ERIC PARTRIDGE

A DICTIONARY OF SLANG
AND UNCONVENTIONAL
ENGLISH

Colloquialisms and Catch-phrases
Solecisms and Catachreses
Nicknames
Vulgarisms
and
such Americanisms as have been naturalized

LONDON
ROUTLEDGE & KEGAN PAUL LTD
BROADWAY HOUSE: 68-74 CARTER LANE, E.C.4
PREFACE

This dictionary, at which I have worked harder than (I hope, but should not swear) I shall ever work again and which incorporates the results of a close observation of colloquial speech for many years, is designed to form a humble companion to the monumental *Oxford English Dictionary*, from which I am proud to have learnt a very great amount.

*A Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English*, i.e. of linguistically unconventional English, should be of interest to word-lovers; but it should also be useful to the general as well as the cultured reader, to the scholar and the linguist, to the foreigner and the American. I have, in fact, kept the foreigner as well as the English-speaker in mind; and I have often compared British with American usage. In short, the field is of all English other than standard and other than dialectal.

Although I have not worked out the proportions, I should say that, merely approximately, they are:

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<th>Category</th>
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<td>Colloquialisms</td>
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<td>Vulgarisms</td>
<td>½%</td>
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(By the last, I understand words and phrases that, in no way slangy, are avoided in polite society.) For the interrelations of these classes, I must refer the reader to my *Slang To-day and Yesterday: a Study and a History*, where these interrelations are treated in some detail.

The degree of comprehensiveness? This may best be gauged by comparing the relevant terms in any one letter (I suggest a 'short' one like o't or v) of either *The Oxford English Dictionary* and its Supplement or Farmer and Henley's *Slang and its Analogues* with the terms in the same letter here (including the inevitable Addenda). On this point, again, I have not worked out the proportions, but I should guess that whereas the *O.E.D.* contains † roughly 30% more than *F. & H.*, and *F. & H.* has some 20% not in the *O.E.D.*, the present dictionary contains approximately 35% more than the other two

* I am keenly aware that, in these, the Dictionary is woefully defective.
† For the period up to 1904, when *F. & H.* was completed.
taken together and, except accidentally, has missed nothing included in those two works. Nor are my additions confined to the period since ca. 1800, a period for which—owing to the partial neglect of Vaux, Egan, ‘John Bee’, Brandon, ‘Ducange Anglicus’, Hotten, Ware, and Collinson, to the literally complete neglect of Baumann and Lyell, and the virtually complete neglect of Manchon, not to mention the incomplete use made of the glossaries of military and naval unconventional terms—the lexicography of slang and other unconventional English is gravely inadequate: even such 17th–18th century dictionaries as Coles’s, B.E.’s, and Grose’s have been only culled, not used thoroughly. Nor has proper attention been given, in the matter of dates, to the various editions of Grose (1785, 1788, 1796, 1811, 1823) and Hotten (1859, 1860, 1864, 1872, 1874): collation has been sporadic.

For Farmer & Henley there was only the excuse (which I hasten to make for my own shortcomings) that certain sources were not examined; the O.E.D. is differently placed, its aim, for unconventional English, being selective—it has omitted what it deemed ephemeral. In the vast majority of instances, the omissions from, e.g., B.E., Grose, Hotten, Farmer & Henley, Ware, and others, were deliberate: yet, with all due respect, I submit that if Harman was incorporated almost in toto, so should B.E. and Grose (to take but two examples) have been. The O.E.D., moreover, has omitted certain vulgarisms and included others. Should a lexicographer, if he includes any vulgarisms (in any sense of that term), omit the others? I have given them all. (My rule, in the matter of unpleasant terms, has been to deal with them as briefly, as astringently, as aseptically as was consistent with clarity and adequacy; in a few instances, I had to force myself to overcome an instinctive repugnance; for these I ask the indulgence of my readers.)

It must not, however, be thought that I am in the least ungrateful to either the O.E.D. or F. & H. I have noted every debt* to the former, not merely for the sake of its authority but to indicate my profound admiration for its work; to the latter, I have made few references—for the simple reason that the publishers have given me carte blanche permission to use it. But it may be assumed that, for the period up to 1904, and where no author or dictionary is quoted, the debt is, in most instances, to Farmer & Henley—who, by the way, have never received their dues.

It has, I think, been made clear that I also owe a very great deal to such dictionaries and glossaries as those of Weekley, Apperson; Coles, B.E., Grose; ‘Jon Bee’, Hotten; Baumann, Ware; Manchon, Collinson,† Lyell; Fraser & Gibbons, and Bowen.

Yet, as a detailed examination of these pages will show, I have added considerably from my own knowledge of language-byways and from my own reading, much of the latter having been undertaken with this specific end in view.

But also I am fully aware that there must be errors, both typographical and other, and that, inevitably, there are numerous omissions. Here and now, may I say that J

* Often, indeed, I have preferred its evidence to that on which I came independently.
† Professor W. E. Collinson’s admirable Contemporary English. A personal speech record, 1927 (Leipzig and Berlin), is mentioned here for convenience’ sake.
shall be deeply grateful for notification (and note) of errors and for words and phrases that, through ignorance, I have omitted.*

Finally, it is a pleasure to thank, for terms † that I might well have failed to encounter, the following lady and gentlemen:

Mr J. J. W. Pollard, Mr G. D. Nicolson, Mr G. Ramsay, Mr K. G. Wyness-Mitchell, Mr G. G. M. Mitchell, Mr A. E. Strong, Mr Robert E. Brown (of Hamilton), all of New Zealand; Mr John Beames, of Canada; Mr Stanley Deegan, Mrs J. Litchfield, Mr H. C. McKay, of Australia; Dr Jean Bordeaux, of Los Angeles. From Great Britain: Mr John Gibbons (most unselfishly), Mr Alastair Baxter (a long, valuable list), Mr Julian Franklyn (author of This Gutter Life), Mr John Brophy, Professor J. R. Sutherland, Mr J. Hodgson Lobley, R.B.A., Mr Alfred Atkins, the actor, Major-General A. P. Wavell, C.M.G., Commander W. M. Ross, Major A. J. Dawson, Mr R. A. Auty, Mr Allan M. Laing, Mr R. A. Walker, Mr G. W. Pirie, Mr D. E. Yates, Mr Joe Mourant, Mr Hugh Milner, Sgt T. Waterman, the Rev. A. K. Chignell, the Rev. A. Trelvlick Cape, Mr Henry Gray, Mr E. Unné, Mr Malcolm McDougall, Mr R. B. Oram, Mr L. S. Tugwell, Mr V. C. Brodie, Mr Douglas Buchanan, Mr Will T. Fleet, Mr Fred Burton, Mr Alfred T. Chenhalls, Mr Digby A. Smith, Mr George S. Robinson (London), Mr Arthur W. Allen, Mr Frank Dean, Mr M. C. Way, Mr David MacGibbon, Mr A. Jameson, Mr Jack Lindsay, Mr 'David Hume' (of 'thriller' fame), Mr J. G. Considine, the Rev. M. Summers, Mr C. H. Davis, Mr H. E. A. Richardson, Mr J. Hall Richardson, Mr R. Ellis Roberts, Mr George Baker (who has a notable knowledge of unconventional English and no selfishness), Mr F. R. Jelley, Mr Barry Moore, Mr H. C. Cardew-Rendle, Mr Norman T. McMurdo, Mr R. H. Parrott, Mr F. Willis (Sheffield), Mr E. C. Pattison (of A Martial Medley), and, for introducing me to the work of Clarence Rook and the early work of Edwin Pugh, Mr Wilson Benington.

E. P.

London; November 11, 1923
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### ABBREVIATIONS AND SIGNS

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<td>adj.</td>
<td>adjective</td>
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<td>adv.</td>
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<td>after</td>
<td>after the fashion of; on the analogy of</td>
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<td>anon.</td>
<td>anonymous</td>
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<td>app.</td>
<td>apparently</td>
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<td>Baumann</td>
<td>Heinrich Baumann's <em>Londonismen</em>, 1887</td>
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<td>B.E.</td>
<td>B.E.'s <em>Dictionary of the Canting Crew</em>, ca. 1600. (Better dated 1698-93)</td>
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<td>Bee</td>
<td>'Jon Bee', <em>Dictionary</em>, 1823.</td>
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<td>Bowen</td>
<td>F. Bowen's <em>Sea Slang</em>, 1929</td>
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<td>Brandon</td>
<td>Brandon's <em>Glossary of Cant in 'Ducange Anglicus'</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>cant, i.e. language of the underworld</td>
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<tr>
<td>C.</td>
<td>century; as C. 18, the 18th century</td>
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<td>c. and low</td>
<td>cant and low slang</td>
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<td>ca.</td>
<td>about (the year . . .)</td>
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<td>cf.</td>
<td>compare</td>
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<td>C.O.D.</td>
<td><em>Concise Oxford Dictionary</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Coles.</td>
<td>E. Coles, <em>Dictionary</em>, 1676</td>
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<tr>
<td>coll.</td>
<td>colloquial(ism)</td>
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<td>Collinson</td>
<td>W. E. Collinson, <em>Contemporary English</em>, 1927</td>
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<tr>
<td>c.p.</td>
<td>a catch-phrase</td>
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<td>d.</td>
<td>died</td>
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<td>Dawson</td>
<td>L. Dawson's <em>Nicknames and Pseudonyms</em>, 1908</td>
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<td>dial.</td>
<td>dialect; dialectal(ly)</td>
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<td>Dict.</td>
<td>Dictionary</td>
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<td>D.N.B.</td>
<td><em>Dictionary of National Biography</em></td>
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<td>'Ducange Anglicus'</td>
<td>his <em>The Vulgar Tongue</em>, 1857</td>
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<td>E.D.D.</td>
<td><em>The English Dialect Dictionary</em>, by Joseph Wright</td>
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<td>e.g.</td>
<td>for example</td>
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<td>Egan's Grose</td>
<td>See 'Grose' below.</td>
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<td>Eng.</td>
<td>English</td>
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<td>esp.</td>
<td>especially</td>
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<tr>
<td>ex</td>
<td>from; derived from</td>
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<td>F. &amp; Gibbons</td>
<td>Fraser &amp; Gibbons, <em>Soldier and Sailor Words and Phrases</em>, 1925</td>
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<td>F. &amp; H.</td>
<td>Farmer &amp; Henley's <em>Slang and its Analogues</em>, 7 vols., 1890-1904</td>
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<td>fig.</td>
<td>figurative(ly)</td>
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<tr>
<td>fl.</td>
<td>flourished (floruit)</td>
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ABBREVIATIONS AND SIGNS

Fowler ... H. W. Fowler's Modern English Usage, 1926
Fr ... French
gen ... general(ly); usual(ly)
Ger ... German
Gr ... Greek
Grose ... Grosch's Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue (1785, 1788, 1796, 1811, 1823). Hence, Egan's Grosch = Egan's ed. of Grosch, 1823. Grosch, P. = my annotated reprint of the 3rd ed.
G.W. ... The War of 1914–18
H ... J. C. Hotten, The Slang Dictionary, 1859, 1860, etc.
ibid ... in the same authority or book
id ... the same
i.e ... that is
imm ... immediately
Irwin ... Godfrey Irwin, American Tramp and Underworld Slang, 1931
It ... Italian
j ... jargon, i.e. technical(ity)
Jice Doone ... Jice Doone, Timely Tips to New Australians, 1926
L ... Latin
Lex. Bal. ... The Lexicon Balatronicum, or 4th ed. of Grosch, 1811
lit ... literally
literary ... literary English, i.e. unused in ordinary speech
Lyell ... T. Lyell's Slang, Phrase and Idiom in Colloquial English, 1931
Manchon ... J. Manchon's Le Slang, 1923
M.E. ... Middle English
mod ... modern
Morris ... E. E. Morris, Austral English, 1898
n ... noun
n.b ... note carefully
ob ... obsolete; cf. ↑
occ ... occasional(ly)
O.E. ... Old English; i.e. before ca. 1150
O.E.D. (Sup.) ... The Oxford English Dictionary (Supplement)
on ... on the analogy of
Onions ... C. T. Onions, A Shakespeare Glossary, ed. of 1918
opp ... opposite; as opposed to
orig ... original(ly)
Pettman ... C. Pettman, Africanderisms, 1913
pl ... plural; in the plural
Port ... Portuguese
ppl ... participle; participial
prob ... probable, probably
pron ... pronounced; pronunciation
pub ... published
q.v ... which see ↓
resp ... respective(ly)
s ... slang
sc ... supply ↓; understand ↓
S.E. ... Standard English
Slang ... My Slang To-Day and Yesterday, revised ed., 1935
Smart & Crofton ... B. C. Smart & H. T. Crofton, The Dialect of the English Gypsies, revised ed., 1875
ABBREVIATIONS AND SIGNS

| S.O.D. | The Shorter Oxford Dictionary |
| sol. | solecism; solecistio |
| Sp. | Spanish |
| s.v. | see at |
| temp. | in or at the time of |
| Thornton | R. H. Thornton's American Glossary, 1912 |
| U.S. | The United States of America; American |
| v. | verb. Hence, v.i., intransitive; v.t., transitive |
| Vaux | J. H. Vaux's 'Glossary of Cant, 1812', in his Memoirs, 1819 |
| vbl.n. | verbal noun |
| vulg. | vulgar(ism). See Preface |
| W. | Ernest Weekley's Etymological Dictionary of Modern English |
| Ware | J. Redding Ware's Passing English, 1909 |
| Words | My Words, Words, Words!, 1933 |
| Yule & Burnell | Yule & Burnell, Hobson-Jobson, revised ed., 1903 |

— (before a date) known to exist then and presumably used some years earlier
+ (after a date) in significant first use then, but still extant
† obsolete; cf. ob.
= (equal(s); equal to; equivalent to
> become(s); became
* before a word a cant term

A NOTE ON ARRANGEMENT

There are two main systems of arranging words in a dictionary. The strictly alphabetical; the 'something before nothing'. No system is wholly satisfactory; the arrangements in the 'O.E.D.' in 'Webster' and, to compare small things with great, the present dictionary are open to severe criticism—severe but unreasonable. No arrangement is, for no arrangement can be, perfect.

Here, the 'something before nothing' system has been adopted—for the simple reason that it is the most suitable to a dictionary of this kind. Thus A.B. precedes abaddon, but it also precedes Aaron. Perhaps an example is more illuminating: a; A.A. of the G.G.; A.B.; A.B.C.; A.B.C., as easy as; a-cocktail; a-crash of, go; A.D.; a-doing of; a.f.; A from a windmill; A1; Aaron; abaa; abaddon; abah. Further, all come (or come-) terms, beginning with come, including come it, come out, come the . . . , and ending with come Yorkshire, precede comedy-merchant. Terms that are spelt both as two words (e.g. cock-tail) and as one (cocktail) present a difficulty; I give them as, e.g., cock-tail, and at, e.g., cocktail insert a cross-reference: to scholars, some of these precautions may seem more foolishness, but there are others to be considered.

1 A date, unpreceded by 'ca.', signifies that this is the earliest discovered record; it is well to bear in mind, however, that in slang, cant, colloquialism, catch-phrase, and solecism, the first use goes back, generally a few, occasionally many, years earlier.
2 An examination of any ten consecutive pages in these three works will show the recalcitrance of the English (and American) vocabulary—with its 'analytical' phrases—to the rigidity, and the desirability, of lexicographical principles, however sound those principles may be.
CORRIGENDA

(Pages 1–794)

2. abo. Read 'mid C. 19 20' and 'Australian coll.'

18. article of virtue. For 'virgins' read 'virgin'.

19. ast. For second line read: Perhaps ex lit. asta, anation. — atcha! For 'C. 20 ' read 'from ca. 1860'.

Ex Hindustani archa, good. — Atkins. Read: 'See tommy, 4'.

21. back of Bourke. In line 3, read 'north-western N.S.W.'.

25. bag of rations. Read 'dormer-ing'.

27. baked. For '1850' read '1910'.

28. balaam. For '1826' read '1818'.

31. bang goes saxpence! see Addenda, s.v. saxpence...

38. bitty. 'Batta' should be 'bhatta'. 45 bell, ring the, line 2: read 'strength-testing'.

40. Bess o' Bedlam. The period should be 'C. 17—early 19'. See esp. Jack Lindsay's Tom o' Bedlam.

90. bevie, bevy. Read bevie, bevy.

91. bint. In Arabic bint has no lit. meaning other than 'daughter'.

95. bit of cavalry. For '1825-80' read '1825 1915'.—bit of sticks. For 'corpse' read 'copso'.

98. Black Hole, the. In sense 2, line 2. The date, obviously, should be 1757!

75. boiled. For 'C. 20' read 'from ca. 1875: orig. among Australian gold-diggers'.

76. bolo. In Hindustani bolo the bat would rather mean 'speak the matter (or words)'.

79. bookmaker's pocket should be book-maker's.

81. booze the jib should read 'booze one's (or the) jib or tip; also booze up the jib'.


102. bug, v. 3. For 'bug over' read 'bug over'.

106. bum. adj. See Addenda.

107. bumm-fodder. Sense I goes back to ca. 1700.

108. bundabunt. — A tying, a binding — should be 'a tying and binding'. The word also means 'revenue settlement'; often spelt bundalast.

110. buoy, round the. Read buoy, go round the.

115. buttered bun. In sense 2, read 'mid C. 17 20'.

122. cat, v., line 1. Read 'C. 18'.

137. chai. In line 3, read 'chiar'.

140. charcoal should have been printed charcoal.

145. cheesy-hammy... Read... topsides.

150. chootah. Ex Urdu chota, small. — chop. Ex Hindi chhap, lit. a print, hence a seal or band.

153. chuck a dummy, line 1. 'To', not 'A'.

169. cold tea. The later limit should be 1910.

180. coppers, hot. Ignore both the entries and see hot coppers.

183. cottage, 2. For 'ca. 1900 12' read 'from ca. 1900; slightly ob'.

189. crate. Read '1914'.

191. col. l, line 1. For 'dia.' read 'dial'.

206. dance, v. 2. The date should be 'ca. 1650'. The word appears in Randle Holme's Armory, 1688.

210. Digby duck should come between dig up and digger: dig out after should follow dig out.

211. dime museum. Obviously Ward meant 'teenth'. — 222, dip, v., l. 3. Read 'thy lands'.

223. dipped in wing should be dipped in the wing.

227. do it. Add: 'C. 19-20'.

233. domino-thumper. For 'Barricó ' read 'Barrão'.—donkey, who stole the. The period should be 'ca. 1835 1910'.

235. doolly... line 8. Read 'See also...'

239. down on, put a. For '1840' read '1800'.

248. dumpling-depot. For 'Conington' read 'Connington'. 254, eclipse. Read 'manipulation'.

258. equality Jack. For dating, read 'since ca. 1810'.

276. fine ham... For '(1894) read: 'C. 20'.

277. finid. B. & L. define finid ready as 'a five-pound note'.

287. flip, n., 3. Read 'A (short)'.

292. flying dustman. Read: See Addenda. — 296, forget, l. 2. Read 'lapse'.

304. frosty face. For '1890' read '1910'.

313. gamaliel, lines 2-4. Read 'Ex the name of several rabbis famous in the first two or three Christian centuries'. (There was a confusion with (tallin).) — 327. gibber, l. 2. Read 'Prum. gibber'.

322. glass-work. For '1880' read '1905'.— Glesca Kules should be Glesca Keetlcs.

358. grubby. The later limit should be 1920.

363. gutty. For 'courage' read 'courageous'.

CORRIGENDA

721, sahib. 'In Arabic and Urdu "sahib" is a respectful address to all and not confined to Europeans only, though always used for Europeans' (Siddiqui).

724, sam l., upon my. For 'Sec preceding entry' read 'Sec sam, stand'.

725, sandbag, n. In line 3, 1820 should obviously be 1920.

727, sargentlymanly. Read 'So gentlemanly'—738, screw-thread... For 'spiral' read 'helical'.

749, shakes, the. Sense 3 goes back to ca. 1880.

772, sitting-room, 1. 2. Read 'slightly'.

776, skittling-dealer. For 'C. 19' read 'C. 18'—skittles. In last line, read, 'Pagott'.

783, slant, v. In line 1, '1809' should read '1800'.

785, snot, n. In line 4, for '—ins.—' read 'quite'. Something very odd happened here!

786, snooty. In line 4, read 'that' for 'preceding'.

803, saucen. EX Hindustan sahukar, a native banker, esp. one doing business on a large scale. Most Hindu bankers are musars, hence the meaning of saucen.

806, spec. 4. Alter date to 'mid-C. 18-20'.

807, col. 2, spirrib should be sperrib.—spess: remembered in 1879 (Professor Arnold Wall).

809, spoil the beans, line 4. Read Bollona.

812, splice, v., 3. For '1903' read '1807'.

813, spooffy. In line 2, for '3' read '2'.

824, standing bridge should be standing budge.

826, steam. For '1903' read '1807'.

837, straight-up. Also as exclamation. Dating since ca. 1905. Elaboration of synonymous straight.

839, straver, 2. For '1903' read '1800'.

831, strikes. In line 1, read '1800' for '1904'.

840, strike-me-blind. For '1904' read '1800'.—stringer. Ditto.

842, stuff, n., 3. For 'C. 20' read 'late C. 19-20'; and for '1904' read '1800'.

847, Sunday clothes. Add: From ca. 1880.

851, swan-slinger. For '1904' read '1800'.

853, sweat one's guts out. For 'lyell' read 'Barrère & Leland'.

856, take the biscuit. For '1923' read '1890'.—take care of dowb should be... Dowb.

860, in col. 1, line 3, for 'try read tag'.

870, 'teekelte, 2. For 'Robert' read 'Roger'.

894, tickler, 6, 1, 3. Read '1903-ca. 1910'.

898, too many for. For 'jugglers' read 'jugglers'—For tools, fixed... read tools, fined...

909, top, over the. Read 'See top, go over the'.

910, trampler. The dating should be 1865-50.

917, traverse. For cart, traverse the... read cart, walk the.

919, triple tree. Randolph, 1634.

921, tumbler, 4. For '1904' read '1890'.—tug, line 5. Read 'work'.

924, utray. See Addenda.

931, very. Read 'sentence'.

933, voker. In line 2, for 'the orig.' read 'a debased'. Perhaps voker is a mere misapprehension for rokker (rocker).

937, vala Matilda. Prob. since 1880; song ex phrase.—wanky. See Addenda.

941, waunds! Type adrift!

943, weenie. In line 4, for 'C. 20. F. & H., 1904' read 'late C. 19-20'. Barrère & Leland'.

945, Westphalia. '1904' read '1800'.

951, whip, n., 2. For '—1904'. F. & H.' read '—1890', Barrère & Leland'. And for whip-sticks, ditto.

952, whisky jack, 1, 3. Read 'grey jay'.

953, whistle and ride: For '—1904'. F. & H.' read '—1890', Barrère & Leland'.

954, white-horsed in; ditto. white stuff is earlier recorded in Barrère & Leland.

974, col. 1, line 4. The semi-colon should be a colon.

A GHOST WORD

At end of F, on p. 399, I list fye-buck (cf.—on p. 99—buck, n., 6: fyrbuck should read syrbuck) with meaning 'sixpence'. But Parker has syrbuck, with the long s, which I genuinely misread, not misapprehended, as fyrbuck; F. & H.'s error may also have arisen from poor reading and not from ignorance. For this, I have to thank the erudite 'wordman', the late Gerald Hatchman.
A

a, 'a. Sol. and dial. for has, have (e.g. "I would a done it, if ...") : C. 18–20; earlier S.E. By way of 'at', which in C. 15–16 was S.E., coll. or dial. thereafter.—2. Of: esp. in kinda, sorta: see kinder, sorter.—3. An: sol. mostly London (—1887). Baumann.—4. Superfluous, therefore castasthetic, of C. 19–20, as in 'No more signal a defeat was ever inflicted'. Fowler.—5. 'a-, an-, not or without, should be prefixed only to Greek stems ... [amoral], being literary is inexcusable, and non-moral should be used instead,' Fowler.—6. Superfluous or, rather, intrusive in v. v.: sol.: C. 19–20. 'He's the party as had a done it.' Cf. of v. Esp. with present ppp.: see, e.g., quotation at a-doing of.

A.A. of the G.G. (or Gee-Gee). The Institute of the Horse and Pony Club, which was founded in 1930. Sir Frederick Hobday, in The Saturday Review, May 19, 1934. Lit., the Automobile Association of the Gee-Gee (or horse).

A.B. An able-bodied seaman (—1875); coll. by 1900. Chamber's Journal, No. 627, 1875.

A.B.C. An Aerated Bread Company's tea-shop: from ca. 1880; coll. by 1914.—2. At Christ's Hospital, C. 19, ale, bread and cheese on 'going-home night'.


a-cockhill. Free; dangling free; nautical coll. (—1887). Baumann; Bowen.


A.D. A drink: male dancers' coll. (—1609) inscribed on dance-programmes; ob. Ware.

a-doing of, Doing: sol.: mid-C. 19–20. (D. Sayers, 1933, 'I arst you wot you was a-doin' of'.) a.f. Having met with (come across) a 'flat', who has, to the speaker's advantage, laid his bets all wrong: the turf (—1823); by 1870. 'Jon Bee.'

A from a windmill or the gable-end, not to know. To be very ignorant, or illiterate: coll.: resp. C. 15, C. 19–20 (ob.). See also B from . . .


Aaron, in c., a cadger; the Aaron, a captain of thieves. C. 17–19. Cf. abandoned, a pickpocket.


D.U.B.

**abaddon. A thief turned informer: c.: late C. 19–20; ob. 'a pun on a bad'un and the angel *Abaddon.*

abahnt. Cockney for about: sol.: C. 19 (t. earlier)–20. See *abab.*


abandoned habits. The riding dresses of demi-mondaines in Hyde Park: ca. 1870–1900.

abber. At Harrow School, an abstract or an abst: from 1890's. Oxford—er.


So an old abess, for the rattling rakes,
A tempting deed of human nature makes,
And dresses up a luscious maid.


abbot. The husband, or the preferred male, of a brothel-keeper (see *abess*): C. 19. Cf. the old S.E. terms, abbot of mistrel, abbot of unreason, a leader in a disorderly festivity.


Abdul. A Turkish soldier; collectively, the Turks: military coll.: from ca. 1860. B. & F. Ex frequency of Abdul as a Turkish name.

abear. Except in dial., it is, in C. 19–20, a sol. or perhaps only a low coll. for 'tollerate', 'endure', after being S.E. Ex O.E. sense, to carry.

abel-w(h)ackets. See abel-w(h)ackets.


aberrator. Incorrect for overruncator (instrument for lopping): from ca. 1860. O.E.D.


Abigail. A lady's maid: from ca. 1616, though not recorded fig. till 47 years later: coll. >, by 1800, S.E. Ex the Bible. In Beaumont &
ABLE

Fletcher, Fielding, Smollett; coll. from ca. 1700. Now outmoded literary.

able-w(h)ackets, wrongly abel-w(h)ackets. A nautical card-game in which every lost point—or game—entails a whack with a knotted handkerchief (Grose, Smyth): coll. from ca. 1789; † by 1883: witness Clark Russell's nautical dictionary.

Abney Park, to have gone to. To be dead: proletarian London (—1909); very ob. Ware. Ex Abney Park Cemetery.

abyss, abys. Incorrect for obnoxious: mid C. 17 (?–18). O.E.D.


aboard of, fell. To meet (a person): nautical coll. (—1887). Baumann.

abo(lian) (or A-); properly abo(liar). A regular writer on Aboriginal lore or of Aboriginal stories: s. (from ca. 1850, verging by 1860 coll. and by 1890 virtually j. It is a coining of The Sydney Bulletin, which, by the way, also coined Billjim and Maori-land. Cognate, and from the same mint, is aboriginality, a (preferably original) contribution to Aboriginal lore: Australian coll.: C. 20. Gen. in pl., in which shape it heads a column in The Bulletin.

abominable. A late C. 19–20 sol., or jocular coll., for abdominal; esp. in abominable prims.—2. Very unpleasant; coll. from ca. 1800; the same with the adv. (–ably). Cf. the S.E. senses and: abominable. To dislike intensely; i.e. very much: from ca. 1875. Coll.

aboriginality. See abo(lian).

about the other way. (Figs.) precisely the contrary: gen. in reference to a statement just made. Coll., from ca. 1860.

about one, have something. 'To show character or ability': to be, in some undefined or intangible way, charming or, perhaps because of some mystery, fascinating; coll. (and dial.): from ca. 1890 (?earlier). E.D.D. (Sup.), 'That fellow has something about him, I must admit.' Cf. the analogous use of there's something to (a person or thing).

about proper. An illiterate variant of proper, adv.: q.v.


[about that, approximately that, is S.E. verging on coll.]

about the size of it. Approximately (right): from ca. 1870, coll. (? orig. U.S.


above board. Openly; without artifice or dishonesty (Coll. verging on, and 1829-39, achieving, S.E. Ex position of hands in card-playing for money. Earliest record, 1608 (Apperson).

above oneself. Too ambitious or confident, not by nature but momentarily: C. 20.

above par. In excellent health, spirits, money in hand, mild drunkenness. All from ca. 1870, ex shares and at a premium. Cf. below par.


ACID, COME THE

(Epicureanism), The Lyceum (Aristotelianism), The Porch (Stoicism), and The 2 vb (Cynicism): same period and changes of status. Fowler.


acase. A sol. for because; now rare except in dial.: C. 18–20.


access. A C. 19–20 sol. for excess. Pronunciation often ae-sess.


accident. An untimely, or accidental, call of nature: coll.: 1899. O.E.D.


accommodation house. A brothel; a disorderly house; from ca. 1820, now ob. Coll. ‘Jon Bee.’

according. Adv. A C. 20 sol. (earlier, S.E.) for accordingly. Esp. in and the rest according. Cf.: according, that’s. A coll. abbr. of the cautious that’s according to, i.e. dependent on, the circumstances. (Not in the sense, in accordance with;)

according to. Properly, correctly. From ca. 1700, ex Edward Cooker (d. 1675). The U.S. phrase (partly acclimatized in England by 1900; Ware) is according to Gunter, a famous mathematician: the C. 19 nautical, according to John Norie, the editor of a much-consulted Navigator’s Manual.

account, go on the. To turn pirate, or buccaneer (— 1812). Coll. ↑ Scott.

account for. To kill: from ca. 1840 (Thackeray, 1842). Sporting coll. >, by 1890, S.E.

accounts, cast up one’s. To vomit: C. 17–19. In C. 20, rare; by 1930, ↑ Dekker; Grose. A nautical variant, C. 19–20: audit one’s accounts at the court of Neptune.—2. In c., to turn King’s evidence: mid-C. 19–20; ob.

accre chocolate. To make oneself popular with the officers’ : naval: C. 20; ob. Bowen.

accumulator. (Racing) a better carrying forward a win to the next event; from ca. 1870.

accru(e), occur(). Often confused: mid-C. 16–18. O.E.D. ( Properly, accrue = to meet.)


achronical, -oyal, -al, and derivative adv. Incorrect for acrony(h)eal, -al. C. 17–20. O.E.D.

acid, come the. To exaggerate: exaggerate one’s authority; make oneself unpleasant; endeavour to shift one’s duty on to another: military: from ca. 1910. F. & Gibbons.

ACIDOTIC.
Acid Drop, the. Mr. Justice Avory: legal nickname: C. 20. (The Saturday Review, March 9, 1836.)


ack! No, as the refusal of a request: Christ’s Hospital, C. 19. Cf. Romaney ac/, stuff!

Ack; Beer; Don.—A, B, D Company: military coll.: from 1914. Ex signalero. Cf.:


ack over tock. See are to thurkey.


*ackman, c., is a fresh-water thief: mid-C. 18–19.

Corruption of arkman, q.v. F. & H. adduces also ack-pirate and ack-rief.

acknowledge the cor, v.i. Admit, acknowledge: (Sal., 1883); ob. Ex U.S. (—1840), to admit failure or outwitting. See esp. Thornton.

*acorn, a horse foaled by an. The gallowes; gen. as ride a horse . . . , to be hanged: c.: late C. 17–19. Motteux, Ainsworth. Cf. three-legged or wooden mare, q.v.

acquaintance, scrape (an). To make acquaintance. Coll.: Farquhar, 1698, 'no scraping acquaintance, for Heaven's sake'.

acquire. To steal: coll.: C. 20. Not a euphemism, for it is used jocularly.—2. Oec. confused with (en-) or inquire and require: C. 17–20. O.E.D.

acre, knave’s. A mid-C. 16–17 early variant of weeping cross, q.v. See also beggar’s bush for a very pertinent quotation.

Acres, Bob Acres. A coward, esp. if boastful. Ex a character in Sheridan’s Rivals, 1775. Coll.,


acromatic. Incorrect for achromatic (late C. 18–20) and acromatic (C. 17–20). O.E.D.

across. To meet with accidentally: mid-C. 19–20: coll., > S.E., not literary, in C. 20.—2. come across (with it) / Confess, I speak out! / band it over!: post-G.W. Ex U.S.. See also come across, 1.

across, get, v.t. Irritate or offend (a person): C. 20: coll. across, put it. See put it across.


acting lady. An inferior actress: ironic theatrical coll.: 1883, Entrance (February); † by 1920. Ware. Mrs. Langtry’s social-cum-theatrical success in 1883 caused many society women to try their luck on the stage; mostly with deplorable results.

acting rabbit-pie. See acting dish.

actor’s Bible, the. The Era: theatrical coll.: ca. 1860–1918. Ware. A fling at sacred matters prompted by the sensation caused by Essays and Reviews.


actual, the. Money, collectively, esp. if in cash: mid-C. 19–20. At this word, F. & H. has an admirable essayette on, and list of English and foreign synonyms for, money. In 1860 there were at least 130 English, 50 French synonyms.

ad. An advertisement: printers’ coll.: 1854 (Dickens); in C. 20, gen. Occ. adverb, rarely ader.

ad lib. A coll. abbr. of ad libitum, as much as one likes: C. 19–20.

add! An expolitive: coll.: ca. 1660–1770. Prob. ex egad!


Adam; adam. (Gen. in passive.) To marry: c.: 1781, G. Parker, ‘“What are you and Moll aduned?” “Yes . . . and by a rum Tom Pat too”’; † by 1850. Ex Adam and Eve.


Adam and Eve on a raft. Eggs on toast: mostly military: C. 20. Ibid. Cf.:

Adam and Eve wrecked. Scrambled eggs: id.: Ibid.


Adam tiler. See Adam, n. 2.


adapto. To come to the correct or wished-for total: coll.: 1850, Dickens. O.E.D. Sup.

-added to the list. i.e. of geldings in training; hence, castrated. Racing a. (—1874). H., 6th ed. Orig. a euphemism.

adele. See addle.


additional. Paint or rouge or powder for the face: ca. 1690–1770. Mrs. Contilivre: ‘Addition is only paint, madam.’ Society s.


addings. ‘Pay accumulated on a voyage or
Amen.

The text appears to be a mixture of fragmented sentences and phrases, making it difficult to extract coherent information. The text contains various terms and phrases related to historical and military contexts, such as "Army," "naval," "naval records," and "naval officers." However, due to the fragmentation and lack of context, it is challenging to provide a meaningful transcription or summary. The text may require a more comprehensive source or a different approach to fully understand its content. If you have access to a full context or additional sources, please provide them for a more accurate transcription.
agility, show one's. (Of women) in crossing a stile, in being swung, to show much of the person: ca. 1870—1914. Perhaps a pun on virility.
again. See agen.
agolopise. See ajolopise.
Agony. Agony, near Arras: military in G.W. Richard Blaker, A Medal without Bar, 1930. This, like many other G.W. place-names, will eventually disappear.
agony, pile up (or on) the. To exaggerate. Ex U.S. (Haliburton, 1835: O.E.D.): anglicised ca. 1855. In C. 20, coll.; the former, now rare.
agony-bags. Scottish bagpipes: English (not Scottish) Army officers' from ca. 1912.
agreeable rents of life, the. The female pudendo: low 'superior'—(1903); ob.
aricultural. See cow-shot. Prob. influenced also by now, n. and v., in cricket j.
aground. At a loss: ruined: C. 18—20. Coll. > in C. 19, S.E.
ah for ou, ow, is typical of Cookney, as in tahn for town; also Cookney for aw as in brahn for brawn. See the quotation at bruver and the entries at l, 4 for th', 4 for w', and 4 for w'.
ah, que je can be bate! How stupid I am: half-society (Ware): ca. 1899—1912. Macaronic with Fr. je, I, and bête, stupid.
ahind, ahint. See afore.
Agisters, the. The 87th Foot Regiment; from ca. 1881, the 1st Battalion of the Royal Irish Fusiliers: military: from early C. 19; ob. At Barossa, in the Peninsular War, they captured the eagle (Fr. aigle) of a French Regiment.
aim. The person that aims: coll. from ca. 1880. Cf. S.E. shot.
av't. Sol. for am, or is or are, not. Swift, 1710. As = are not, also dial.; as = am or is not, mainly Cockney. Cf. a'n't, q.v.—2. Sol. for has not, have not: C. 19—20; esp. London. 'I ain't done nothing to speak on,' Baumann.
air, give the. See give the air.
air, go (straight) up in the. 'To get angry, excited' (Lyell): coll. C. 20.
air, hot. See hot air.

air-in-the. (Of news, rumours) generally known or suspected, but not yet in print: C. 19 coll., C. 20 S.E.; likely to happen: 1920+, coll.; uncertain, problematic, remote or fanciful: C. 19 coll., C. 20 S.E.

air-on-the. (Wireless telegraphy) on the 'wireless' programme: if applied to a person, it often connotes that he—or she—is important, or notorious, as news or publicity. Resp. 1927 (O.E.D.) and 1930: coll.; by 1935, verging on S.E.

air-take-the. To go for a walk: coll. > S.E.; C. 19–20. Also, make oneself scarce: coll.; from ca. 1880.


air one's vocabulary. To talk for the sake of talking or for that of effect: coll.; from ca. 1820. Ob airesy. See airesy.

airesy. See airesy.

airesy. (The turf) a race run with no intention of winning: ca. 1870–1914.

airing, give it an. An imperative = take it away!; coll.; from ca. 1890. Also, be quiet!; C. 20.

airesy. See airesy.


airesy. See airesy.


airesy-fairy. As light or dainty as a fairy: coll., now verging on S.E.: 1869, W. S. Gilbert. Ex Tenney's airy, fairy Lilyan. O.E.D. (Sup.).

airesy-plane. Aeroplane: sol.: from ca. 1911. Cf. aereo-plane, q.v.


ajesy. A jakes, a water-closet: late C. 16–18. A spate of scatological was loosed by Harington's tract, The Metamorphosis of Ajesy, 1596.


ak. A variant of ask, q.v. (Philip Macdonald, Hope to Spare, 1932.)


ak dum and viggery! At once!: rare: from 1919. A combination of ak dum, 1, and (corrupted) viggery. I.e. ex two Army phrases, the former from Hindustani, the latter from Arabic!

Akerman's hotel. Newgate prison. 'In 1787,' says Grosé, 'a person of that name was the gaoler, or keeper.'† by 1850. 19. Akeybo. As in 'He beats Akeybo, and Akeybo beats the devil': proletarian (—1874); ob. H., 5th ed. Cf. Banaghan, Banagher, q.v. Akeybo, however, remains an etymological puzzle. Is there a connexion with Welsh Gypsy ake tu /, here thou art! (a toast: cf. here's to you!): Sampson.

akka. An Egyptian piastre: Regular Army's: from ca. 1920. Ex the slang of Egyptian beggars: piastre corrupted.

alaccompain. Rain: rhyming a. (—1859); ob. H., 1st ed. Also alla-, all, etc. Cf. France and Spain.


albert. Abbrev. Albert chain: from ca. 1884; coll. till ca. 1901, then S.E. Ex the name of the Prince Consort of Queen Victoria.

Albertina. 'An adroit, calculating, business-like mistress': aristocratic; ca. 1860–80. Ware. Ex the character so named in Dumas the Younger's Le Père Prodigue.

Albertopolis. Kensington Gore, London: Londoners the 1890's. Yates, 1864; H., 1874, notes it as †. Ex Albert Prince Consort, intimately associated with this district.


alcalde and alcayde are sometimes confused mid-C. 18–20. O.E.D.


alderman, vote for the. To indulge in drink: ca. 1810–50. Cf. Lushington, q.v., and:

alderman in chains. See alderman, 3.


aldermanity. The quality of being an alderman; a body of aldermen. From ca. 1625; in C. 19–20, S.E. Aldermanship is the regular form, aldermanity a jocular variant, a cultured coll. after humanity.

alderman's pace. A gait and solemn: C. 17 coll. > S.E. Cf. taragrow; Ray.

Aligwe, a draught or bill on the pump at. A bad bill of exchange: late C. 18–19 commercial. Gros. 1st ed. (at draught).

This jocular term actually occurs in the burial-entry of a Lincolnshire parish register of the C. 18. 


**ale-head wind**, beating(?) up against an. C. 19–20. I.e. 'tackling all over the place', esp. the pavement.

**ale-knight**. A drunkard; a boon companion (1576). C. 16–17; coll.: S.E.

**ale-spinner**. A browser; a publican. C. 19.

**ale-stake**. A tippler: coll., C. 17–18. In S.E. 

**ale-stake = ale-pole**, a pole serving as an ale-house sign.

**aleo.** See smart **Alceo.**

** Alec.** See smart **Alec.**

** Alec, alecy.** Lunacy; intoxication: Lyly, 1598. Cited as an example of pedantic nonce-words, it may be considered an. because of its derivation, after lunacy, from ale + y. (N.B.: despite a subservient belief to the contrary, culture and/or pedantry do not prevent a word from being so. or coll.; indeed, culture and pedantry have their own unconventionalisms.)

**ales.** (Stock Exchange) the shares of Messrs S. Allsopp & Sons: from ca. 1880. Also *alopa.* (A. J. Wilson.)

**ales, in his.** In his cups, or rather his tankards of ale (ale orig. synonymous with beer): C. 16–17; coll. Shakespeare.

**Alex.** Alexandria (in Egypt): military (1915) ex Anglo-Egyptian (late C. 19–20). E.g. in F. Brett Young, *Jim Redlake, 1930.*

**Alexander.** To hang (a person): Anglo-Irish coll.: ca. 1670–1800. Ex the merciless way in which Sir Jerome Alexander, an Irish judge in 1690–74, carried out the duties of his office. F. & H., revised.


**'all a mo'.** A tooth-brush moustache: Australian military: 1916–18.


**Algerine.** (Theatrical) one who, when salaries are not paid, reproaches the manager. Also, an impertinent borrower of small sums. Ca. 1890–1900. Perhaps ex the U.S. sense: a pirate (1844).

**Algic, -y.** Generic for a young male aristocrat (esp. if English): coll.: from ca. 1895. See my *Name This Child,* 1936.

**alias and alibi** are, in late C. 18–20., occ. confused. 

**-2. alias = otherwise** (not in the legal sense) is a loose, coll. deviation from the S.E. sense: C. 19–20.

**Alice.** An imitation tree (serving as an observation-post) in the Faunissiart sector: G.W. military. F. & Gibbons.

**Alice ... or, Alice ... and: catastrophic** C. 19–20. See *inquisitorial* at dry smoke, 

**alive, look.** (Gen. in imperative.) To make haste: coll.: 1858. T. Hughes, 'He . . . told [them] to look alive and get their job done', O.E.D. 

**alive and kicking; all alive.** Very alert and active. Coll.: from ca. 1862: see *all serene.*

**aliveo.** Lively; sprightly; (low) coll.: late C. 19–20. Ex all alive. J. Storer Clouston, 1932. ‘Mrs. Morgan considered herself quite as alive and beamful as these young chaps with no figures.’

**all, and.** See and all. 

**all a-cook.** 'Overthrown, vanquished', Ware: prophetic (—1909). Ware thinks that it derives either ex *knocked into a cocked hat* or ex cook-fighting. 

**all a-treat.** 'Perfection of enjoyment, sometimes used satirically to depict wild catastrophe', Ware: London street coll. (—1900).

**all abroad.** See *abroad.* 

**all afloat.** A coat: rhyming s. (—1859). H., 1st ed. 

**all alive.** (Tailors') ill-fitting: ca. 1850–1910.

**all alivo.** See *alive and kicking.*

**All-Aloney, the.** The Cumnard liner *Alouata.* 

**nautical:** C. 20. Bowen.


**all arms and legs.** See *arms and legs.*

**all at sea.** At a loss; confused: C. 19–20; coll. from ca. 1890. Cf. *abroad,* q.v.

**all brandy.** (Of things) excellent, commendable: non-aristocratic: ca. 1870–1910.

**all callao (or -io).** Quite happy: nautical: late C. 19–20; ob. Bowen. Prob. ex *Callao*, the Peruvian sea-port, to reach which must be a comfort and a relief.

**all cando.** All right: naval: C. 19–20; coll. from ca. 1880. Cf. *cando,* q.v. 

**all cleared.** An all-clear signal; coll.: from 1918. Often fig.; orig. in respect of hostile air-craft.

**all cut.** Confused; upset; excited: military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons.

**all dick(e)y with.** See *dicky, adj.*

**all dressed-up and nowhere to go!** A c.p.: from ca. 1915; ob. Collinson. Ex 'a song by Raymond Hitchcock, an American comedian'.


**all fours, be or go on.** To proceed evenly. C. 19–20; coll. 

*all gay!* The coast is clear: C. 19 c. Cf. *bob,* adj.

**All Hallows.** The 'tolling place' (i.e. scene of robbery), in *Prigging Law* (lay): c. of ca. 1680–1700. Greenco, 1692.

**all hands and the cook.** Everybody on the ship: nautical coll.: mid-C. 19–20. Bowen. The cook being called on only in emergency.

**all hands ship.** A ship on which all hands are employed continuously: nautical coll.: mid-C. 19–20. Bowen.

**all hands to the pump.** A concentration of effort: C. 18–19; ob. by 1890. Coll. rather than a.

**all harbour light.** All right: orig. (1897) and mostly cabbies' rhyming s.; ob. 

**all his buttons on, have.** To be shrewd, alert, and/or active: London proletarian: ca. 1880–1915. Ware.

**all holiday at Peckham.** A mid-C. 18–19 proverbial saying = no work and no food (pun on *peck);* doomed, ruined. Grose, 3rd ed.

**all-hot.** A hot potato: low (—1857); † by 1900. 'Ducange Anglicus', 1st ed.

**all-in.** An all-in assurance policy: insurance-world coll.: from ca. 1927.

**all in, adj.** (Stock Exchange) depressed (of the market): coll.: mid-C. 19–20; opp. *all out.* These are also terms shouted by dealers when prices are, esp., falling or rising.—2. Hence, in C. 20, *all in* (of persons, occ. of animals) = exhausted.—3. 'Without limit or restriction', C. J. Dennis: 

**ALE-HEAD WIND**
ALL IN A BUST

Australian coll.: C. 20. Cf. S.E. nuance, 'inclusive of all'.

all in a bust. See bust, all in a.

all in fits. (Of clothes) ill-made: mid-C. 19-20—tailors'.

all in the seven. See seven, all in the.

all jaw (like a sheep's head), Excessively talkative; eloquent. From ca. 1870; ob. Variant, all mouth; ca. 1850-1910. Ware. All right, all correct: military (— 1914) >, by 1920, fairly gen. F. & Gibbons; Manchon. Perhaps ex all k'rect = O.K.; prob. ex Fr. a. kif-kif.

all legs and wings. (Of a sailing vessel) over-masted: nautical: late C. 19-20; ob. Bowen.

all Lombard Street to nineness, to a china orange. Heavy odds: coll.: 1819+, — 1880 respectively. The former is /; the latter slightly ob. Cf. bet you a million to a bit of dirt, q.v.

all my eye (and Betty Martin). Nonsense! 'All my eye is perhaps the earliest form (Goldsmith has it in 1768), although it is clear that Grose's version —'that's my eye, Betty Martin'— was already familiar in 1785. . . . 'Of the fr. mon ait', Grose. P. Betty Martin part, despite ingenious, too ingenious, hypotheses (esp. that sponsored by 'Jon Beo' and silently borrowed by H.: 'a corruption . . . of . . . Oh, miki, beate Marine'), remains a mystery. It is, however, interesting to note that Moore the poet has, in 1819, all my eye, Betty, and Poole, in Hanlist Travestied, 1811, has that's all my eye and Tommy; this problematic tommy recurs in like Hall and Tommy (W.). Cf. the next two entries.

all my eye and (my) elbow. A London elaboration of the preceding: 1882; † by 1920. Ware. 'One can wink with the eye and nudge with the elbow at once'; he also points to the possibility of mere alliteration. Cf.:

all my eye and my grandmother. A London variant (— 1887) of the preceding; ob. Baumann. Cf. so's your grandmother I., which, in late C. 19-20, expresses incredulity; gen. throughout England.


all-night man. A body-snatcher: ca. 1800—60. See also: Ramsay, Reminiscences, 1861.

all of a dither. Trembling, shivering, esp. with fear. A phrase app. first recorded, as 'unconventional', in 1917, but existing in Lancashire dial. at least as early as 1817.


all of a heap. Astounded; nonplussed: C. 18-20; coll. by 1890. In Shakespeare, all on a heap.

all of a piece. 'Awkward, without proper distribution or relation of parts': low coll. (— 1909); slightly ob. Ware.


all one's own. One's own master: London appellant: ca. 1830—1905. Ware.

all out. Completely: from ca. 1820; coll. >, by 1870. — 2. Of a big drink; ex drunk all out, to empty a glass, C. 17—19, coll.— 3. In error: O. 19—20.—4. (The turf) unsuccessful: ca. 1870—1900.— 5. (Stock Exchange) improving, cf. all is, q.v. for period and status.— 6. Exhausted: athletics, ca. 1880—1900; then gen.— 7. In post-G.W. athletics coll. it also means exerting every effort, as indeed it has done in gen. use since the early 1890's; by 1930, S.E. (O.E.D.).

All over, adj. Feeling ill or sore all over the body: coll.: 1851, Mayhew, who affords also the earliest English instance of all-overish.

All over grumble. Inferior—very unsatisfactory: London proletarian: 1886, The Referee, March 28, 'It has been a case of all over grumble, but Thursday's show was all over approval'; ob. (Ware.)

All over oneself. Very pleased; over-confident: C. 20, esp. in the Army. Lyell.

All over red. Dangerous: ca. 1860—1920. Ware. Ex the railway signal.

All-over pattern. A pattern that is either very intricate or non-recurrent or formed of units unseparated by the 'ground': coll. from ca. 1880.

all over the shop. Ubiquitous (G. R. Sims, 1883); disconcerted (1887); confused, untidy (C. 20).

All over with, it is. (Of persons) ruined; disgraced; fatally ill or mortally wounded: from ca. 1880; coll. soon S.E. Cf. the L. actum est de (S.O.D.).

All-overish. Having an indefinite feeling of general indisposition or unease: from ca. 1840; coll. Perhaps ex U.S., where it is recorded as early as 1833 (Thornton).

All-overishness. The state of feeling 'all-overish' (q.v.): from ca. 1840; coll. Early examples in Harrison Ainsworth (1854) and John Mills (1841).

All present and correct. See correct, all . . . all posed up. See all spruced up.

All profit. See profit, all.

All right! Yes ! agreed ! ; you needn't worry! C. 19—20; coll. As adj. and rare adv., all right is S.E.

All right, a bit of. See bit of all right.

All right, all right. A coll. emphasising of all right: C. 20. (D. Sayers, Murder Must Advertise, 1933, 'She's a smart jake all right, all right.')

All right up to now. Serene, smiling: a c.p., mainly women's: 1878—ca. 1915. 'Used by Herbert Campbell ... in Covent Garden Theatre Pan tombimo, 1878; Ware, who adds that it is derived ex 'eucnine women making the remark as to their condition'.

[all round. Versatile; adaptable, whether at sport or in life (James Payn, 1881); of things, or rents, average (1869: O.E.D.). S.E. bordering on coll.]

All round my hat. Indispensable: ca. 1860—1900. As an exclamation (1834—ca. 1890) = nonsense! Hence, spicay as all round my hat (ca. 1870—1900), sensational: C. 1882, Punch.

all-rounder. A versatile or adaptable person, esp. at sport (— 1887); coll. >, by 1910, S.E.— 2. A collar of equal height all round and meeting in front (Trollope, 1857), unfashionable by ca. 1886, rarely worn after 1890.

All saints. See mother of all saints (Bridges, 1772).

all serene. Correct; safe; favourable: c.p., now ob. Dickens, 1833: 'An audience will sit in a theatre and listen to a string of brilliant witticisms, with perfect immobility; but let some fellow . . . roar out "It's all serene", or "Catch 'em all alive, oh!" (this last is sure to take), pit, boxes, and gallery roar with laughter.' In 1901, Fergus Hume used the rare variant, all serene (O.E.D.)
alone, go. To be experienced, wary, and alert: e.g. (16–17) 'There was an alter parade this morning': military (not officers): from ca. 1930. Perhaps ex (-1800) Hampshire dial. alteration and (-1808) Berkshire dial. altery, (of weather that is) uncertain, tending to rain. (E.D.D.)

alter the jiff's click. To make a garment regardless of the cutter's chalkings or instructions: tailors' (-1903). F. & H., revised.

amath, C. 16 c., a wife; a mistress. Whence? the c. adj. autem, q.v.

altifrontal, adj. High-brow: 1932; somewhat pejorative, 'Is he intelligent?—Oh, very altifrontal, I'd say.' London authors', reviewers', and publishers'.

altitude, grabbing for. (Occ. in other senses.) Becoming very angry: aircraft engineers': from ca. 1932. The Daily Herald, Aug. 1, 1936.

altitudes, in the (or his, my, etc.). In elevated mood (coll. : Jonson, 1630); drunk (ca. 1700). Both were tapers by 1840. Cf. elevated.

allocad. An oldish paid member that in the choir takes alto: Winchester College, from ca. 1850. altogether and all together are often confused: mid-C. 19–20. The former it entirely, on the whole. Fowler.

altogether, the. The nude: coll. : 1894, Du Maurier (Ware). I.e. the altogether (wholly) naked.

altogetherly. Drunk: Society: 1816, Byron; tapers by 1930, Ware. Ex altogether drunk.


amachoor. A coll. written form of amateur, which, after all, is thus pronounced by the majority. (D. Sayers, Murder Must Advertise, 1933.)

amazingly. Very: coll. ; from ca. 1790. Maria Edgeworth, 'She speaks English amazingly well for a Frenchwoman.' O.E.D.


amber, shoot the. See shoot the amber.

amb, ambitious. Zealous, with a view to personal advantage; also foolishly zealous, asking for more work, etc., etc'. John Masefield, in the Conch, 1933. Conway Training Ships, ca. 1880.

amb( or o) dexter. A double—dealing witness, lawyer or juror: C. 16–19; coll. ; S.E. after 1800. —2. Any double-dealer: from ca. 1650, coll. ; by 1880 S.E.


ambrol. A naval corruption of admiral: late C. 17–18. B.E.


amen-chapel. 'The service used in Winchester School [sic] upon Founder's Commemorations, and certain other occasions, in which the responses and Amens are accompanied on the organ', E.D.D., 1896.


Cf. amen-enor and amen-wallah.
amen-snor TER

amen-snor TER. A person. Rare in England, frequent in Australia (ca. 1880-1900).


[amercy for God have mercy was orig. coll. and is still far from 'literary.']

American shoulders. A coat cut square to give the appearance of broadness. From ca. 1870; at first, sailors', but s. by 1890.


amended. Hand me down (v.), or hand-me-down (adj.): poorest London low coll. (—1800). Ware.


(Ammunition = munition.)


among(st) other things or among(st) others is gen. illogical for 'along with, or in addition to, other things'. This catachresis, however, seems to have been consecrated by long usage.

amorosa. A wanton: ca. 1630-1720; Society, mainly. It. word, never acclimatised.

amoroso. A (male) lover: ca. 1616-1770; chiefly Society. An It. word never properly anglicised.


amourette. A trifling love affair or, esp., amour: ca. 1860-1914; Society coll. Directly ex Fr.; cf. C. 17 E.S. amores, dalliance.


amperand. The posterior(s). ' & ' used to come at the end of nursery-book alphabets: hence the kinder parts. Ca. 1885-1914. The lit. sense is about a century old. Ex and per se—and, i.e. ' & by itself as and'.

amputate one's mahogany or timber. To cut off one's stick', to depart, esp. depart quickly: from the 1800's; ob. 'Ducange Anglicus', 1867. There is a rich synonymy for rapid departure; see F. & H., also my Slang.

amuse, in late C. 17-18 c., is to throw dust, pepper, snuff, etc., in the eyes of the person to be robbed; an amuser is one who does this. B.E. amy. 'A friendly alien serving in a man-of-war': naval: ca. 1800-60. Bowen notes that in the old days there were many foreigners serving in the British Navy, 'a mutilated blend of enemy mess or simply an adoption of Fr ami, a friend.

an'. A sol. pronunciation of and; it is also dial. C. 15-20.—2. See a, 4.

anabaptist. A pickpocket that, caught in the act, is ducked in pond or at pump: late C. 18-early 19. Grose, 1st ed.

anagological, applied to persons, is catachrestio: from ca. 1840. O.E.D.


anatomical. Bawdy: sexual: artists': from ca. 1920. E.g. 'anatomical stories, jokes, humour, wit'.

anatomy. An extremely emaciated—or skinny—person: late C.16-20. (Low) coll. Cf. atomy, q.v.


anchor, swallow the. To settle down—above all, to loaf—on shore, esp. if one is still active: naval: late C. 19-20. Ware.—2. To surrender or yield: c. : from ca. 1919. George Ingram, Stir, 1913.


ancient mariners. At Oxford, an occasionally-rowing group or crew of dons; at Cambridge, any graduates that, still associated with the university, continue to row. From ca. 1880; ob. Ware quotes The Daily News of Nov. 7, 1884.

—and. In coll. names of drinks, of which cider-and, 1742, is the earliest.

—and—. Between adj., and either is intensive, as in hot and hot (very hot), in the pure and —, and in rare and some other adj. (very —); or it gives a familiar tang, as in nice and hot (nicely hot, hence pleasantly hot): both usages are coll., the former of C. 19-20, the latter of C. 18-20.—2. The familiar note occurs also in adv. phrases, as (I hit him) good and hard: coll.: mid-C. 18-20.—3. Of its coll. presence between two vv., there are two examples: try and (e.g. do something); go and (do something): see these two phrases.

and all. As well: lower-class coll. tag implying a grumble: from ca. 1860. Cf. S.E. usage.

and all that. And all the rest of it: S.E. in ordinary usage: since 1929, however, it has had a coll. connotation owing, in part, to such book-titles as Good-Bye to All That, 1066 and All That.


and he didn't! A sailors' c.p. implying a discreditable action: ca. 1870-1920.

and how! 'Rather': an American c.p. anglicised by 1933. The Western People (Balling), Nov. 11, 1933.

and no error or mistake! See mistake, and no.
and no mogue! A tailors' implication of slight incredulity = 'that's true?' From ca. 1880.

Mogue is an etymological puzzle, as are so many s. terms.

and no whistle. Another tailors' implication: that the speaker is actually, though ostensibly not, speaking of himself. Ca. 1860-1900.

and so forth and so fifth. See fifth.

and so he died; and then she died. These Restoration dramas tags vergo on c.p.p.: See Dryden, ed. Summers, I, 419.

and so she prayed me to tell ye. An almost meaningless c.o. (with slight variations) rounding off a sentence: ca. 1670-90. E.g. in Duffett's burlesque, 'The Mock-Tempest,' 1675.

and the rest! A sarcastic retort or comment: from ca. 1860. The implication is that something has been omitted.

and things. See things, and.

and welcome! And you're welcome to it; I'm glad to let you have it, etc.): coll., non-aristocratic: late C. 19-20. Manchon.

and which. See which.

Andrew. A gentleman's servant: coll. > S.E.: 1698, Congreve; † by 1800. Because a very common name.—2. In full, Andrew Miller. A ship, esp. of war: rhyming s. (—1864); ob.—3. Hence, a revenue cutter; Australian smugglers: ca. 1870-1900. But this, like sense 2, may abbr. Andrew Miller's (or 'art') lugger, 'a king's ship and vessel,' 1813 (sea cant), a phrase † by 1880.—4. Abbr. Andrew Miller, 2; always the Andrew.


P. F., Rhyming Slang, 1932.


angel-maker. A baby-farmer: proletarian: 1889; ob. Ware, 'Because so many of the farmed babies die.' Probably ex the Fr. faiseuse des anges.

angelico, Angelica. An unmarried girl. The former ca. 1810-50, the latter ca. 1850-1900. Moncrieff in Tom and Jerry, 1821, speaks of 'the angelics at Almack's.'

angel's food. Strong ale: ca. 1575-1620.


angel's foot-stool. A sail carried over the moon-

Anthony; St. Anthony's pig: antony pig. The smallest pig in a litter: late C. 16-20; ob. Coll. by 1750. St. Anthony the hermit was the patron of swineherds. Apperson.

anti. Errorneous for ante (before): mod. Eng.—2. A person opposed to a given opinion or party; one by nature a rebel, an objector: coll. (1889) >, by 1920, S.E. Ex the adj. (O.E.D.).

anti-guillotine. 'A straw or tube... for sucking liquor out of casks or bottles': nautical coll.: C. 20. Bowen.

Anti-Hope, the. The clipper Antiope, 'a very unlucky ship': nautical: late C. 19-early 20. Bowen.

anti-tempus. Anti-tetanus; anti-tetanus serum: military sol.: from 1916. (Van Wely.)


antimony. Type: printers' ('-1890). F. & H., 'Antimony is a constituent part' of the metal.

antipodean. With everything topsy-turvy: from ca. 1850. Orig. jocularly pedantic S.E., then jocularly coll.

Antipodes, the or her. The female purdah: late C. 19-20.

antiquarian. To play at being an antiquary: C. 20; coll.

antiquated rogue. An ex-thief; an out-of-date thief: ca. 1660-1730. At the age formed by three linguistic regions: A, j, and S.E. Only in B.E.

Antonio. A Portuguese soldier: military: G.W. Also Tony. (B. & P.)


any. At all: s. (and dial.): late C. 19-20.


anuer. See goose.—answer is a lemon. See lemon, the answer is a.

a'n't. Am not: coll.: C. 19-20.—2. Sol., when not dial., for 'is not', 'are not', or, as occ., 'has not': C. 19-20. Cf. ain't.

antipodean, v.i. To compete; strive to win: sporting coll. ('-1887'); by 1920. Baumann.

ante up. To hand over, surrender (a thing): military: from not later than 1915. F. & Gibbons. Ex U.S. poker j.

*antem. Prob. a misprint for autem, q.v.

Ant(h)ony, cuff or knock. To knock one's knees
any more for any more? Does anyone desire a second helping? : military mess-orderlies' c.p.: 1915; ob.
any road. See road, any.
anything, as or like. Very; much. The as form, C. 16-20; ob.; the like, C. 19-20. Coll.
anything else but. See nothing but.
anythingarian. A person of no fixed or decided views: from ca. 1707, when coined by Swift; whence anythingarianism, defined by Kingsley in 1851 as 'modern Neo-Platonism'. Coll., soon S.E.; ob.
anything. Anything: sol., as are nothink, somethink. C. 16-20.
anywhere down there! A sailors' c.p. when something is dropped on the floor: ca. 1800-1910.
Anzac, a member of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps on Gallipoli: military coll. (April 20, 1915—the day after the landing) >, by 1919, S.E.—2. Loosely, any Australian or New Zealand soldier serving in the G.W.: coll.: from late 1918.
Anzac poker. See kangaroo poker.
apartments to let. (With have) brainless; silly: from early 1860's. H., 3rd cd.; ob.—2. In C. 18, descriptive of a widow.
apes, if applied pejoratively to a person, tends in C. 20 to rank as a low col. Cf. baboon.
aple, make anyone his. To becooL: C. 17-19 coll. Varient, put an ape into one's head or cap.
apenny bumper. 'A two-farthing omnibus ride': London streets: ca. 1870-1900. Ware.
apenny-lot day. 'A bad time for business: costs!' (—1909); ob. Ware. Because on such a day, the sales total 0d.
aples. 'To be an old maid': C. 16-20; ob. 'Empire' Lyly was one of the first to record the phrase; Gascoigne was app. the first. Apperson.—Whence, ape-lender, an old maid: mid-C. 17-early 19. Bromo: Grose. (O.E.D.)
apes patroner, say an. To chatter with cold. Recorded by Cotgrave in 1611. For the quaint proverbs and proverbial sayings connected with the ape, see esp. G. L. Apperson's English Proverbs, 1829.
apes. First mortgage bonds of the Atlantic and North-Western Railway: Stock Exchange, ca. 1870-1914.
apriy and avriy are occ. confused: late C. 17-20.
apiece. For each person: coll.: C. 19-20. (S.E. when applied to things.)
apolitic. Choleric; violent-tempered. C. 20; coll.
apostles, manoeuvre the. To rob Peter to pay Paul: mid-C. 18-20; ob. Grose, 2nd ed.
apostles, the (Twelve). The last twelve on the degree list: Cambridge University: late C. 18-19. Ex post altum, after the others, is H.'s suggestion. Variant, the chosen twelve.
appealing. Objectionable; ugly; noticeable, marked: coll. (Society and middle class): C. 20.
appellingly. Very: C. 20; coll.
apple and pears. An early form of apples and pears, q.v. 'Ducange Anglicaus', 1857.
apple-cart. The human body. Grose, 2nd ed., 1788, has 'down with his apple-cart; knock or throw him down': cf. H., 1st ed., 1800, '... down with his applecart,' i.e. upset him. Northern.' In upset the apple-cart there seems to be a merging of two senses: body and, in dialect, plan; originating app. ca. 1800, this phrase > coll. ca. 1850. In 1931, thanks largely to G. B. Shaw's play, The Apple Cart, it was admitted into S.E. though not into literary English. For fuller information, see F. & H., O.E.D., W., and Apperson.
apple-cart, upset the old woman's; upset the apple-cart and spill the gooseberries (or peaches). Variants, dating from ca. 1880, of upset the apple-cart: see preceding entry. F. & H.
apple-pie bed. A bed short-sheeted: late C. 18-20; coll. by 1830; S.E. by 1850. Grose, 2nd ed., applies it as 'A bed made apple-pye fashion, like what is termed a turnover apple-pye.'
apple-pie Day. That day on which, at Winchester College, six-and-six was, C. 19, played. On this day, the Thursday after the first Tuesday in December, apple-pies were served on 'gomen', in College, for dinner. F. & H.
apple-pie order. Perfect order, impeccable precision (Scott, 1813): coll. >, by 1900, S.E.
apple-pies, a man's last will. orig. (—1601), a Greene. See also apple-monger.
appleby, p, who has any lands in. A c.p. addressed to 'The Man at whose Door the Glass stands Long' (B.E. at landlord): late C. 17-mid 18. (Cf. parson Mallum and parson Palmer.) Perhaps orig. of cider.
apples and pears. Stuarts (—1859). 'Ducange Anglicaus,' 1st cd., and H., 1st cd., have apple and pears. Ware records, for 1882, the abbr. apples, which has never > gen.
apples swim, how we! What a good time we have! C. 17-20; ob. Clarke, 1639; Ray, 1678.
FitzGerald, 1852. (Apperson.) Another unsolved etymological conundrum.

appro, on. C.: abl. on approbation or approval (things), from ca. 1870 (1st ed.); on approbation (persons): from ca. 1900.

appea la gare; appre la guerre. Sometime, or never: military c.p.: 1916–18. Ex Fr. après la guerre, after the war.


ar-rogue. A labourer, an artisan: C. 17 coll. (In C. 17 S.E., ar-pron-man.)

ar-ron-sure. See apple-monger.

ar-ron-string hold or tenure. An estate held only during a wife’s life: late C. 17–19 coll. Ray, 1678, ‘To hold by the ar-ron-strings, i.e. in right of his wife.’ (Apperson.)

ar-ron-zones tied to (or always at) the (or a woman’s). Dangling after a woman, C. 18; under petticote government, C. 18–20.

ar-ron-up. Pregnant: lower and lower-middle class coll.: C. 19–20; ob. ‘Because modest women tend in pregnancy, to use their aprons as “disguise.”’


ar-preneur. A shopkeeper: ca. 1650–1720; coll. During the Civil War, a Roundhead. On the other hand, ar-poner (ca. 1600–40) as a barman, a waiter.

‘appy dossor. See dossor.

aqua pomagginis (or pump).—Apocryphes’ Latin for water from the well: C. 18–early 19. Harrison Ainsworth, drawing heavily on Egan’s Grose, uses it the term several times.


aquatic. A game of cricket played by the oarsmen; the playing-field used by them: Eton; mid C. 19–20.


Arab, city Arab, street Arab. A young vagrant; a poor boy playing much in the streets. Coll. >, by 1812–1855;

Arabs; Arab merchants. ‘The Indian merchants and shopkeepers in Natal are locally, but erroneously known by these designations. They are chiefly Mohammedans and are also known as “Bombay merchants”,’ Pettman: from early 1800’s.

arbor vitae. Lit., the tree of life, i.e. the penis: late C. 18–20; ob. Grose, 3rd ed. Pedantic.

‘Arbour I, our. A Melbourne c.p. at Sydney’s expense: C. 20. Sydneyites being apt to boast about their very beautiful harbour; in retaliation they gibe at Melbourne’s rather smelly river, the Yarra: see Yarra.

Arbroath. A Scottish sporting c.p. (from Sept. 6, 1885) to anyone boasting. Because on Sept. 6, 1885, Dundee Harp defeated Aberdeen Rovers by 35–0 and sent a telegram to their great rivals Arbroath, ‘You can’t beat this’, to which Arbroath, having the same day defeated Bon Accord, in a Scottish Cup Tie, by 36–0, replied, ‘Can’t we?’ Athletic News Football Annual, 1885–6.

-a confirmed rogue, from ca. 1650; playfully, C. 18–19. In c., arch = principal; confirmed; extremely adept. Arch-doll or dozy, however, is the wife of an arch-cove: Grose, 2nd ed.


Archer up! (He, etc., is) safe; or, bound to win: London c.p.: 1881–6. Ex the famous jockey, Fred Archer, who (d. 1886) sprang into fame in 1881.

archideacon; archi-mander. Incorrect for archistricine (C. 15), archimandrite (late C. 16–20). O.E.D.


Archibald, certainly not! No! c.p. of ca. 1913–20. Ex a music-hall song having this refrain. (F. & Gibbons.)


archi-mander. See archidecynne.

*ard. Hot, both of objects and of persons or passions: C. 17–early 19 c. Ex Fr. ardent.


are we down-hearted? A military c.p. of the G.W. (for variant and elaboration, see B. & P., p. 194); orig (ca. 1906) political but soon gen.

area-smear. A sneak haunting areas in order to thieve (Vuix, 1812; Dickens, 1838). Coll.: S.E. by 1880 at latest. ‘For a lengthy list of English and Continental synonyms for a thief see F. & H.


arer. A Cockney term of ca. 1900–15, as in Ware’s quotation, ‘We are, and what’s more, we can’t be any arer’, i.e. more so.


‘arf-and-’arf. Ale and porter mixed equally: Cockney; from ca. 1830. Cf.

‘arfmanar. Drunk: Cockney (—1909); ob. Ware. Lit., half, half, and half; applied orig. to one who has had many an arf-and-’arf, q.v.


argal; argol-bargol. In Shakespeare, argol—therefore: obviously corrupted from ergo. Argol-bargol, unsound reasoning, osivelling,—as v., to bandy words,—is of the C. 19–20 (ob.) and seems to be etymologically rhyming after willy-nilly, hocus-pocus, etc. Moreover, The Times, in 1883, used argal as = quibble, and Galt, forty years earlier, employed
argol. Incorrect for botanic archil or orchil: mid-C. 18–20; ob. O.E.D.

*argot. 'A term used amongst London thieves for their secret . . . language’, H. : c. (− 1859); † by 1920. The Fr. argot, properly cast, loosely slang.—2. For its misuse as = 'slang', see introductory chapter of Slang; 1843. The Quarterly Review, 'Some modern argot or vulgarism'.

argue the leg off an iron pot. To be, on one occasion or many, extremely argumentative: coll.: from ca. 1880. Also argue a dog's tail off: coll. (− 1903). F. & H., revised.

argue the toss. 'To dispute loudly and long': low: from ca. 1910. B. & P.


argy-bargy. See argal.


Arístippus. Canary wine: C. 17: Middleton, 'rich Aristippus, sparking sherry'. Ex the hedonistic Greek philosopher.

aristo. An aristocrat: dated by the O.E.D. Sup. at 1864, but perhaps rather from ca. 1790 and perhaps influenced by Fr. s.

aristocrat. A 'swoll', a 'toff': C. 19–20; coll., but at no time at all gen.

aristocratic vein. (Gen. pl.) A blue vein: theatrical coll. (− 1899); ob. Ware. Cf. S.E. blue blood.


*ark. See arckman.—2. A barric-room chest: military coll. (− 1903); ob. A survival ex S.E.

ark, be (or have come) out of the. To be very old or very stale: coll.: C. 20. Lyell, 'Good Havens! This cheese must have come out of the Ark!'

*ark and win(n)s. Aouluer; a row-boat; c.: late C. 18–mid 19. Grose, 1st ed. See arckman.


*ark-pirate. A thief 'working' navigable rivers: nautical c. (− 1823); † by 1900. Egan's Grose.


Arlesena. Orleans plums: Cockney coll. Recorded by Baumann, 1887.

arm, as long as one's. Very long: coll.; late C.19–20.

arm, chance one's. See chance your arm! arm, make a long. To stretch one's arm after something: from ca. 1880; coll.

arm, under the. (Of a job) additional: tailors' (− 1903). F. & H., revised.—2. No good: tramps c. (− 1935). Also under the crutch.

Arm-in-Tears; Arminteers. Armentières: military: from late 1914. Immortalized in that lengthy, scabrous, humorous song, Mademoiselle from Armintees (for which, see esp. B. & P.).

*arm-pits, work under the. To avoid being hanged, to commit only petty larcenies: e.: C. 19. Vaux, 1812.


arm the lead. 'To fill a small cavity with tallow to bring up a sample of the bottom' when sounding the depth: nautical: mid-C. 19–20: coll. >, by 1900, J. Bowen.


Arminteers. See Arm-in-Tears.

armour, be in. To be pot-valiant: late C. 17–18. B.E. Cf. Dutch courage and perhaps the C. 17 proverbial 'armour is light at table' (Apperson).

armour, fight in. To use a 'French letter': ca. 1780–1840. Grose, 1st ed.


arm's length, work at. To work at a disadvantage; clumsily: coll. > S.E.; C. 19–20; ob.


Army rocks. See almond rocks.

Army Safety Corps. See Ally Sloper's Cavalry.

Army Service C'snts. The A.S.C.: infantrymen's pejorative: G.W.

arm. See aren't.

arrow. See arrow.


array. To thrash, flog; afflict; disfigure, befoul: ironically or jocularly coll.: late C. 14–18. Cf. draw down, dressing down.


arri. An exclamation of astonishment or vexation: Midland Districts of South Africa: coll.: from early 1880's. Ex Hottentot arid, Pottman.


'Arry and 'Arriet. A typical costermonger and his, or any, coster lass; hence, any low-bred and lively (esp. if not old) man and woman. Popularized by Milliken. From ca. 1870; coll. Whence 'Arryish, 'costermongerish', vulgarly jovial: coll.: from ca. 1880. Also, 'Arry's worrier, a concertina: Cockney: 1885; ob. ware.

ars musica. The 'musical arse', i.e. the podex: late C. 18–19. Grose, 1st ed. Punning the L. for musical art.

arse. Posterior; buttocks. Until ca. 1660, S.E.; then a vulg. Ca. 1700–1830, rarely printed in full; even B.E. (1690) on one occasion prints as ' arr-', and Grose often omits the r, while Frederic Manning (d. Feb., 1935) was in Jan., 1930, considered extremely daring to give its four letters in his magnificent War-novel Her Private's We.

arse, v.t. To kick (C. 19–20), to dismiss, esp.
ARSE, ANCHOR ONE'S

18

from a job (G.W.); s.— 2. arse off, v.i., to depart, late C. 19 — 20 s.
arse, anchor one's. A C. 19 — 20 variant of anchor.
bring . . . . , q.v.
arse I, ask my. I don't know! low: mid-
arse, 19-20. Manchon. See also ask mine . . .
arse, grease a hat in the. See grease . . .
arse hang on the. To hold or hang back; to hesitate timorously: C. 17-20 coll. ; ob.
arse, thickest part of his thigh is nearest his. See handdugone.
arose about, v.i. To fool about, waste time: C. 20. In late C. 18-19, (v.i.) to turn round: a vulgarism.
arose and sh*te through his ribs, he would lend his. A c.p. applied to 'anyone who lends his money inconsiderately', Grose, 2nd ed.: ca. 1780-1800.
arose cooter. (Women's dress, C. 19) a bustle.
arose foot. A pigeon: (nautical) coll. (— 1598); Florio, Goldsmith; † by 1880. Because its feet are placed so far back.
arose from one's elbow, not to know one's. To be very ignorant: lower-classes: late C. 19-20.
arose if it was loose, he would lose his. A c.p. 'said of a careless person', Grose, 2nd ed.: ca. 1780-1800; but in a more gen. form C. 16. Nowadays we say . . . head . . .
arose off. See arse, v.
arose off, tear one's. To work furiously: low (— 1929). Manchon.
arose on . . . See handbox.
akc over took: which suggests an original arse over top.
Arse-uje, the. The 4th Battalion of the N.Z. Rifle Brigade: New Zealand military in G.W. Ex the shape of the battalion shoulder-patch.
arose upwards. In good luck; luckily: coll.: C. 17-20. Ex rose with one's . . . (Ray).
—arosed. Having a — arse: C. 16-20; see arse, n., for status, Heywood, 1562 (bare-arse); Cotegrave. O.E.D.;
arose. A fall on one's behind: mostly hunting and turf: C. 20. E.g. Evelyn Waugh, A Handful of Dust, 1934, 'You just opened your bloody legs and took an arse.'
arosemetry. A late C. 16-early 17 sol. (after geometry) for † arametie, aramaetic or -ek, arithmetic. (O.E.D.);
—arste-Varry, adv. Head over heels, esp. with fall, C. 18-20; adj., preposterous, topsy-turvy, mid-
c. 17-19. Ex vary, a rhyming addition, properly vary, L. versus (turned), and coll.
arterial. Abbr. arterial road: 1931: coll.—
soon, prob., to be S.E.
artful fox. A box: music-hall rhyming s.: 1882; † by 1916. Ware.
artichoke. See hearty choke.
artichoke ripe. To smoke a pipe; rhyming s.: ca. 1855-80. H., 1st ed.
article. A girl, a woman: ca. 1810-70. Lex. Bal.—2. Contemptuous of any person: from ca. 1856; coll. 'Duceango Anglicus' 1st ed. Ex ' its common use in trade for an item of commodity, as in the phr[ase] 'What's the next article?' of the mod. shopkeeper', E.D.D.
article, the (very). The precise thing; the thing (or person) most needed. Coll. From ca. 1850. Trollope.
artillery, esp. the heavy. 'Big wigs'; convincing or very important reasons; coll.: from late 1918; ob.
arilleryman. A drunkard: low (— 1903); † by 1919. F. & H., revised. Ex nousiness.
artry. Artistic; esp. spuriously or affectedly artistic in practice, theory, or manners: coll.: C. 20. Cf.:
artry and crafty: art-crafty. Artistic but not notably useful or comfortable: coll.: resp. 1902 and ca. 1920. (O.E.D.)
—arv- for -alti-, as in farver (father) and rover, and for -arth, as in farver (farther), is typical of Cockney.
Arvernum. A frequent error for Avernum, esp. in C. 20. (Virgil, fascilis descensus Avernum.)
arv. Ever a (of which it is a corruption); any . . . whatsoever: a C. 19-20 sol. Perhaps imm.
ex arrow, q.v.
—arv. Relative pronoun = that; who, which. In C. 18-20; sol.: previously, M.E. onwards, S.E. (It survives also in dial.)—2. As conjunction = that. (Variant as how.) See how, arv.
—arv — Very —; e.g. drunk as drunk, very drunk: coll.: mid-C. 19-20. Perhaps ex — as can be.
—arv as they make 'em. Utterly; very. Exn with bad, drunk, fast mad. From ca. 1880. Coll.
arv as ever is. A (mostly lower classes') coll. c.p.-
tag, emphasizing the preceding statement: C. 20. D. Sayers, Unnatural Death, 1927, 'This very Whit- suntide as ever is'. Ex dial. (— 1898): E.D.D.
as how. See how, arv.
as such. See such, as — as that. See that, as. Cf. of how (at how, arv).
as (he, I, etc.) used to was. As (he, I, etc.) used to be: c.p.: C. 20. Somerset Maugham, Cakes and Ale, 1930, 'I'm not so young as I used to was.'
as you were. ‘Used... to one who is going too fast in his assertions’ (--1864); post-War, ‘Sorry! my mistake.’ Coll. Ex Army.


ash-plant. A light cane carried by subalterns: military coll.: 1870; ob. Ware. Ex its material.

Ashes, the. ‘The symbolic remains of English cricket taken back to Australia’ (S.O.D.): 1882. Also win, regain or recover, or lose the Ashes, to win or lose a series of test matches (from the English point of view): 1883 (W. J. Lewis). Coll.; in C. 20 S.E.

Asian Minor. Kensington and Bayswater (London, W.8 and W.2), ex the large number of retired Indian-Civil servants there resident ca. 1860-1910: London: ca. 1880-1915.


ask another! Don’t be silly!: Cockney ex. addressed to one who asks a stale riddle: 1886; ob. Ware.


ask for it. To incur foolishly; be fooled unnecessarily, ludicrously: coll: C. 20; the O.E.D. (Sup.) dates it at 1909, but it is at least four years older. Cf. buy it.


ask out. To invite to (an) entertainment: coll.: from late 1880’s. O.E.D. (Sup.).

asker. A beggar: euphemistic s.: 1858, Reade; ob. E.D.D.


asking, not you by your. A c.p. reply (late C. 18—curly 19) to ‘Who owns this?’ Cf. the late C. 19-20 none the better for your asking (health).

asking!, that’s. I.e. when you shouldn’t, or when I shouldn’t reply: coll. c.p. : late C. 19-20.


aspidistra(1a). Incorrect for aspidistra: m.id-C. 19-20. (O.E.D.)

Aspinall. Enamled: coll. (—1900). Ware. Ex the inventor of an oxidised enamel paint. The v. is S.E.

aspro, take the. See take the aspro.

Asquith. A French match: military of G.W. Ex Asquith’s too famous ‘Wait and see’: such matches often failed to light.


as about. To fool about: schoolboys (—1890) — by 1910, gen. (O.E.D.) Cf. ass, 3.: q.v.


Assayes, the. The 74th Foot Regiment; from ca. 1881, the 2nd Battalion of the Highland Light Infantry: military coll.: from 1803 (Battle of Assaye), for them a notable year.

assig. An assignment, an appointment: ca. 1680-1830. B.E.

assinego. See assinego.


assail, assaillment. Catachrestic for soil (to sully; defilement): C. 19—20. (O.E.D.)


aste. Rare c. for money: early C. 17. Nares. Ex ast, old lt. c. for the same.

astonish me, you. Well, that’s pretty obvious, isn’t it!: ironic c.p.: from ca. 1920.


astrologer. See conjuror.


Francis D. Grieson, Murder at Lancaster Gate, 1934, ‘‘Mr. Croggs??... ‘‘At’s my name, Guv’n’r,’’

at that. See that, at.

at the high port. At once; vigorously; unhesitatingly; very much: military; from ca. 1925. I.e. in fine style.

atch. To arrest; trampa: c. (—1923). Manchon. Ex Romany (?): but it may abbr. atchker, q.v.

atcha! All right!: military: C. 20.

atchker. To arrest; central s. (—1923) on catch. Manchon.


*He’s ate it all,” Baumann.

attier. See hatter.

Athanasiawench. ‘A forward girl, ready to oblige every man that shall ask her’, Grose. Ca. 1700-1830. Variant, quicunque vult (whosoever desires)—the opening words of the Athanasian Creed.

Athenaeum; gen. the A. The penis: cultured (—1903); very ob. F. & H., revised. Perhaps ex Athenanum, an association of persons meeting for mutual improvement.

Athenaeum, the. The Athenaeum; printers (—1887);† by 1920. Baumann.

ation, as used in humorous neologisms, verges on the coll. E.g. hisation, a hissing.

Atkins. See Thomas Atkins.


atmospheres. A coll. abbr. of atmospheric disturbances (‘wireless’): 1928 +; by 1935, almost S.E. Hence, fig. an irritable or quarrelsome or highly strung atmosphere: 1932 +.

atomy. A very small, a small thin, a small deformed person: late C. 16—19. Coll. by 1700; from mid-C. 19, S.E.; slightly ob. Ex anatomy, q.v. (variant of atom) confused prob. by atom.
ATROCIOUS

(W). Shakespeare: 'Thou atomy, thou!... you thin thing.' Sala: 'A miserable little atomy, more deformed, more diminutive, more mutilated than any beggar in a bowl.'

atrocious. Very bad; execrable; very noticeable; coll.; from ca. 1830.—2. Adv. in -ly; 1831, Alford, 'The letter had an atrociously long sentence in it', F. & H., revised.

dread. A bad blunder; an offence against good taste, manners, or morals. 1878. (O.E.D.)

attack! Go it! U.S. (— 1917); anglicised in 1918. F. & Gibbons. The O.F.D. and Collinson derive it from that's the boy!, but possibly it represents at her, boy!, where her is sexes; prob., however, it is a corruption of the exclamatory U.S. stabboy recorded by Thornton.—2. Hence, an approbatory exclamation, from ca. 1931, as in D. Sayers, Murder Must Advertise, 1933, "'Picture of nice girl bending down to put the cushion in the corner of the [railway] carriage. "And the headline [of the advertisement] said: 'Don't let them pinch your seat.'" "Attaboy!" said Mr. Bredon [Lord Peter Wimsey]."

attache case. Incorrect for attaché case: C. 20. E.g. frequently in Miles Burton’s thriller, To Catch a Thief, 1934.

attack. To address oneself to; commence. From ca. 1820, coll.; after ca. 1860, S.E. due to Gallic influence.


attend to. To thash: coll.; from ca. 1800. Cf. L. animadvertère.

attest. See detest.


attorney. A goose or turkey drumstick, grilled and devilled: punning devil, a lawyer working for another: 1920, Griffith, "I love a plain beef steak before a grilled attorney"; ob. (Attorney as a legal title was abolished in England in 1873)—2. In e., a legal adviser to criminals: late C. 19–20, ob.


auctioneer, deliver or give or tip (one) the. To knock a person down: ca. 1860–1930. Sala, 1863 (deliver); H., 5th ed. (tip). ‘Tom Sayers’s right hand was known to pugilistic fame as the auctioneer’ (Sayers, d. 1865, fought from 1849 to 1860, in which latter year he drew, miraculously, with Howan; Mitchell) on Manchon.


audit one’s accounts. See accounts.

Aug. See Feb.

Australasian


Auld Hornie. The Devil. Mainly Scottish: C. 18–20, ob. Ex his horn. For accounts of the Devil’s names, see Weckley’s Word and Names, 1932, and Word t, 1933.—2. The penis: Scots (— 1903) A pun on horn, a priapism.


auly-ally. (Winchester College) a game played ca. 1700–1840 in Grass Court after Saturday afternoon chapel. A collective game with an indiarubber ball. Supposedly ex hand ye, call ye, but, in view of Winchester’s fame in Classics, prob. ex Gk. αὐλή, a court or a quadrangle.

aunt. A procress, a concubine, a prostitute: C. 17–ca. 1830. Mine (or my) aunt, as in Grose, 1st ed. Shakespeare.

Summer songs for me and my aunts, While we lie tumbled in the hay.


aunt, or aunie, go to see one’s. To visit the w.c.; euphemistic, mostly women’s: from ca. 1850. Cf. Mrs. Jones, which is occ. Aunt Jones (H., 6th ed.).

aunt, my. See my aunt.

aunt, my: my painted aunt! A mild exclamation: coll.; resp. from late 1880’s and ca. 1920. O.E.D. (Sup.).

aunt had been my uncle, if my. See uncle.


Aunt Sally. A wicket-keeper: cricketers’ jocular coll.: 1898. (W. J. Lewis.)

aunt’s sisters. Ancosters: London middle-class (— 1900); virtually t. Ware. By pun.


auntie, aunty. Coll. form of aunt: from ca. 1790. Also, like uncle, used by children for a friend of the house: C. 19–20.—2. A 12-inch gun: military: 1915; other.—3. See aunt, go to see one’s.


Aussieland. An occ. variant, C. 20, of Aussie, sense 1. Rare among Australians.

Austen Reid service, I suppose?—just a part of the, Included in the service, I presume?; all from: a c.p. of 1926 based on a slogan (1925–?) of the well-known men’s clothiers.

Australasian, n. and adj. (An inhabitant) belonging to Australasia: no longer—since ca. 1925—used of either an Australian or a New Zealander. Cf. the fate of Anglo-Indian.
AUSTRALIAN FLAG

*
autem, a church, mid-C. 16–18 c., is the parent of many other c. terms, e.g. autem bawler, a parson; autem cackler, a Dissenter or a married woman; autem-cackle tub, a Dissenters' meeting-house or a pulpit; autem dipper or dier, a Baptist or a pick-pocket specialising in churching; autem goyer (goyer), a pretended prophet, or a conjurer; autem jet, a parson; autem pricker, see autem cackler; autem quaver, a Quaker; and autem-quaver tub, a Quakers' meeting-house or a desk therein. Perhaps via autem, an authem.

autem, adj. Married, esp. in the two c. terms, autem coae, a married man, and autem mort, a married woman: C. 17–18. Perhaps ex allam (q.v.), a wife.

author-baiting. Summoning an unsuccessful dramatist before the curtain: theatrical, ca. 1870–1900.

authorious; unauthorious. Such occ. errors for orthodox, unorthodox, as would be impossible to any one with an elementary knowledge of Greek or with even a moderately sensitive ear.

auto. Abbr. automoblie: 1890; coll.; S.E. by 1910 but never gen. Ex Fr. (S.O.D.)

*autem, autumn. Variants of autem, q.v.

automatic. Abbr. automatic receiver: C. 20; coll. > S.E. Esp. in G.W.

autumn. (The season or time of) an execution by hanging: low: mid-C. 19–20; ob. II., 2nd ed.


avant, give the. To dismiss (a person): late C. 18–early 17. Shakespeare. Ex avant! /, be off! (C. 15 +).


avenue. Possibility, as in explore every avenue, to try all possible means: C. 20; mainly political, journalistic, and commercial: soon > coll.; perhaps soon to > S.E.

average man, the. The ordinary person: C. 19-20; coll. > S.E. Cf. the man in the street (q.v. street).

avering. A boy's begging naked to arouse compassion: c.: late C. 17–early 18. Konnett, 1695, has also go a-avering. * ex aver, to declare (it) true.


(a.O.D.)
aviary. See apiary.


*avapidus lay. The thieving of brass weights from shop counters: late C. 18–mid 19 c. Grose, 2nd ed.


awake. To inform, let know: from mid-1850's; ob. Ducange Anglicus', list ed.

*awake. A c. form of awake; in big awake, q.v.


awful, adj. A catch-phrase. Apparently C. 18 Scottish, then U.S. (see Bartlett), and ca. 1850 adopted in England. Lamb, 1854: 'She is indeed, as the Americans would express it, something awful.' Coll., as is the adv. awful(y) = very: mid-C. 19–20. In 1859 occurs awfully clever; Punch satirised it in 1877 in the phrase, 'it's too awfully nice '; P. G. Wodehouse, 1907 (see frightfully); Lyell, 1931, 'We had awful fun at my brother's party.' Cf. Society's post-G.W. use of grim for 'unpleasant'. F. & H.: O.E.D.

awful place, the. Dartmoor Prison: c. dating from the late 1890's.

awfully. See awful, adj.

awright. See orright.

awhile for a while is catachrestio when while is purely a n.

'Awkins. A severe man: one not to be trifled with: Cockney: ca. 1880–1900. Ware. Ex Judge Sir Frederic Hawkins, reputed to be a 'hanging' judge.


awkward squad. Recruits, esp. a segregated group of recruits, commencing to learn to drill or having their drill improved: naval and military, from ca. 1870; coll. by 1890.; j. by G.W.

awl and be gone, pack up one's. To depart for good: (low) coll. (— 1756). Prob. awls is a corruption of all, as Machon suggests.

awry, tread the shoe. To fall from virtue: C. 16–20, ob.; coll.; then, in C. 18–20, S.E. Cf. in S.E. take or make a false step.

ax(e). To ask. Down to ca. 1600, S.E.; since then, sol. (Cf. ark, arst, q.v.) Chaucer: 'If any fellow have neede of sapiens [= wisdom], axe it of God.'—2. To reduce (expenses) by means of 'the axe': 1923. Coll.; S.E. by 1925. (S.O.D.) Cf.: axe, the.

axe, the. Reduction of expenses, mainly in personnel, in the public services: 1922—2. A body of officials (quis custodiet ipsos custodes) effecting these reductions: 1922. Coll.; both S.E. by 1925. See: axe, the Geddes. That reduction of public-service expenses which was recommended in 1922 by Sir Eric Geddes, who aimed at the size of the various staffs. Recorded in 1923: coll. by 1925, S.E. and historical.

axe, where the chicken got the. See chicken got . . .

*axe after the helve, send the. (Better, send the helve after the hatchet.) To take a further useless step; send good money after bad. Coll.; from C. 16; in C. 19–20, rare but S.E.

*axe in the helve, put the. To solve a doubt. Coll.; from C. 16; ob. Like the preceding, proverbial.

*axe (or axes) to grind. An ulterior motive, gen. selfish. Coll., orig. (— 1815) U.S., adopted ca. 1840. At first of politics, it soon widened in applicability: by 1850, moreover, it had > S.E.


axle-grease. See grease, n. 5.

Ayrshires. Glasgow and South-Western Railway shares: Stock Exchange from ca. 1880.
B

b. A bug; coll. from ca. 1850. Also b flat: 1836 (F. & H., revised). Ex the insect's initial letter and appearance.—2. In c, abbr. blue, q.v.—3. See 'A1', 2.

b. and a. B. and S. Brandy and soda: Whyte-Melville, 1868: >, ca. 1890, coll. The b is occ. separable, as in 'Give me some B in my S?': Baumann, 1837.


B.B.A. Born Before Arrival: medical student's: C. 20. (Stang, p. 189.)


B.B.C., the. The 2.10 a.m. freight express train from London to Wolverhampton: railwaymen's: from ca. 1920. The Daily Telegraph, Aug. 15, 1936. It passes through Basingstoke, Birmingham and Crewe. Cf. The Beezer, q.v.

*b.c. A person bringing a wholly inadequate action for libel: from ca. 1870. Ex the bloody cut of an actual lawsuit.†

B.C. See anno domini.


B flat. See b, 1.

B from a battlefield, or, rarely, from a broomstick or, very gen., from a bull's foot, not to know. To be illegitimate, extremely ignorant: resp. mid.C. 16-17, C. 19, C. 15-20. A battlefield was an alphabet-hornbook. For the first phrase and the third, see esp. Apperson's English Proverbs and Proverbal Phrases. Also not to know great A from a battlefield or (great) A from a bull's foot.


B.I.D. Brought In Dead (to the hospital); medical student's: C. 20. Cf. B.B.A.

b.k. Military officers in muffs, when out on the s Percy, and not wishing their profession to be known, speak of their barricades as the B.K.'s; H., 3rd ed); military (—1864); ob.


B.N.C. Brasenose College, Oxford: from ca. 1840; coll. >, by 1900. J. Cf. Brasen Nose College, you were lerd in. q.v.


b.s. A euphemism for bull-shit, q.v.: from ca. 1910.

b.m. A coll. domestic euphemism for bottom (reprobate): late C. 19-20.

b-ha. Broochitis; tailors': from the 1890's; slightly ob. By deliberate slurring.


Ex the sheep's bleat. Cf. bow-wow, cock-a-doodle (-do), moo-cow, quack-quack.

b-a-ba (black sheep). Go. To bar the favourite: race-course s. (—1932): Stang, pp. 242, 246.

There is, further, an allusion to the nursery rhyme. Baa-Baa, the. The Barbarian Rugby Football team: sporting: from ca. 1924.


bail! See bale!


babbler; babbling brook. A cook: C. 20; resp. military, ex the latter; and gen. rhyming s. B. & P.


baby, kiss the. See kiss the baa.

babe in the wood. A criminal in the stocks or the pillory: late C. 18-early 19. Grosz, 1st ed.—2. In C. 20, the pl. = dice.

babe of grace. Baa defines the pl. as 'sanctified-looking persons, not so': fast society: ca. 1820-40.

babes. A gang of irreverent that, at an auction, forbears to bid against the bigger dealers; their reward, drinks and/or cash. From ca. 1800 ob. H., 2nd ed. Cf. knock-outs, q.v.

Babies; Baby Wee-Wees. Buenos Aires Water Works shares: Stock Exchange: from ca. 1870. The shorter ex the longer, which combines an acrostic with a pun on Water Works and see-see (urination).

babies' cries. A variant of baby's cries, q.v.

baboone. Fig. for a person: like ape, this is in C. 20 considered low coll.

Balsky. A wind-swift part of Liverpool: Liverpool: 1886; Ware. I.e. Bay o' Biscay.


baby, the. A diamond-mining sitting machine: Vaal River coll. (—1886); ob. Ex Baa, its American inventor. Pettman, who notes baby, to sift ground with this machine: from mid-1890's.

Baby Act, please the. To excuse oneself as too inexperienced: from ca. 1900; ob. Ex.—2. To plead minority as voiding a contract: coll.
BABY AND NURSE

from late 1890's. Ex the plea of infancy in its legal sense.

baby and nurse. 'A small bottle of soda-water and two-pennyworth of spirit in it': public-house: ca. 1870-1900. Ware. Cf. baby, q.v.

baby bunting. See bunting.


baby-farmer or -stealer. A male or a female courier or lover of one much younger, very young: C. 20.

baby-maker. The penis: euphemistically jocular: late C. 19-20; ob.

baby- or baby's-pap. A cap: (mostly under-world) rhyming slang: ca. 1855-1900. 'Ducange Anglicus', 1857.


baby-tot. See Bouncing-Picture Slang, § 3.

Baby Wee-Wees. See Babies.

babylonish. C. 19 Winchester College for a dressing-gown: ex Babylonishajish garment.


Bacco, the. The express goods-train carrying tobacco (including cigarettes) from Bristol to London: railwaymen's: from ca. 1910. The Daily Telegraph, Aug. 15, 1936. Cf. the Riscit, the Flying Pig, the Leek, the Magic Carpet, the Sparagras, the Span; also the Early Bird, the Early Riser, the Farmer's Boy, the Feeder, and the Mopper Up. These railwaymen's nicknames were recognised as official in the G.W.R.'s Guide to Economical Transport, issued in August, 1936.


bacco-pipes. Whiskers curled in ringlets: (—1880; ↑ by 1900).

baccare! baccare! Go back, retire! Ca. 1540-1820. Hollywood: Udall; Lyly; Shakespeare, 'Baccare! you are marvellous forward'; Howell, 1659. (Apperson.) Jocular on back: perhaps Latinised or Italianised back there. (O.E.D.)

Bacchus. A set of Latin verses written on Shrove Tuesday at Eton: ↑ C. 18-early 19: coll. at Eton College. Ex the verses there written, on that day, in praise or dispraise of Bacchus. Anon., Eltontana, 1863.

bacco, baccy, baccy-box. See bacco.

bach. A bachelor: in U.S. in 1850's; anglicised ca. 1100. Ware prefers bache. Cf.:

bach, occ. batch, v. To live by oneself, doing one's own work; orig. like a bachelor. Ex U.S.; anglicised ca. 1890. Cf. the n.

bachelor 1, then the town bull is a. A semi-proverbial c.p. retort incredulous on a woman's alleged chastity: mid-C. 17-18. Ray, 1878; he does not, however, restrict it to either women or chastity.


bachelor's fare. Bread, cheese, and kisses: C. 18-19. Swift, ca. 1708 (published 30 years later). 'Lady... Some ladies... have promised to breakfast with you... what will you give us? Colonele. Why, faith, madam, bachelor's fare, bread and cheese and kisses'. Grose, 3rd ed.

back. To support by a bet, was perhaps orig. late C. 17 coll., but O.E.D. and S.O.D.—rightly, one suspects—treat it as always S.E.

back on one's. Penniless; utterly puzzled: late C. 19-20. Naughtily, on the bones of one's back: Bowen.

back, ride on one's. To fool or deceive a person, esp. successfully: coll. ↓ C. 18-19.


back and fill. See backing and filling.

back-biter, his bosom friends are become his. A punning c.p. (cf. bostom friend, q.v.) of ca. 1700-1840. Swift, ca. 1708; Grose, 1st ed.

back-breaker. A person setting, or a thing being, a task beyond normal endurance: C. 18-20 coll. The adj., back-breaking, gen. goes with job or work.


back-chat. A variant of back-talk, q.v.: 'A slang term applied to saucy or impertinent replies'. Petman: South African (—1901) and (↑ hence) Australian.


back-clotch star. An actor or actress that plays up-stage, thus forcing the others to turn their backs to the audience: theatrical (—1935).


back-door trumpet. A mid-C. 19-20 variant of ares musica, q.v.

back down, often a square-back-down. An utter collapse; complete surrender of claim: from early 1880's: coll. ↑, by 1920, S.E. —2. A severe rebuff: from ca. 1890.


back-ender. 'A horse entered for a race late in the season', F. & H.: racing coll.: ca. 1899. Ex back-end, the last two months of the horse-racing season.

back-hair. A role 'in which the agony of the performance at one point in the drama admit of the feminine tresses in question floating over the shoulders': theatrical: 1884; ob. by 1920; by 1930. Ware.

back-hairing. 'Feminine fighting, in which the occipital locks suffer severely', Ware: London streets (—1900).


back-handed. Indirect; unfair: from ca. 1815: coll. ↑, by 1880, S.E. Dickens, 1865, has a back-handed reminder. Cf. back-hander, 3, q.v.


back-hander. A drink either additional or out of
**BACK IS UP**


back is up. —Sir, I see somebody has offended you, for your. A jeering c.p. addressed to a hump-backed man: ca. 1870–1890. Grose, 1st ed. See back up, adj.

*back-jump. To enter (e.g. a house) by a back door or window: c. from ca. 1855. R., 1st ed. Ex.: from 1835. Vaux. 
Because one jumps from it in escape. See back-marked.—2. Hence, to outdistance (easily): sporting: 1928 (O.E.D., Sup.).

back-marked, be. To have one's athletic handicap reduced: late ca. 19–20 coll., ob. Rare in active voice.

back-scratcher. (Of a person) a 'has been': coll.: U.S. (1890: O.E.D. (Sup.)) anglicised ca. 1905; by 1936, S.E. Prob. ex the back numbers of periodicals.

**Back Numbers, the.** The 28th Foot, in late ca. 19–20 the Gloucestershire Regiment: military: ca. 19–20. Ex. the sphinx worn, as distinction for services at the Battle of Alexandria, 1801, on both the back and the front of the helmet until 1881. F. & Gibbons.

back of the neck, talk through (rarely out of): the. To talk nonsense: from ca. 1920. Ex talk through one's hat.

back of the hand down. Bribery. —: from ca. 1890; ob. [J. Milne, *The Epistles of Atkins*, 1902.]

back out. To retreat from a difficulty or unpleasantness: 1818, Scott: coll. >, by 1860, S.E. Ex lit. sense.

back pedal. Steady 1; tell that to the marines 1: c.p.: from ca. 1910. Collision. Ex cycling.

back-racket. A tu quoque: coll.: ca. 17–18. Ex the S.E. sense, 'the return of a ball in tennis', S.O.D.


back-scratching. (A) flogging: naval: late ca. 19–20. Bowen. (As scyphophagy flatfoot, it is S.E.)

*back-scuttle. Same as back-slang it, q.v.: c. of C.19.—do or have a back-scuttle, to possess a woman a retro: low: mid-C. 19–20.

back-seam, be (down) on one's. To be out of luck, unfortunate. Tailors' (—1887). Baumann; Whiticar, 1899. Cf. back, on one's, q.v.

backseat, take a. To retire; yield; fail. Orig. (1865) U.S.; anglicised ca. 1890: coll. >, by 1920, S.E. (Thorton.).

[Back-slang dates from ca. 1850. Slang, pp. 276–7.]

*back-slang it. To go out the back way: ca. 1810–1910; low; prob. orig. c. Vaux; H., 1st ed. Cf. back-scuttle.—2. In Australia, ca. 1850–1900, to seek unoffered lodging in the country.

Morris. Perhaps ex Vaux's second sense: —3. To go a circuitous or private way through the streets in order to avoid meeting certain persons: c. of ca. 1810–50. Vaux.

*back slum. A back room; the back-entrance of a building. 'Thus, we'll give it 'em on the back slum, means, we'll get in at the back door', Vaux, 1812; c. >, ca. 1870, low. Cf. back-jump and back-slang it.

back slums. In C. 20, S.E. for very poor urban districts, but orig. (—1821) as. for residential area of criminals and near-criminals.

back-staircase. A woman's bustle: ca. 1860–1900. (Bustle occurs in 1788: S.O.D.)


back-strapped. (Of a ship or a boat) 'carried back into an awkward position by the tide and held there': nautical coll.: mid-C. 19–20. Bowen.

back-talk. Impudence; verbal recalcitrance. Esp. as no back-talk/ From ca. 1870; coll. Cf. back-chat. Ex dial.

back teeth underground, have one's. To have eaten one's fill; to have them awash or under water = to be drunk. Both are jocular (—1913) and ob. A. H. Dawson.

back the barrier (i.e. barrier). To intervene unasked: low Australian (—1916). C. J. Dennis.


back-to-backs. Paralleling slums in suburbs and mining towns. C. 20; coll.

back-towny. Cloth covering the stays at the waist: tailors': late ca. 19–20.

back or backs to the wall. Hard pressed: C. 19 coll., C. 20 S.E. In C. 16–18 with at for to.

back up. To be ready to help, chiefly in games: coll. (in C. 20, S.E.) from ca. 1860.—2. Winchester College, from ca. 1870: to call out, e.g. for help.

back-up adj. Annoyed, aroused. One's back to be up, to be annoyed, C. 18–19 coll.; put or set one's back up, to be, or to make, annoyed, C. 18–20 coll.: from ca. 1890 both phrases tended to be considered as S.E. though not literary. Since ca. 1870, get one's back up, to become or to make annoyed, is the gen. form: this, however, has always been coll. Cf. back up, q.v.

backare! See bacare!

backed. Dead: late ca. 17–early 19. Perhaps = set on one's back: B.E. and Grose, however, explain as 'on six men's shoulders', i.e. carried to the grave.


backgammon-player. A sodomist: mid-C. 18–early 19; cf. back door, gentleman of the.

backgammoner. The same: ca. 1820–80. 'Jon Bean.'

background. Retiring; modest: coll.: ca. 1896. 'A reticent, background kind of lover', O.E.D. I.e. keeping in the background.


backings-up. The ends of half-burnt faggots: Winchester College, C. 19.

backs to the wall. See back to the wall.
backsheesh—abject; bakheesh, ba(ck)hees. See bakhees (the latest form).


backward, ring the bells. To give the alarm: ca. 1800–1890; call. > S.E. Cleveland, Scott. Ex the practice of beginning with the bass when the bells were rung.


backward station. ‘In the old Coastguard Service one that was considered most undesirable, frequently on account of its distance from a school’: coastguardsmen’s coll.: C. 19. Bowen.

backwards, go. To go to the w.c.: C. 20; very ob. F. & H., revised.

backwards, pies. To decoacte: low: late C. 19–20; ob. Ibid.

backy. A shamote working behind another: tailors’, from ca. 1870; ob.—2. See backer.

backyard, two feet one. See two feet one backyard and cf. boats.

*bacon. See bacon, save one’s.

bacon, a good voice to beg. A c.p. derivative of an ill voice: late C. 17–18. B.E.

bacon, bring home the. See bring home . . .

bacon, pull. To put one’s fingers dersively to one’s nose; mid C. 19–20.

bacon, save one’s. To escape narrowly: late C. 17–20; coll. from ca. 1750. A. Bohn, 1682, ‘I go [to church] to save my bacon as they say, once a month’ (Apperson). Perhaps from the days of heretics burnt at the stake; A New Canting Dictionary (1725), however, says that in this phrase, bacon ‘in the Canting Sense, is the Prize, of whatever kind, which Robbers make in their Enterprizes’. (Cf. the 1934 advertisement slogan, ‘Breakfast on Shredded Wheat and save your bacon.’)


bad. Difficult; esp. in bad to beat, as in Hawley Smart’s Post to Finish, 1884: coll. Ob.


Cf. badder, q.v.

bad, go to the. To be ruined; become depraved. From ca. 1860; coll. >, ca. 1910, S.E. Early users are Miss Braddon and ‘Dagonet’ Sims. Ex to the bad, in deficit.

bad, not. Rather or (patronisingly) quite good; upper (hence, derivatively, middle) classes’ coll.; from ca. 1860 (Ware); the O.E.D. (Sup.) example at 1836 is prob. isolated and perhaps inoperative. 

bad, not half. Fairly good: coll.: from late 1890’s. Cf. not half.


bad bargain. A worthless soldier (gen. preceded by King’s or Queen’s): C. 18–20; coll. from 1800. Grose, ed.—2. Hence, since ca. 1850 (without King’s or Queen’s) worthless person: coll.

bad cess to! Evill befall! . . . Anglo-Irish coll.; from ca. 1850 (S.O.D. records it at 1859). Prob. ex cess = assessment, levy, rate(s); but perhaps abbr. success.


bad ha[p]penny. A n'er-do-well; from ca. 1850. Ex the c.p., it is a bad halfpenny, said by one who, having failed, returns as he went: ca. 1810–50: Vaux.

bad hat. A rascal: from ca. 1880. Besant, 1883; Galsworthy, 1924, ‘If that young man’s story’s true, we’re in the hands of a bad hat.’ In The Daily Telegraph of July 28, 1894, G. A. Sala, citing Sir William Fraser’s Words on Wellington, suggests that the phrase what a shocking bad hat, which > a c.p., was coined by the Duke in the 1830’s: this rests on hearsay. Sala continues, ‘The catchword soon lost its political associations, and after a few years, was merged in the purely imbecile query, “Who’s your hatter?” ’ which was † by 1900. Ware thinks that bad hat was, prob. Irish in origin, ‘the worst Hibernian characters always wearing bad high hats (caps are not recognised in kingly Ireland)’. Cf. bad lot and see hat!, what a shocking bad and, for an anticipation, see queer nob.

bad job. See job.


bad mark. See ‘mark, bad or good ’.

bad match twist. Red hair and black whiskers: hairdresser’s, from ca. 1870;†

bad shilling. a. One’s last shilling: proletarian (—1900); slightly ob. Ware.


bad slang. Spurious curiosities: circus, from ca. 1870. Hindley, 1876.


bad young man. See good young man.

badder, badder. Once S.E., but in C. 18–20, for worse, worst.

badders. Something (event, news, etc.) bad or unpleasant: from ca. 1925. (Evelyn Waugh, A Handful of Dust, 1934.) ‘The Oxford -er.’


*badge. A brand in the hand: C. 18 c.

*badge, he has got his. He has been branded on the hand: c. of ca. 1720–1840. A New Canting Dict., 1725.


BADGER


badger. To tease; persecute. Perhaps s. when used by the dramatist O'Keeffe in 1794, but very soon coll.; S.E. by 1860. Perhaps ex lit. draw the badger; cf. :

badger, overdraw the. To overdraw one's banking account: ca. 1840-1914. Hood.


badger-legged. With one leg shorter than the other: coll.: from 1700; ob. Cf. the earlier semi-provachal badger-like, one leg shorter than the other (Howell, 1659). Ex the erroneous belief that a badger has legs of unequal length.

badges and bull's eyes. Badges and medals: military: Oct., 1899; † by 1915. Applied (says The Daily Telegraph, Dec. 21, 1899) by General Gatacre to the officers' badges, etc., because they offered so splendid a mark for Boer bullets. (War.)

badgy. An enlisted boy; badger fiddler, a boy trumpeter: military: ca. 1860-1905. F. & Gibbons. Either because he was a nuisance or because he was bullied or persecuted.


badly. Much; greatly: with such vv. as need, want, require, raise: coll.; from ca. 1850.


Ex the Duke of Beaufort's seat of that name. The former sense has suggested the latter.


bag. To obtain for oneself, esp. anything advantageous: Mortimer Collins, 1880, but also for at least a decade earlier.—2. To catch, take, or steal (1818): a common school term, Farrar using it in 1862.—3. To beg or to conceive: C. 15-17. At three senses, coll.

bag, empty the. To tell everything; close a discussion: coll.: C. 18-19.

bag, get one's head in a or the. To drink: printers' and sailors': from middle 1880's. The Saturday Review, May 14, 1887. See bag, n., 3.

bag, give the. To deceive: C. 16-17., coll., as the senses, to give (a master) warning, to abandon (a thing): late C. 16-17; in C. 18, give (one) the bag often = to slip away from (a person), while in late C. 18-19 the phrase came to mean dismiss (cf. give this the receive that the bag). In C. 17-18 = good bag = get the sack, be dismissed; coll. But give the bag to hold = to engage one's attention with a view to deceive: late C. 17-19: coll. ‡ by 1800, S.E.

bag, in the bottom of. In reserve; as a last resource: mid-C. 17-18: coll. ‡ by 1760, S.E. Cf. C. 20 out of the bag.

bag, let the cat out of the. To disclose a secret or a trick: from ca. 1750: coll. ‡, by 1840, S.E. Wolcott, Mrs. Gaskell.

bag, put one in a. To have the upper hand of C. 17–18 coll. Fuller.

bag, put one's head in a. See bag, get one's head. bag a brace. See brace.


bag and wallet, turn to. To become a beggar: late C. 16–17 coll. Hakluyt.


bag of(†) beer. A quart of beer: proletarian (— 1809); † by 1930; ob., indeed, by 1916. Ware. 'This once stood for "pot o' four 'arf an' 'arf", reduced to "[pot o'] four 'arf", and thence to, "bag o' beer"'.

bag of bones. A very thin person: Dickens, 1838: coll.: in C. 20, S.E.


bag of mystery. See bags of mystery.

bag of nails, squat like a. To squat very badly late C. 18–mid-19. Grose, 2nd ed., 1. i.e. his eyes are directed as many ways as the points of a bag of nails."

Bag of Nails, the. The Bacchanals: a tavern in Pimlico (London): ca. 1770–1830. Grose, 3rd ed. (Folk etymology.)


*bag-thief. See bagger.


baggage, heavy. Women and children: late C. 18 19 (Grose, 2nd ed., records it); cf. Fr. pas de bagage en train de plaisir.

*bagger, bag-thief. One who, in stealing rings, seizes the victim's hand: late C. 19–early 20 c. Ex Fr. bague, a ring.


baggonet. See bagonet.

baggy. (Gen. pl.) A rating in the old naval troopers: military: ca. 1860–1900. Bowen. 'On account of their uniform trousers.'

baggy, adj. (Of clothes, esp. trousers at the knee) unduly stretched: coll. (1858) ‡, by 1910, S.E.

bagman. A commercial traveller: S.E. in C. 18 (1765) and until ca. 1850, then it > pojective and coll.—2. A bag-box: sporting (1875). O.E.D. (bagnio. A brothel: C. 17–18; coll., or perhaps rather S.E. (See O.E.D.)

bagonet; also baggonet, rarely bagnet. In C. 19–20, sol. (but in C. 17–18, S.E.) for bagonet;
was often heard among the Tommies in 1914-18. In late C. 17-early 18 a., however, it meant, B.E. tells us, a dagger.

**barguine.** A long-winded talker: C. 17-19; Carlyle has it. Coll.—2. As v., to indulge in a sexual practice that even F. & H. says is "too indecent for explanation": late C. 18-19. Grose, 1st ed., has recorded the synonymous **buffle:** neither word occurs in later edd.

**bags.** Trouser: 'Cuthbert Bede,' in Verdant Green, 1853. A low variant, from ca. 1860 but ob., is **bun-bags.** Oxford bags, very wide-legged: from 1922. Ca. 1870-1910, go-to-meeting bags, (a man's) best clothes, and 1850-90, **koweling bags,** (H., 1st ed., Introduction) trousers very 'loud' in pattern or colour(s).—2. Buenos Aires Great Southern Railway Bonds: Stock Exchange: from ca. 1885.—3. See **bags of.**—4. See **bags, mount the.**


**bags, have the.** To be of age; have plenty of money: mid-C. 19-20; coll.; ob. Variant, have the bags off: H., 1st ed.

**bags, mount the; over the bags.** (To climb) over the trench parapet—made of sandbags—in order to attack the enemy: military s. (1915) >, by 1917, coll. Cf. over the top.

**bags, rough as.** Extremely uncoth; very 'tough': Australian, G.W. +. Jice Doone.

**bags, take the.** To be bare in hare-and-hounds: athletic, coll.: from ca. 1870.

**bags I! See bags!**

**bags of.** Much, plenty; many. E.g. 'bags of time': C. 20. B. & P.; Lye. Cecil Litchfield entitled his first, and wittily funny, novel: **Bags of Blackmail.** Cf. bag of a.

**bags off. have the.** See **bags, have the.**

**bags of mystery.** Sausages and savoys: from ca. 1850, says Ware. H., 3rd ed.; Whiting N. 5, John Street, 1899. Rare in the singular.

**bagsy.** Unshapely: Glasgow coll. (—1934). I.e. with as much delicacy of shape as a bag.

**bail! See bail!**

**bail, to give leg.** To run away from: coll.: from ca. 1770; ob. Scott in Guy Mancuring. Occ. varied till ca. 1810. It has leg bail and give land security.

**bail up.** To demand payment, money, or other settlement from: Australian, from ca. 1878. Esp. Morris. Ex earlier lit. use: (of a bushranger) to hold up—which (—1864) was, by Cockneys, adopted, in the imperative, to mean 'Stop!': H., 3rd ed.

**bailied man.** (Gen. pl.) One who had bribed the Press Gang for his immunity: nautical: coll.: mid-C. 18-19. Ca. 1870 took a bag and cover to cover: cricket; the O.E.D. records it for 1881. Coll. >, by 1900, S.E.


**bait-land.** A port where refreshments can be procured: C. 18-19, nautical, † by 1867.

**bak.** See buck, n. 11; also _v._, 2.

**bake.** The head: a C. 20 military corruption of boco. 1. F. & Gibbons.—2. A fisso: a useless act; low and military: C. 20. Frank Richards, _Old Soldiers Never Die_, 1933, 'I found a stretcher-bearer already attending to Smith... and he informed me that it was a bloody bake, as Smith had stopped it through the pound.' With bake, cf. Fr. _four_, an utter failure theatrically; _pound is pound of lead_, rhyming s. for 'head': late C. 19-20 (cf. lump of lead).

**bake, v.** To rest, lie down: Winchester College, C. 19. Whence († by 1890), bakers, a slugged. Cf. also _baker_ and _baking-leave__, q.v._

**bake it.** To refrain from visiting the w.c. when one should go there to ease the major need: low: late C. 19-20.

**bake one's bread.** To kill (a person): C. 14-19; coll. > S.E.


**baked.** (Of persons) exhausted: ca. 1790-1850, coll. — only half baked, half-witted: coll.: from ca. 1860; ob. H., 2nd ed.

**baked dinner.** Bread—which is baked: c. from ca. 1860; virtually f. Ex a joke played on newcomers to prison.


**baker (or Baker)! not to-day.** A lower-class' c. addressed to a man paying unwelcome attentions (to a woman): 1885-ca. 1915. Ware. Ex housewives' reply to a baker and also ex a soldier named Baker paying undesired court to a young lady: see _Baker's Light Bogs._

**baker, spell.** To attempt something difficult: C. 18-19 coll. From old spelling books, where _baker_ was gen. the first disyllabic word.


**baker's dozen, give one a.** To thrash vigorously: mid-C. 19-20; ob. H., 2nd ed.; Manchon. Cf. _what for_, q.v.

**Baker's Light Bogs.** The 10th Hussars: military: from ca. 1870; ob. The reference is to Valentine Baker (1827-87), who commanded them—and developed their efficiency to an extraordinary degree—in 1860-72. He was both a practical and a theoretical authority on cavalry tactics. (D.N.B.)

**baking.** Very hot: with _weather or day_. Coll.: from ca. 1850.

**baking leave.** Permission to sit in another's study: from ca. 1885, Winchester College. Prior to this date: permission to rest. **baking place:** a sofa. Ex _bake, v._ q.v.

**bakshee (C. 20 coll.),_ baksheesh (most gen. form.)_ bakshees, buckakeesh, bucksheesh, buckshish._ A tip; gratuity. Near-Eastern and Anglo-Indian; from ca. 1750. Popularised by the British Army in India and Egypt, esp. in G.W., though it was fairly gen. even by 1800. The forms in _-ee_ are the more
BAKSHEE


For senses 3, 4, see esp. F. & Gibbons; B. & P.—5. A light wound: military, esp. New Zealanders': in G.W.


balsa. (Journalsitic) 'paddling' kept in standing type: Scott, 1826; slightly ob. A strange perversion of the Biblical Balaam and his ass.

balsam-basking. (Journalsitic) the receptacle for type representing padding. Also, the basket for rejected contributions (1827). Both senses are slightly ob. Ex preceding.

ballalava. 'A full beard'; ca. 1856–70. Ex the beards worn by those soldiers who were lucky enough to return from the Crimean. Ware.

Balscavla day. (Military) a pay-day. 'Balscavla, in the Crimean War (1854–6) was the base of supply for the English troops: and, as pay was drawn, the men went ... to make their purchases', F. & H. ↑ by 1914.

balance. The remainder: in England, orig. (ca. 1804) a sol. ex U.S. (1819: Thornton), but accepted by English business men ca. 1870 and > very gen. s. by 1890; not yet acceptable to culture—though it might, in 1937, be considered as having attained the rank of coll. Blackwood's Magazine, April, 1875, 'Balance, long familiar to American ears, is becoming so to ours.' See esp. O.E.D., F. & H., Thornton, and S.O.D.

ball. To manoeuvre (an enemy 'plane) into a bad position: Air Force: 1918. F. & Gibbons. Ex U.S. ball, to get round 'a person. Possibly connected with Balbus, who 'was building a wall' (cf. next).


bald-coat. An elderly or old man that, in gambling, is plucked: fast life (—1823); ↑ by 1890. 'Jon Bee', Dictionary of the Turf.


bald-headed. (Of a ship in square-rig) 'with nothing over her top-gallants': (of a schooner) 'without top-masts': nautical: mid-C. 19–20; ob. Bowen.

bald-headed, go (at) it. To be impetuous or whole-hearted in an action. Orig. (—1850) U.S.; anglicized ca. 1900. Perhaps a perversion of Dutch baldheidig, audacious (W.).

bald-headed butter. Butter without hairs: trade (—1909); ob. Ware.


bald-headedly. The coll. adv. (1920, W. J. Lockie: witness O.E.D. Sup.) corresponding to bald-headed, go at it, q.v.

ballast-shooting. 'The strictly prohibited sailing-ship practice of dumping ballast overboard at the end of a voyage, to the detriment of the fairway': nautical coll.: late C. 19–20; ob. Bowen.

bald-rib. A thin bony person: jocularly coll.; from ca. 1820. Ex S.E. sense, 'a joint of pork cut nearer the rump than the spare-rib', S.O.D.

balderdash. A nonsensical farrago of words: from ca. 1600; coll. by 1700; S.E. by ca. 1730. Prob. ex earlier (late C. 16–17) sense, 'froth'—2. As adulterated wine, late C. 17–18, the term presumably never rose above coll. See O.E.D. and Grose, F., for other, i.e. S.E., senses.

* baldbother, baldowler. A leader; a spokesman: C. 19–20, ob., c. Ex German c.


bale up. See bale up.

Balfour's maiden. A battering ram: Parliamentary, 1889; ↑ by 1920. Ex the Irish elections of 1888–9, when Mr. Balfour was Secretary. Cointed by Sir Wm. Harcourt.

balk. See baulk and baulk, in; also miss, give a. Balkan tap is a Salonic Front variant (1915–18) of doolly tap (q.v.). B. & P.

*ball. A prison ration of food, esp. the six ounces of meat; also, a drink. Both are mid-C. 19–20 c.; the former occurs in Brandon, 1839.

ball, open the. To begin: from ca. 1810: coll.; in C. 20, S.E. Byron; The Eton Chronicle, July 20, 1876. (O.E.D.)

ball, take up the. To take one's due turn in conversation, work, etc.: coll. >, by 1900, S.E.; from ca. 1840. (O.E.D.)


ball at one's feet, have the. To have something in one's power: coll. >, by 1850, S.E.; from ca. 1800. Occ. and earlier, before one.

ball before the bound, catch or take the. To forestall, anticipate opportunity: coll. >, by 1800, S.E.; from ca. 1640. (O.E.D.)

ball is with you, the. It is your turn; it is 'up to' you: coll. >, by 1910, S.E.; from ca. 1850; slightly ob. (O.E.D.)


ball of wax. A shoemaker: C. 19. Ex the wax used in shoemaking.

ball rolling, or up, keep the. To keep an activity, a conversation, going: coll. >, by 1840, S.E.; from ca. 1780. (O.E.D.) Set the ball rolling therefore = to begin, start a thing going: same period. Cf. open the ball, where having the ball = a dance.

ball under the line, strike the. To fail: coll.; mid-C. 16–17. Ex (royal) tennis. Apperson.


ballad-basket. A street singer: C. 19. In C. 19, a street singer sang mostly ballads, which, now, are much less popular; basket has perhaps been suggested by the synonymous 'street pitcher'.

ballast. Money: from ca. 1800, orig. nautical. whence (—1890; now ob.) scot ballasted, rich.

ballast-shooting. 'The strictly prohibited sailing-ship practice of dumping ballast overboard at the end of a voyage, to the detriment of the fairway': nautical coll.: late C. 19–20; ob. Bowen.
ballabou. 'A term of derision applied to an ill-conditioned slovenly ship'; The Century Dict.: nautical: from ca. 1885.† etymology: not impossibly ballyhooey, q.v.

Ballambangiang, Straits of. Straits as imaginary as they are narrow: nautical coll. (— 1864); slightly ob. H., 3rd ed.

Ballarat lantern. See lantern, Ballarat.
balle. See bally, v.
balkoe; now gen. bollock. A testicle; gen. in pi. A very old word, S.E. until ca. 1840, then a vulg. Cf.:


Balloch Bill the Sailor. A mythical person commemorated in a late C. 19—20 low ballad and often mentioned, by way of evasion (cf. up in Annie's room), by the soldiers in the G.W.; he is reputed to have been most generously testicled. Pronounced and spelt bollicy. Cf., as perhaps partially operative, dial. bolickey, left-handed, or, hence, clumsy.


balloon. 'A week's enforced idleness from want of work', Ware: tailors (— 1909); ob. Ex Fr. biletan.

balloon go up?, when does the; also the balloon goes up at (such a time). When does it happen?; it happens at: 1915, orig. military; slightly ob. Cf. zero hour, q.v. (B. & F.)

balloonic. A man handling a naval kite-balloon: naval: 1915; ob. Punning lunatic. (Bowen.)

balloon—juice. Soda—water: 'public-house, 1883'; Ware; † by 1930. Ex gaseousness.—2. Whence balloon—juice lover, a total abstainer: ca. 1884—1920. Ware.

ballooning. Jockeying of the prices of stocks: Stock Exchange (— 1890, ob.).

balls; all balls. Nonsense (— 1890). In Feb., 1929, it was held to be obscene; by 1931 it had > permissible in print. Low coll. For semantics, cf. balloons, 2, and boloney (orig. U.S.), q.q.v., also the U.S. nerts (as an interjection). See esp. Allen Walker Read, Lexical Evidence from Folk Epigraphy, 1935 (Paris; privately printed).

balls, bring through. To collect footballs to be blown up: Winchester College, from ca. 1890.

balls of, make (a). To spoil; do wrongly (— 1800). Low.

balls on. See do one's balls on.

balls to you! Rats to you! : low: late C. 19—20. (Cf. balls, q.v.) Manchon.

balls-up. To make a mess or a blunder of; to confuse inextricably; misunderstand wholly; do altogether wrongly: low: C. 20. Cf. U.S. ball-up and (also for balls-up) the somewhat rare ball, to clog, gen. of a horse getting its feet clogged with balls of clay or snow.

ball-in-rason. A dance at which all the women are harlots. Grose, 2nd ed., adds, 'N.B. The company dance in their birthday suits': from ca. 1780 (Grose, 1st); † by 1900. Cf. buff ball, q.v. Ex ball, a testicle.

bally; gen. bailey. To depart (speedily): London traders' (— 1909); virtually †. Ware. Cf. hop it, polka, skip, waltz, q.q.v.

bally, adj. A euphemism for bloody. From 1884, says Ware (1909) who classifies it as sporting s. and quotes from The Sporting Times, April 11, 1885. W., after F. & H. (revised), suggests ex Ballyhooey truth; cf. blighter, blinking, blooming. See my Words / ballyhoo. An abbr. (orig.—ca. 1913—U.S.) of, and from ca. 1925 more gen. than ballyhoo, (though cf. next entry); † by 1930, coll.; now verging on S.E. 'The now recognized term for eloquence aimed at the pocket-book', The Times Literary Supplement, July 19, 1934.

ballyhoo of blazes. 'The last word of contempt for a slovenly ship': nautical: C. 20. Bowen. Perhaps ex ballahou, 'a West Indian schooner with forecast raking forward and mainmast aft' (Bowen).

ballyhody. Copy-writers' or politicians' exaggeration; 'advance publicity of a vulgar or misleading kind' (H. G. Le Mesurier): from ca. 1910; coll. by 1925. Abbr. Ballyhooey truth, a ca. 1880—85 music-hall tag perhaps ex whole bloody truth (W.).—2. See Balloo.


Ballymena(s). Belfast and Northern Counties Railway shares: Stock Exchange (— 1895). A. J. Wilson, Stock Exchange Glossary, Ex Ballymena, the urban district and market town 114 miles north of Antrim (Bartholomew's Gazetteer).

bally-rag. See bully-rag.
balm. A lie (— 1820; † by 1900). Duncombe. Variant of baim, n.: q.v.

baldest balm. 'Balm in the extreme', Ware: proletarian London (— 1900); virtually †.

balmuy. (Always the b.) Sleep. Dickens in The Old Curiosity Shop, 1840: 'As it's rather late, I'll try and get a wink or two of the balmy.' Prob. suggested by balmuy slumbers (Shakespeare), balmy sleep (Young): F. & H., revised.—2. An idiot: low: C. 20. Ex: balmuy; perhaps more correctly barmy. Adj.: anything from stoolid to manifestly insane; gen., just a little mad. Henry Mayhew, 1851. Whence balmuy cove, a weak-minded man. Perhaps ex B.S. balmuy, soft, but see also barmuy: the latter form prob. suggested the former.


baloney, or -ey. See bolon(ey).—Baloo. See Berloo.

balros. Money: late C. 17—18, c.; C. 19—early 20, s. B.E.; Grose; Ware, prob. wrong in stating that it was 'orig. confined to dispensing chemists'. Ex its healing properties.

Baltic Fleet. 'The Fourth Division of the Home Fleet for some years before the War, when the smallness of the naval crews reminded seamen of Rozhdestvensky's ill-fated squadron', Bowen.

balum rancum. See ballum rancum. (The spelling in 4th, 5th edd. of Grose.)
bam; bumb (C. 18). A hoax; an imposition: Dyche's Dictionary (6th ed.), 1748. Ex.—2. As barmy, to sham, be in jest (— 1764); y.e., hoax (in print, 1738), a sense that was current as early as 1707. Abbr. bamoosie, q.v.

bamboo backsheesh. A blow evoked by important begging for money: Anglo-Indian: from ca. 1850; ob. See backsheh.

bamboozle. To hoax, deceive, impose upon (c.p., & v.l.): Gibber, 1703. To mystify (1712). Swift in 1710: 'The third refinement ... consists in the choice of certain words invented by some pretty fellows, such as banter, bamboozle, country-put, and kidney, some of which are now struggling for the vogue, and others are in possession of it.' In late C. 18-mid 19 naval a., it meant 'to deceive an enemy by holisting false colours' (Bowen). As n., Gibber, 1703; bamboozling (1709) is much more frequent and occurs also as adj. (— 1731). bamboozle, easily deceived (1866) development, and so is bamboozlement (1855); these two were never s. but have never quite risen to S.E. Etymology still a mystery; prob. ex a c. word of which no record is extant; perhaps ex banter corrupted, or rather, perverted; W., however, suggests an interesting alternative.

bamboozler. A hoaxer, an imposer on others (1712).

bamboosh. Humbug; a hoax by one (1805): rare and ob. Prob. ex bams or -bash, q.v.

ban, A Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland: Irish: C. 18-20; ob. Ware. 'Bedad, one ban or anoder, 'tis the same man.' Perhaps punning ban, a curse or edict, and bancheer, the precursor of sorrow, as Ware suggests.

Banagher, beat. To tell a (too) marvellous story: orig. and mostly Anglo-Irish c.: late C. 18-20. Grose, 1st ed.; The Passing Show, Jan. 21, 1933, has the variant, beat banagher.

banagher. To bang. I find no record earlier than F. & H. (1800), which says 'old.' App. † by 1800. Prob. a word heard by Farmer in his youth and possibly a reduction from beat Banagher, from ca. 1840, Banagher (or banagher): this phrase, however, suggests that banagher may be a development of bang, to strike violently, a view supported by the fact that the most usual form is this bangs Ban(s)hagger, an Irish proverbial saying, with which cf. beat creation, for Banagher is a village in King's County (W.).

banana i, have a. A low c.p., expressive of contempt: C. 20; ob. Ex a popular song (Collinson). —2. Perhaps ex the popular song, 'I had a banana With Lady Diana,' the phrase to have a banana with meat, ca. 1905-30, to crot with (a woman).

BananaLand: Bananaland. Queensland; a native of Australian coll. (— 1887); slightly ob.

bananas i, yes, we have no. See yes, we ... Banbury. A loose woman: low London: 1894, The People, Feb. 4; † by 1920. Ware. By association with hot-cross buns and 'jam-Marta's'.

Banbury story (of a cock and bull), 'Silly chat,' B.E.; lit. C. 17-early 19. Cf. the 19 dial. Banbury tale and see Grose, P.


banco. Evening preparation, superintended by a monitor: Charterhouse: from ca. 1832. Tod, Charterhouse, 1906, p. 81. Cf. toy-time and, for origin, the legal in banco.

band, beat the. See beat the band.—band, follow the. See follow the band. Cf.

band-party, the. Members of the Church of England: military: late C. 19-20; ob. F. & Gibbons. See also follow the band.

band played i, and then the. The fat is in the fire: c.p., ca. 1880-1910. (Cf. good night! and Kipling's 'I've 'Thank you, Mister Atkins,' when the band begins to play' (1892). Also then the band began (to play): C. 20; ob. D. Coke, Wilson's, 1911.


Bandagehem, Doskinghem, Mendinghem; or Bandage'em, etc. Jocular names for three hospital stations in Flanders: military: 1915-18. F. & Gibbons. On such names as Ebblinghem.

Bandanna. A. s., (in C. 20, also cotton) handkerchief, with white or yellow spots left in the coloured base; coll. in C. 18. India, but there accepted ca. 1800, in England in 1854 (Thackeray), as S.E.

bandbox, (orig. that is) my or mine are on (ros, in) a! That won't do!: a late C. 18-mid 19 c.p. Grose, Ist ed. Ex the inadequacy of bandbox as a seat.

bandboxial. Like, or of the size of, a bandbox: coll.: 1787, Beckford, 'Cooped up in a close, bandboxial apartment,' O.E.D.; slightly ob. On paradoxical.

banded. Hungry: c. or low: 1812, Vaux; H., 1st ed. Cf. bands, wear the, q.v. (With band or belt tightened round one's middle.)

bandcook, miserable as a. See miserable ...


bandog. A baillif or his assistant: late C. 17-18. B.E. Ex lit. sense, a fierce mastiff watch-dog; ex bond, a fastening.—2. Also late C. 19-early 19, a band, or either Banogue or foralogue, owner of a bailliff.

bandog and Bellam, speak. To speak in a rage, like a madman: late C. 16-17 coll. Dokker. Cf. preceding entry, 1.

bandok. See bandook.


bandore. A widow's head-dress (the Fr. bandouretta corrupted): ca. 1680-1750; orig., perhaps S.E. or by 1785 (Grose) coll. if not s. Note that the O.E.D.'s two examples occur in very light works and that B.E. has it. (The other sense, a banjo (itself a corruption of bandore), has a different etymology and was always S.E.)

bands, wear the. To be hungry. C. 19: c. or low. Vaux. Cf. banded.


bandy. To band together: '— 1818', says O.E.D.; but B.E. († 1890) has it = 'follow a faction': so that, in C. 18, it was probably—until ca. 1760, at any rate (for Grose does not give it)—either a. or coll.

bang. A blow (— 1550). If on a thing, S.E.; if on a person, still coll. (as in a bang on the nose).—2. A sudden movement, (unexpected) impetus, as in C. 18-20 with a bang. Coll.—3. 'The front hair cut square across the forehead' (1860), ex U.S.
BANG


bang, v. To strike. If the object is a thing, it is S.E.; if a person, (c. 1550).—2. To outdo: from c. 1800; coll.—3. (Rare) to have sexual intercourse (v.t. and with a woman): C. 20.—4. Louzily or recklessly to offer stock in the open market, with the intention of lowering the price if necessary: Stock Exchange: from c. 1880. Often as vbl. n., banging.

bang, adj. Afraid, frightened: Midland and Western Districts of South Africa: coll. (c. 1869).—Ex Dutch bang, afraid. Pettman.

bang, go full. To go at full speed or as quickly as possible: coll. (c. 1922). Manchon.


bang Banagher. See Banagher.


bang goes saxpence! A jocular c.p. applied to any small expense incurred, esp. if on entertainment or with a light heart: from c. 1880. Popularized by Sir Harry Lauder; obviously Scottish in origin. Here, bang suggests abruptness: W.

bang-Mary. A 'bain Mario': kitchen sol. (c. 1909) verging on coll. Ware. Cf. bummaree, n., 2.


bang-straw. A thrower: *orig. and mainly dial.: late C. 19–20, ob. Grose, 1785, adds: 'Applied to all the servants of a farmer'.

bang-tailed. (Eep. of horse) short-tailed: T. Hughes, 1801. Coll. rising to S.E. The n., bang-tail, is recorded for 1870 by the O.E.D., which considers that it is S.E. An.

bang through the elephant, have been. To be thoroughly experienced in dissipation: low London (c. 1909); virtually *. Ware refers it to elephant = elephant's trunk, drunk; but cf. rather elephant, see the, and bang up to the Elephant, q.v.

bang-up. A dandy: in fast life (c. 1811); *by 1920. Lex. Bal. ; 1882 in Punch. Ex the adj.: — 2. First-rate: Lex. Bal., 1811; Vaux, 1812, implies that it may, slightly earlier, have been (the certainly synonymous) bang-up to the mark; the Smiths in Rejected Addresses, 1812; *by 1910, except in U.S. Cf. slap-up, q.v. Prob. echoic; but perhaps, as Ware suggests, influenced by Fr. bien used exclamationarily. The form bang-up was later and less used.—3. V.t., make smart, as, passively, in the third of William Combe's Fours.

bang-up prime. An intensive of bang-up, 2; 1811, /. Bal.; *by 1890.

bang-word. See bang, n. 4.

bang up to the Elephant. 'Perfect, complete, unapproachable', Ware: London: 1882—ca. 1910. With reference to the Elephant and Castle Tavern, long the centre of South London public-house life.

banglay. See bang alley.—banged-up. See bang-up.

banged up to the eyes. Drunk: mid-C. 19–20, ob. 'banged to rights, be. To be caught 'on the job' or in possession of stolen property: o.: C. 20. (David Hume) Lit., defeated utterly. Cf. dead to rights, 2.


Bangers, the. The 1st Life Guards: military C. 19–20; ob.

bangies. See bangy.—banging. See bang, v., 4.

banging, adj. Great: coll. Grose, 2nd ed. (1788), has a fine banging boy, but the O.E.D.'s quotation from Nashe (1590) may be a genuine anticipation of both the 'great' and the 'overwhelming' sense. One of the many periphrastic adjts. that are coll. Cf. thumping.—2. In C. 10, a banging lie.—3. Also, C. 19 coll., overwhelming, as in a banging majority.


bangs Ban(n)agher and Ban(n)agher bangs the world, that. A mid-C. 19–20 variant of this bangs Ban(n)agher, beat Banagheran (etc.): see banagher.


bangy. Brown sugar: Winchester College, C. 19; ex Bangalore. Adj., brown, whence bangies, brown trousers: both, from c. 1855, Winchester College; Bangy Gate, that gate 'by Raccourt Court, into Kinggegate Street' and 'a brown gate from Grass Court to Sick House Meads' (F. & R.) id.: ibid.


banian- or banian-days. Days on which sailors eat no flesh: nautical; indirectly in Purchas, 1609; directly in Ovington, 1690. In C. 19 (now rare), the term > fairly gen., e.g. in Lamb and Thackeray. Ex the Banian, a Hindu caste or class of traders, who eat no flesh.


banister; bannister. A baluster: 1667 (O.E.D.); sol. until mid-C. 18, than S.E. By a corruption of the earlier balustrade: see W.


banjoe. A banjoist: London society: 1890's. Ex banjoist + joey, a clown. Ware, 'Said to be a trouvaille by the Prince of Wales [King Edward VII], who brought banjo orchestras into fashion, being a banjoist himself.'


*bank, v. In C. 19–20 c.: to purloin; put in a safe place; go equal or fair shares.

BANK, GO TO THE

bank, go to the. To go to the Labour Exchange. (workmen's; from ca. 1824.

Ex of England Team. Aston Villa Football Club: Northern sporting: from mid-Dec. 1935. Ex the very large fees paid out by this club to get such players as might save it from relegation. 

bank on. To anticipate as certain: from ca. 1880: coll., >, by 1910, S.E. To consider as safe as money in the bank: cf. safe as the Bank of England.

bank up, v.i. and t. To complete, almost to excess: North Country coal districts' coll. (— 1806). War. Ex ' building up a huge fire'.

banker. A river running flush—or almost flush—with the top of its banks: Australian (— 1888). Coll. by 1890 and 'accepted' by 1900—if not before. — 2. See bawker.

Banker Chapel Ho. Whitechapel; hence, vulgar language: East London (— 1909); virtually t. Ware. 'A ludicrous Italian translation—Bianco, white; cappella, chapel...'. Anglicisation entering in the first instance into "Banker" and the second back into "Chapel", with the addition of the rousing and cheery " oh! "'

bankers. Clumsy boots or shoes: C. 19, 16 by 1890. Egan, Randall's Diary, 1823.

Bankers' Battalion, the. 'The 26th (Service) Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers, raised early in 1916 mainly from Bank Clerks and Accountants': military coll.: 1916–18. F. & Gibbons.

bankrupt cart. A one-horse chaise: ca. 1780–96 and very sectional. Grose, 2nd ed., 'Said to be so called by a Lord Chief Justice, from their being so frequently used on Sunday jaunts by extravagant shopkeepers and tradesmen.'

bankruptcy list, to be put on the. To be completely knocked out: pugilistic: ca. 1820–60. Egan, Randall's Diary, 1823.

Bankside ladies. Harlots, esp. of the theatrical quarter: coll.: C. 17, Randolphi, 1638. In 1721, Strype 'explains': 'The Bank-Side where the Stews were' (O.E.D.).

bannister. See banister.

bannock. A hard ship's-biscuit: nautical cata-

bant. To follow a special dietary for the reduc-
tion of obesity: from 1865; soon coll. Ex banting, such a dietary (1863), devised by W. Banting, a London cabinet-maker: a word coll. by the next year, S.E. 1870, but now slightly Irish. (Banemas, the, as a military term, is S.E.; not, as so often asserted, s. nor even coll.)

banter. Ridicule, esp. if wantonly merry or supposedly humorous: B.E. 1870: 'a pleasant way of prating, which seems in earnest, but is in jest, a sort of ridicule'. In 1688 it was s., but in C. 18 it came gradually to mean harmless raillery and by 1800 it is attested S.E. Ex: banter, v.t. to be made fun of: (1667, Pepys); in C. 18, prob. ca. 1750, it lost both its sting and its associations and > S.E.—2. As = to cheat, deceive, impose on, it was current only ca. 1865–1820. B.E. Etymology problematic; but if—as Swift, in 1710, says—it 'was first borrowed from the bully in White Friars', then it is perhaps a perversion of † S.E. ban, to chide.

banister, banistering. The agent and action of bantering: v.t.; v.

bantling. A bastard, lit. a child conceived on a bench and not in the marriage-bed: late C. 18–17 and, in this sense, certainly not lower than coll. But = a child, a brat, it was (see B.E. and Grose) s. in late C. 17–18.

banyan. See banian—banyan-days and -party. See banian-days and -party.

banzai party. Naval men going ashore on a spree. The same as a hurrâh-party, for banzai is Japanese for hurrâh, 'the phrase dating from the British Navy's enthusiasm for anything Japanese during the Russian war' (1904–5); ob. Bowen.

baptise. Esp. of wine, to dilute: C. 17–early 19.

Healey, Theophrastus, 1838. Cf. christen.

baptist. 'A pickpocket caught and ducked', says: ca. 1820–50. Ex anabaptist, q.v.


[b, to exclude, prohibit, object to, and bar, prep. = except, have always (from C. 16, C. 19 resp.) been S.E., though not quite literary since ca. 1880: they are idiomatic in the north and here they are noted only as a corrective to F. & H. Note, however, that W. considers bar, to cold-shoulder, to be university s.; also, the Public Schools' sense, 'to dislike (intensely)', may be s.: late 19–20: see quotation at rag, v.t.


[bar sinister. See Fowler.]

bar-stock, be on the. To carry 'the daily supply of liquor from the store-room to the bar': (liners') nautical coll.: C. 20. Bowen.


bar-rap. To clip or shave gold. Ben Jonson in The Alchemist. C. 17 c. Ex to barter.

Barbados. To transport to (formally, the) Barbados: coll. >, by 1700, S.E.: ca. 1650–1850.


barbed wire, hanging on the (old), See hanging...


barber, v. See barbers.

barber, that's the. A street saying of ca. 1760– 1825 signifying approbation. Grose, 1st ed. Cf. such almost meaningless c.pp. as all serene, get your hair cut, how's your poor feet, have a banana.


barbers; also barber. Act as a deputy in the writing of (a task or an imposition): University and Public School: ca. 1850–80. 'Cuthbert Bede', 1853. Ex tradition of a learned barber so employed.


barber's block. See block, barber's.

barber's chair. A harlot, "as common as a barber's chair" (Grose). From ca. 1570; † by 1890. See e.g. Burton's Anatomy and Mettuce's translation of Pantagruel. (The whole phrase is very common, fit for general use.)


barber's knife. A razor: C. 18–early 19; coll. verging on (? achieving) S.E.

barber's knock. 'A double knock, the first hard and the second soft as if by accident', F. & H. revised: ca. 1820–30; ob. Beec.

barber's music. Harsh, discordant music (—1860); † by 1800. Coll. bordering on S.E. (A rister was provided by the barber for his waiting customers.)

barber's sign. Penis and testicles: low: late C. 18–19. Grose, 2nd ed., explains this scabrous pun: see Grose, P.

Barclay Perkins. Stout: Cockney (—1869); various † Ware. Ex the brewers, Barclay, Perkins & Co.

*bard (or bar'd) dice. See barred dice.


bare-bum. A dinner-jacket, as opp. to failis, the full-dress evening coat. Australia: C. 20; low. bare body (or N.). The rigid scale of preserved notions, without fresh meat or supplementary: naval: late C. 19–20; Bowan.


bargain, beat a or the. To haggle: ca. 1660–1700. Coll. †, almost imm., S.E. Killigrew, Pepys, G. O.D.

bargain, Dutch. See Dutch bargain.

bargain, make the best of a bad. To combat a misfortune: from ca. 1700; coll. till ca. 1840, then S.E. Boswell, 'According to the vulgar phrase, "making the best of a bad bargain"', (O.E.D.) But the phrase is found as early as 1663 (Pepys) with market († by 1850), as 1860 (L'estrangin) with the race game († by 1800); in C. 20, we often say best of a bad job. Apperson.

bargain, sell a. To baffle; as in Shakespeare and Swift, who, however, uses it of a specific "sell" practised at Court. † by ca. 1750. Coll. See esp. Onions' Shakespeare Glossary, Grose, 2nd ed., and F. & H. revised.


barge, v. Speak roughly or abusively to: ca. 1850–1920. Albert Smith, 1861, 'Whereupon they all began to barge the master at once'. Prob. ex barges.—2. Whence, at Charterhouse and Upping-

D.U.E. ham, to hustle (a person): late C. 19–20.—3. Hence (1), gen. barge about: to move, or rush, bravely (about): late C. 19–20. W. Ex a barge's clumsy motion. Cf. the next three entries.—3. To push or knock: Public Schools: late C. 19–20. P. G. Wodehouse, Tales of St. Anselm's, 1903, 'To him there was something wonderfully entertaining in the process of "barging" the end man off the edge of the form into space, and upsetting his books over him.'


barge in, v.i. To intrude; to interfere, esp. if rudely or clumsily: C. 20. Manchon. Cf.: barge into. To collide with: orig. Uppingham School (—1890). In C. 20, gen., and often in = meet, encounter esp. if unexpectedly. Cf. barge (v. 2), barge in.

barge-man. (Gen. pl.) A large, black-headed maggot of the kind that, formerly, infested ship's biscuits: nautical: mid-C. 19–20; ob. Bowan.


barge-pole, wouldn't touch with (the end of) a. One person thus indicates that he will have nothing to do with either another person or, it may be, a project: coll.: late C. 19–20. Cf. not touch with a pair of tongues.

bargee. A lout; an uncultivated person: Public Schools' coll.: 1909. P. G. Wodehouse, Mike.

barges. Imitation breasts: proletarian: ca. 1884–90. Ware adds: 'Which arrived from France, and prevailed for about four years ... From their likeness to the wide prow of canal- barges'.


bark. An Irish person: C. 19. See Barks.—2. The human skin: from ca. 1750; in C. 18, dial.—3. A cough: from ca. 1870; coll. as is the vbl.n., barking, (a fit of) coughing (—1788: see Grose at Barkshire).

bark, v.t. Scrape the skin off: from ca. 1850, e.g. in Tom Brown's Schooldays.—2. V.i. To cough: from ca. 1880.—3. 'To sit up at night to watch the fire when camping out in the open veld', Pettman: South African: 1873, Boyle, To the Cape for Diamonds. Ex a dog's barking.


bark off, take the. To reduce in value; as in Dickens, 1849. (Take the skin off.)

bark up the wrong tree. To be at fault in an attempt, an aim, a method; follow a false scent; deal with the wrong person. Orig. U.S. (—1839); anglicised ca. 1890, but less in Britain than in Australia and New Zealand. Coll. rather than s. Ex a dog hunting a racoon.

barker. A pistol: Scott (1815), Dickens, Charles
Barney


Barking Creek, have been to. To have a bad cough: a ca. 1820–50 variant of Barksheirle, 2, q.v. Lee.

*braking iron. Pistols: late C.16–early C.19 c.; recorded by Grose, 1785.—2. In the Navy, ca. 1630 70, large muskets, pistols.

Barks is willing) An indication of a man's willingness to marry; later, to do anything. Coll. Ex the character in David Copperfield, 1849–50.

Barks. The Irish: either low or c. To judge by the anon. No. 717, in use ca. 1845, but prob. much earlier. Cf. :

Barkshire. Ireland: C. 19.—2. Also, late C. 18–19, as in Grose, 2nd ed., 'A member or candidate for Barkshire; said of one troubled with a cough, vulgarly styled barking'; ob.

barley broth. 'Oil of barley', i.e. strong beer: 1785, Grose; † by 1860.


barley. Very eccentric: mad: mid-C. 19–20. Ex barmy, full of barm, i.e. yeast. Cf. the (mainly Yorkshire) proverbial saying, his brain's will work without barm, Ray, 1670; Burns, 1785, 'My barmiah noddle's working fine' (O.E.D.); Ware, 1909, notes the variant barmy in the crumpet. The E.D.I. remarks, 'frothing like barm [yeast], hence, full of ferment, flotty, empty-headed'. Cf. barmy, v.—3. Hence, a mad or a very eccentric person: non-cultural: from ca. 1880. Also in dial. (E.D.I.)


barn. A parson's. 'Never so full but there is still room for more', Grose, 2nd ed.: C. 19–early 19 coll. whence the C. 19 Dorsetshire big as a person's barn.

barn-door. A target too big to be missed: coll.: late C. 17–20; hence barn-door practice, battles in which the game can hardly escape.—2. A batsman that blocks every ball: from ca. 1880; ob. Cf. donemuller.

Barney


barn-stormer. A strolling player: theatrical (1859). H., 1st ed. Coll. by 1884 (O.E.D.'s date), S.E. by 1900.—2. barn-storming, ranting acting, must also have long preceded the earliest O.E.D. record (1884). They frequently performed and stormed in barns: see, e.g., Hugh Walpole's Rogue Herries.

Barnaby dance. To move quickly or unevenly: C. 18–10 coll. Ex 'Barnaby, an old dance to a quick movement' (Grose, 2nd ed.) popular in C. 17. Barnaby, it seems, was a dancing jester.

barnacle. A too constant attendant; an acquaintance keeping uncomfortably close to one: from ca. 1600; coll.—2. One who speaks through his nose: ca. 1560–1600.—3. 4, 6, 8. In † c., there are at least four senses —A pickpocket; (? C. 18–) C. 19; a good job easily got: late C. 17–18 (B.E.); a gratuity given, at horse-sales, to grooms: late C. 17–18; a decoy swindler: late C. 16–early 17: Greene, Dekker.—7. 'A senior officer who hangs on to the job to which his juniors hope to be appointed': naval: late C. 19–20. Bowen.

barnacled, ppl. adj. Wearing spectacles: from ca. 1600; coll.

barnacles. Spectacles: in mid-C. 16–17, gen. coloured: in C. 18–19, any spectacles: coll. Prob. ex barnacle, a powerful bit for horse or ass (as in Wyclif, 1382); for these old spectacles pinched the nose considerably.—2. In c. (late C. 17–18: B.E.), letters.


*barnard's law. 'A drunken cosinage by cards'; Greene; c. : ca. 1530–1630.

barnbook. See bundoob.

Barner, barker. 'A roaring' blade, a fast man of North London', Ware, who derives it ex 'Highbury Barn, one of those rustic London gardens which became common casinos': North London: ca. 1800–80. Cf. barn, q.v.


Barnet Fair. The hair: rhyming s., orig. (—1857) thieves'. 'Duscange Anglicus.' In C. 20, often Barnet.

Barney. The invariable Australian nickname (C. 20) of men named Allen. Ex Barney Allen, a famous and very wealthy Australian bookmaker.

barney. A jollification, esp. if rowdy; an outing: from late 1850's; ob. H., 1st ed. † ex Barney, typical of a noisy Irishman (cf. puddy, anger: W.).—2. † hence, crowd: low s. or c. (—1859). Ibid. —3. Humbug, cheating: low (1864). H., 3rd ed. This sense may have a different origin: cf. 'come / come / that's Barney Castle! ... an expression often uttered when a person is heard making a bad excuse in a still worse cause', recorded in the Denham Tracts, 1846–59, Apperson, whose other two Barney proverbs suggest that the ultimate reference is to 'the holding of Barnard Castle by Sir George Bowes during the Rising of the North in 1669', E. M. Wright, Rustic Speech, 1913.
barracoota, -coota. An inhabitant of Hobart, Tasmania: Australian nickname (-1808); ob. Ex the name of an edible fish. Morris.

barrage. An excessive number or quantity: military: 1917; ob. Ex the myriad shells fired during a barrage.

barrakin. See barrakin.

barrack. (Gen. pl.) False dice so made that the four (quatre) and the three (trois) were seldom cast: c. of ca. 1600–50. Dekker; Taylor (1630).


barrak the better berring, never a. Nothing to choose between them: coll.: from 1650's; slightly ob. Bale, ca. 1640; Jonson, 1633; Fielding, 1736; FitzGerald, 1822. Apperson. Obviously ex the fish-markets.


barrack. (Military) the Fourth Foot Regiment; since ca. 1881, the King's Own Royal Regiment (Lancaster). From its blue facings and its colonel of 1734–49, the celebrated General Wm. Barrall.

barraker. A cow not calving for a given season, i.e. for a year: farming coll. > S.E.: from ca. 1870.

barr. To convey (a 'drunk') home on a barrow: either low Cockney or c.: ca. 1870–1915. Ware.


barrakin; occ. barrakin. Gibberish; a farrago of words; jargon: Cockney's: Henry Mayhew, 1851; ob. Of the prob. Fr. original (barougouin) H., 1st ed., rather aptly remarks that "Miége calls it "a sort of stuff", for Frenchmen still say Je ne puis rien comprendre à ce barougouin. Cf. barraking, q.v.


barring-out. (Schools) the shutting of the door against a master: from ca. 1700; coll.: S.E. by ca. 1840. Notable instances in Swift and Tennison.

*barrister's. A coffee-house affected by thieves: c.: late C. 19–early 20. Ex 'a celebrated host of this name', Ware.


barrow-man. A costermonger: C. 17–19; S.E. by 1700.—2. A man under sentence of transportation: ca. 1810–50. Lex. Bal., 'Alluding to the convicts at Woolwich, who are principally employed in wheeling barrows full of brick or dirt'.


barr. A harpoon: C. 19. Bowen, 'More used by the sword-fishermen than the whalers'. Per-
BAT, CARRY


bat, carry (out)—occ. bring out—one's. To oustalk others; finally to succeed: coll. : from ca. 1870. Ex a batman not out at cricket; the lit. sense 'goes back to the less luxurious days when the man 'out' left the bat for the next comer', W.

bat, of (rarely on) one's own. Without assistance; independently: coll. >, by 1890, S.E. (Sydney Smith, 1845.) Also ex cricket.

bat, sling or spin the. See sling the bat.


*bat-fowl, v.t. and i. To swindle; victimise the simple or the inexperienced: from ca. 1565, Greene. Very little later were its pure derivatives, bat-fowler, a swindler, confidence trickster, and the vbl.n., bat-fowling. All > by 1840. Ex the nocturnal catching of birds by dazzling them and then batting them with a stick.


batch. A dose or bout of liquor: late C. 18–early 19. Grosie, 2nd ed. Prob. ex dial. : cf. batch, a quantity of things (e.g. bottles).

batch, v. See bach, v.—batchelor's fare. See bachelor's fare.


bate. See bat.


*Batte's farm, feed the chickens on Charley. To be put to the treadmill: c. of ca. 1850–90. Ex preceding.

Bath. give the Order of the. To duck: from ca. 1895. Punning; cf. give the Order of the Boot.—see order.

Bath, go to. To become a beggar: mid-C. 17–19. Bath, being fashionable, attracted many vagrants. As ca. 1820–30, an injunction, often with addition of and get your head shaved: stop it, go away! , 'dry up, you're crammed!' In addition to beggars, Bath drew lunatics, who were 'supposed to benefit from the waters' of this noted spa (W.).

bath-mat. (Gen. pl.) 'The flooring of wooden battens laid over the mud of trenches': military: 1915; slightly ob. F. & Gibbons.


bathing Towel. Lord (earlier, General) Baden-Powell: from ca. 1876. Also, from 1900, B.P.


*batmer. See battenier.


batz, adj. Very extravagant; mad, to any degree: C. 20. Ex bats in the belfry.

Bats, Captain. George Ranseley, notable Kentish smuggler of the 1820's: ca. 1820–40, then historic. Bowen, 'From his readiness to employ batmen, or armed bullies, to protect his runs from the Coast Blockade men'.

bats in the belfry, have. To be very eccentric; mad, to any degree: late C. 19–20.


batta. See batty, n.

*battalion. A gang of criminals: C. 18 c. [battles. Account(s) for provisions: j.; not s. nor coll. as implied by F. & H.]

*batt(e)ner. An ox: mid-C. 17–18 c. Coles, 1676; B.E. Beef tending to batten (fattion).


batter, (go) on the. (To walk the streets) as a harlot, to be debauched; to be on a riotous spree: from late 1830's; ob. H. Rodger, 1839 (O.E.D.); H., 1st ed.; Whiteing, 1890. Presumably cognate with U.S. bat (1848); cf. bat, v.r.

batter through. To struggle through (e.g. a part): proletarian: C. 19–20 coll. ob. Ware. Abbr. batter one's way through.

battered. Given up to debauchery: from ca. 1890:.... Cf. go on the batter.


batterfng, battyfng. (Lit. and fig.) to batter, maul: ca. 1830–1830, then dial. The former was S.E., the latter (C. 18–20) is a sol.

batteries. Defective type of printers': 1500 (O.E.D.) coll. >, by 1010, j. Ex batter, 'a bruise on the face of printing type'.

Battersea. See simples, go to Battersea to be cut for the.

Battle-Axe Company, the. The 'J' Coast Battery of the Royal Artillery: military coll. : from 1809, when its predecessors (the 43rd Company, 7th Battalion, R.A.) received, for services at the capture of Martinique, a trophy consisting of a French battle-axe. F. & Gibbons.

battle-bag. A big rigid airship designed to operate with the Fleet: naval: 1915; ob. Bowen.


Battle of the Nile. A tilo; a bat: rhyming s. (—1869); ob. H., 1st ed. Occ. battle (—1874), battle-royal. A vehement quarrel, a vigorous fight; from ca. 1800; coll. >, by 1860. B.E. Ex medieval jousting between two sides each commanded by a king (S.E.); also cock-pit j.

battle the watch. 'To do one's best against difficulty. To depend on one's own exertions': nautical coll. : mid-C. 19–20; slightly ob. Bowen

battledore. See B from a battledore, not to know.—Cf. battledore-boy, one learning his alphabet: late C. 17–mid 18; coll. or, rather, S.E. Here, however, battledore is able. 


Battling 'Els (or L's), the. The “L.” Class of destroyers: naval coll.: G.W. (F. & Gibbons.)


battings. (Public schools') a weekly allowance of money (—1864). Either coll. or j. Mostly at Winchester, where used from before 1850: E.D.D.

*battener. See batterer. (Coles spells it batterer.)

batty. Wags, porquisists: coll.: orig. (Hook, 1824), batto, ex Hindustani; in India it properly means (late C. 17–20) subsistence money, extra pay on campaign, then pay for Indian service. Yule & Burnell.

batty, adj. Mad: C. 20, esp. among soldiers. Cf.—perhaps ex—bats in the belfry.

batty-fang, best: coll. C. 19–20, ob. Also, in C. 17–19, battier-fang. Prob., to hit and bite; Ware's evidently battre à fin is presumably a joke.

bawl. See bow, b'sh help me.—baubee. See bawbee.

—baubles. See bawbee—baudy. See bawdy.

bawder. (Winchester College) a false report: from ca. 1850. Hence sport and, depleted; one. (Gen.) a mistake; mid-C. 19-20, ob. A survival of balak, baull, C. 15–18 S.E. for a mistake or blunder.

bawl, give the miss in. See miss in baull.

bawll (balk), at. To avoid: coll.: 1908 (O.E.D. Sup.). Semantia: 'jib at'.

bawl (or balk), in. Cheeked; at a loss: coll.: from ca. 1880. Ex billiards; in India it properly means (late C. 17–20) subsistence money, extra pay on campaign, then pay for Indian service. Yule & Burnell.

*bauker. Frequently spelt bauker, q.v.

*baw-baw', quoth Bagshau. You're a liar: semi-proverbial c.p. (—1570); t by 1700. Levins; Naethe. Ex baaw-baw', indicating contempt or derision: Bagshau, prob. for the jingle. F. & H. revised.

bawbee. Money; cash. C. 19–20. In singular, coll. for a halfpenny, a 'copper': late C. 17–20, as in B.E.

bawbles. (Properly but rarely bawbies.) Human tattletales: late C. 18–early 19. Gruse, 3rd. Earlier, e.g. in Shakespeare, bawbe = the penis; this is prob. S.E.

bawbard. Larboard: nautical coll.: C. 18–19. A corruption of larbourn (Bowen); prob. influenced by Fr. babord.

bawcock. A fine fellow, gen. derisively: Shakespeare's Henry V; † by 1700, though resuscitated by Ainsworth in 1862. Coll.: ext Fr. beau coq.


bawdy bachelor. A 'confirmed' bachelor: late C. 17–19, low coll. B.E. (But how hard he falls!)


*bawdy-ken. A brothel: c. or low s.: ca. 1810–

*bawker. A cheater at bowls: late C. 16–early 17 c. Gruse. (=basker.) At least once it is misspelt basker (Greene, at beginning of 2nd Cony-Catching).

*bawl. 'To suck or swallow' : East End of London c. (—1933). George Orwell, Down and Out.

bawl out. A C. 20 and perhaps catastrophic variant of bowl out, q.v.


Bay, the. The Port Elizabeth: South African coll.: from ca. 1870. Ex Algoa Bay, on which the town stands. Pettman.

Bay fever. 'A term of ridicule applied to convicts, who shamed illness, to avoid being sent to Botany Bay': Lex. Bal.: coll.: ca. 1810–60. Cf.: Bay of Condomine. 'Where we console our friends, if plucked, and left at a nonplus', Egan's Gruse, 1823: Oxford University; ca. 1820–40.


Bayard of ten toes. One's feet. Esp. ride B. ... toes, to walk. Coll. in late C. 16–early 18, then dial. (ob.). Breton, Fuller, Gruse. Breton's use in Good and Bad, 1616, tends to show that the phrase had been current long before that. Ex Bayard, a horse famous in medieval romance, Aperson.


Bays, the. The 2nd Dragon Guards: military coll.: 'from 1767 when the regiment was first mounted on bay horses', F. & Gibbons.

Bayar, captain. A spronger: ca. 1879–1910; mostly London. Because so many of these club parasites resided in Baywater, W.2. Cf. turnpike sailor.

*bazaar. A shop; a counter: c. ca. 1850–80. 'Ducango Angels'. Ex (and cf.) S.E. sense ex Hindi—ultimately Persian bazaar, a market.

*bazaar, v.t. To rob; gen. as bazaar'd: Society: 1882–ca. 1915. Ware derives it ex 'the extortion practised by remorseless, smiling English ladies at bazaars'.

*bazaar (or B.), in. The. In the (money-)market: to be bought; procurable: Anglo-Indian coll. of late C. 19–20. Thus, in Richard Blaker, Here Lies a Most Beautiful Lady, 1933, an Indian Army officer says, 'Garstein seems to think that Johnnie's oil shares are as good as anything in the Bazaar at the moment.' Ex the importance that the bazaars have in life in India.


Bazooker. A thing, esp. if mechanical (e.g. a motor-car): low: C. 20. (R. Blaker, Night Shift, 1934.) An artificial word: cf. oog-a-ka-piv.
when lato also in low low forcibly low C. Brandon) defeat cf. C. energetic (sense ob. low coll.)

See느 fewcomes, officer. (esp. C.)

Grose. 


be damned. See damned, be.

good! A c.p. 'au revoir': from ca. 1012. B. & F. Often be good and, if you can't be good, be careful!

be sorra! See be sorra!—be jabers! See jabers! be.—be there. See there be.—be yourself! See yourself be.

beach, be on the. To be or become a beach-comber; coll.: late C. 19-20. Cf.:

beach, on the. Ashore, whether on leave or having retired from the sea: nautical: mid-C. 19-20. Bowen. Also be beached, to be 'put out of employment': naval: late C. 19-20, [F. & Gibbons].


beached, be. See beach, on the.

Beachy Bill. A Turkish heavy gun at Gallipoli: military: 1915. B. & P.

*beadle. A blue roqueulare; esp. to fly or sport a beadle, to wear one: c.: ca. 1820-50. Egan's Grose. Prob. because beaddles often wore a blue jacket.

[beagle. A spy, man-hunter: despite F. & H., it is S.E.]


*beak. A magistrate: C. 18-20. In C. 16-17, the form was beak, the meaning a constable (a sense lingering till ca. 1860); also it was c., as beak itself was until ca. 1850, since when the most frequent use has been up before the beak, on trial by a magistrate; in the G.W. this phrase is before the orderly officer. See esp. Grose, P.—Hence, 2, in schools (esp. Eton and Marlborough), from ca. 1880, an assistant master.—3. The nose: Thackeray, The Newcomes, 1854. (Very much earlier in dial. see the E.D.D.) See esp. Grose, P.; Manchon, 1923, notes keep your beak up, don’t lose heart!: lower classes! All senses prob. ex Fr. bec, a beak.—4. See beaker.

*beak, v. Late C. 16-early 17 c. as in Rowlands, 1610, 'What maund do you beake, what kind of begging use you?' (O.E.D.).—2. To bring (a male-factor) before a magistrate: low (—1897). Baumann, rightly, implies that it is used mostly in the passive. Ex beak, n., 1.

beak, strap one's. (Of the male) to cott: low: late C. 19-20; ob.

beak-gander. A judge in the higher courts: from ca. 1870; ob. (Gander = old man.)

BEANS, SPILL THE

*beaker, occ. abbr. to beak. A fowl. C. 19-20 c. as is (—1839: Brandon) the derivative beaker(n-hunter, a poultry-yard thief.


beam, broad in the. Of (a person) broad-seated: C. 19-20; orig. nautical.

beam-ends. The buttooks: Marryat, 1830; Outhbert Bede, 1853. Cf. next.

beam-ends, on one's. Utterly exhausted: nautical: ca. 1830-80 Marryat.—2. In a difficulty (Dickens, 1844); short of money (H. Mayhew). Coll. Ex a vessel in imminent danger of capsizing.

beamy old buss. Any very broad ship: nautical coll.: mid-C. 19-20. Bowen. Ex the broad herring buss or smack; cf. broad in the beam.


bean, not have a. Esp. I haven't a bean, I'm penniless: late C. 19-20. (O.D.D., 1894 Sup.) Cf.: bean, not worth a. Of very little value: from C. 13; coll. since ca. 1400.

bean, old. See old bean.


bean-cod. The Iberian type of small craft with sharp lines and a stream raking aft from the water-line: nautical: C. 19-20; virtually +. Bowen. Ex shape.

bean-feast. A jollification: C. 20. Orig. (1806) an annual feast given to workmen by their employers. (Tailors as early as 1890 applied bean-feast to any good meal.) Hence bean-feaster, ca. 1833-1900, a participant in such an annual feast.—2. The act of kind: low: C. 20; ob.

bean-pole or -stick. A tall thin man: coll. (ex dial.) > almost S.E.: from ca. 1830.

bean-tosser. The penis: low: late C. 19-20; ob.

beaner. A chasteisement: proletarian, mostly London (—1909); ob. Ware. Ex beans, give, q.v.

beano. Orig. (—1898) an annual feast: printers'.—2. From ca. 1897 (see Ware), a jollification. Ex bean-feast, perhaps (via lingua franca) influenced by Sp. bueno or It. buono, good. Cf. bingo, q.v.


beans. See bean.

beans, abstain from. To take no part in politics: not very gen. (—1923); ob. Manchon.


beans, give. To chasteis: defeat severely (—1890). Kipling.—2. get beans, be chasteisied.

beans, like. Excellently; forcibly: from ca. 1860; ob.

beans, spill the. See spill the beans.
BEANS MAKE FIVE

beans make five (white ones), know how many.
To be alert: Galt, 1839; adumbrated in Shelton's known numbers are five, 1612. Apperson.

beans in a or one blue bladder, three blue. Noisy and empty talk: late C. 16–18. Origin obscure: even Nares failed to discover it.

beanly. Vigorous; spirited: from ca. 1850. Cf. full of beans (see beans): beans being great energy-makers.—2. Hence, in good humour: from ca. 1890.

bear. At first (ca. 1700), stock sold in the hope of fall: either S.E. or j. Then (—1744) the speculator for a fall, as in Foote, Colman, Scott; the term > coll. only ca. 1900, Peacock having, in 1860, written: 'In Stock Exchange slangs, bulls are speculators for a rise, bears for a fall.' See the chapter on commercial slang in my Slang. The origin phrase was prob. sell the bear-skin, such bargainers being called bear-skin jobbers, in reference to the peculiar habit of selling the bear's skin before one has caught the bear'. Hence, sell a bear, to sell what one does not possess: C. 18 coll.—2. The pupil of a private tutor: late C. 18–mid-C. 19. See bear-leader.—Also, 3, a very gruff person: C. 18–20 coll. Notably used by Lord Chesterfield.

—4. 'A matted stone or shot, or a coil mat filled with sand, dragged over the deck to clean it after the fashion of a holystone' (Lowen): nautical coll.: mid-C. 19–20; ob. Ex ob. S.E. bear (bere), a pillow-case.

bear, v.i. To speculate for a fall in prices: Stock Exchange, from ca. 1840, as is the v.t. sense, to effect or manoeuvre a fall in the price of (a stock or commodity). This term > j., and by 1930 it was considered S.E.

bear, play the. To behave rudely and roughly: late C. 16–17: coll. >, by 1600, S.E.

bear-garden discourse (or language) or jaw. 'Rude, vulgar language,' Grose, 1st ed.: late C. 17–early 19. With discourse or language, coll.; with jaw, a. Ray, 1678, has 'He speaks Bear-garden.' Apperson.
bear, it would bite or have hit you, if it were or had been: A semi-proverbial c.p. applied, as B.E. phrases it, to 'him that makes a close search after what lies just under his Nose': C. 17–18.

Draxo, 1633; Swift. (Apperson.)

Bear-Leader, the. Boswell (1740–96), because he 'led' Johnson (Ursa Major): late C. 18.—2. Wm. Gifford, the 'beareish' critic (1757–1826): early C. 19. (Dawson.)

beareader. A travelling tutor in the days of the Grand Tour: Walpole, 1749; Thackeray, 1848; H., 1874. Coll. in C. 19; ↑ by 1880. He licks 'cubs' into shape: W.
bear one's blushing honours . . . See thick upon one.

bear-pits, the. The empty and barred yards outside the 'zeros' (w.c.a.'s): Botham School: C. 20. Another Dict. of Botham Slang, 1925.
bear-play. Rough and noisy behaviour: apparently not recorded before 1883. Coll., soon S.E.
bear-up. The act of pursuing a woman: coll. U.S. >, by 1900, Australian; rare. H. Lawson (O.E.D. Sup.).
bear to the stake, go like a. To 'hang an Arse': B.E.; coll. C. 15–early 19. Lydgate, ca. 1430; Florio; Defoe; Scott. (Apperson.)

bear up, v. To support in a swindle (—1823); ob. by 1900. Hence bearer-up, such a supporter.—Hence, 2, v.i., to 'log-roll': 1883, The Referee, Dec. 2.—3. Have courage: coll. C. 17; S.E. thereafter, though the imperative, bear up I, has a coll. tang.
bear with, play the. To play the duce with: dial. (—1881) >, by 1889, coll.; ob. O.E.D. (Sup.).
bear, make a man's. To outwit or trick him: coll. C. 15–16.
bear, to one's. To a person's face; frankly; openly: coll. (in C. 20 S.E. and archaic); from ca. 1780.
bear-splitter. A frequenter of prostitutes, an enjoyer of women: late C. 17–early 18; B.E. and Grose. Cf. U.S. low s. or c. beard-jammer.—2. Also, the penis: C. 18–19.
bear without a razor, make a man's. To behead: coll. ca. 1520–1700.
beardie, -y (or B.). A Christian Israelite: a Victorian (Australia) nickname: 1875, O.E.D. (Sup.). A sect that let its hair grow.

bearing, vb.ln. Acting as a speculative 'bear': from ca. 1860, Stock Exchange.

bearings, bring one to one's. To cause to see reason: late C. 18–20 coll., orig. (—1785) nautical, as Grose, 1st ed., indicates.
bearish. Indicative of, natural to, or tending to, a fall in prices: Stock Exchange; from ca. 1880.
bears', are you there with your. There you are again!; so soon? James Howell, 1642; Richardson, 1749; Scott, 1820. ↑
bearskin-jobber. A seller of 'bear' stock (—1726); money market; ob. by 1750. See bear.
bear. Anything naturally unpleasant or momentarily displeasing, as a beast of a day (Baumann, 1887): coll. from ca. 1860.—2. A youth that, having left school, goes to Cambridge to study before entering the University; Cambridge University; from ca. 1820; very ob.—3. A bicycle: youths'; ca. 1870–90. Ware.
bear, drink like a. To drink only when thirsty: late C. 18–19. Grose, 2nd ed. Contrast S.E. drink like a fish.
bear with two backs. A man and woman in the act of copulation'; Grose; gen. with make (the), as in Shakespeare's Othello. ↑ by 1830 and prob. never gen. a.
bearish. A coll. and endearing form, orig. Scottish, of beast; gen. only since ca. 1890.
beastly. Unpleasant; bad (however slightly) coll.; in C. 20, the adj. vorges on S.E., while the adv. has definitely remained coll. Cf. awful, terrible. From ca. 1690, as is the adv., which = very. Anstey, 1882, has feeling beastly: The Daily Telegraph, 1865, he was in good health. . . looked almost 'bearishly well': but adumbrations appear in Barclay, 1500, Dekker in 1611, in Johnson, 1778, and in Dickens, 1844.
besteat. See bhestie.
bear. A normal round (as of prostitute or policeman): G. A. Stevens, 1788; sphere of influence:

beaut. Exhausted: from ca. 1830. Often dead beat. — 2. Baffled, defeated: coll. : from ca. 1840. beat. get a. (Confined with on.) To obtain an advantage (over): from ca. 1830; ob. In, c., the term implies secret, shady, or illicit means. beat, have (a person). To be superior to, to have the better of: from ca. 1910.


beaut goose or (nautical) the booby. To strike the hands across the chest and under the armpits to warm one’s chilled fingers: coll. : from ca. 1880. (O.E.D.) Earlier, cuff or beat Jonas. Jocularly varying beat oneself.


beaut it while the beating’s or going’s good. To depart at ease or without trouble: C. 20 coll.: f ex U.S.

beaut one’s way through the world. To push oneself ahead: from ca. 1860; coll. beat the band. To be remarkable, superior, startling: C. 20. Esp., That beats the band. — 2. Whence, to beat the band, greatly, excessively, utterly, as in the Tommies’ translation of the Hymn of Hate: ”Ate of the ’art and ’ate of the ’and,”’ Ate by water and ’ate by land,”’ ’Oo do we ’ate to beat the band? England!” (W.). Cf. the prototype, to bang banagher (see banagher).

beaut the hoof. To walk: late C. 17–18. In Anthony Wood’s Athenæ Oxonienses, 1691.

beaut the road. To travel by rail without paying: low, mostly U.S. (— 1890).

beaut the streets. To walk up and down: C. 19–20: coll. till ca. 1890. S.E.

beaut up the quarters of. To visit unexpectedly, very informally: coll.: 1741, Richardson (O.E.D.); Ware (the shorter form). From ca. 1891, gen. just beat up. Ex S.E. sense, ’to disturb’.

beauten out. Impoverished: in very severe straits: H. Mayhew, 1851; coll.; ob.


*beating the bush. The inveigling of a prospective victim: c. of ca. 1855–56. Greene.

beau-catcher. See bow-catcher.


think it represents a sol.: *becc is a S.E. pronunciation; one of two that are recognised to be equally correct. In short, it rivals *off in ineptitude.

bed, get up on the wrong side of the. See wrong side.—bed, more belongs to marriage than . . . See legs in a bed.

bed, go up a ladder to. To be hanged: mid-C. 18–early 19: low s. verging on c. 'In many country places', says Grove, 1st ed., 'persons hanged are made to mount up a ladder, which is afterwards turned round or taken away; whence the term, 'turned off'.

[bed-bug. The entry in the first edition was based on my foolish mispronunciation of two passages in James Curtis's *The Gilt Kid, 1936.]


bed one has made, lie or sleep in the. To abide (patiently) by one's actions: from ca. 1850; coll. > proverbial >, by 1850, S.E. Hanway, 1733 (O.E.D.1.). By fig. extension of make a bed, to put it in one's mind.

bed with a mattock, put to, often amplified with and tucked up with a spade. Dead and buried: C. 18–early 19. From ca. 1830, the form was gen. put to bed with a pickaxe and shovel, while C. 19–20 dial. prefers put to bed with a shovel.

bed-fag(ger)ot. A hussey; a harlot: coll.: C. 19–20; ob. (Not a Society term.) II., 3rd ed. Ex fugit as part of firewood. Cf. curving-pan, q.v. But bed-sister, -piece, and -pessar may be S.E.

bed-house. A house of assignation where beds may be had for any period desired: C. 19 coll.

bed in one's boots, go to. To be very drunk: low coll.: late C. 19–20.

bed-post, between you and me and the. Between ourselves: coll.: 1830 (O.E.D. Sup.); Bulwer Lytton, 1832. Variants with post, as in Dickens, 1836—door-post, from ca. 1860—gate-post, id.—gate, C. 20.

bed-post or -staff, in the twinkling of. Immediately: resp. from ca. 1830 (ob.), and ca. 1860–1850 (Shadwell, 1870). Prob. ex its well-known use as a ready and handy weapon: O.E.D.


bed-staff, in the twinkling of a. See bed-post, in . . .

bed-work. Lit., work that can be done in bed; hence, very easy work: coll.: late C. 16–18. Shakespeare, in *Troilus and Cressida.

bedad I An Anglo-Irish coll. asseveration: 1710. Swift, 1848, Thackeray, "Bedad it's him," said Mrs. O'Dowd, O.E.D. Lit., by dad or (of begad, q.v.) by God.

bedaubed all over with lace. A 'vulgar saying of any one dressed in clothes richly laced', Grove, 1st ed.: mid-C. 18–mid-19.

bedder. A college servant: Cambridge University; from ca. 1870.—2. A bed-room: Oxford University (1897); ob. O.E.D. (Sup.). Cf. bed-sitter, q.v. Also, in C. 20, at certain Public Schools: witness Desmond Coke, *The House Prefect, 1908.

bedford go. A rich chuckle: taverns: ca. 1835–60. Ex Paul Bedford, the actor. Ware.


*bee, put on the; v.t., put the bee on. To ask for a loan or a gift of money: c.: from ca. 1930. James Curtis, *The Gilt Kid, 1936. For semantics, cf. the corresponding v., sting.

bee-itch. See b.h.


bee in a treacle-pot. See busy as . . .

bee in one's or the head or bonnet, have a. To have queer ideas, be eccentric: C. 17–20; adumbrated in 1553 (Apperton); ob. Ilave an obsession: C. 20. A variant: one's head is full of bees, C. 16–20: this, however, also = one is (very) 'anxious' or 'restless' (Heywood; Franklin, 1745); † by 1900. Apperton.

bee-line, make or take a. To go direct: coll.; orig. (— 1830) U.S.; anglicised ca. 1870; in C. 20, S.E.

beebee. See beeb.

*Beecham's (pills). Bills, placards, etc., showing that one is an ex-soldier: tramps' c. (— 1935). Rhyming s. on bills.


beef, be dressed like Christmas. Dressed in one's best: from ca. 1870; ob. Ex a butcher's shop on Christmas Eve.

beef, be in a man's. To wound him with a sword: late C. 18–early 19. Grove, 1st ed. Cf.: beef, be in a woman's. To have intercourse with a woman: late C. 18–mid-19 (Grove, 2nd ed.). Contrast preceding entry and cf. do or have a bit of beef, take in beef, low for women in collo: C. 19–20.

beef or hot beef, cry or give. To set up a hue and cry: c.: C. 18–20, ob. Grove, 1st ed. Occ. whiddle beef.

beef, dressed like Christmas. clad in one's best: proletarian: from ca. 1860.

*beef, make. To decamp: C. 19 c. Cf. ampu- tate, q.v. and beef, cry.


beef, take in. See beef, be in a woman's.

*beef, whiddle. See beef, cry.

beef a bravio. To load the applause: music-halls: from ca. 1880; ob. Ware. Ex beef, v. : q.v.

beef a-la-mode. Stewed beef: commercial Lon- don (— 1909); ob. by 1915, † by 1920. Ware.
**BEEF-BOAT**

**beef-boat.** See beef-trip.


**beef-heart.** (Gen. pl.) A bean: low; late C. 19—20. B. & P. Rhyming on fart: ex the effect of (peas and) beans.

**beef into it, put some.** (Gen., imperative.) To try or work hard: coll.: C. 20. Cf. more beef!

**beef up!** q.v.

**beef (it), v.** To eat heartily: C. 19 coll.; orig. dial., then East End Cockney.

**beef it out.** To declare vociferously: Australian (—1816). C. J. Dennis.

**beef one's way (through).** To force one's way (through): Rugby football coll.: C. 20.

**beef-stick.** The bone in a joint of beef: military; ca. 1870—1910.

**beef-trip; beef-boat.** 'The service of supplying the Fleet with food': the ships therein engaged: naval coll.: G. W. Bowen.

**beef to the heels (or, in C. 20, knees), like a Mull-lar heifer.** (Of a man) stalwart, (of a woman) 'fine': mostly Anglo-Irish: mid-C. 19—20.

**beef-tugging.** 'Eating cook-shop meat, not too tender, at lunch-time': Ware: City of London, mostly clerks; (—1900): ob.

**beef up.** See beef, n. 3.

**beef up!** Full especially hard!, 'put some beef into it': nautical (—1903).


**beefiness.** Solid physique: coll., orig. (—1859) at Oxford.

***beefment, on the.* On the alert; c. (—1903). F. & H. Cf. beef, q.v.


**beefy.** Thick esp. of hands or ankles (—1859); obese, fleshy (—1860); stolid (1859): coll., all three senses. —2. Lucky (—1874). H., 5th ed.

**Beelzebub's Paradise.** Hell: C. 19—20 literary coll.; ob. Ex St. Matthew x. 25 and xii. 27 (F. & H.). Heywood, in his Proverbs, 1646, had used Beelzebub's bower.

**been.** Sol. for has (or have) been; was, were; went. C. 17—20. —2. See bene.

**been (or done).** A tautological elaboration, indicative of surprise or annoyance, of the second participle: illiterate coll.: 1837, Dickens, 'See what you've been and done,' O.E.D. Cf.: been and gone and done it, I (etc. have or he etc.) has. A jocularly coll. emphasised form of I have (etc.) done it, with esp. reference to marriage. C. 20. Ware. Ex illiterate speech (gorn and done it or as in preceding entry): cf. P. G. Wodehouse, Tales of a Fungi, 1905. Captain Kettle had, in the expressive language of the man in the street, been and gone and done it.' This elaboration is peculiarly reminiscent of veni, vidi, vici, which is a rhetorical amplification of vici.

**been in the sun.** Drunk. Variant been standing too long in the sun; cf. have the sun in one's eyes, be tipsy. Of these the first is C. 18—20 and recorded in Grose, the other two are C. 19—20.

**been there.** (Of women) having sexual experience: C. 19—20. (Of men) experienced: shrewd: anglicised ca. 1900 ex (—1888) U.S. Both senses are coll. and rare except when preceded by has or have.

**been-ship.** See beneship.

**Beer.** See Ack. —2. See:

**Beer.** Burton-on-Trent: railwaymen's: from ca. 1920. The Daily Herald, Aug. 5, 1936. So much beer is brewed there.

**beer, v.** To drink beer; to become intoxicated: coll.; ca. 1780—1850, as in Peter Findar.

**beer, do a.** To take a drink of beer: coll. (—1880). See do a beer, a bitter.

**beer, in.** Drunk: C. 19—20. A coll. that, ca. 1890, > S.E. Cf. in liquor.

**beer, on the.** On a bout of drinking: lower-class coll. (—1900). Ware. More gen., on the beer.

**beer, small, n. and adj.** (Something) unimportant, trifling: C. 17—20, coll. Shakespeare in Othello: 'To suckle fools, and chronicle small beer'. Hence think no small beer of oneself, have a good opinion of oneself, as in De Quincey (T earliest record), 1840.

**Beer and Bible Association.** Licensed victualers' leaders ('many of whom were strong High Churchmen', Dawson) and Conservatives leagued to resist a measure introduced by moderate Liberals in 1873. The Morning Advertiser, earlier known as The Gin and Gospel Gazette (it artfully backed beer as well as the Bible), was thereupon called The Beer and Bible Gazette. The B. and B. terms were ob. by 1882.

**beer and skittles, not all.** Not wholly pleasant: coll. from ca. 1860; by 1930 almost S.E.

**beer-barrel.** The human body: C. 19—20, coll.; ob. Cf. bacon and:

**beer-bottle.** 'A stout, red-faced man': London streets' (—1900); ob. Ware.

**beer-drink.** A gathering of aborigines to drink 'Kaffir beer': South African coll.: from the 1890's. Pottman.

**beer-eater.** A mighty drinker of beer: 1887, The Referee, Aug. 21; ob., except in the Army. Ware.

**beer (h).** A c.p. cry among artisans engaging a fine for some breach or omission: ca. 1850—1900. Ware.

**beer-singer.** A drinker, esp. if frequent, of beer: from ca. 1870.

**Beer Street (or beer street).** The throat: low (—1909); ob. Cf. Gutter Lane.

**beercage.** See beercracy. (Ca. 1880—1900.)

**beercracy.** Near-intoxication: coll. from ca. 1885. Ex S.E. beery (1859: H. 1st ed.)

**beercracy.** Brewers and publicans: coined in either 1880 or 1881. This might be described as pedantic coll.; the likewise coll. beerage, which, esp. as beercracy and peercracy, was much neater and much more viable, had app. > † by 1900 if not, indeed, by 1900 (Ware's testimony being ambiguous).

**beery buff.** A fool: rhyming s. on maff: C. 20.

**bees (the B.).** The Brentford 'soccer' team: sporting: C. 20.—2. bees. See be in...

**bees and honey.** Money: rhyming s.: from not later than 1892. E.D.D.

**bees, his head is full of.** To be very anxious, fanciful, restless: coll.: ca. 1640—1850. Apperson.

**bee's knee, not as big as a.** Very small; gen.
applied to a tiny piece of anything: late C. 18-20; coll. (ob.) and dial. verging on S.E. Locker-Lampson, 1899: Apperson.

bees' knees, the. The acme of perfection, beauty, attractiveness, skill, desirability, etc.: from ca. 1930. Only this year (1936) I heard a girl described as 'a screamer, a smash-er, a—oh! the bees' knees'. Cf. the cat's pyjamas.

*bees-wax. Soft, inferior cheese: c. or low s.: Moncrieff, in *Toms and Jerry*, 1821; ob.—2. Whence (?), a bore: gen. as old bees-wax: ca. 1850-1900.

bees-wing, old. A nickname for a genial drinker: from ca. 1870; gen. in address. Ex the film in long-kept port wine.

beestie. See *beestie*.

beetle, as deaf or dull or dumb as a. Extremely deaf, dull, or dumb: coll. verging on S.E.: resp. C. 18-19, C. 16-17, and C. 17-18. This may refer to the insect, not the insect.

beetle-case. A large boat or shoe: ca. 1850-1900.

beetle-crusher. A large, esp. if flat, foot: from ca. 1840 and popularised by Lecch in *Punch*. In this sense, no longer gen. after 1880, beetle-quasher was an occ. variant.—2. A large boat or shoe (—1840): in G.W. an Army boot. 'The blun-jacket’s name for a Marine’s boots, never his own', Bowen.—3. (Military) an infantryman: from ca. 1885; cf. the usual mud-crusher.


beetle off. To fly straight in departure: Air Force: 1915, F. & Gibbons, 'As a beetle flies'. Since the War, beetle about, to wander about actively, as frequently in John Brandon’s *The One-Minute Murder*, 1934, and beetle off, to depart, as in Denis Mackail’s *Summer Leaves*, 1934.

beetle-squasher. See beetle-crusher.


beetle’s (or beetles’) blood. Stout (the drink): Anglo-Irish (—1935). Ex the colour and the consistency.

beecrot mug. A red face: London streets: ca. 1870-1916. Prob. coined by Charles Ross, that creator of Ally Sloper, who was ‘a humoress of the more popular kind’ (Warc).


before on until is catastrophic: throughout Mod. E. F.

before the wind. Well-placed, prospering, fortunate: coll.: from ca. 1840; orig. nautical.

before you bought your shoe! A tailors’ c.p. implying that something has been done, or thought of, before: C. 20. Cf.:

before you came (or come) up! See came up...

Elaborations were ‘fore you listed, before you had a regimental number or your number was dry (or up) or you knew whether a button-stick was or you was breeched or you nipped, also before your Eyess is dropped or you lost the cardinals off your aese: or when your mother was baking bread on you or while you were clapping your hands at Charlie (Chaplin) or when you were off to school (with tags): or I was cutting barbed wire while you was or were cutting your teeth. B. & P.

The prototype is the proverbial saying (Fuller, 1732), your mamma’s milk is scarce out of your nose yet: Apperson. There is also a Shakespearean anticipation: see at nails on one’s toes,

beforehand with the world. Having a reserve of money: from ca. 1640; coll.; in C. 19 S.E.: C. 20, archaic.

begg (a person) for a fool, an idiot or an innocent. To consider, set down as a fool; from ca. 1580; coll. >, ca. 1700, S.E.; in C. 19-20, archaic. (O.E.D.)

begad! An exclamation, gen. in support: coll.: 1742, Fielding (*O.E.D.*). Ex by God! 

beggar! An occ. variant of beggar(h), q.v.

beggar. A euphemism for bugger: whether n. or v. E.g. in I’ll be beggarid if . . ., I swear I won’t . . .: C. 19-20.—2. (N. only.) Playfully coll.: from ca. 1830; cf. scamp.—3. A man, chap, fellow: from ca. 1850.

beggar boy’s ass. Bass (the drink): rhyming s.: late C. 19-20. P. P. *Rhyming Slang*, 1932. Often abbr. to beggar boy’s. (There is a curious connexion between P. P.’s volume of rhyming s. and that dict, which had been published only the year before: J. Phillips’ *Dict. of Rhyming Slang*.)


beggar-maker. A publican: late C. 18-early 19, coll. Grose, 1st ed., where also beggar-makers, an ale-house: an entry that should, I think, read beggar-maker, etc., for the singular is all that is necessary.

beggared it. See beggar, 1.

beggarily. More; coll.: C. 19-20. E.g. ‘He gave the rescuer a beggarily fiver.’

beggars. Cards of denomination 2 to 10: coll., C. 19-20; ob.

beggar’s benison. ‘May your p***k and (your) purse never fail you’ : low: C. 18-early 19. Grose, 1st ed. Cf. best in Christendom, both ends of the bush, and the sailor’s farewell, q.v.

beggar’s bolts or bullets. Stones: coll., resp. late C. 16-17, late C. 18-early 19 (as in Grose, 1st ed.).

beggar’s brown. Scotch snuff: coll.: C. 19-20; ob. Orig. and mainly Scottish. It is light brown in colour.

beggar’s bush, go (home) by. To be ruined: late C. 16-19; in 1684, Bullen has a rare variant, thus: ‘In the ends they go home . . ., by weeping cross, by beggers barren, and by knaves acre,’ Apperson. Beggars have always, in summer, slept under trees and bushes; in winter, if possible, they naturally seek a barn.


bein’ to, not to. ‘Not to (do something) emphasised; to be in no way; full short of being or doing: coll.: U.S. (1842): Thornton, anglicised ca. 1860. E.g. an ill-disposed person might say, ‘This does not begin to be a dictionary.’

bein’ up/on. To attack, either physically or verbally: coll.: ca. 1825, Mrs. Sherwood, ‘All the company began upon her, and bade her mind her own affairs.’

begorra(h)! By God! Anglo-Irish coll.: C. 19-20. By corruption. Cf. be jahers!

begun (in the preterite). Began: sol., in gen. opinion. This begun, though objectionable, is not strictly incorrect.)
behalf of, on. In behalf of, i.e. in the interest of: catachresis: late C. 18–20. As the O.E.D. remarks, to the loss of an important distinction *; see also Fowler.

behave oneself. To behave with propriety: coll.: mid-C. 19–20. (O.E.D.)


behind. The posterior; the rear part of a garment. The first record is of 1786. The O.E.D. and the S.O.D. designate it as coll. and low: in 1933, however, was it not on the borderline between coll. and Ed.?, and nearer to the latter? It certainly was no longer low: it lost that stigma ca. 1930. See Slang.—2. At Eton and Winchester Colleges, ca. 1820–1914, a back at ‘soccer’; coll. > j.

behind chests. ’ Dark nooks on the oorlop deck’: The Convoy: from ca. 1875. Massfield’s history of the Navy.

behind oneself, be. To be late, a long way behind, far from ‘up to the minute’: non-aristocratic coll., non-Smyth., non-Beor, mid-C. 1914–18. W. 19-20. Cf.:

behindativeness, have [e.g. a deal of]. To have a (big) dress-panner: Society: 1888–ca. 1905. Ware. Behove. Incorrect for behove: ed. 1470–1500. Malory. (O.E.D.)

‘Beiley’s ball (where the sheriff plays the music is added in Grose, 3rd ed.), dance at.’ To be hanged: late C. 18–early 19; prob. orig. c. Grose, 1st ed. It is not known who Mr. Beiley was; perhaps a notable London sheriff. But Beiley’s is more prob. a personified and punning perversion of bil‘sone, butlers; F. & H. infers that it implied an Old Bailey hanging.

bejain, occ. baijan. A freshman at the University of Edinburg (where by, etc., and nearer to the latter?), certainly St. Andrew’s. From ca. 1640: s. only in C. 17, then j. Ex the bec jaune of the Sorbonne, where the term was certainly a.

belos. A variant of becos, q.v.


belch. Beer, esp. if inferior and therefore apt to cause belching: from ca. 1600; ob. B.E. One recalls Sir Toby Belch, a jolly blade, but he, I surmise, avoided poor beer. Cf. europa.

belch, v.i. To eructate: C. 11–20: S.E. until mid C. 19; then a vulgarism.

belcher. A blue handkerchief white or, occ., yellow-spotted (Lez. Bat., 1811); from ca. 1860, loosely, a handkerchief of any base with spots of another colour. Soon > coll. and, from ca. 1875 it has been S.E. Ex the boxer Jim Belcher (d. 1811)–2. A (gen. hard) drink of beer: C. Hindley, 1876, but prob. in use at least twenty years earlier: circus and showmen’s s., which is nearer c. than to s.–3. A thick ring: 1861, Mayhew; ob. s.

belfry, the. The head: see bats in the belfry.


Belgians, give it to the. C.p. advice to a man complaining about his food or cl’ding or inquiring what to do with some superfluity: New Zealand soldiers’: 1916–18.


believe you, I. Yes! Coll. (—1835, when employed by Dickens): ob. Cf. the much later e.p., I believe you, my boy!, q.v.


bell, v. To run away with (a marble): schoolboys’, ca. 1850; 1910.

bell, ring one’s own. To blow one’s own trumpet: coll. verging on S.E.: C. 19–20; ob. Cf. who pulled your chain?, q.v. at chain.

bell, ring the. To win (v.i.), be the best: coll.: 1928 (O.E.D. Sup.). Either ex a weight-testing machine (O.E.D.) or ex the bell rung by a shot hitting the bull’s-eye at a shooting gallery.


bell, book and candle. Jocular coll. for the accessories of a religious ceremony: C. 19–20; coll. > S.E. Ex a medieval form of excommunication, these nn. occurring in the final sentence.

bells go rotten. See rotten, bells go.

bell-ropes. A man’s curl in front of the ear; cf. agrammar. Punning bell and bells. Low (—1868); ob.

bell-shangle. See bel-shangle.

bell the cat. To undertake something dangerous: from ca. 1720, coll.; S.E. by 1800.

bell-tongue. See bel-tongue.


belling cake. ‘Cake in which the plums are so far apart that they have to bellcr (bellow) when they wish to converse’, Ware: schools (—1909); ob bellers. See bellows.

bellibone. A smartly dressed girl: low (—1923) Manchon derives it ex Fr. belle et bonne.

bellied. Stuck fast; Tank Corps coll., applied to a tank under-caught by, e.g., a tree stump: 1917–18. F. & Gibbons.


bellows; illiterately, bellars. The lungs. Re-
corded for 1615, but that was a fig. use; as s., C. 18-20. Cf.:

bellows away! ; bellows him well! An adjuration to a
singer not to spare his opponent; i.e. to
make him pant for wind; boxing: ca. 1820-70. 'Jon Bee', 1823.

bellows to mend, have. (Of a horse) to be broken-
winded; hence, of a man: mid-C. 19-20. 'Cuth-
bert Bode ' in Verulant Green.

bellowed. Transported as a convict: ca. 1820-
60. Cf. (by) lug, q.v.

bellower. A blow in 'the wind': boxing, from ca.
1840; ob.--Hume, 2, a sentence of transportation
for life: c. of ca. 1810-60. Lex. Ital., 1811; Vaux. 
knap (i.e. nap) a bellower.

dell down. The last peel of chapel-warning:
Winchester College, ca. 1840-1900. Bells go single
was the second of the warning notices. See the
works of Mansfield and Adams.

belly, his eye was bigger than his. 'A saying of a
person at table, who takes more on his plate than he
can eat', Grose, 2nd ed.: mid-C. 18 mid-19.

belly-ache. A pain in the bowels. Since ca. 1840
it has been considered both coll. and low, but orig.
(— 1552), and until ca. 1800, it was S.E.

belly-ache, v. Grumble, complain, esp. queru-
lously or unreasonably: ex U.S. (— 1881), angli-
cised ca. 1900: coll., somewhat low.

belly and wipe my eyes with it, I could take up
the slack of my. I am very hungry: a nautical e.p.
frequent on ships where rations are inadequate:
late C. 19—20.

belly-band. A choker belt: military: from
1915. F. & Gibbons.

belly-bound. Costive: coll.: from ca. 1600 and
gen. of horses.

belly-bunker or -buster, get a. To be got with

belly-can. A tin vessel that, shaped like a saddle,
is easily secured about the body: used for the
earliest conveyance of beer and holding about four
quarts: political, 1880 +, but ob. by 1900.

*belly-cheat. An apron: ca. 1600—1830: c. or
low s. Compounds with cheat, earlier chete, a thing,
an article, are all either low s. or c. or—2. Also: c. :
c. : C. 17. Fletcher, 1622—3. (Cf. sense 1.) A
pad dewormed to produce a semblance of pregnancy:
c. (— 1823); f by 1890. 'Jon Bee'.

belly-cheer. Food: late C. 16 early 19; slightly
earlier (— 1540), gratification of the belly. V., to
feast heartily or luxuriously: C. 16-17. Orig. those
terms were S.E., but in the later C. 17 the v., in
C. 18-19 the n., were coll. The vb.l., belly-cheering,
meant eating and drinking: C. 18-19 coll.

belly-drop, do a. See the next.—2. To drop down
a. s. at all approaches: military: 1916; ob.
B, & P.

belly-dropping. Sectional rushes by attacking
troops advancing at the crouch and flopping down
at intervals: military coll.: 1916-18. F. &

verging on S.E.

belly-of-bellyful. A thrashing: late C. 16-19;
e.g. in Nashe, Chapman, Pepys. In the sense of a
sufficiency, the word has, since ca. 1840, >-coll.
simply because it is considered coarse:—(Of a
woman) have a-or have got her—bellyful, to be with

belly-furniture. Food: C. 17 coll., as in Urqu-
hart's Rabblats; cf. belly-timber.

belly-go-first. (Boxing) an initial blow, given—
as such a blow was once so often given—in the belly.
C. 19. 'Jon Bee', 1823.

belly-gut. A greedy, lazy person; gen. of a man:
coll.: C. 16-18.

belly-hedge. (Shrewsbury School) a steepelcheas
obstruction belly-high and therefore easily jumped:
from ca. 1850.

belly-jaunch. A glutton: mid-C. 16-17, coll.
verging on S.E.: cf. belly-gut.

belly-piece. A concubine, a mistress, a harlot:
coll.: C. 17—2. Also, an apron (cf. belly-cheat): late
C. 17—18.; coll. It occurs in that lively, slangy
play, Shadwell's Bury Fair.

belly-plea. An excuse of pregnancy, esp. among
female prisoners. C. 18—early 19, coll. Defoe, in
Moll Flanders, 1721: 'My mother pleaded her
belly, and being found quick with child, she was
resipt for about seven months'; Gay, in The
Beggar's Opera; Grose.

belly-rumflan. The penis: ? C. 17—19: low
(? coll. rather than s.). F. & H.

belly thinks ... See throat is cut, my belly
thinks my.

belly-timber. Food: from ca. 1600. In C. 17, S.E.
; then coll. In C. 19 a.; in C. 20, an archaism.
Butler's use tented to make it ludicrous. (O.E.D.)

belly-up, adj. and adv. Of a pregnant woman:
C. 17—18; low.

1870, it is mainly dial. Cf.

belly-wash. Thin liquor, rinsings: coll.: late

belliful, fight for a. Ioc. 'without stakes, wager,
or payment', Bee: pugilistic: mid C. 18—20; very ob.

belong. To be rightly a member of (club,
coterie, household, grade of society, etc.): U.S.

1800—2. Relatives: Dickens, 1852; coll.; ob.
below the belt, adv. and adj. Unfairly: from
ca. 1870; coll., in C. 20 S.E.

below the waist. Too bad; esp. nothing below
the waist, good or shrewd: tailor: C. 20. E.g.
The Tailor and Cutter, Nov. 29, 1928.

belsh. Incorrect spelling of belch, n., q.v. B.E.

belswagger. A bully; blustering fellow: coll.:
Gone, 1892; Dryden, 1688; Grose. ? by 1850.

distinguishes by spelling the former bellyswagger, the
latter as belswagger.

belt. A hit, blow, punch. 'He caught me an
awful belt on the ear.' From ca. 1895. Ex the v.: cf.
belt, q.v.

belt, give (a person) the. To dismiss or reject:

better. A harlot: 'old', says F. & H. (revised):
but when? She 'punishes one's purses. Cf.
beltinker, q.v.

belting. A thrashing, whether punitive or
pugilistic: mid-C. 19—20; coll. verging on S.E.—
2. A busy period: busmen's: from ca. 1930. The

beltinker, n. and v. A thrashing, to thrash.
Coll.: C. 19. F. & H. Perhaps a pun on belt,
thrust with a belt.

beltong, bell-tongue. Incorrect for biltong:
C. 19—20. O.E.D.

bemean (oneself). To lower oneself: sol: mid-
C. 17—20. Ex demean + mean. O.E.D.; W.
bemused (with beer). In C. 18–mid-19, S.E., as in its originator, Pope; ca. 1860 it > a fashionable phrase and genuinely s.; ob. in C. 20.

ben. A coat, C. 19, ex benjamin; a waistcoat (—1846), ex benjamin. Both ob.—2. (Theatrical) a benefit performance: from ca. 1850. H., 1st ed. Cf. stand ben, to stand treat (—1823); † by 1900. Bee.—3. In c., a fool: late C. 17–18. B.E., Grose. (See good fellow; see bene.—4. 'A tardiddle': Society: ca. 1880–1914. Ware: ben ex Ben ex Ben Tro ex Ben Trovato ex Ben Benjamin Trovato ex se non è vero—è Benjamin (for ben) trovato, if it isn't true it's nonetheless felicitous.


ben, stand. See ben, n., 2.

*ben- or bene-bowtie. Drunk (esp. with good wine): c.: C. 17–18. Jonson. Ex bene bowse (see bene).

*ben onull, C. 19; ben cove, C. 17–18. Both c.: for a friend or a companion. See ben and bene, bene also being found, in same sense, with core and, less often, call.

*Ben Flake or ben-flake. A steak: thieves' rhyming s.: from ca. 1855. 'Ducange Anglicus', 1st ed. (Rhyming s. may have been invented by criminals.)

Ben Tro and Ben Trovato. See ben, n., 4.

*benar. Better. Benat: best. The former in Coles, but prob. both are C. 17–18; c. see bene.


bend, on a. Drinking; on a spree: U.S. (1857) anglicised ca. 1890. Also on the bend; see sense 2 of:

bend, on the. Crooked, underhand: coll. from ca. 1860; ob. Cf. crooked.—2. The same as the preceding entry: 1891, Kipling (O.E.D. Sup.). Prob. ex on a bendor: see bendor, 4.

bend, round the. See round the bend.

bend on (the) filbert. A bow, a nod: low London: ca. 1800–1900. Ware. See filbert.


*bender! I don't believe it!; as a c.p. tag, I'll do no such thing: c. (—1812); † by 1890. Vaux.

bender, over the. Exaggerated, untrue; often as an exclamation of incredulity. Cf. over the left (shoulder). C. 19–20, ob.—2. (Of a partridge) before Sept. 1st; (of a pheasant) before Oct. 1st: poachers (—1909). Ware.


bending. See catch one bending.—2. A severe parade conducted by a N.C.O. to tire out the men: military: from ca. 1920. Also a sweating.

bends, the. Diver's paralysis or, more accurately, cramp: pearl-fishers': C. 20.

*bene. Good. In c. as n., tongue: C. 16–18, prob. by transference ex the adj.—2. Good, with benar, better, and benat, best: mid-C. 16–early 19. Variant ben, q.v., and even bien. E.g. ben(es), boose, boose, etc., excellent liquor.

*bene (or bien), on the. Well: expeditiously. As in B.E.'s 'pike on the bene (there speelt bien)', run away quickly. C. of late C. 17–18.

*bene darkmans! Good night! Mid-C. 16–18: c. See darkmans; contrast lightmans, q.v.


*bene, or bien mort. A fine woman or pretty girl; hence, a hostess. C. 16–18: c. Revived by e.g. Scott. See mort, mol, a woman, a girl.

benedick. Sol.: (?) for see Fowler for benedict, a newly married man: C. 17–20.—2. Also, C. 19, sol. for a bachelor.

Benedict, benedict. Any married man: catastrophic: mid-C. 19–20. In New Zealand, contests between married and single men are described as being between bachelors and benedicts. (Properly, a newly married man, esp. if a 'confirmed' bachelor).


benefit, take the. I.e. of the insolvent debtor's Act: coll. (—1823); † by 1890. Bee.


benevolence. 'Ostentation and fear united, with hopes of retaliation in kind hereafter', Bee, 1823: Society: ca. 1820–40.

*benefer. A variant of bene feaker, q.v.

Bengal blanket. The sun; a blue sky: soldiers in India: mid-C. 19–20; very ob. Cf. blue blanket, q.v. (Ware.)

Bengal light. (Gen. pl.) An Indian soldier in France: military: 1915–18. B. & P.

Bengal Tigers. The Seventeenth Foot Regiment,
from ca. 1881 the Leicestershires: military, from ca. 1825. Ex 'badge of a royal tiger; granted for services in India from 1804–23'. F. & H. They were also, from the facings, called The Lily-Whites.

benge. An onion: military, from ca. 1860. Perhaps cognate with Somerset benge, to drink to excess; cf. bings.

bengy. See benny.


benison, beggar's. See beggar's benison.

benjamin or Benjamin. A coat (from ca. 1815), with upper benjamins (1817), a greatcoat. Peacock in Nightmare Abbey: 'His heart is seen to beat through his upper Benjamin.' Borrow in Lavengro: 'The coachman ... with ... fashionable Benjamin.' The word may have begun as c. in C. 20, ob. Perhaps, as Brewer suggests, ex the name of a tailor; more prob. on Joseph, q.v.—2. At Winchester College, from ca. 1860, a small ruler. i.e. Benjamin small in comparison with Joseph.—3. A husband: Australian: pigdin-English (—1870). Chas. H. Allen, A Visit to Queensland, 1870. Morris. Cf. Mary, q.v.

Benjamin Trovato. See ben: n., 4.

benjo. A riotous holiday: nautical: late C. 19–20; ob. Perhaps ex benno + beuder, 4; Ware suggests derivation ex buon giorno (? via Lingua Franca).


*bennish. See benish.


*benship. See benship.

bent. Broken (esp. if fig.): C. 20. Either dysphemistic ex such phrases as (e.g.) bend but do not break or evolutionary ex any bent object, esp. a coin. B. & P.

bent on a splice, be. To be on the look-out for a wife: nautical: from ca. 1860; ob. Smyth. Perhaps punning spliced, married.


*bery, wrongly bewray. To defile, befoul: C. 10–20, ob. 'Old cant', says F. & H.; it is merely old E.

*bereavement luck. The pretended loss of a wife as a pretext for begging: c. (—1870).Ribeton-Turner, Vagants and Vagrancy. See lurk and contrived luck. —O. E. D.


Bermoodes banger. A man prominent in the society of the South London tanneries: Cockney (—1809); t by 1830. Ware, 'He must ... be prepared to fight at all times for his social belt.'

Bermoothes. See Bermudas.

Bermuda Exiles, the. The Grenadier Guards: ca. 1805–1914. In 189—, a portion of this regiment was, to expiate insubordination, sent to the West Indies. F. & H. revised.

Bermudas, Bermoothes. A London district (cf. Aleta, q.v.) privileged against arrest: certain alleys and passages contiguous to Drury Lane, near Covent Garden, and north of the Strand: Jonson, The Devil's an Ass (1616): 'Keeps he still your quarter in the Bermudas.' Grose and Ainsworth are almost certainly in error in referring the term to the Mint in Southwark. In C. 17, certain notable debtors fled to the Bermuda Islands, says Nares.

Bermudian. A wet ship: naval coll.: C. 19. Ex the Bermudian-built 3-masted schooners in the Napoleonic wars: 'they went through the waves instead of rising to them' (Bowen).

*berr. See barnard.


berry, get the. (Of an action) to be hissed: theatrical: C. 20. Collins. Like synonymous get the rasper, it obviously derives ex get the raspberry.


Berths (bertha); also big Bertha. Nicknames of any one of the long-range German guns that, in the summer of 1917, shelled the back areas on the Western Front and, in 1918, Paris: mid-1917–18: military > gen. In Gen., die dicke Bertha. Ex Bertha Krupp of Essen. W.; B. & P.


Berwicks. The ordinary stock of the North Eastern Railway: Stock Exchange (—1890).

beside the lighter. In a bad condition: late C. 17–18. B. E. Perhaps the lighter going out to a ship proceeding to the convict plantations. Cf. book, beside the.


bespeak-night. (Theatrical) a benefit performance: from the mid-1830's; ob. Ex bespeak, to choose, arrange, the actor's friends choosing the play. Often abbr. to bespeak (as in Ware).

*bess. A burglar's tool: see betty.—See brown.

Bess o' Bedlam. An insane beggar: C. 18–early 19. Scott in Kenilworth: 'Why, what Bess of Bedlam is this, would ask to see my lord on such a day as the present?'

best. To worst; get the better of: coll. (—1859), as in H., 1st ed., and in Charles Hindley's best-known book, A Cheap Jack.—2. Hence, to cheat, as in Hindley, 'His game was besting everybody, whether it was for pounds, shillings, or pence,' 1876. Cf. bester, q.v.—3. Hence as in best the pistol, to get away before the pistol is fired: athletics: 1889, The Polytechnic Monthly, July.

*best, get one's money at the. 'To live by dishonest or fraudulent practices': o. (—1812); t by 1890. Vaux.
*best, give. See give best. 

best, not in the. Not in the best of tempers: coll.: from ca. 1890.

best.— of the. Of the best notes; thus, five of the best, £; C. 20. Collinson.

best, one of the. A 'good fellow,' i.e. a good companion: Society: from ca. 1920.

best bib and Tucker. Gen. one's, occ. the. (Rarely of children's) and only loosely of men's) best clothes: U.S., 17th cent. (O.E.D. Sup.), anglicised in Lancashire dial. ca. 1870, in coll. ca. 1880; ob.

best foot or leg foremost, put one's. To try hard: coll. >, by 1850, S.E.: foot from late C. 16, leg from late C. 15; ob. Apperson.

best in Christendom, to the. A toast very popular ca. 1760–80 (cf. beggar's benison and both ends of the bush, q.v.): Grosz, 1st ed. Sc. c.*

best leg of three, the. The penis: low: late C. 19–20; ob. *best mop. The cat-skin or coney fur worn by a bookie's woman when he has been very successful: C. 20 racing c.

best of a bad bargain (etc.). See bargain, best... best of a Charley, the. 'Upsetting a watchman in his box', Egan's Grosz: ca. 1820–40.

best part, best thing, etc. The best part, thing, etc.: coll.: late C. 19–20. (J. Knox, 1933, 'He'd been here best part of three weeks.')

best the pistol. See best. 3.

*bester. A swindler; a 'smart Alex' criminally or illicitly: orig. (—1839), c.; then low, H., 1st ed.; Mayhew. Ex best, q.v.


bet i, you. Certainly: orig. (ca. 1870) U.S., anglicised ca. 1890.—2. You betcha (or betcher), you bet your (e.g. boots): U.S. phrases anglicised ca. 1905.


*bet on top. A bogus bet laid, pour encourager les autres, by a pal of the bookie. The bookie's clerk places the bet 'on top', not in the body of the betting book. Often abbr. to on top. C. 20 racing c.

bet you a million to a bit of dirt! A sporting c.p. indicative of 'the betting man's Ultima Thule of confidence', Ward: ca. 1880–1914. Cf. all Lombard Street to a China orange.

bet your boots or life or bottom dollar! Orig. (resp. 1808, 1852, and 1882) U.S.; anglicised ca. 1910, 1880, 1890 resp., largely owing to the writings of Bret Harte and Mark Twain. Thornton; Ward; betcha, betcher; you betcha (or betcher). See bet, you, 2.

bête noir. A common error (mid-C. 19–20) for bête noire, pet aversion.

betseachoot. See banchoot.

bethel the city. To refrain from keeping an hospitable table; to eat at chop-houses: C. 18. Ex Bethel, one of the two Sheriffs of London elected in 1880.


bette. To betoken or bode: catachrestic: late C. 18–20. Cowper. (O.E.D.)

Betsy. The inevitable nickname of anyone sur-

named Gay: late C. 19–20. Ex the old song. Bowen considers it to have been orig. naval. Cf. Dusty.


better half. A wife: coll. from ca. 1570. In C. 16–18, my better half and seriously, in C. 19–20, or, anyone's, b. h., and juicely.

better hole or 'ole. See hole, better.

better never than come in rags! I.e. in poverty (see rag, a farthing): a c.p. retort to better late than never: ca. 1820–50. 'Jon Bee.'

better than a dig in the eye with a blunt stick or than a kick in the pants (or up the a**e). Better than nothing; by mislos, much better than nothing or than a set-back: resp. mid-C. 19–20 (coll.) and C. 20 low s. Contrast: better than a drowned policeman. (Of a person) very pleasant, attractive, good or expert: c.p.: ca. 1900–15. (J.B. Priestley, *Faraway*, 1932.)


betterish. Somewhat better or superior: coll. (—1888); verging on S.E.—but ugly!


betting, often corrupted to getting, round. The laying of odds on all the likely horses: from ca. 1860; ob. H., 3rd ed. Whence better round, such a better, as in 'Thornmable', *Famous Racing Men*, 1882.

betting lay, the. The betting on horses: turf (—1887). Baumann.


betsy, v. Fuss, or potter, about: coll.: from ca. 1850; slightly ob. *betty*, all. It's all up! C. 19 c.; opp. it's all bob, see bob. (This kind of pun (Betty and Bob) is not rare in c.)

Betty Martin. See all my eye (and Betty Martin).


between. For a catachrestic usage, common in late C. 19–20, see the quotation at *Trades Union*. See below and high water, between.

between and high water, between. See below and high water, between. On the actual race-course: sporting (—1865); ob. See bed-post. 

betwixt and between. Intermediate(y): indecivive(y); neither one thing nor the other: adv. and adj. Coll.: from ca. 1830. 'A betwixt and between fashionable street,' Marryatt. (O.E.D.)

bever; often beaver; occ. bevir, etc. etc. Orig. S.E. and in C. 19–20 mainly dial., but as used at Eton and as bevers at Winchester College for after-
noon tea—a sense recorded by B.E.—it is s. See In My Words! the essay entitled 'The Art of Lightening Work.' Ex L. bibere, to drink, in the Old Fr. form, bevere, this is one of the most interesting words in the language. Cf. binary and beverage, 19-20. Hence, as v.: C. 17-early 19.

beverage. 'A Garnish money, for any thing', B.E.; Grosz adds that it is drink-money—cf. the Fr. pourboire—demanded of any person wearing a new suit; in gen., a tip. Coll.: late C. 17-20; † by ca. 1820, except in dial.

bevvi, v.; gen. bevvy. To drink: Parlyaree, esp. among grafters: late C. 18-20. (Philip Allingham, Chester, 1934.) Ex:

bevvi-berry. A public-house: mid-C. 19-20 Parlyaree. See Parlyaree, coll., that's mid-C.

bevvy. Anglo-Irish printers' coll. 1864, late see ob. gen. o. dishonourable sol. 'tramps in what team.' C.


bevir. See bever.

beware. Any drinkable: low s., from ca. 1840. Mayhew in that mine of Cockney and low s., London Labour and the London Poor, 4 vols., 1851-61, says in vol. iii: 'We [strolling actors] call breakfast, dinner, tea, supper, all of them "numary."' and all beer, brandy, water, or soup, are "beware."' Nurnere (? a corruption of it. mangiare, to eat) and homosex (cf. bewer, beverage, and binny) are Lingua Franca words employed in Parlyaree, the s. of circuses, showmen, and strolling actors: see Stang, section on the circus.


beyond, be (a person). To pass the comprehension of: coll.; from ca. 1800. Jane Austen.

beyond the byways. 'The absolute outside edge': 'the limit': Anglo-Irish: from ca. 1910.


b'hoi. 'A town rowdy: a gay fellow', Thornton: *ex U.S. (1846), anglicised—almost wholly in the latter sense—ca. 1865. (Cf. g'hal.) Ex Irish pronunciation. (O.E.D.)


*bib, nap a one's. To weep: c. or low s.; late C. 18-20; ob. G. Parker, 1789; Vaux; Egan. Lät, to take one's bib in order to wipe away one's tears.

ble-all-night. A toper: C. 17, coll. (Bib, to tipple.)

bib and tucker, best. See best bib . . .


bibile. Nautical: 'a hand-axe; a small holystone [sandstone employed in the cleaning of decks], so called from seamen using them kneeling': Admiral Smyth in his valuable Seafires' Word Book, 1867. C. 18-20; ob. The holystones were also named prayer-books. For nautical s. in gen., see Stang.—2. Lead wrapped round the body by those who 'fly the blue pigeon': what they stow in their pockets is a testament: † late C. 18—mid-19. G. Parker, 1789.—3. † hence: in mid-C. 19-20 s. (vagrants'), a pedlar's box of pins, needles, laces, etc.

bible, v. Implied in bibler, billing.


Bible class, been to a. 'With two black eyes, got in a fight': 'printers' (—1909). Ware. Prob. suggested by the noise and excitement common at printers' chapels.

Bible-clerk. (Winchester College) a prefect appointed to fill power for one week; he reads the lessons in chapel. From ca. 1800; see esp. Mansfield and Adams: coll. soon > j. (In S.E., an Oxford term.)

bible (or B.) leaf. (Gen. pl.) A thin strip of lubber ready for the fry-pot: whalers': coll.: late C. 19-20. Bowen. Ex leaves preserved by being kept in the family Bible.

Bible-mill. A public-house; esp., noisy talking there: London proletarians' ca. 1850-1910. Ware. 'An attack upon Bible classes.'

Bible-pounder. A clergyman, esp. if excitable: coll. C. 19-20. Cf. bible-banger and the next two terms:

Bible-punching. A sermon; religious talk: C. 20. (E.g. in Michael Harrison, Spring in Tartarus, 1935.) Cf.:


bibber, billing. Six cuts on the back: the former ca. 1830-60, the latter from ca. 1860. Winchester College: see Adams, Mansfield, and Blackwood's Magazine, 1864, vol. xcv. A bibler, later biblical, under nat.: a pillory-process before the cuts were administered. The biblical, a handle with four apple-twigs twisted together at the end: invented by Warden Baker in 1845; † by 1890. 

*bi-cape and a rota or a half. Odds of 2½, i.e. 5 to 2: C. 20 racing c. John Morris.

bid stand, bid-stand, bidstand. A highwayman: coll.: late C. 16—? 18. Ben Jonson. For the philology of highwaymen, see Words !

biddy. A chicken: coll.: late C. 16-early 19; then dial. Occ. chick-a-biddy.—2. A young woman (ex Bridget): C. 18-early 19, as in Grove, 1st ed.—3. Any woman: C. 19, as in O. W. Holmes, Guardian Angel, 1886.—4. At Winchester College, see:

bidet or biddy. A bath. Also, though this is S.E. as bidet, coll. as biddy, defined thus by Grosz: 'A kind of tub, contrived for ladies to wash them-
selves, for which purpose they bestride it like a little French pony or post horse, called in French bidet’s, as also is this toilet accessory. — 2. See: biddy-biddy; bidbid. The burr named in Maori piripiri: New Zealand coll. (— 1880). By the process of Hobson-Jobson.— 2. Hence, gen. as biddy, to rid burrs: 1880. Morris.


*bien. See been, ben and bence.


biffin. An intimate friend: from ca. 1840; virtually †. Ex a kind of apple. Cf. ribstone and pippin, q.v., and the C. 20 old fruit.

big. Great; important: coll.; from ca. 1570. On the verge of S.E. this is humorous substitute for great as in Shakespeare’s ‘ I Pompey am, Pompey supreme of the big’. O.E.D.

big, go; go over big. See go big.

big, look. To attempt an impressive manner; coll. C. 16–19. E.g. in Shakespeare’s Winter’s Tale.

bix, talk. To boast, talk pretentiously: from ca. 1630; coll. verging on S.E. Smollett, 1771: 'The squire affected . . . to talk big.'

big as bull-beef. See bull-beef, big as.


big Bertha. See Bertha.

big bird, get or give the. To be hissed; to hiss. Theatrical: cf. 'the goose and be goose' were. From ca. 1890. H., 3rd ed. See goose and bird, n., 6. — 2. Ware, however, notes that ca. 1860–1910, the phrase also = 'to be appreciatively hissed for one's performance in the role of villain'.


big country. Open country: hunting coll. (— 1890). F. & H.


big digger. At cards, the ace of spades (cf. diggers) : from ca. 1850; ob.

big dog. A chuck-out: coll. : from ca. 1870. 'He was a 'big dog' to a disorderly house', Good Words, June 1884, O.E.D.

big drink. The ocean, esp. the Atlantic: Miss Braddon, 1882. (In U.S., from 1846, the Mississippi.)


big head. The morning-after feeling (— 1880): coll. Get a or the b.h., to become intoxicated: from ca. 1870.

big, or large, house. The workhouse: among the indigent (— 1851). Mayhew. In the U.S., a prison.


big loaf and little loaf. A political c.p. used by Liberals during the fiscal controversy ca. 1906. Collinson.


big noise. An important person: from ca. 1907 (in U.S.). Popularised in England in G.W.

big number. (Gen. pl.) A brothel: Parisian Englishman: ca. 1820–1910. Ex the huge size of the number on the swinging door, never shut, never more than two or three inches open; 'Wore, possibly in part, also, a pun on bagnio'.

big one or un. A notable person: coll., ca. 1800–50; cf. big gun and pot and wig.

big people. Important people: coll. : from ca. 1855; slightly ob. Trollope.

big pond. The Atlantic: (prob. ex U.S. and anglicised) ca. 1880; cf. big drink.

big pot. A person of consequence; a don: Oxford, ca. 1850–60. Hence, solely the former and in gen. use. Perhaps pot, abbr. potentate. Ware implies that, ca. 1878–82, it had, in the music-halls, the special sense of 'a leader, supreme personage'.


big side. (Rugby and other Public Schools') the bigger boys combining in one game or sport; the ground used therefor. Whence b.-s. run, a paper chase in which all houses take part. C. 19–20; ob.

big smoke (or B.S.), the. See Smoke, Big.


big talk. Pompous, or sesquipedalian, speech : (— 1874) coll.

big triangle, the. The old sailing ship tramping route—from U.K. to Australia with general cargo, on to the West Coast of S. America with coal from Newcastle, N.S.W., and then home with nitrates': from ca. 1860 (now ob.): nautical coll., >, by 1880.}

big wig. A person of high rank or position or money. It occurs in Ned Ward early in C. 18, but it > gen. only ca. 1840. Whence big-wigged, consequential (Carlyle, 1851), big-wiggy, a display of pompousness or importance (Thackeray, 1848), — and big-wigism, pompousness, pretentiousness (George Eliot): all three being coll. at first, then soon S.E.—though seldom employed.

big Willie. See Willie.

big word. A word of many syllables or much pretentiousness: coll. (— 1879) rising to S.E. In the pl., pomposity: from ca. 1850; in C. 20 almost S.E., though rarely used.

bigger and better. A jocular coll., as in bigger and better babies: from ca. 1924. Ex the Coué vogue of 1923 with its self-adjudications to grow 'better and stronger', etc.

biggin. A woman’s coat: a late C. 17–18 cat-echelars recorded by B.E. Properly a sergeant-at-law’s coat (also a night-cap, a hood for the head).

BIL

*bil. A late C. 17–mid-18 c. abbr., recorded by B.E., of bilboa.


bilbo(a). In C. 16–17, S.E.: a sword noted for its excellence of its temper and made orig. at Bilbao in Spain. Hence, in late C. 17–18 (in C. 19, archaic), coll.: the sword of a bully. Congreve in the Old Bachelor: 'Tell them ... he must refund—or bilbo's the word, and slaughter will ensue.'

Bilboy's ball. See Belby's ball. (Grose, 1st ed.)

bile. The pudenda muliebra: so says F. & H., but I suspect that there is a confusion with bite, q.v. —2. A C. 19–20 sol. for boil, n. and v., though for the n. bile was once S.E.


bilge. Nonsense: empty talk: Public Schools' (from ca. 1860) >, in 1919, gen. Desmond Coke, The House Prince, 1908. 'Let's go ... This is awful bilge.' Lytell; R. Blaker, Night-Shift, 1934, referring to 1926, 'Bilge' was the polite word, current in those days for the later "tripe." Ex bilge-water.

bilge-cod. Fish served at dinner on Fridays: Conway s.: from ca. 1800. Masefield.


bilious. Bad, 'rotten', as e.g. 'in bilious form': Society: from 1930. (Graham Shepard, Tea-Tray in the Sky, 1934.)

bilously. The corresponding adj.: id.: id. (Ibid.)


bilk, v. To deceive, cheat; defraud, fail to pay; elude, evade: all these coll. senses (B.E. is prob. wrong in considering the word to be c.) arose in Restoration days and all had > S.E. by 1750. Grosjean 1st ed., 'Bilking a coachman, a box keeper, or a poor whore, was formerly among men of the town thought a gallant action.' Cf. the n.

*bilk the blues. To evade the police: c. or less a.: from ca. 1845; ob.

bilk the schoolmaster. To gain knowledge—esp. by experience—without paying for it: 1821, Moncrieff's Tom and Jerry: coll.; ob.

bilk' a cheat(ster), swindler: s. (1717; O.E.D. Sup.) >, ca. 1800, coll.; now almost S.E. Likewise bilking, vbln. (– 1750), was almost S.E. by 1800; it is now, except in its abbr. form bilk, rather ob.

Bill. See Billy.

bill. A list of boys due to see the headmaster at noon, as in Brinsley Richards, Seven Years at Blom, 1878; also of those excused from 'absences'. At Harrow School, names-calling: from ca. 1850. —2. In c., a term of imprisonment: from 1800. Always with long or short.—3. A variant of bil, q.v. (A New Canting Dict., 1725.)

Bill Adams. Euphemistic for b****r all, nothing or extremely little: military: G.W. Cf. Fanny Adams. (B. & F.)

bill at sight, pay a. To be, by nature, apt to enter into sexual intercourse: ca. 1820–1910. Egan's Grosje, 1823.

Bill Bailey. A jocular c.p. form of address: ca. 1900–12. Collinson. Cf. would you ... bill brighter. A small flaglet used for lighting coal fires: from ca. 1840 ex Bill Bright, a servant extant at least as late as 1850: Winchester College (see Mansfield).

Bill Harris. Bilharziasis (or -osia): Australian military; late 1914–16. By 'Hobson-Jobson'.

bill in the water, hold one with (his). To keep (him) in suspense: ca. 1570–1700. Coll.

Bill Jim; occ. Billijim. An Australian: Australian: from ca. 1912. Ex the frequency of those two hypocoristic forms of William and James.

Bill Massey's. N.Z. army-boots: New Zealand soldiers: in G.W. Ex the late Wm. Massey, who was the N.Z. War Minister.

bill on the pump at Aldgate. See Aldgate.

bill of sale. Widow's mourning clothes, esp. her hat: late C. 17–19 († by 1890) B.E. Cf. house (or tenement) to let.


billet, every bullet has its. Every bullet must land somewhere, and only those in battle who are marked by fate for such a death. Coll. from ca. 1895. Wesley in his Journal, June 6, 1765—'I quote the O.E.D.—'Hq never received one wound. So true is the odd saying of King William, that "every bullet has its billet." The phrase is anticipated by Gascoigne, 1575, 'Every bullet hath a lighting place'; cf. Smollett's 'Every shot has its commission, d'ye see?' (Apperson). In the G.W. many soldiers pessimistically assumed that the phrase implied a loading of the dice against them.

billiard-block. One who, for ulterior motives, suffers fools and other disagreeables with apparent good nature: Mrs. Gore, Mothers and Daughters, 1831. Cf. Society a.

*billiard slum. In Australian c. of ca. 1870–1910, false pretences. Here, slum = trick, dodge, game. Go on the b.s., to practise such trickery. Ex: — give it (to) 'em on the billiard slum, to impose on them with that swindle which is termed a 'mace' (q.v.): c. of ca. 1810–70. Vaux, 1812.

billcock. See billycock.


billikin. A small tin can used as a kettle: coll. 1926 (O.E.D. Sup.). Ex billy-can.

billing-boy. See biller.


Billingsgate (it). To talk coarsely; to vituperate (a person): (– 1678) coll.; † by 1850. In C. 19–20, talk Billingsgate, also coll.
BILLYGOAT IN STAYS. An effeminate officer: naval, ca. 1870–85, when many young 'swells' wore stays. Ware.

*billy-ho. See *billy-o.*

*billy-hunting. Post-1820, ob. c. for collecting and buying old metal: ex *billy*, sense 4. Also, going out to steal silk handkerchiefs: same period: ex *billy*, sensibly.

*billy-o (or oh) or occ. *billy-ho, like. With great vigour or speed: mid-C. 19–20. The Referee, Aug. 9, 1885, 'I'll rain like *billy-ho!*' Perhaps ex the name used euphemistically for the devil.


*billy-roller. 'A long stout stick . . . used . . . to beat the little ones employed in the mills when their strength fails', Mrs. Trollope, *Michael Armstrong*, 1840. (O.E.D.) See, too, Urqu's *Dict. of the Arts*, vol. iii, 1875. Coll. †. Cf. billy, a truncheon.


Billy the Butcher. The Duke of Cumberland (1721–65). Ex his cruelty when suppressing the Jacobite rising after the battle of Culloden, 1746. His sobriquets were the *Bloody Butcher* and the *Butcher of Culloden*. Dawson.

Billy Turnip. An agricultural labourer: from ca. 1890; virtually †. The *Daily Telegraph*, July 10, 1890. (Ware.)


Bim (or Bimm); Bimshire. A Barbadian (cf. Badian); the island of Barbados, which is also (−1890) called *Little Engeland*: coll. mid-C. 19–20. Perhaps ex *vim*, as suggested in Paton’s *Down the Islands*, 1887. bim-by. By-and-by: dial. (−1839 and) Cookney sol. (−1887). Ex U.S., where recorded in 1824 (O.E.D. Sup.). Baumann.

Bimm. See Bim.


bind. A depressing or very dull person, taak or duty: Royal Air Force: from ca. 1920. (Cf. binder, 4.) Ex:
bind, v. To weary, bore a person: Royal Air Force: from ca. 1920. Cf. binder, 4. *Jack † Oh, he binds me solid! *


*binder, go a. To eat a meal: New Zealanders' (esp. tramps) from before 1932. See binder, 2.


bing or byng. Gen. bing a-vast. To go: go c. of mid-C. 18–early 19. Scott has b. out, in Guy Manning, and b. avast, in Nigel. Perhaps of Romany origin.

bing-hang. Echoic for a repeated heavy impact or a continued banging: coll.: from ca. 1100. (O.E.D. Sup.) Prob. at first a nursery word evoked by the excitement arising from 'playing soldiers'.

binge. A drinking bout: Oxford University (—1889). Barrère & Leland. Hence, in G.W., 'an expedition, deliberately undertaken in company for the purpose of relieving depression, celebrating an occasion or a spasm of high spirits, by becoming intoxicated' (B. & P.); also as v. Food, often, music and singing sometimes, form part of a 'binge'. More an officers' than a private soldiers' word. Perhaps ex bingo, q.v.; or ex dial. v. binge influenced by bingo, the latter being the more prob., for binge, a heavy drinking-bout, exists in dial. as early as 1834 (O.E.D.).—2. See: binge, have a; haul off and take a binge. To go (away to) get a sleep: nautical: ca. 1880–1910.

binge a cask. 'To get the remaining liquor from the wood by rinsing it with water': nautical coll.: C. 19–20. Bowen. Ex binge, to drench: see binge. Also bail the (or a) cask, q.v.

bingey. See binge.

Bingham's Dandies. (Military) the 17th Lancers: from ca. 1830; slightly ob. Its colonel of 1829–37, Lord Bingham, insisted on well-fitting uniforms. Earlier, the 17th Lancers were called the Lores Marines, q.v., and from ca. 1870 the Death or Glory Boys.

binghi. See binge.


*bingo. In late C. 17 (as in B.E.) and in C. 18, c.; in C. 19 (as in Tom Brown at Oxford), s. ob. Spirituous liquor, esp. brandy. Perhaps b. (cf. b. and s.) + stinger, q.v., or ex binge, to soak, steep, after stingo (see Grose, P.). The word occurs notably in Fighting Attie's Song, in Lytton's Paul Clifford. The O.E.D. dates it at 1861.—2. Whence bingo boy and mort, and male and female dram-drinker: c. of late C. 17–early 19.


*bingo mort. See bingo, 2.

*biny; bingey; or, as The Sydney Bulletin, keeping closer to the Aboriginal, spells it, binghi.


bingy, adj. (Of butter) bad, ropy; cf. vienned. Largely dial. (—1857); as s., ob.

binnacle word. An affected, too literary word, which, says Grose (1785), the sailors jeeringly offer to chalk up on the binnacle. † by 1890.

binned, be. To be hanged: London: 1883–ca. 1910. Ware, 'Referring to Bartholomew Binns, a hangman appointed in 1883.'

*bint. A girl or woman; a prostitute,—in which role the female was often called sada [sah-eds] bird, lit. 'a Good-day! ' girl' among soldiers in Egypt: late C. 19–20, but esp. in G.W. Direct ex Arabic.—2. Hence, the bint, the man playing a female part in a Divisional Concert Party or Troupe: military: 1916–18. F. & Gibbons.

bioney. B.E.'s variant of bagonet, q.v.

bioscope. (A drink of) brandy: ca. 1910–14. The more a man drinks, the more 'moving pictures' he sees.

*birch. A room: rhyming s. (—1857). 'Ducango Angelous'.

birch-broom in a fit, like a. (Of a head) rough, tously, tousled: C. 19; c.g. in Hindley's Cheap Jack, 1876.

'Birchen or Birchin(g) Lane, send one to. To flog; ex birch, to thrash: coll.: ? C.17–18. An allusion to Birchin Lane, London. Cf.: birchen salve, anoint with. To cane; thrash: C. 16–17 coll. Tyndale. (O.E.D.)

Bird; always the Bird. The Eagle Tavern: theatrical: ca. 1840–85. Ware, 'General Booth of the Salvation Army bought it up (1882)'.


*bird, big. See big bird.


bird, give (one) or, hence, get the. To disarm (a person), send him about his business; to be so treated: late C. 19–20. Ex the theatre: see bird, n., 5.—2. In Australia, give the bird is to treat with derision: from before 1916. C. J. Dennis.

bird, like a. See the like a . . . entry.

bird, little. An unnamed informant or, rarely, informer: (—1838) coll. >, by 1890, S.E.—though far from literary.

*bird, old. See bird, n., 6.


Bird and Baby, the. A mid-C. 18–early 19
faecious version of the Eagle and Child (inn). Gros. 1st ed.


Bird-Catchers, the. The Royal Irish Fusiliers, since 1811; the 1st Royal Dragoons and the Scots Greys, since 1815 (Waterloo): military. F. & Gibbons. Ex the capture of French eagles: cf., therefore, Aglères.


bird-lime, come off the. Tell that to the marines! low. (—1923). Manchon.

bird-man. An aviator; coll. ca. 1908—18. O.E.D. (Sup.).

bird-mouthed. Apt to mince matters: from ca. 1800; coll. > S.E. by 1700; ob. 

bird of passage. A person never long in one place: C. 19—20; coll.: in ca. 20, S.E. 


bird-witted. Wild-headed, inattentive; inconsiderate; gullible: ca. 1600—1890; coll. till ca. 1800, then S.E. B.E., Grosse. (O.E.D.) 

birdie. A hole done in one under the bogy figure: golfing coll. from ca. 1920. O.E.D. (Sup.). Cf. eagle.

bird's-eye. Baumann, 1887, records it as a variant of:


birds of a feather. Rogues of the same gang: late C. 17—18; e.g. in B.E. Ex late C. 16—20 S.E. sender of persons of like character mainly in the proverb birds of a feather fly (1578; long ï) or flock (1607) together, as esp. in Apperson. 

birds with one stone, kill two. To manage to do two things where one expects, or has a right to expect, to do only one: from ca. 1600; coll. till ca. 1700, when it > S.E. 

birk. A house; back s. on crip, q.v. H., 1st ed., 1859.

Birnabylon. (The political) import of Augustine Birrell's Educational Bill of 1906: political; now only historical. Collinson.

birthday suit, in one's. Naked. Smollett, Humphry Clinker, 1771: 'I went in the morning to a private place, along with the housemaid, and we bathed in our birth-day suit.' Increasingly less used in C. 20 owing to the supremacy of the in altogether. Prob. suggested by Swift's birthday gear, 1731; cf. the rare birthday attire (1860); both of which phrases are accounted as. O.E.D. (Sup.).

Biscuit, the. The 10.30 p.m. express goods-train carrying biscuits from Reading to London: railwaymen's: from ca. 1910. The Daily Telegraph, Aug. 15, 1936. Cf. the Bucca, q.v.


biscuit, take the. See take the biscuit.

biscuit and beer. To subject to a biscuit and beer bet, a swindling bet of a biscuit against a glass of beer: low London: ca. 1850—1910. Ware.

*Biscuit Factory, the. The Reading Gaol (closed down a few years ago): early C. 20 e. (It adjouned Huntley & Palmer's factory.) Cf.: 

Biscuit Men, the. The Reading Football Club ('soccer') sport; C. 20. See preceding; cf. Toffee Men.


bishop. A fly burnt at a candle: late C. 16—mid-17. Florio. Cf. bishop, v., 1.—Cf. 1, b. 'a mushroom growth in the wick of a burning candle': late C. 16—19—2. A warm drink of wine, with sugar and either oranges or lemons: Ned Ward in The English Spy, that work which, at the beginning of C. 18, held an unflattering but realistically witty mirror up to London. Ob. by 1890 after being coll. by 1750, S.E. by 1800.—3. 'One of the largest of Mrs. Philipps's purses [cundums], used to contain the others', Grosse, 1st ed.; low: late C. 18—early 19—4. A chamber-pot: C. 19—20, ob.—5. At Winchester College, ca. 1820—1900, the sapling that binds a large faggot together; cf. deu, q.v.

bishop, v. Burn, let burn: coll., C. 18—20. Ex the C. 16—20 (ob.) proverbial sayings, 'The bishop has put his foot into the pot' or 'The bishop hath played the cook', both recorded in Tyndale.—2. To use deception, esp. the burning of marks into the teeth, to make a horse look young (—1727, R. Bradley, The Family Dir.): v.t. ex a man so named, and often as vbl.n., bishoping. Coll. by ca. 1790, S.E. by ca. 1820. —3. To murder by drowning: from 1836, when one Bishop drowned a boy in order to sell the body for dissecting purposes: the irrepressible Barham, 'I burk'd the papa, now I'll bishop the son.' F. & H. describes it as at 1900, but the S.O.D. allows it currency in 1933.—4. In printing, bishop the balls, to water the balls: 1811, Lex. Bal.; ob. 

bishop! (rarely); oh bishop! A c.p. used in derision on the announcement of stale news: the 1890's: Connaway Training Ship. Masofield.

bishop, do a. See do a bishop.

bishop hath blessed it i, the. A c.p. of C. 16 applied 'when a thing speedeth not well' (Tyndale, 1628).


Bishops, the. The Bishop Auckland 'soccer' team; sporting v. 20.


bishop's sister's son, he is the. He has a big 'pull' (much influence): ecclesiastical o.p.: C. 16. Tyndale, 1628.

bishop's wife, as in what, a bishop's wife? Eat and drink in your gloves? A semi-proverbial o.p. of mid-C. 17—early 18. Ray, 1788. 'This is a cryptic saying', remarks A. Raeburn; prob. it = 'You're quite the fine lady (now)'

Biskiwits, Biskwitz. Prisoners of war in Germany: military: 1915–18. B. & P. Ex the Ger. for the maize biscuits sometimes obtainable from the canteen in prison camps.
Bismarcker, bismarque, to. Cheat, esp. at cards or billiards: ca. 1866-1900. In 1865-6, Bismarck, the German Chancellor, pursued a foreign policy that rendered indignant a large section of European thought. The *bismarque* form shows Fr. influence.

**biscuit, give (someone) fifteen, etc., and a.** To defeat very easily; 'leave standing'. Coll.: from ca. 1860; ob. Ex tennis.

**bit.** In C. 16-early 19 c., with variant bite, modernized bite, bit also = a purse.—2. The silver piece of lowest denomination in almost any country: C. 18-19.—3. Any small piece of money: coll., C. 19-20, ob. —4. A fourpenny-bit (1829): still so called in 1890, though joey was much commoner.—5. The smallest coin in Jamaica: Dyche, 1748.—6. A term of imprisonment: c. (—1869) > low.—7. A girl, a young woman, esp. regarded sexually; low coll.: C. 19-20. Cf. piece, q.v.—8. In such phrases as a bit of a fool, rather or somewhat of a fool, the word is coll.; from ca. 1880, Baumann.—9. Coll. also in the adv. phrases a bit, a little or a whiff, late C. 17-20: not a bit, not at all, from ca. 1749 (Fielding); and every bit, entirely (—1719).—10. Likewise coll. when it = a short while, either as for, or in, a bit or simply as a bit: from ca. 1860. Walton; Wm. Godwin, in his best work (Caleb Williams), 'I think we may as well stop here a bit.' (O.E.D.1.)

**bit, past ppl. of bits, v., 1: q.v.** 'Robb'd, Cheated or Out-witted', B.E.

**bit, do a.** See do a bit.

**bit, do one's.** See do one's bit.

**bit-faker or bit-turner-out.** A coiner of bad money: C. 19-20 c.; the latter †. Vaux. Whence bit-faking, vb.l.n., counterfeiting. See bit, n., 1.

**bit his grammam.** See bite his grammam.

**bit-maker.** A counterfeiter (—1897), ob.: low, perhaps even o.n.

**bit of all right, a (little).** Something excellent; a pretty or an obliging female: C. 20. Manchon; Freeman Wills Crofts, *Mystery in the Channel*, 1931, 'This looked a bit of all right.' Cf. bit of 'tout droit', q.v.

**bit (of) beef.** 'A quid of tobacco; less than a pipeful. A... reference to tobacco-chewing staying hunger', Ware: low: ca. 1850-1910.

**bit of bits.** (Cf. bit, n., 8.) When used affectionately or depreciatively, it is a coll., dating from late C. 18. Anderson, *Ballads*, 1808, 'Our bits o' bairn's' (E.D.I.1.)

**bit (of) blink.** A drink: tavern rhyming s. (—1909): ob. Ware.

**bit of blood.** A high-spirited or a thoroughbred horse: 1819, Tom Moore; slightly ob.

**bit (of) bull.** Beef: C. 19. Like the preceding entry, it was lacking on coll.

**bit of cavalry.** A horse: ca. 1825-80. Moncrieff, 1821.

**bit (of) crumb.** 'A pretty plump girl—one of the series of words designating woman imm. following the introduction of 'jam' as the fashionable term (in unfashionable quarters) for lovely woman', Ware: from ca. 1880; ob. Cf. crummy, 1, q.v., and bit of grease.

**bit (of) dirt.** A hill: *trampa* c. (—1935).

**bit of doing, take a.** To be difficult to do: coll.: late C. 19-20.

**bit of ebony.** A negro or a negress: C. 19-20; coll.

**bit of fat.** An unexpected advantage, esp. (cf. bunc) if pecuniary: C. 19-20; cf. fat, n. 2. Whence have a bit of fat from the eye, to eat 'the orbits' of a sheep's eyes—a delicacy (Ware, 1909),

**bit of fluff.** The same as bit of muslin, q.v.: C. 20.

**bit of gig.** Fun; a spree: c. (—1823); very ob. Egan's Grose.

**bit (of) grease.** (Not derogatory.) A stout and smiling hindu woman: Anglo-Indian military (—1869). Ware. Cf. bit of crumb, q.v.

**bit of grope.** 'An elderly person at a ball or a marriage... to give an air of staid dignity': Society: ca. 1880-1910. Ware. Ex grey hair.

**bit of haw-haw.** A fop; London tavern's: ca. 1860-1914. Ware. Ex *haw haw!*

**bit of hard (or stiff).** A penis (*erectus*): low: C. 19-20.

**bit of it, not a.** No; not at all; you're wrong: coll.: late C. 19-20.

**bit of jam.** Something easy; a pretty, esp. if accessible, girl; prob. from ca. 1850, though Ware dates it at 1879. Cf. tart, jam; and see bit of crumb.

**bit of leaf.** Tobacco: mid-C. 19-20 c.; ob. J. Greenwood, 1876.

**bit of (one's) mind.** Gen. with give. One's candid, unfavourable opinion; coll.; from ca. 1860.

**bit (of) muslin.** A (young) girl, esp. if a prostitute: ca. 1873; ob. H., 5th ed. (a bit of stuff); Whiteing, 1809, 'She's a neat little bit o' muslin, ain't she now'? Cf. skirt and bit of fluff.

**bit of mutton.** A woman; gen. a harlot: C. 19-20, ob.; perhaps coll. rather than a.

**bit (of) pooh.** Flattery; 'blarney'; courtship: workmen's (—1909); almost †. Ware. Ex pooh / nonsense!

**bit (of) prairie.** 'A momentary lull in the traffic at any point in the Strand... from the bareness of the road for a mere moment, o.g. "A bit o' prairie—go",' Ware: London: ca. 1850-1914. Cf. S.E. island.

**bit (of) raspberry.** An attractive girl: from ca. 1880; very ob. Ware. On bit of jam, q.v.


**bit of skirt.** A girl; a woman: coll.: from ca. 1800; esp. military, Australian, New Zealand.

**bit of snug.** The act of kind: low: late C. 19-20; † ob. —2. The penis: id.: id.

**bit (of) soap.** A charming girl—though frail: low London: ca. 1883-ca. 1914. Ware.

**bit of sticks.** A corpse: sporting, from ca. 1860; ob.

**bit of stiff.** Money not in specie; a bank or a currency note; a bill of exchange: from ca. 1850. Lever. Whence do a bit of stiff, to accept a bill of exchange or a post-dated cheque.—2. See bit of hard.


**bit of 'tout droit', a.** A 'bit of all right', q.v.: Anglo-French (—1923); ob. Manchon. Ex the bogus Fr. un petit morceau de tout droit.

**bit (of) tripe.** A wife: rhyming (†) s. (—1909); virtually †. Ware. Cf. trouble and strife.

**bit off.** A. See off, a bit.

**bit on (have) a.** (To lay) a stake: racing: 1894, George Moore.—2. As adj., a bit on = drunk: low: C. 19-20; ob. 1 cf. bite one's grammam, q.v.
**BIT THE BLOW**

*bit the blow. See bite the blow.*

bit of wood in the hole, put a. See wood in it !

bit you? What's. See what's bit you?


bitch, v. Go whoring; frequent harlots: from Restoration times to ca. 1830; coll. Ex bitch, n. 1. —2. To yield, cry off, from fear: coll. verging on S.E.: C. 18-early 19. Ex a bitch's yielding.— 3. V. t.: ape or brangle: from ca. 1820; coll. 'Jon Bee', 1823. Prob. a thinned form of bitch: W. bitch I, may I be a whore but can't be a. A low London woman's c.p. reply on being called a bitch: late C. 18-mid-19. Grose (1st ed.), who prefaxes it with: 'The most offensive appellation that can be given to an English woman, even more provoking than that of whore, as may be gathered from the regular Billingsgate or St. Giles answer, etc. Cf. the C. 19 proverbial saying, the bitch that I mean is not a dog (Apperson).

bitch, stand. To preside at tea or perform some other female part: late C. 18-early 19. Grose, 1st ed.

bitch booby. A rustic lass: mid-C. 18-early 19; military (Grose, 1st ed.). Cf. dog booby, q.v.


bitch party. A party composed of women: from ca. 1890. Orig. (ca. 1850) a tea-party: Cambridge and Oxford. Ex bitch, n. 3.

bitch-pie 1; go to hell (where you belong) and help your mother to make a. A c.p. elaboration of go to hell?: mid-C. 18-20; ob. Grose, 2nd ed., 1788; Manchon.

bitch the pot. To pour out the tea: undergraduates: late C. 18-mid-19. Ware.

bitched, bitch'd, and bewildered. See Barney's bull.

bitches' wine. Champagne: from ca. 1890. Cf. cat's water.

*bite. The female pudend: (prob.) c.: late C. 17-early 19, as in B.E. (The Cull wear the Mord's bite, i.e. the Fellow enjoyed the Whore briskly) and Grose; perhaps ex A.-S. byht, the fork of the legs, a sense recurring in Sir Gawain, vv. 1340, 1349. —2. A deception, from harmless to criminal: Steele, 1711; ob. by 1800; 1st t. 1890; . Hence 3. A sharper; trickster: c. or low s. > gen. s.: late C. 17-early 19, as in B.E., Fielding, Smollett.—Hence 4. A hard bargainer: C. 10— hence, 5. Any person or thing suspected of being different from, not necessarily worse than, what appearances indicate: C. 19-20 coll., ob.—6. (Cf. some 4.) A Yorkshirman: from late 1850's, though recorded in Cumberland dialect as early as 1805; ob.: at first, pejorative. H., 1st ed.—7. In c., C. 16-early 19: money; cash. It occurs as early as John Davis's novel, The Post Captain, 1805. Cf. bit, 1, q.v.

*bite, v. To steal; rob: late C. 17-early 19 c. B.E.—2. Decieve, swindle: orig. (1699) c., but by 1709, when Steele employs it in the Tatler, it is clearly s.: except in the passive, † by ca. 1870.— 3. To take the bait?: C. 17-19 coll.—4. To drive a hard bargain with: C. 19-20 coll. Implied in 'Jon Bee', 1823.—5. (Of a book, a MS.) to impress or appeal to: publishers': from 1935. Thus a publisher might say to his reader: 'So it didn't bite you, after all?'

bite! Sold! done! tricked you! Only ca. 1700-80. Swift makes a male character, in reply to a young woman's 'I'm sure the gallowes grouse for you', exclaim, 'Bite, Miss; I was but in jest.'

2. At Charterhouse, C. 19-20: cave!—3. At the Blue-Coat School: give it to me!: 1887, Baumann.

*bite a blow; gen. to have bite the blow. To have 'accomplish'd the Theft, plaid the Cheat, or done the Feat'. B.E.: c. of late C. 17-18.


bite me 1. Frost; (dog) bite my ear! A lower-classes' cry of astonishment (1923). Manchon.

bite (upon) the bit or the bridle. To be reduced in circumstances: C. 14-20: coll. verging on S.E.; in C. 19-20, mainly dial. Gower, ca. 1390; Latimer; Smollett. (Apperson.)

bite one's, or the, ear. To borrow money from: since ca. 1850. In C. 19, c.: in C. 20, low.

bite one's grammam, gen. as to have bit one's grammam. To be very drunk; late C. 17-18. B.E., bite one's hips. To regret something: tailors', ca. 1850-1910.

bite one's name in. To drink heavily: tipple: low: C. 19-20; very ob.

bite one's, or the, thumb. To make a contemptuous gesture; v.t. with at. Coll.: C. 16-18. Shakespeare, in Romeo and Juliet: 'I will bite my thumb at them: which is a disgrace to them if they bear it.'

*bite the tooth. To be successful: c.: late C. 19-20. Waro, 'Origin unknown.'

bite up, n. A disagreeable altercation: tailors', ca. 1840-1920; as is biting up, grief, bitter regret.— 2. (bite-up.) A meal; refreshments. Also v., to eat, occ. as bite up a hole. Tailors': C. 20. E.g. in The Tailor and Cutter, Nov. 29, 1928.—3. V.i., to grumble; a grumbling or a complaint: id.: id.

bisetité. See bitezité.

biter. A sharper; late C. 17-18 c. Cotton.— 2. A hoaxer: from late C. 17 coll. passing to S.E.; except in the biter bit, † by ca. 1870.—3. In mid-C. 18-early 19 low s., 'a lascivious, rampant wench', Grose (q.v.).

bites, when the maggot. At one's own sweet will: coll.; from late C. 17; very ob. L'Estrange.

biting you. See what's bit you?

biting up. See bite up 1.

bit of. See bite bit.

*bitt. A variant of bit, 1.

bitten. See bite, v.

bitter. (A glass of) bitter beer: coll.: 'Cuthbert Bede', 1856; '... to do bitters... the act of drinking bitter beer.' After ca. 1880, coll.

bitter-end. One who resists or fights to the bitter end: coll.; mid-C. 18-19; O.E.D. (Sup.).

bitter oath, e.g. take one's. To say an oath solemnly: low: ca. 1850-1910. Ware. Corruption of better oath (as, e.g., by God / is 'better' than by hell /, the devil /, etc.).

bittock. A distance or a period of uncertain
length; properly, a little bit. Orig. (—1802), dial.; but from ca. 1880, also coll.

bitwise. Little by little: coll. from the 1890's; very ob.

*bitty. A skeleton key: c. late C. 19-20. Ex bit, a piece of mechanism.

*bitilite; bitilite (or bitt-ilite). Hunger: (low) East London: ca. 1890-1915. Ware. Ex bite on appetite. Cf. drinkbite, q.v.


*big, good! Excellent!: C. 20. Lyell. Ex good biz, profitable business or transaction (—1899).


bliab, a; bliable, to. An indiscreet talker; to talk indiscreetly, also v.t. C. 16-20. Until ca. 1600, S.E.; thereafter, the v. is coll., the n. (see esp. Grose, P.) is almost a. Likewise blabber and & blabberer, in the same senses, were orig. S.E., but from ca. 1750 coll. Blabbing, tale-telling, indiscreet talk, has always been coll. rather than S.E., except perhaps in C. 20: from ca. 1800. Wesley.—2. A synonym of juicer-meeting (q.v.), but ↑ by 1925. Anon., Dic. of Botham Slang, 1925.


black, v. In C. 20 c., to blackmail. Whence the black, blackmail; at the black, on the blackmail 'lay'; put the black on, to blackmail; pay black, to pay blackmail; and blacking, vbln., blackmailing:—Edward Wallace, passim.

black, adj. See table-cloth.

Black. Agnes, Agnes, the heroic Countess of Dunbar (ca. 1312-69). Ex her dark complexion. Dawson.

black-a-moor, black Moor. (Gen. unhyphenated.) Recorded in 1547; ↑ in S.E. senses. In ca. 19-20 used as a nickname and as a playful endearmament (cf. Turk): essentially coll. Also adj. As in black-nosed, this is prob. euphonic and to be compared with the nonsensical but metrically useful -a in jog-trot verses.

black and tan. An Oxford undergraduate: Oxford University: late 1921-ca. 1925. Ex the black gown and the tan or shanter affected at that period, with a pun on the Black and Tans (q.v.) W.

*black and tan. Porter (or stout) mixed equally with ale: from ca. 1880: c. (vagrant) >, by 1900, gen. low s. Ex resp. colours.

Black and Tans. The men who, in 1921, assisted the Royal Irish Constabulary. Ex their khaki coats and black caps, the nickname coming the more readily that, near Limerick, is the famous Black and Tan Hunt. (Weekley, More Words Ancient and Modern.)

*black and white. Night; to-night: c. rhyming


black and white, in. Written or printed; hence, binding. Late C. 16-20. Coll. Cf. black on white, which, C. 19-20, only very rarely applies to writing and tends to denote the printing of illustrations, hence printed illustrations.

black army, the. The female underworld: low (—1923). Manchon.

black arse. A kettle; a pot: late C. 17—early 19. B.E.; Grose, 2nd ed. From the proverb, 'the pot calls the kettle black arse,' the last word has disappeared (pudoris causa).

black art. An undertaker's business: from ca. 1850; undertakers'—2. In late C. 18-19 c., lock-picking. Greene; Grose.


black-bagging. 'Dynamitarding': journalistic coll. 1884-ca. 1910. Ware. Ex the black bags in which the explosive so often was carried.

black-ball. To exclude (a person) from a club: late C. 18-20: coll. >, ca. 1830, S.E. Ex the black ball indicative of rejection.

black-balling. Vbln. of preceding term.—2. Stealing, pilfering; nautical: ca. 1850-1910. It originated on the old Black Ball line of steamers between Liverpool and New York: a line infamous for the cruelty of its officers, the pilfering of its sailors.

black beetles. The lower classes: coll.: ca. 1810-50. Moncrieff, 1821.

black bird. An African captive aboard a slaver; nautical (—1864): this sense is rare.—2. Gen., a Polynesian indentured labourer, virtually a slave; nautical (—1871); soon coll. See esp. the anon. pamphlet entitled Narrative of the Voyage of the Brig 'Cari', 1871.

black-bird, v. To capture Negroes and esp. Polynesians: nautical (—1885). The term ↑ S.E. soon after this branch of kidnapping ceased. Whence black-birding, vbln., such kidnapping (—1871), and adj. (—1883).

blackbird and thrush. To clean (one's boots): rhyming s. (on brisk): 1884, Barrett, Nervces. E.D.D.

black-(b)ird catching. The slave-trade; nautical (—1864). Displaced by black-birding (1871).

black-birders. Kidnappers of Polynesians for labour (—1880); quickly coll.; by 1900, S.E.

black-birding. See black-bird, v., and black-bird catching.

black books, in one's. Out of favour. Late C. 16-20 coll. In C. 19-20 gen. regarded as S.E.

*black box. A lawyer: either c. or low s.: ca. 1690-1860. B.E.; Grose; Duncombe's Sinks of London, 1848. Ex the black boxes in which he deposits clients' papers.


black (or soot) coal. Coal imported from abroad
or dug by blacklegs during the stoppage' caused by the General Strike of May 1926: Trade Unions' coll., often revived. Collinson.

black coat. A person: from ca. 1600; coll.; ob.

Black Cuffs, the. (Military) the Fifty-Eighth Foot, from ca. 1881 the 2nd Battalion of the Northamptonshires: C. 19–20. Ex the facings, which have been black since 1767.


black diamond. A rough person that is nevertheless very good or very clever: ca. 1800–75. Displaced by rough diamond, q.v.—2. The Black Diamond. Tom Cribb (1781–1848), the great boxer. Dawson, 'From his occupation as a coal porter.'


Black Dick. Admiral Howe (1726–99), who, tradition says, smiled only when a battle was imminent: naval: ca. 1770–1820. Bowen.

black dog. A counterfeit silver coin, esp. a shilling: ca. 1705–30. (Black had long before been applied to base coins.)—2. Ill-humour; coll., from ca. 1825; ob. Scott.


black dog (sitting) on one's back, have (got) a. To be depressed: coll.: late C. 19–20; ob. Lyell.

black doll. The sign outside a dolly shop, q.v. Dickens, Sketches by Boz, 1835. Ob. if not f.

black donkey, ride the. To cheat in weight: rosters: late C. 19–20.—2. To suck, be ill-humoured or obstinate: mid.-C. 19–20; ob. Ex a donkey's obstinacy; black merely intensifies.


black-faced mob. A gang of burglars who, blackening their faces as a disguise, trust to violence rather than skill: c. (—1845); ob.

black fly. Pejorative for a clergyman: ca. 1780–1850. Grose, 2nd ed. Esp. in relation to farmers, who, on account of the tithes, dislike clergymen more than they do insect pests.


black gown. A learned person: C. 18; coll.

black guard, later blackguard. A scoundrel, esp. if unprincipled: from ca. 1730; > coll. ca. 1770, S.E. ca. 1830. At first this was a collective n.: in C. 18–17, the scullions of a great house; in late C. 16–17, the Davenport bodyguard; in C. 17, the camp-followers; in C. 18, a body of attendants of black dress, race, or character, or the underworld, esp. the shoe-blacking portion thereof. A collective abomination of the sense, 'a criminal, a scoundrel', occurs in a MS. of 1685: '... of late a sort of vicious, idle, and masterless boys and rogues, commonly called the black-guard.' Two notable derivatives are:—blackguard, v. To act the blackguard (—1786); S.E. by 1800, but long f. Treat as a blackguard, revile (1823 +); S.E. by 1850. (S.O.D.) And: blackguard, adj., black-guardly; vile. From ca. 1750; S.E. by 1800. Smollett, 1760: 'He is become a blackguard gaol-bird'; Byron, 'I have heard him use language as blackguard as his action.' For this interesting word—the early senses are all pole rather than s. and all became S.E. thirty to fifty years after their birth—see an admirable summary in the S.O.D., a storehouse in the O.E.D., a most informative paragraph in Weekley's More Words Ancient and Modern, and a commentary-lexicon in F. & H.


Black Hole, the. Cheltenham: from ca. 1870; ob. Ex the number of former residents of India, esp. officers and civil servants, who go to live there.

—2. A place of imprisonment, 1821, whence the famous Black Hole of Calcutta (1856).—3. Whence, from ca. 1870, a punishment cell, and from ca. 1890, the guard-room: military.

Black Horse, the. The Seventh Dragoon Guards, ex the regimental facings and their (at one time) black horses; occ. abbr. to The Blacks: from ca. 1720; slightly ob. Temp. George II, The Virgin Mary's Guard; from ca. 1880, Strawboots.

black house. A business house of long hours and miserable wages: ca. 1820–1900; trade.


black is ... See black's my eye.

black jack. A leather drinking-jug: late C. 18–

black job. A funeral; also adj. Ca. 1850–

black joke. The female pudendi: late C. 18–

black-leg, usually as one word. A turf swindler: Parsons, Newmarket, vol. ii, 1771. So called perhaps from their appearing generally in boots, or else from game cocks, whose legs are always black.' Grose, 1st ed. 'W., however, suggests—more pertinently—that it is 'a description of the rook'.—2. Whence, any sharper: 1774. Colman, Man of Business. Perhaps ex black-leg(e), a disease affecting the legs of sheep and cattle (1722, S.O.D.).

—3. (Ex 1 and 2.) Pejorative for a workman
BLACKFORD-BLOCK

BLack Saturday. A Saturday on which, because of advances received, there is no wage to take: mid-C. 19-20, workmen's. Cf. dead horse, q.v.

Black Sea Cat, the. 'H.M. paddle frigate Terrible, on account of her activity during the Crimean War': naval: ca. 1855-80. Bowen.

black shark. An attorney: mostly naval: ca. 1820-60. 'Jon Bee.'


black ship. One of the 'teak-built ships from Indian yards in the days of the East India Company': nautical: mid-C. 18-19. Bowen.

Black Shirt. A Fascist: 1923+; Coll. passing rapidly into S.E. Orig. a translation of the It. (S.O.D.)

black-silk barges. A stout woman that, frequenting dances, dresses thus to minimise her amplitude: ball-room (-1909); † by 1920. Ware. Cf. barges.


black spy. The devil: late C. 17-18 c. and low. B.F.


black teapot. A negro footman: lower class: C. 19-20; ob.


Black Tom Tyrant. Sir Thomas Wentworth (1633-1641): nickname given by the Scots in 1740. Ibid.


Black Watch, the. The Royal Highlanders: military: from ca. 1725: s. >, by 1800, coll. >, by 1851, S.E. Ex their dark tartan.


black-work. Funeral-undertaking (1859, G. A. Sala, Golightly and Daylight). Cf. black art, 1, and black job.

blackamoor's teeth. Cowrie shells: C. 18, coll.

blackberry swagger. A hawk'er of tapes, shoe-laces, etc.: c. or low s.: ca. 1850-1910. H., 1st ed.


blacklee, blackey. See blackey.

blackfriar-block, -swell, -toff. A person (gen. male) well-dressed on occasion: London: ca. 1890-1910. 'Blackford's is a well-known . . . tailors.'
and outfitting establishment which also lets out evening and other garments on hire', F. & H. (revised).

Blackfriars! See black friars!

Blackfriars Buccaneers. 'The London division of the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve, whose head-quarters have been at Blackfriars for many years past', Bowen, 1929: naval: C. 20.

blackguard. See black guard.


blackleg. See black-leg.—*blackmam. See black man's.

Blacks. See Black Horse.

black's his, my or your eye, say. To accuse; reprimand; C. 15–20, ob.; coll. A mid-C. 18–19 variant was say black's the white of your eye, as in Smollett (Apperson). Note, however, that black's the white of your eye is an old-time sea protestation of innocence (Bowen).

blacksmith's daughter. A key (—1859); esp. in dial, (which has also blacksmith's wife), lock and key, padlock.

blacksmith's shop. 'The apron of the unpoplar Cunningham's patent reeling topsails in the mid-19th century', Bowen: nautical: at that period.

Blackwall, have been to. To have a black eye: Cockney: ca. 1865–66.

Blackwall fashion. (To conduct a sailing-ship) 'with all the smartness and ceremony of the old Blackwall Frigates. On the other hand it was frequently applied to a seaman who did not exert himself untily': nautical: C. 19. Bowen.


blacky; occ. blackey, blackee, blackie. A black man: from ca. 1810; coll.; occ. as a nickname. Moore, 1815; Thackeray, 1864. Cf. darky. (O.E.D.)


bladder. A very talkative, long-winded person: from ca. 1578; coll. >, by 1800, S.E.; ob. by 1900.


blade. A 'good fellow', or simply a man: from ca. 1859 (H., 1st ed.). Ca. 1750–1860, a sharp fellow: coll. Late C. 16–early 18, a roisterer, a gallant: S.E. The earliest sense appears in Shakespeare, the second in Goldsmith, and the latest in Dickens. Cf. Fr. une bonne épée, a noted swordman: W.

Blades, the. Sheffield Football Club: sporting: from ca. 1920. Ex the knife-factories of Sheffield.

*blag. To snatch a watch-chain right off: C. 20 c. Charles E. Leach. Perhaps ex Yorkshire dial. blag, to gather blackberries, itself ex Yorkshire blag, a blackberry.


Blanco. The inevitable nickname of all men surnamed White: naval and military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Not ex Blanco White, poet and theologian (d. 1841), but ex 'Blanco', that white accoutrement-cleanser which came on the market in 1895.

blandander. To tempt blandishly, to cajole: coll.: 1888, Kipling; ob. By rhyming reduplication on the stem of blandish, O.E.D. (Sup.).


blandiloquence. Smooth or flattering speech or talk: mid-C. 17–20; ob. The O.E.D. considers it S.E.; W., s.; perhaps it is a pedantic coll. Blount, 1656. Ex L. for 'bland speech'.

blank, blanked. Damn; damned. From ca. 1850. 'Cuthbert Bede.' Most euphemisms are neither s. nor coll., but blamoration and blank(ed) are resp. s. and coll.; cf. the remark at blast / and see blankety.—2. See blinkers I, blank your.


blanket, (born) on the wrong side of the. Illegitimate: from ca. 1770; coll.; from ca. 1850, S.E. Smollett.

blanket, lawful. A wife: from ca. 1800; coll.

blanket, wet. A spoil-sport: coll.: (—1830); in C. 20, almost S.E. Spencer.

Blanket Bay. The nautical form (late C. 19–20: Manchon) of blanket fair. Cf.:}


*blanket stiff. A tramp that never utilises the casual warts: C. 20 c. ? ex U.S.

blanketeer. See hot blanketsteer.


BLARM ME!

Ex blank, q.v., the 'blank' being the dash ('—') beloved of prudes and printers.


blamey. Honeyed flattery, smooth cajolery (— 1819); coll. Grose, 1785, records a sense rather more grave: 'He has licked the Blamey stone; he deals in the wonderful, or tips us the traveller.' Ibid., 'To tip the Blamey, is figuratively used for telling a marvellous story, or falsity.' In the 3rd ed. he adds: 'Also sometimes to express flattery.' Ex a stone in the wall of Castle Blamey, Ireland, the kissing of which—'a gymnastic operation', W.—is reputed to ensure a gift of cajolery and unblushing effrontery. Cf.: blamey, v.i. and v.t. To cajole; flatter grossly: coll., ex the n. Southey in 1803 (O.E.D.). The vb.n. blameyng is fairly common, blameyer much less so.


blasted. See blasted.

blaze. Satiated with pleasure. From 1819 until ca. 1860, s., but ca. 1860—1900 coll.; thereafter S.E. Byron uses the term, but its popularity came ca. 1860–4, when two versions of the Fr. farces, L'Homme Blessé, were played on the London stage. —2. Hence, conceded; pretentious: Charterhouse: from ca. 1910.

blaze. A conciliated or pretentious person: Charterhouse: from ca. 1910. Ex blaze, 2. Hence:

blaze, v. To be conceded; put on 'side': Charterhouse: from ca. 1910.

blashy. Eap. a blasty day, wretched weather: nautical coll. (— 1887) ex dial. blasty, gusty, rainy (1788). Baumann.

blast. To curse and swear (intransitively): coll. >, in late C. 19, S.E.: from ca. 1850, in gen. use (original military); foreshadowed in C. 17. (blast 1 A curse. Oaths, unless they consist of words already s. or coll., are often neither s. nor coll. though they verge on the latter.)

blast, at (or in) full. (Hard) at work: coll.; from the 1850's; now bordering on S.E. Ex the lit. sense (— 1800).

blasted. As a euphemism for bloody, it has no place here, but as a low expulsive adj., violently coll. and = 'executed', it is in point. From ca. 1740. (Cf. the ensuing pair of entries.) The spelling blasted is superfluous: nobody except a rustic, i.e. in dial., so draws out the a—and even then the spelling should be, not blasted but blast.


blasted fellow. An abandoned rogue: ca. 1760–1830; cf. Chesterfield's 'the most notorious blasted rascal in the world,' in a letter of Jan. 8, 1750.

blat. To talk much: s. (— 1923) ex C. 18–20 dial. blat, blate, to roar, to talk wildly. Manchon.


blaster. See blaster. —blasterkite. See blasterth-

blaster. (Gen. in passive.) To strike, assault: Glasgow: C. 20. Prob. ex dial. blater (gen. blather), to splash or besoal.

BLEATER

Blayne's Bloodhounds. (Military) the Eighty-Ninth Foot, from ca. 1881 the 2nd Battalion of the Royal Irish Fusiliers: from 1708, during the Irish Rebellion. Blayne was their colonel: and they excelled in tracking the rebels. Also known as The Rollickers, for they bore themselves jovially, swaggeringly.

blaze a trail. Lit., S.E. and orig. (— 1737) U.S. Fig., C. 18–20: coll. at first but soon S.E. and soon anglicised.

blaze away and) blaze away! Look sharp! Work hard! Later (cf. fire away!) go ahead! Coll.: from ca. 1825 in the indicative and from ca. 1850 as an adjuration. Ex the rapid firing of cannons and rifles.


blazers. Spectacles: Coopney (— 1887); ob. Baumann. Ex the sun therefrom reflected.

blazes. The bright clothes of flunkies: ex the epistle of Sam Weller and the 'swarry' in Dickens's Pickwick Papers. Ob. Cf.: blazes! A forcible exclamation: from the 1850's. Ex the flames of hell.

blazes, drunk as. Exceedingly drunk: from ca. 1800. Perhaps not from blazes! (q.v.) but a folk-etymology corruption of drunk as blazers, ca. 1830–60, a phrase arising from a feast held in honour of St. Blaise, blazers being the participants. See F. & H.

blazes, go to. To depart hastily; to disappear melodramatically: cf. the adjuration, go to blazes! and to († the) blazes! (e.g. with it) ! From the mid-1850's. Also in such phrases as that in 'He concigned me to blazes.' See blazes!

blazes, how or what or whothe? ! An intensive coll. interrogation; e.g. in Dickens, 1838, 'What the blazes is in the wind now?' (O.E.D.), and ibid., 1836, 'How the blazes you can stand the head-work you do, is a mystery to me.' See blazes!

blazes, like. Vehemently; with ardour. From ca. 1840; coll. As in Disraeli's Sybil, 'They... cheered the red-coats like blazers.' See blazes! Blazes, Old. The devil: from ca. 1845; ob. Cf. blazes!, q.v.

blazing. A coll. intensive adj. (gen. euphemistic; e.g. for bloody), as in a blazing shame: from ca. 1880.—2. Hence, (of a money-market that is) exceptionally active and good: Stock Exchange coll.: C. 20.

bleached. A very fair-complexioned girl: mid-C. 18–early 19 c. Grose, lat. ed. (Cf. the C. 20 peroxide blonde.) Prob. ex the mort lay last night a-bleaching, 'the wench looks very fair to Day,' A New Canting Dict., 1725.

bleacher. A maidservant: Glasgow (— 1834).


bleat. To complain, grumble; to lay information: from ca. 1560. This pejorative implies either feebleness or cowardice or an unpleasant readiness to blab.

*bleater. A victim of sharp or rook: o: C. 17-
Bleating, in C. 17–early 19 c., is an adj.: sheep, as in bleating call, a sheep-stealer; bleating prig or rig, sheep-stealing; bleating cheat = a sheep.—2. Among the lower classes, a euphemism for bloody: C. 20. Manchon.

Bleeved. Blood, 'as 'She'll have his bleed' — usually said of a woman who is rating her husband', Ware: protestant (mostly London): from ca. 1800. Cf. Bleeding, q.v.

Bled, v. To extort, overtly or covertly, money from: late C. 17–20, coll.—2. V.i. part (freely) with money: from ca. 1660, coll. in C. 19; ob.; little used since ca. 1850. Dryden, 1668, 'He is vehement, and bleeds on to fourscore or an hundred; and I, not willing to tempt fortune, come away a moderate winner of two hundred pistoles.—3. In printing, a book bleeds when the margin is so cut away that portions of the printed matter are also removed from them ca. 1870; > coll. > j. But since ca. 1920 (also bleed off), one bleeds a book-jacket when the colours are made to run over, i.e. appear to continue beyond the edges.—4. To let out water: nautical: late C. 19–20. F. & H., revised.—5. Hence, to let (caek, etc., of e.g. wine) fall in order to steal the escaping liquor: c.: C. 20. Manchon.


Bled the monkey. (Naval) to steal rum from the mess tub or monkey. C. 19. Cf. suck the monkey and tap the admiral.


Bleeding. A low coll. intensive adj. of little meaning: its import is emotional, not mental. (Rarely used as a euphemism for bloody.) From ca. 1857 (O.E.D. Sup.). Besant & Rice in Son of Vulcan, 1877, 'When he isn't up to one dodge he is up to another. You make no bleeding error.' Cf. bleed (n.) and bleeder, q.v.


Blenheim Pippin, the. Lord Randolph Churchill: political nickname: 1883, Etrusque, April 7. Punning that variety of apple; Lord Randolph, a son of the Duke of Marlborough (whose family seat is Blenheim, near Oxford), was 'diminutive ' (Ware).

Bless my (or me) soul! See soul, bless my. Bless oneself. Irregular (or course: from ca. 1870; coll. After ca. 1880, S.E. 'Has my Lord Treasurer 'blesse himself,' Pepys in his diary, April 1, 1665. Also, to bless another: to reprimand, scold, curse, curse at, sweat at him: coll. > S.E. C. 19–20.

Bless oneself with, not a (penny, shifting, etc.) to.

Peniless: from ca. 1650: coll. till ca. 1800, then S.E. Dickens has it. 'In allusion to the cross on the silver penny ... or to the practice of crossing the palm with a piece of silver', S.O.D. In fact a proverbial phrase, recorded in 1840, runs: not a cross [coin] to bless oneself with (Apperson).
BLIGHTY


Blightly, i roll on. 'When this bloody war is over, oh how happy I shall be': a military c.p. of 1910-18. (Manchon.)

Blightly bag. A small stuff-bag issued at the Casualty Clearing Stations, where soldiers were deprived of their kit and so had nothing in which to carry personal belongings: military: 1915-18. F. & Gibbons. Ex their 'manufacture' in Blightly.


blini(e), occ. bimm! Abbr. Borlingby (God blind me!): mostly Cockeye: late C. 19-20. Barbro & Leland.

blimney, adj. Sentimental; (likewise esp. of songs) sentimental and popular: theatrical, music-halls: from ca. 1920. Maurice Lincoln, Oh! Definitely, 1933.

blimp. 'A small non-rigid dirigible airship': military s. rapidly > coll., then j. Invented by Horace Shortt (O.E.D. Sup. B. & P.).


blind. To curse: soldiers > gen.: from the late 1880's. Kipling:

If you're cast for fatigue by a sergeant unkind,
Don't grouse like a woman, nor crack on, nor blind.

Ex such curses as blind your eyes !—2. To go heedlessly, esp. of a motorist reckless speedily: 1923 (O.E.D. Sup.).—3. To cheat (a person): c. or low: ca. 1815-40. (O.E.D. at nail, v., § 8, c.)

blind, adj. In liquor; tipsy: C. 17-18 c. (Cf. the S.E. blind-drunk.) The c. term has, in C. 20, > slang, popularised during the G.W.—2. See table-cloth.—3. See blind ten.

blind, go (it). To enter unawares or rashly into an undertaking: U.S. (1848) anglicised ca. 1900. Prob. ex poker.

blind, when the devil is. Never: from ca. 1650, ob.; coll. Howell, Scott.


blind as a brickbat. Lit. and fig., exceedingly blind: coll. verging on S.E.: Dickens, 1850. Ex the C. 17-20 S.E. blind as a bat. Cf. the didacticism blind as a beetle, as a buffoon, as a mole.

blind buckler. A wooden plug that, for use with hawser-pipes, has no passage for the cable: nautical coll. verging on j.: late C. 19-20. Bowen.


blind drunk. Very drunk: from ca. 1830; coll. >, ca. 1890, S.E. Dusaresi in Spald, 1845: 'Hang me if I wasn't blind drunk at the end of it.' Cf. blind, n., 4.


Blind Half Hundred (occ. Hundredth), the. The Fiftieth Regiment of Foot: from ca. 1841 the 1st Battalion of the Royal West Kents. II., 3rd. ed., says ex the ophthalmia common in the Egyptian campaign, 1861. Hence, from ca. 1890 in the game of house, '50.' The regiment was also known as The Dirty Half-Hundred, q.v., and The Gallant Fifteenth, q.v.

*bland harper. A beggar that, counterfeiting blindness, plays the harp or the fiddle: late C. 17-18 c. B.E.; Grose.

blind Hookey. A great risk: non-aristocratic (~1900); ob. Ware, 'Oh, it's Blind Hookey to attempt it.' From a card game.

blind man (occ. officer, reader). One who deals with 'blind', i.e. imperfectly or indistinctly addressed, letters: from ca. 1864. S. > coll. > j. (S.O.D.)

blind man's holiday. Night, darkness: late C. 16-17. From 1890, the gloaming: early examples occur in B.E. and Swift. Coll.; in late C. 19-20, S.E.


blind swiping. See swiping.

blind ten, twenty, thirty. 10, 20, 30 (etc.) in the game of house: military: C. 20. B. & P. Ex the noughts: having only one '10' or eye.


blinder. 'A huge, curling wave' before the pre-1913 deepening of the channel at Durban: mostly Durban: late C. 19-early 20. Pettman.

—2. See pooldier.

*blindler, take a. To die: mid-C. 19-20 c.; ob. I.e. take a blind leap in, or into, the dark.


blink, like a. Immediately; in but a moment: coll.: C. 20. E. Phillips Oppenbach, The Strange Boarders of Palace Crewent, 1935. 'Must have died like a blink.' Prob. on like winking or in a flash.

*blinking-fencer. A seller of spectacles: mid-C. 19-20 (ob.) c. H., 1st ed. Ex blanks = blinkers; see blink, 1, and fence(r).

blinker, blank your. Damn your eyes! — jocularly euphemistic (— 1890); ob. See blinker 1.

blinking. A verbal counter, indicating mild reprobation or mere excitement: from ca 1890. 'Prob. for blanking, euphemism for blushing, with vowel substituted as in 'bid', W.'

Blinking Sam. Dr. Samuel Johnson (1700–84) Dawson.

*blinko. An amateur entertainment—gen. held at a 'pub'. C.: from ca 1870; ob. Perhaps because it makes one blink; in form, cf. blindo.


blop. 'To switch an aeroplane engine on and off': Air Force: from 1915. F. & Gibbons. Blend ex blink up; or a perversion of flip.


blister, v. To punish moderately; to fine: proletarian: from 1890; ob. Ware.— 2. To thrash: C. 20; ob. A. H. Dawson.

blister it, them, etc. Blaze it, them! : euphemistic: coll. C. 1920. H. Cockton.


blizzard collar. A woman's high stand-up collar: Society: 1897, The Daily Telegraph, Jan. 16; † by 1920. Ware, 'Suggestive of cold weather'.

*block. See block.

block. 'A drowned body. (2) A drunkard. (3) A contemptuous term applied indiscriminately to anybody': A. H. Dawson; † error for bloater. Late C. 19–20.


bloated aristocrat. Any man of rank and wealth: coll.; from ca 1850, though adumbrated in 1731. Thackeray, 1861: 'What a bloated aristocrat Thimsey has become since he got his place!' In C. 20 the term is bloated plutocrat, which when used seriously is S.E.; when jocularly, coll.


bloe, bloy. A 'duck's egg': cricket: coll.: 1868; says Ware; 1934, W. J. Lewis, 'From the cipher 0 D.U.E.

placed against his name on the score-sheet'; ultimately ex blo, a blot, a shapeless mass.—2. A glass of beer; military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons.— 3. Patter or beggars' tales: vagrants'. o. (— 1861). Mayhew. Cf. *blof, v. To talk, esp. if indiscreetly; to patter: from ca 1850; c. Same period: on the blof, by talking (Mayhew, 1851). Ex blof, get a. To make no score: cricketers' coll.: 1905, Norman Gale (W. J. Lewis). Ex the n. Also make a blof, 1903 (O.E.D. Sup.); used fig. to make nothing, it is likewise coll.: from ca 1905. blof, on the. See blof, v.

block. A person either stupid or hard-hearted: C. 16–20; coll. until ca 1860, then S.E. Early examples are offered by Udall (in Ralph Roister Doister), Shakespeare, Jonson. Cf. deaf, dull, etc., as a block.— 2. The head: C. 17–20. Shirley, ca. 1837. See also block, lose the.— 3. In Scottich o., a policeman: recorded for 1888 (Ware), but prob. from ca. 1860.— 4. 'The young lady of fine shape who in the mantle department tries on for the judgment of the lady customer', Ware: linen-drapers' coll.: C. 20.

block, v.t. Have intercourse with a woman: C. 20, low.— 2. See blocking.— 3. See block a hat.— 4. (Usually block a pub.) To occupy, or remain, long in: non-euphemistic (— 1909). Ware, 'Gen. said of a sot'...

block, a chip of the same or (same) old. Of the same character; with inherited characteristics. Coll.: C. 17–20. In a sermon, Sanderson, 1627: 'Am I not a child of the same Adam, a vessel of the same clay, a chip of the same block with him?' (O.E.D.)

block, barber's. The head: from ca 1820; in Scott.— 2. Also, an over-dressed man (— 1876, ob.). Both ex the wooden block on which barbers displayed a wig.

block, do in the; occ. do one's block. See block, lose the.


block, lose (or do in) the; occ. do one's block. To become angry, excited, diffident: Australian (— 1916). C. J. Dennis, who has also keep the block, to remain dispassionate.

block, off one's. Panicky; crazy; occ. angry; late C. 19–20. F. & Gibbons. See block, n. 2.

block a hat. 'To knock a man's hat down over his eyes', H. 3rd ed.: from ca 1860. Perhaps ex block, the head.


block-ornament, blocker. A small piece of inferior meat displayed on a butcher's block: coll.: from ca 1845; slightly ob.— 2. A queer-looking person: from ca 1860; †

block with a rascal, cut a. (Often blocks for a block.) To try in a futile or incongruous way: coll. Goldsmith, 1774.

blocking. (Parliamentary) the preventing or postponing of a bill being passed, esp. of its being voted-on after 12.30 at night: 1884; coll. > J. C. S. (S.O.D.)

*bloke: in mid-C. 19, occ. blook. Occ. con-temp-tuous; occ. a term of address among sailors. A man; a chap, follow (— 1839). Until ca. 1890, c.; until ca. 1900, low. Pre-1870 examples: Brandon (in 'Ducange Anglicæ'), Mayhew, Sala, Kingsley, Ouida, Miss Braddon, James Greenwood. Also, 2, a lover ('Sally and her bloke'), Ware: from ca. 1890. And, 3, in C. 20 Navy, a man's (passive) male; 4, in late C. 19–early 20 universities, an 'outsider', a book-grubber, as Ware notes. Perhaps ex Dutch blok, a fool, or (via Romany) ex Hindustani,.loke, a man; Weekley thinks that it derives ex Shelta ('Irish tinkers').

Note, however, the slightly earlier glock, q.v.: though, of course, glock may well derive ex Shelta.


*blokes with the jasey, the. The judge: c. or low s. (— 1874). II, 5th ed. Ex bloke, 1.

blonde or -y. A blonde girl: non-aristocratic and non-cultured coll.: from ca. 1925.

*blone. A corruption of bloven, q.v. (Egan's Grose.)

blanked. See blanked.

[blood, by itself or in combination with God's, Christ's, in oaths: all † by 1900.]


blood, adj. Fashionable; distinguished: Public Schools, late C. 19–20. P. G. Wodehouse, Mike, 1909, 'You might think it was the blood thing to do to imitate him.' Ex blood, n., 2.

blood, in and out of. Vigorous, weak. C. 19–20 hunting s. ex hunting j.

blood, young. (C. 20 political.) A youthful and vigorous member of a party.


blood and guts alderman. A pompous man; a man with a large 'corporation': C. 19.


blood and 'ouns! I.e. God's blood and wounds: C. 18–19.

blood and thunder. A mixture of port wine and brandy: ca. 1890–1910. Ex colour and effect, resp. (The phrase was orig. an oath.)


blood ball. 'The butchers' annual hopser [sic], a very lusty and fierce-eyed function': London trade: late C. 19–20; virtually †. Ware. Cf. bung ball, q.v.


blood-curler or -freezer. A thrilling, esp. a 'creepy' narration or incident: coll., from ca. 1870. Cf. blood-and-thunder tales, shocking shocker, thriller, and blood, n., 6 and 7.

blood for blood. In kind: tradesmen's, esp. in purchase and payment; from ca. 1790; ob. Grose, 2nd ed. (With deal.)


blood on the bullet. A musketry-instructors intention that a bullet should, if possible, have a fleshy billet: 1915; ob. F. & Gibbons.

blood or beer! A London streets' jocular c.p. = fight or pay for such refreshment!: ca. 1900–15. Ware.


Blood-Suckers. The Sixty-Third Regiment of Foot, now—and since ca. 1881—the 1st Battalion of the Manchester Regiment: military: from ca. 1860; ob.


bloody, adj. A low coll. intensive, orig., and still occ., connoting detestation: from ca. 1810. Lex. Biol., 1811, 'A favourite word used by the thieves in swearing, as bloody eyes, bloody rascal'; Egan, 1823, added: 'Irish'. During the G.W., an adj. of all work, often used with a splendid disregard for congruity. Ex and cf.: bloody, adv. (in mid-C. 17–18, gen. bloody, adv.) Also a low coll. intensive; = engr. C. 17–20, but respectable till ca. 1790. In C. 17, there was an undertone of violence, in early C. 18 (cf. blood, n., q.v.) of high but roistering birth: from ca. 1760, neutral ethically and socially, but (until ca. 1920, at least) objectionable aesthetically. Only since the G.W. has it, in post-1800 days, been at all gen. written in full. There is no need for ingenuous etymologies: the idea of blood suffices. For both adj. and adv. see F. & E., O.E.D. Weekley's Adjectives and his Words Ancient and Modern, Robert Graves's Lara Porsena in the revised ed., and esp. my Words; the last contains a 2,000-word essay on the subject.— 2. It is often inserted, as in abs-bloody-lutely, hoo-bloody-rah, not bloody likely: C. 20. Manchon.


Bloody Eleventh. The Eleventh Regiment of
Foot, now—and since ca. 1881—the Devonshire Regiment: military: C. 19–20, ob. Ex. the bloody battle of Salamanc a in the Peninsular War; they had already suffered heavily at Fontenoy. Dawson.

"bloody end to me!; I wish my bloody eyes may drop out if it is not true!; God strike me blind!" Thieves' oaths recorded in Egan's Gros, 1823.

bloody flag. That single red flag which is the signal for close action: naval: C. 19–20; ob. Bowen.

Bloody Forty (or b.f.), The. A criminal gang infesting the Liverpool Docks in the 1860's: nautical coll. It was broken up by Captain Samuels of the "Dreadnought" (Bowen).

bloody Jimmy. An uncooped sheep's head: ca. 1810–1914. Vaux, 1812; H., 1st ed. Also known as a sanguinary James and a mountain pecker.


Bloody Mary. Queen Mary of England (d. 1558). Ex the persecutions she allowed. (This nickname soon > an historical and theological counter, a mere sobriquet of 'the Swan of Avon' type.)

Bloody Mary's. 'The red-brick church, St. Paul's, resembling St. Mary's in Cambridge, the university church', F. & H. revised: Cambridge University: late C. 19–20.


Bloody Pirates. A good-natured South Seas nickname for Burns, Philip & Co., the big steamship firm of the Pacific: C. 20. Punning B.P.'s, as they are also called.


bloomeration. Illumination: London illitrate: 1897: ob. and, prob., never gen. Ware. blooming. (Occ. euphemistic—cf. bleeding—for bloody) A mild intensive adj. and adv.: cf. daily, blinking. The S.O.D. dates the earliest instance at 1882; the usage was foreshadowed early in C. 18. Its popularity in the 1880's was owing largely to Alfred G. Vance, the comic singer.

Bloombury Birds. 'Hot-spirited recusants,' the disciples of 'corner-miching priests': London ecclesiastical circles: ca. 1630–90. Hacket (whose phrases they are).

*bloss, blowse. A wench; a low harlot: the former certainly a. always, the latter prob. a. word at one period. These senses date from late C. 17. Prob. ex blowse, 2, q.v., but not impossibly abbr. blossom. Cf. blower, q.v.—2. 'A Thief or Shop-lift,' B.E.: of. of late C. 17–early 19. Prob. an extension of sense 1.


*blot the scrip. To put in writing: mid-C. 17–18; prob. o. Hence blot the scrip and jark it, to stand engaged: be bound for anyone: late C. 17–18 o. Jark = a, or to, seal.

blocco. Drunk: from ca. 1905. P. G. Wodehouse, of a drunken man, 'He was oiled, boiled, fried, plastered, whiffled, sozzled, and blotto.' Ex the porousness of blotting-paper, possibly suggested or influenced by Bonamy motto, intoxicated blouser. 'To cover up, to hide, to render positive', to mislead: ca. 1880–1914. Ex the workman's blowse. Ware, 'Probably in an anti-Gallican spirits'.


blow, v. To fume, storm, speak angrily: C. 16–20, coll. (O.E.D.) In later C. 19–20 the term, in its first two nuances, has, after nearly a century of obscurity, been revived by contact with Australia and America, where, as 'to boast', it had—and has—a second life.—2. To inform, give information (v.t. absolute, in B.E. put gen. with up or upon, later on): from ca. 1670; S.E. till ca. 1660, coll. till C. 19, then s. 'D—n me, if I don't blow . . . I'll tell Tom Neville,' Leigh Hunt. (S.O.D.) —3. The euphemistic blow (me !) is also used as a low jocular coll. = to curse, swear at (often with past tense blowed), v.i. and v.t.: 1835, Marryat. 'If I do, blow me !' (O.E.D.). Occ. blow me tight t, † by 1920; blow me up t, current ca. 1780–1850 (George Parker), blow it! mid-C. 19–20 (cf. blast it t).—4. Spend, lose money: see blow,—5. University, occ. as go on the blow: to indulge in a spree: C. 19.—6. Winchester College, C. 19–20: to blush (a corruption or a variant of blue, q.v.).—7. In C. 20 o., to go away, esp. if quietly and quickly.—8. Also, v.t., to 'blow the goods' (v.t. with fo): o.: in C. 19–20, Waller, Roett 13. Cf. sense 2.—9. To open (a safe) by the use of powder: o.: late C. 19–20. James Spencer, 1934.


blow a cloud. To smoke a cigar or a pipe: coll., verging on S.E.: late C. 18–19. Tom Moore, 1819. (In late C. 17–18, raise a cloud — to smoke a pipe.) *blow a tank. To dynamite a safe: post-G.W. New Zealand c.


blow great guns. To blow a violent gale: from ca. 1640; coll. Hugh Miller. Occ. b.g.q. and small arms, †.

blow hot and cold. To vacillate; be treacherous: mid-C. 16–20; coll. till ca. 1800, then S.E.

blow-in. To arrive; enter (v.t.); come. blow-in on (a person), to visit. Coll.: C. 20. From U.S.A.
blow (in) a bowl. To be a confirmed drunkard: C. 16 (? early 17); coll. Barclay, 1815. (O.E.D.)

blow in one's pipe. To spend money: low: ca. 1804-50. Cf. blow, v., 4; blow it; blow me (tight) !; blow me up !

See blow, v., 3; for 1st, see also blow it.

blow off my last limb (or wind) ! I swear that's true: nautical (—1923).

blow off steam. To work, talk, swear, etc., hard, as a "safety-valve": from ca. 1830; coll. Marryat.


blow off the loose corns. 'To Lie now and then with a Woman', B.E.: late C. 17–mid-18; c.

blow the groundels, q.v.

blow one's bacc. To boast, 'show off': ca. 1870-1910. Ex Dutch baccas = baccaus, trumpet.

blow one's hide out. To eat heavily: low coll. (—1857); ob. 'Ducange Anglicus.'


blow sky high. To scold, or blame, most vehemently: f. orig. U.S. and anglicised ca. 1900.

blow the gab or gaff. To reveal a secret: in C. 17 or (as Grose, 1st ed.); then, always with gaff, low s., as in Marryat.

blow the grampus. (Nautical) to throw cold water on a man asleep on duty: C. 19–20; ob.

blow the groundels. To 'lie with' a woman on the floor: C. 17–18; c. In B.E. blow-off on . . . blow-through, have o. (Of a man to coll): low: C. 20.

blow together. To make in a slovenly way: tailors': from ca. 1850; ob.


blew-ed, be. Euphemistic when blown = damned; otherwise, low coll. From the mid-1830's. Dickens, 1836, 'You be blown.' Cf. blow, v., 3; q.v. N.B.: in late C. 19–20, blewed is, except in this phrase, considered sol. for blown.


blowing, vb.in. Boosting: from ca. 1860. Trollope in Australia and New Zealand, 1873, 'A fine art much cultivated in the colonies, for which the colonial phrase of "blowing" has been created'. —2. See blown.

blowing marlin-spike, it's). (It is) a full gale: nautical coll.: mid-C. 19–20. Bowen. I.e. the gale is strong enough to lift a marlin-spike (or almost).

blowing of a match, in the. In a moment: coll., mostly London (—1887); ob. Baumann.

blowing-up. See blow-up, 2.

blown in, look (or see) what the wind has. See who has arrived: jocular coll.: C. 20.

blowswella. A country wench: C. 18; coll. Suggested by the character in Gay's poem, The Shepherd's Week. Cf. blowswinda, which likewise has a coll. savour.

blows, blowze. A beggar's trull; a wench: late C. 16–18: either o. or low s. Chapman in All Folks. Cf. blow, q.v.—Cf. 2, a slatternly woman: C. 16–18.


blunder. Winchester College: a prefect in half power: ca. 1830–1910. Also, a non-privileged cab plying at railway stations: ca. 1850–1900. Ex the Prussian field-marshals, who arrived somewhat late at the Battle of Waterloo.

bludge. To use a bludgeon: 1924, Galworthy, The White Monkey.

bludgeon business. See swinging the stick.

bludgeon. A harlot's bully; a bawdy-house chucker-out: o. (—1822); ob. Also, in late C. 19–20, blunder.

—2. A thief apt to use a bludgeon, i.e. violence: o. ca. 1850. E., 1st ed.—2. See bludgeoner.

blue. This word, in the S.E., coll., and s. of C. 19–20—it is rare before ca. 1700—plays a protean and almost intangible part, for it expresses a gamut of opinions and emotions. For an excellent gen. introduction on the subject, see F. & H. at blue.}

blue. The Blue Squadron: from ca. 1700; orig. naval and coll.; in C. 19, gen. and S.E. See the note at admiral of the blue.—2 A 'blue stocking': 1788, Mme. D'Arlay; after ca. 1860, coll. Byrom, in Don Juan: 'The Blue, that tender tribe, who
Blue and Orange. The nickname of the Loyal and Friendly London club of the 1740's. Grose.
blue-apron, A tradesman: C. 18–19, coll. > S.E. Amherst, Terra Finita, 1726.
blue-back. One of the old privately prepared charts: nautical coll.: C. 19–20; ob. Bowen. Contrast:
blue-backs. Orange Free State paper money: ca. 1860–1900. Thus F. & H.
blue-backs. See, however, bluebacks.
blue bill, Winchester College: a tradesman's bill sent to the pupil's home: C. 19–20, ob. Ex the colour of the envelopes gen. used.
blue billy. A blue handkerchief: white-spotted; low: boxing: from the 1830's; ob. Brandon, 1830.
blue-book. See 'Westminster School slang'.
blue board. A C. 20 variant of the preceding.
blue boys. (Rare in singular.) The police: James Greenwood, 1883. Ob.
blue breeches!—by my eyes, limbs, and. See Eyes and Limbs, the.
blue butter. Mercurial ointment, against parasites: (Cockney) coll.: from ca. 1870; ob. H., 5th ed.
Blue Cap. A Scotsman: ca. 1590–1800; coll. > S.E. Cf. the S.E. blue bonnet and contrast:
Blue Caps, the. The Dublin Fusiliers: military: 1857 (Indian Mutiny); slightly ob. Ware. Oce. Neill's Blue Caps, ex their gallant colonel killed at Lucknow. (F. & Gibbons.)
blue damn. (I don't know why.) A slightly evasive curse: coll. (—1909); ob. Ware's semantics are rather far-fetched: prob. ex blue, adj., 2.
blue devils. Low spirits: from ca. 1780; coll. >, by 1850, S.E. Grose, 1st ed.; Cowper has Mr. Blue Devil. Ex blue devil, a baleful demon.—Hence 2,


blue funk. Adj., sensational: from ca. 1870; mainly theatrical. *Post-1920, however, it is fairly usual and, in its gen. use, coll. > S.E. Ex a blue light used on the stage to create a weird effect; cf. b.d. blue light.


blue funk. Extreme fear (< 1856). Thomas Hughes popularised it.

blue-funk school. A coll. form of the blue-silver school, q.v.; its opponents': from ca. 1900. Collinson.


Blue Horse, the. The Fourth Dragoon Horse: military; late C. 18—20; ob. Ex its facings of 1746—88. *blue it. See blow it.

blue jack (or Jack). Cholera morbis: nautical (— 1800). Ex colour of skin (Ware). On yellow jack.


blue marines (or B.M.), the. The Royal Marine Artillery before they were amalgamated with the Light Infantry: naval coll.; C. 19. Bowen.


blue murder, cry. See blue murders.

blue murder, like. With great rapidity, esp. if hastily or in a panic: 1914 (O.E.D. Sup.). Ex: blue murder(s). Cries of terror or alarm: a great noise, horrible din: from late 1850's; coll. H., 1st ed. Gen. as cry b. m. Cf. the Fr. morbleux, which, however, = mort (de) Dieu.


blue paper, fly. See fly blue paper.

blue peter. (Cardis) the signal for trumpets at whist: coll. > j. ca. 1860—1900.—2. Also fig. in its coll. use, as in Byron, for immediate departure.

blue pigeon. (Nautical) the sounding-lead; from ca. 1820—2. In mid-C. 18—19 c., blue pigeon is rooting-lead; hence, b.p. flyer is a stoker of lead from houses and churches. Grose, 1st ed.


blue plum (b). A mid-C. 18—19 c. term for a bullet. Grose, 1st ed.; Harrison Ainsworth, 1834. Grose has the following phrase: surfaced with a blue plum, 'wounded with a bullet', and a symptom (i.e. an assemblage) of George III's 'a (i.e. Roy's) blue plums, a volley of ball, shot from soldiers' firelocks.


blue-ribboner or -ribbonite. A teetotaller: coll. verging on S.E.; from ca. 1890. Ware. The blue ribbon worn by certain teetotalers is recorded in 1878 (S.O.D.).


blue shirt at the mast-head, (there's) a. (There is) a call for assistance: nautical; late C. 19—20. Bowen. Ex the blue flag then flown.


blue stocking. A literary or a learned lady (< 1790). The adj. began to be applied in the 1760's to the frequenter of Montagu House, London, where literary and cognate talk replaced cards. Both n. and adj. were coll. by 1810, S.E. by 1820; both are ob. Ex the blue worsted stockings affected by Benjamin Stilligfield, a near-poet, who was a shining light of the Montagu House assemblies—by Admiral Boscawen dubbed the Blue Stocking Society. See esp. the O.E.D.


blue stone. Gin or whisky so inferior that it resembles vitriol, which in Scottish and Northern dial, is called 'blue stone'. Ca. 1850—1900.

blue tape. Gin: ca. 1780—1900; perhaps a.
Grose, 2nd ed. Cf. blue ruin and sky blue, the latter in Grose, 3rd ed.

Blue Un. The. The Winning Post: sporting (−1909); ob. Ware. Ex its colour, adopted to distinguish it from The Pink Un’s.


blue-water school. Those who believe that naval officers in Britain’s best defence: 1905. S. > coll. >, by 1914, S.E.

bluebacks. ‘The notes of the Transvaal Government issued in 1865. The imprecious condition of the Transvaal at the time made these notes very much less than their face value. Cf. the American term “Greenbacks”’, Pettman. (These notes lapsed before 1884, the term was ob. by 1900.) Ex their colour. Occ. blue-backs.

blued, occ. blewed. Drunk: low: C. 19–20; ob. This word perhaps influenced screwed and sleeved.

bluyly, came off. To have lit success, bad luck: coll.; ca. 1650–1840. Uorulists.


bluer. See ‘Harrow slang’.

blues, the. See blue, n., 2 and 7.—2. Despondency; low spirits. Apparently Washington Irving was, in 1807, the first to abbr. blue devil, q.v.—3. Delirium tremens: from ca. 1850 but never very gen.—4. The police: see blue, n., 4: from ca. 1835. ‘Sometimes called the Royal Regiment of Footguards Blue’, H., 6th ed.: ca. 1870–90.—5. The Royal Horse-Guards: C. 17–20. Ca. 1690–1780, gen. the Oxford Blues, to distinguish them from King William the III’s Dutch troops, also called the Blues.


*bluey-cracking. The stealing of lead from buildingexteriors: o. (−1846); ob.


bluff. A considerable assurance adopted to impress an opponent: orig.—(1848) U.S., anglicised ca. 1870; cf. the v. Coll.; in C. 20, S.E.—2. In low s., an excuse: a sense firmly grounded in England—see Mayhew’s London Labour—as early as 1851: this sense may, perhaps, not come from the U.S.

bluff, v.i. and v.t. To impress, intimidate, make an excuse; bluff off, to frighten away by bluffing; bluff out of, to frighten out of. Orig. (1850): (Thornton), U.S.; anglicised as a coll., in the early 1860’s or even the late 1850’s, for H., 1869, makes no comment on the American origin of either n. or v.; in C. 20, S.E. The American usage, for both n. and v., perhaps derives from the Restoration sense, bluff, to blindfold (as in Ray) and look bluff, look big (as in B.E.); but see bluffing and W. at bluff.

bluff, call one’s. To challenge a person, with implication of showing up his weakness: coll.: C. 20. From U.S.A.

*bluff the rats. To spread panic: low (−1923). Manchon.


bluffling. Vb.ln., ‘imposing on another with a show of force, where no real force exists: a phrase taken from the game of poker’, Thornton, who records it for U.S. at 1850. Anglicised, as coll., ca. 1880.


blugy. A jocular, therefore a., not—except among purists or prudes—a euphemistic twisting of bloody: 1877. The O.E.D. (Sup.), remarks: ‘(A) pretended infantile pronunciation of bloody’. Hence, bluginess (1894; ibid.).

blunderbuss. A stupid, or ignorant, clumsy fellow: from ca. 1690; coll. verging on, perhaps achieving, S.E.; ob. Ex the weapon’s unwieldiness.—2. Also, ca. 1680–1800, a noisy and truculent talker: coll. Ex the noise of its report.

blunk. A squall; a period of equally weather: dial. (−1790) >, by 1820, nautical coll. Bowen. Dial. has a v. blank, which is cognate with blesh (E.D.D.).

*blunt. Money, esp. cash (−1714); orig. c.; ob., except among tramps as the blunt. John Hall; Grose (2nd ed.), Moncrieff, Dickens (in Oliver Twist), Punch (1882). Etymology doubtful: perhaps, indeed prob., ex the blunt rim of coins; perhaps, however, ex John Blunt, chairman of the South Sea Company; or perhaps, despite its surface improbability, ex the Fr. blond (cf. brown, a half-penny), as H. and F. & H. maintain.—2. Whence in blunt, out of blunt, rich, poor: C. 19. Bee.


bluntly. A variant of the preceding. ‘Jon Bee’, 1823.


blurry. A sturring, gen. euphemistic, of bloody: from not later than 1910. B. & P.


blurt, v. To let or cause an escape of anal wind: C. 20; low coll.

blush. See black dog.


blushing honours. See thick upon one.


bly! ; bly ma. Reduced forms of God blimey, Godblimey; low: late C. 19–20. Ware.
*blin, blin. A horse: vagrants' o. (— 1845); t. ex bliner.
Blint. See Blightly.
bo. (In vocative mate): U.S. (— 1895), partly anglicised ca. 1918. Perhaps ex (you) hob, but see esp. Irwin.
bo or boo to a goose, say or cry; ooc. to a battle-dore. To open one's mouth; to talk; speak: gen. in negative. Coll. from ca. 1880
— 3. A railway signal: railwaymen's; from the 1890's. Till-Buis, Nov. I, 1890, notes the synonymous stick.
board, v. To accost: C. 18–20. In Surrey and Shakespeare, S.E., but from ca. 1600, coll., as in Vanbrugh's False Friend, 'What do you expect from board and woman... already heart and soul engaged to another?' In C. 19–20, much more definitely nautical in flavour: before 1800, the Fr. aborder, to approach, accost, impressed rather by its Gallicism than by its nauticalism.— 2. t. hence, to borrow money from (a person): military (— 1890); ob. F. & H.
board, above. See above board.
board, get the. To receive the right-away signal: railwaymen's: from ca. 1927. The Daily Herald, Aug. 5, 1936.
board, keep one's name on the. To remain a member of one's College: Cambridge coll.; from ca. 1860. In C. 20, S.E.
board, on the. (Tailoring) enjoying all the privileges and perquisites of a competent workman: ca. 1820–1829. Perhaps r. rather than s.
board, sail on another. To behave differently: C. 16–early 17; coll.
board, sweep the. To win all the prizes; obtain every honour; coll. from ca. 1830. Ex the card-game senses, take all the cards, win all the stakes: S.E., C. 17–20.
board in the smoke. (Nautical) to take by surprise: C. 19. Ex the lit. usage of boarding a ship under cover of broadside-smoke.
*board job. A sandwich-man's job: C. 20 c.
Ex the board he carries.
Board-man. See boardman.
Board. See boardman.
*boarding house or school. A prison; house of correction: c.; ca. 1860–1840. B.E.; Grosre. Hence, boarding scholars, 'Bridewell-birds', B.E.
A standing patterer, who often carried a board with coloured pictures: c. (vagrants'): ca. 1840–1900. The practice was, by Cockneys, called board-work. — 2. (Or Board-man.) A school-attendance inspector: London coll. (— 1887); ob. Baumann.
boards, the. The stage; theatre: from ca. 1770: coll. till ca. 1880, then S.E.
*boat, always the boat. The hulks; or any public works or prison; c.: ca. 1810–95. Mayhew. Ex convict-hulks.
— 2. To sentence to penal servitude: ca. 1870–1910. Both are c. In the latter sense, get the boat or be booked = to receive a severe sentence: H., 5th ed.
boat, be in the same. I.e. in the same position or circumstance(s): coll., from ca. 1860, though anticipated in late C. 10; in C. 20, S.E.
boat, have an oar in another's or every. To meddle, be a busybody: from mid-C. 16; ob. Coll. till ca. 1860, then S.E.
boat, miss the. To be too late: nautical coll.: C. 20. Bowen.
boat, sail in the same. To act together: coll. from late C. 10; in C. 19–20, S.E.
boats. Large boats: middle-class jocular: C. 20. Cf. cards and two feet...
bob. A man, a fellow: coll.: from ca. 1700; ob. Cf. Jack and Tom, Dick and Harry, the commonness of the name giving rise to a generic sense. Cf. sense 3, where, however, the idea may be that of bopping in, out, and up; also dry and wet bob (see bob, dry).— 2. A shilling: from ca. 1810. In 1812 Vaux records it in his Flash Dict. Origin obscure: perhaps ablur, bobrick, q.v.; Waller suggests ex Robert, cf. joye, q.v.— 3. In c., a shopkeeper's assistant: late C. 17–19. Cf. sense 1.— 4. Gin: C. 18.— 5. At Winchester College, C. 19: a large white beer-jug, holding about a gallon.— 6. See bob, s'help me.
*bob, v.; ooc. as bob out of. To cheat, trick. Late C. 17–19 c. C. 14–16: S.E.; C. 17, coll. Ex Old Fr. bober, to baffle.
bob I, all is. See bob, adj., 2.
Bob I, bear a. Be quick! Look lively: coll.: from ca. 1860; ob. Ex bear a bob (lit. a refrain), join in the chorus.
Bob, dry. Incomplete colition: applied to the man: ca. 1860–1930. Rochester: Grosre; F. & H. (revised). Ex dry bob, a blow that leaves the skin intact.— 2. See: bob, dry and wet. At Eton College, one who concentrates resp. on land games and sports and on
boating. Swimming. (recently) water-polio. Dry bob occurs in Dissard's Contingency: the terms would therefore seem to date from ca. 1835; they were coll. by 1875, S.E. by 1900.

bob, give the. To dismiss: C. 17, coll. (In S.E., give the bob = to befool, impose on.)

bob, light. A soldier in the light infantry, artillery, etc.; coll.; from ca. 1840. Here, as in dry and wet bob, bob a blar. Robert, so common a name that it > generic for a man, a fellow; cf. Jack, Joe, Dick, etc.

bob (or, in Ware, baub!), s'help me. As an oath, euphemistic (bob = God). It is a. only when, as in 'Jon Be' 1823, in Barham, 1837, and in James Payn, 1880, it is virtually or actually an asseveration (= you may be sure) made jocularly. 'The word . . . comes from Catholic England, and is "babe"—meaning the infant Saviour,' Ware. Now s'help, s'ap', is often, deliberately or otherwise, pronounced stubble (q.v.) and among the middle and upper classes, after ca. 1890, it is always spoken in jest.

bob, shift one's. To move, go away: mid-C. 18–20; ob. Grose.

bob, wet. See bob, dry.

bob-a-day gunner or guns. A temporary gunnery-officer: naval C. 20. F. & Gibbons; Bowen. He draws an additional shilling a day.

bob a nob. Almost a c.p.: a shilling a head. Ca. 1820–1910. Bose; F. H., 3rd ed.; records in this form, which is correct; F. & H. as bob a nod, which I believe to be an error.

bob around. To go quickly from place to place; coll.; from ca. 1860. Cf. bob, shift one's.

*bob cull. A 'good fellow,' pleasant companion: late C. 18–19 c. See bob, adj., and cull.


*bob grin. See grin.

Bob, Harry, and Dick. Sick, esp. after drink: rhyming s. 1808; virtually ↑. Ware.

*bob ken; bowman ken. 'A good or well Furnished House, full of Booty, worth Robbing; also a House that Harbours Rogues and Thieves,' B.E.: c. late C. 17–early 19.

bob (or Bob) my pal. A girl: rhyming s. on gal. From ca. 1865; ob. D. Augeassic, 1857.

bob-tack. Cleaning-wherewithal; brass polish; military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Perhaps ironically ex bob, adj. 1; see also tack.


bob up. To appear; to return, as in he's always bobbing up. C. 20, coll.


bobbery. Noise; disturbance; squabble. From ca. 1800; Kenney has it in his comedy, Raising the Wind, 1803; Punch honoured it in 1879. Ex Hindi baj or, Oh, father: often employed to express grief or surprise. Since ca. 1890 it has been little used except among soldiers and others with experience of India; current among the Tommies in the G.W. See also bobbery.


Bobbing John. The Earl of Mar; a nickname: 1716. Ex political behaviour. O.E.D.


bobbish. 'Clever, smart, spruce', Grose, 2nd ed.: ca. 1785–1820. Ex bob, a light, revolving movement—.2. Hence, in good health and/or spirits: implied in 1813; ob. except as pretty bobbish.— Adv., bobbishly: 1813, Scott (O.E.D.).


bobby. A policeman (— 1851). Ex Mr., later Sir, Robert Peel (cf. pedder), mainly responsible for the Metropolitan Police Act of 1828. F. & H. points out that, long before 1828, Bobby the beadle = a guardian of a public square or other open space'.—2. Hence, at Oxford and Cambridge, ca. 1860–90, the proctors were called bobbies.


bobby(-)horse. A chink-backed horse: va-grants c. (— 1845); ob. Ex. bobby.

bobby-tiwster. A burglar or thief that, on being pursued or seized, uses violence: mid-C. 19–20 (ob.): c. Ex bobby, a policeman.

bobby's labourer. A special constable: such constables in 1868. Ware. See bobby, 1.


Bobs. Lord (General) Roberts: Society (1900) > gen. (late 1900); ob. As Bob for Robert, so Bob for Roberts. (Ware.)

Bob's horse, with nobody to pay the reckoning,—off, like: To decamp with all money, furniture and personal effects: nautical: from 1830's; ob.

bobstay. 'The freemum of a man's yard', Grose, 2nd ed.: mid-C. 18–20 (ob.); low coll.

bobstick. A 'shilling's worth' (— 1799). Orig. ex. town s.; ↑ by 1860. George Parker; Moncrieff, 1821. Whence perhaps bob, n., 2, q.v.— but then what is the origin of bobstick?

bobtail, bob-tail, bob tail. A lewd woman, lit. one with a lively pendent: coll.: C. 17–18. B.E.,

**bobtail,** -tag, rag and ; or tag-rag and bob-tail. The rabble (1599); coll. in C. 18, S.E. thereafter: the common herd (of any social class): C. 19—20. Pepys has it first, but it was doubtless used earlier.

Boohe. N., then also adj.: German, esp. a German soldier: from 1914: not much used by the British soldiers. Direct ex Fr. slang, where the word (from ca. 1870) is of uncertain origin: see esp. *Words i.* p. 221.

boco, boko. The nose. Orig. (ca. 1820) pugilistic, but gen. by 1873. Prob. ex bead; but if coccod also in U.S., simply coco or, erroneously, coco existed some years before its earliest record, then perhaps boco derives ex bead coco. Ware thinks that it may derive ex Grimaldi's tapping his nose and exclaiming c'est beaucoup: cf. sense 3.—2. Nonsense: ca. 1870—1910; etymology uncertain. 

**bodily,** -cation. An early C. 19 form of *botheration* (see bother).

Bodger. The Bodleian Library: Oxford University: from the late 1890's. Dorothy Sayers in *The Passing Show,* March 25, 1933. Ex Bodley, q.v.: see *er, the Oxford*.

**bother,** -ation. An early C. 19 form of *botheration* (see bother).


bodier. (Boxing) a blow on the side: loosely, on breast or belly: ca. 1820—1914. Bee.

bodies. *The foot guards, or king's body guards,' Grose, 1785; † by 1890.

**bodkin,** a contraction of *bawle kem, a brothel:* ca. 1920—60. Bee. & Gibbons. See *bodley*.

bodkin. (Sporting) one who sleeps in a bed only on alternate nights: ca. 1850—1900. Ex the next entry.—2. A midshipman's dirk: jocular naval coll.: C. 19—20; ob. Bowen.

bodkin, ride or sit. C. 19—20; adumbrated in Ford, 1638, and occurring in 1798 as to bodikis alone; ob. To be wedged between two others when there is, a twogether, rook for only two. Coll. Ex bodkin, to make, as it were, a bodkin of.

Bodley, the. The Oxford University Library: from ca. 1870; coll. Cf. Bodder, q.v.

[body appears, from ca. 1530, as part of many ancient oaths. E.g. Bod(i)kin(s), a little body.]

body. A person: in C. 19—20, either a sol. or a facetious coll. In dia., however, its usage is serious and respectable.

body-line work. Unfair or dishonest work or play: coll.: 1933. Ex the body-line cricket controversy, which began in Dec., 1932. See esp. *Slang,* p. 234.


Ex their trade.

body-house, brag or brisk or busy as a. Very brisk or busy: coll.: resp. late C. 16—17, (the gen. form) mid-C. 17—20, mid-C. 17—19.

**body-slangs.** Fetters: C. 19 o. (See slang.) Vaux, 1812.


boog, often bogs. Abbr. *bog-house,* q.v., a pryv: from ca. 1840; orig. either printers' or Public Schoolboys' s.; in C. 20, coll.—2. In c. (?) or in the singular, the land-reclaiming works at Dartmoor: from ca. 1860; ob. 

boog, v. To ease oneself, evacuate: from ca. 1870; s. >, ca. 1920, low coll. Baumann. Ex preceding or possibly ex:

**bog, go to.** 'To go to stool,' *Lex. Bal.,* 1811.


bog-orange. A potato: C. 18—20, ob.; coll. So many potatoes come from Ireland.

boog-allop. A ca. 1840—1910 low variant of *bog-house* (q.v.).


bog-trotting. A pejorative adj. applied to Irishmen, esp. if uncouth: from ca. 1750; coll. Employed by Goldsmith and Thackeray.

bogee or bousie. To force (a mixture of cement and water) into the required position by means of compressed air: Public Works' (1935). Ex the medical sense of *bogie.*

bogy. See boog.

boggle-de-botch, bogglesbyotch. A bungling: a *mess:* coll. (1834); ob. Maria Edgeworth, 1834. Ex *bogle,* a, or to, bungle, and botch, to do, or make, clumsily.


bogus. Sham; spurious; illicit. Orig. (—1840) U.S. and = counterfeit (ex instrument, thus named, for the uttering of base coin). Acclimatised ca. 1860 in England, where it > coll. ca. 1900, S.E. ca. 1930. As W. remarks, 'calibogus', 'rum and spruce beer, an American beverage' (Grose [1st ed.]) suggests a parallel to balderdash; but, as F. & H. (revised) remarks, bogus may be cognate with bogy; the word possibly derivation ex bogy on hocus-pocus. See esp. the O.E.D., F. & H., and Thornton. Cf. *scamp, *snide, qq.v.—2. Hence, unpleasant; dull; silly: Society: from ca. 1929. Evelyn Waugh, *Vite Bodies, 1930, ‘Oh, dear,’ she said, ‘this really is all too bogus.’


bogy, adj. Sombre of tint or colour: studio, ca. 1870-1910.

bogy (or boggy), go. To become prophetic; be or become gifted with second sight: actors’ and music-hall performers: C. 20. E.g. Christine Jope-Slade in *The Passing Show, Feb. 24, 1934.

Bogy (or Bogey), Old. The devil: from ca. 1820. Soon coll.; now ob. Barham. Occ. without old. But a comparison with ask bogy, q.v., suggests that this sense, which precedes by thirty years that of a goblin, a person to be dreaded, may be fifty years earlier than 1820. It is true that bogy, the presumed and prob. orig. of bogy, antedates bog-house by 160 years or so, yet the indelicate sense of ask bogy provides a not-to-be-ridiculed possibility both of ask bogy’s derivation from bog-house and even of an esoteric connexion between ask bogy, bog-house, and Bogy.

*boil. To betray: ca. 1600-50; * orig. c. Rowlands; Middleton & Dickker (O.E.D.)


boil one’s lobester. To leave the Church for the Army: mid-C. 18-19 early 19; military. (Lobster: a soldier.)

boil over. To fly into a rage: coll., from ca. 1850; in C. 20, S.E.

boil your head, go and. A proletarian injunction not to be silly: C. 20. (Crompton Mackenzie, *Water on the Brain, 1933.) Occ. go away and boil yourself!


Boiled Bell (or b-.b.). Port Glasgow: nautical, esp. by Greenock men: mid-C. 19-20. Bowen. ‘The queerest possible bell . . . painted so much that it would not ring’; the paint had to be boiled off. Cf. Omitted Gabber.


boiled lobster. See lobster, boiled.

boiled over, ppl. adj. (Of a market) that has been good but has had a set-back: Stock Exchange: C. 20. Ex a kettle that has boiled over.

boiled owl, drunk a. Extremely drunk: from the early 1880’s. Why? Ware thinks that it may be a corruption of drunk as Abel Boyle.

boiled rag, feel like a. ‘To feel excessively limp’, or unwell: coll. C. 20. Lyell. Also (piece of) chewed rag or string, which is less respectable.

boiled shirt. A dress-suit shirt: C. 20. Coll. Ex U.S., where it orig. (—1854) signified any white linen shirt. (Uncultured Americans rather like the pronunciation, and spelling, billed.)

boiled stuff. Collectively for harlots: ca. 1580-1630; as in Shakespeare’s *Cymbeline. Prob. extremely rare outside of Cymbeline.

boiler. Abbr. pot-boiler, q.v.—2. At Winchester College, until ca. 1910, a four and sixpenny boiler was actually a large, plain coffee-pot used for heating water, from, not the price but the amount of milk they held; and a ro覆g boiler—lit. a whole-lot boiler—was a large saucepan-like vessel in which water for bidets (q.v.) was heated.

Boilers or Brompton Boilers. The name given orig.—since ca. 1873 it has been applied to the Bothal Green Museum (likewise in London)—to the Kensington Museum and School of Art (now the Victoria and Albert Museum), because of the peculiar form of the buildings and also because of their sheet-iron roofs. X., 2nd ed., 1880,—2. (Only as boilers.) At the Royal Military Academy, from ca. 1880, boiled potatoes, greasers being fried potatoes: the Oxford—er.

*boiling. A discovery, a betrayal: c. of ca. 1000—50. Ex boil, q.v.

boiling, the whole. The whole lot: 1837. Marryat. Common also in U.S. (the boiling, 1796; O.E.D. Sup.). Ex boiling, a quantity of food boiled at the one time: c. S.E. batch (W.). Also of the whole shoot.

boiling point, at (the). About to fly into a rage: from ca. 1880; coll. Adumbrated by Emerson.


*boke. The nose: a late C. 19-20 c. variant of boc, q.v.


boil as a miller’s shirt. Explained by its frequent appendage, which every day takes a rogue by the collar. Coll.: C. 18-early 19.

bold as brass. Presumptuous; shameless: from ca. 1780; coll. George Parker; Thackeray, 1846, ‘He came in as bold as brass’; Weyman, 1922. Apperson. Cf. brasses, 2.

bold boat. A seaworthy ship: nautical coll.: mid-C. 19-20. Bowen has also a bold house, ‘said of a ship when her hawse pipes are well out of the water’. Both phrases verge on 1.


boiler. See bowler.


bollicky. See bollocky (n.). — Bollicky Bill. See Ballocky Bill the Sailor—bollocks. See balconk and bollocks, 2.

bolly. At Marlborough College: pudding, esp. if boiled; from ca. 1880; ob. Cf. The North Country bolly, gruel. Both, prob., ex Fr. beurles.

bolo, v. To speak: esp. bolo the bat, to speak the language, and therefore = slang (or spin) the bat: Regular Army: late C. 19-20. F. & Gibbons. Ex Hindustani.


boloney: incorrectly ballyoney. Nonsense; 'eye-wash'. Of this U.S. word, anglicised by 1931 (thanks to the 'talkies'), Dr. Jean Bordeaux—in a private letter—writes thus: 'Used since at least 1900 in U.S.A., especially around New York, to mean "buncombe" or "a poppycock story"'. It appears in songs of 1900, and [the word boloney as a corruption of Bologna sausage] probably dates back twenty years earlier because there was a music-hall song, "I Ate the Boloney" popular in the late 70's, early 80's... There is much to uphold belief that the sausage origin has merit, on analogy that it's a mixture of ground-up meat and then you stuff the casing. Hence, mix up a tale and stuff the auditor. Yet, at the risk of appearing too sceptical, I must declare my disbelief in that origin and my opinion that 'It's (or that's) all boloney'—the usual form—is exactly synonymous with 'That's all ballyoney', the etymology of boloney being the Gipsy peloné, testicles: cf. the U.S. nerts / and ballocke, 2 (q.v.), and see balls.

Bobbie; Bolshevik. (All senses are coll.) A Bolshevik: 1920. Any revolutionary: 1933. Jocularly of an unconventional person: 1924 or 1925. Also adj.: same dates for the corresponding senses. The word Bolchevist (a majority socialist) seems to have been first used in 1903. See the S.O.D. for an admirable summary. Cf. Bolo, q.v.


bolt, v. To escape; depart hastily: C. 17-20. In C. 17 S.E.: ca. 1710-90; coll.: ca. 1780-1870; s.; then coll., then in C. 20, again S.E. In Moncrieff and Barham it is wholly s.; the latter having *Jovey ransack’d the house, poppy’d her breaks on, and when so [Disguis’d, bolted well with her bearer— one Lorenzo.—2. V.t., to eat hurriedly, without chewing; gulp down: coll.: from ca. 1750. Gros, 1765; Wolcot, 1794; Dickens, 1843. With the speed of a bolt.—3. To break with a political party (bolt from): orig. = (1813) U.S., anglicised ca. 1860 as a coll. and in C. 20 considered S.E. Thornton. Wellington, 1860. Ex a rabbit's bolt-hole.

Bolt-Hole, the. The Channel Islands, where the income-tax is low: political coll.: from ca. 1920. Collins. Ex an elephant's bale-hole.

*Bolt-in-Tun, go to the. To bolt, run away: c.; from ca. 1810; † Vaux. Ex a famous London inn. A play on the v. bolt, q.v. Also, as c.p., the Bolt-in-Tun is concerned (Vaux): † by 1890. bolt of it, make a shaft or a; gen. a bolt or a shaft. To risk this or that issue; accept a risk: ca. 1690-1750; coll. >, by 1660. S.E. Shakespeare; Fuller. (Apperson.)

Bolt Street, turn the corner of. To run away: low coll.: from ca. 1880; ob. Baumann. Ex make a bolt for it.

bolt the moon. To depart with one's goods without paying the rent: C. 19-20; ob.


boltsprit, bowsprit. Late C. 17-18, C. 19-20 (ob.) resp.: the nose. Until ca. 1770, low. Shadwell; B.E., 'He has broke his Boltsprit, he has let his Nose with the Pox.'


*boman ken. A variant of boman ken: see bob ken.


bomb-proof job. A safe job, i.e. one at the Base: military: 1916-18. B. & P. Hence, bomb-proofer, a man holding such a job. Cf. U.S. bomb proof, a Southerner who did not join the Confederate Army (Thorton).


Bomb-Proofs, the. The 14th Foot, since 1881 the Prince of Wales's Own West Yorkshire Regiment: military: mid-C. 19-20; ob. F. & Gibbons. 'From the immunity from casualties when in the trenches before Sebastopol'.

Bomb-Shop, the. The (formerly Henderson's) very interesting bookshop at 66, Charing Cross Road, London, W.C.2: it offers a notable display of advanced belles-lettres and, c.p., political writings. G. H. Bosworth's novel, Prelude, 1932, at p. 227. I myself first heard it so described by the proprietor early in 1928, but it has enjoyed this distinction since ca. 1924.

bomb the chat, gen. as vbl.n. To practise trickery or plausible deception; to 'tell the tale' to exaggerate; military coll.: 20. F. & Gibbons. Origin? Prob. supplied by the variant bum the chat (B. & P.). Also bum one's load.

Bombay duck. That Indian fish which, alive, is called the "bunmalo," whence, by the Law of Hobson-Jobson, the present anomaly (cf. Welsh rabbit): at first (C. 18) coll.; by 1890 S.E. Cordiner in his C. 18 *Voyages to India.* W.

**Bombay Ducks.** The Bombay regiments of the East India Company's forces: C. 18—early 19.

**Bombay merchant.** See Arabs.—Bombay Toughs. See Old Toughts.


**bomb-chat.** See bomb chat.

**bomb-deer.** A bombardier: military coll. (— 1857); † by 1920. Baumann.


**bon.** Good; excellent; very acceptable: military coll.: G.W., and after. Also tray bon. (Fr. très bon.)—2. Hence, bon drop, a goodly portion (of, e.g., sleep); bon for the bust, good to eat; bon santé (Fr. bonne santé!), good health, good luck! F. & Gibbons; B. & F. The reverse was no bon.

**bona.** A girl; a belle: C. 19—20, ob.; low, prob. a reminiscence of bona-roba. Cf. dona(h).

**bona, adj.** Good; pleasant; agreeable: theatre and circus s., from ca. 1850. E.g. in Thomas Frost's *Circus Life,* 1875, and Edward Seago's *Circus Company,* 1933. Cf. bono.

**bona roba, bona roba.** A harlot, esp. a showy one: late C. 16—early 19; in C. 18—19, archais. and S.E. Shakespeare, Jonson, Cowley, Scott. Ex It. buona roba, lit. a fine dress.

**bonahle.** Abominable: a C. 16 († later) sol. O.E.D.

**bonanza.** A stroke of fortune; a prosperous enterprise. Orig. (1847) U.S., a rich mine—perhaps ex an actual Nevada mine. Accepted in England as a coll., ca. 1850, and as S.E., ca. 1910. Ultimately, via the Sp. bonanza, prosperity, ex L. bona, good.—2. Hence, in Glasgow (— 1934), money very easily obtained.


**bone.** A subscriber's ticket for the Opera: London: C. 19; † by 1887 (Baumann). Ex Fr. abonnement, subscription.—2. (Always the bone.) The thin man: London: 1882—ca. 1910. Ware. *bone, v. To act, arrest; rob, thieve; make off with. From ca. 1600; until ca. 1860 (witness B.E., Dyche, Grose (2nd ed.), Vaux). C. As s., it appears in Dickens, 1838, and Miss Braddon, 1861, and it had a great life in the G.W.: see *Words* / and cf. make, nab, win. ‘Perhaps from the dog making off with the bone,’ W.

*bone, adj.** Good; excellent: e.; from ca. 1850; ob. Mayhew, 1861. Ex Fr. bon or It. buono. Opp. grumbly, q.v. Cf. bone and bono. *bone or hard as a. Free from moisture: coll. (— 1833) †, by 1890, S.E.

**bone-aqua.** Venereal disease, esp. in men: late C. 18—17; coll. verging on S.E. Nahe, Shakespeare.
boner nochy! Good night! : Clerkenwell (Lon-
don), which contains many Italians: late C 19—20.
Ex the it, for good-night! , though nochy more
closely resembles 8p. noche. Ware.

boners. A form of punishment: Charterhouse:
† before 1900. A. H. Tod, Charterhouse, 1900.

Cf. boner, 1.

Bone. Dice: C 14 — 20; coll. in C 14 — 15, there-
after S.E.—2. Bone played castanet-wise (1590):
coll., but very soon S.E.—3. A player of the bones:
from ca. 1840; coll. — 4. The human teeth: C 19—
20; ob. — 5. A surgeon: C 19; abbr. auBone.

6. The examination in osteology: medical students’
(- 1923). Manchon. — 7. (Stock Exchange) the
shares of Wickena, Pease & Co., also the First
Preference shares of North British 4%; ca. 1830 —
1914; cf. Boneas. Something very good, orig.
tasty; almost an adj.: from ca. 1880; ob. Coll.

bones, be on one’s. To be (almost) destitute:
non-aristocratic: C 20. Galsworthy, The White
Monkey, 1924, ‘Give us a chance, constable; I’m
right on my bones.’ Ex emasculation. Cf. ribs, on
the, 2.

bones! by these ten. A coll. asseveration: late
C 15 — early 17. Shakespeare. An allusion to
one’s fingers (cf. by this hand I witness). Cf. the
late C 10 exclamation bones a (or of) me (or you)

bones, feel a thing in one’s. To have an idea;
feel sure: coll.; 1875 (O.E.D. Sup.); by 1910, S.E.
Ex be in one’s bones, to feel as certain: itself S.E.
verging on coll.

bones, make no. To hesitate not; make no
scruple: C 19—20; coll. Udall, Greene, Wycher-
ley, Thackeray. In C 15—16 the more gen. phrase
was find no bones (in the matter): this.—along with
without more bones, without further obstacle, delay,
discussion (late C 16—19), would indicate that the
reference is to bones in soup or stew.

bones, sleep on. See sleep on bones.

bones of, be upon the. To attack: late C 17—18,
low. L’Estrange (d. 1704): ‘Puse had a month’s
mind to be upon the bones of him, but was not will-
ing to pick a quarrel.’

bonétas. (Stock Exchange) the 4% Second
North British 2nd Preference stock: ca. 1880—1914.

Boney. Bonaparte: ca. 1800—21; before, ‘the
Corsican Ogre’; after, historical, then legendary.
Most British people still know whom Boney nick-
names. Sidney Rogerson, in Introduction to his
notable War book, Twelve Days, 1933.

Boney Cobbett. Wm. Cobbett (d. 1835), from
Britain back to England the bones of Thomas
Paine (d. 1809). Dawson.

boney-ide. See bonyfide.

*bony, drunk, in the anon. Street-Robberies Con-
sider’d, 1728, is prob. a misprint for bonay, ‘booy’. 

Gibbons.)

bong. A variant of bon, q.v.


bong-o-booh. ‘A tasty morsel’ (of anything):
-military on Western Front: 1915—18. F. & Gib-
bons, ‘A perversion of the Fr. bono bouche ’.

Boniface. The landlord of an inn or a country
tavern: C 18—20, ex the bonny-faced, jovial inn-
keeper in Farquhar’s lively comedy, The Beaux
Stratagem, 1707. The first record, however, of the
generic use is not until 1803, and by 1850 the term
was considered S.E.

bonjer. A “duck’ cricketers: 1934, ‘Patty’
Hendren, Big Cricket, ‘If I had landed a bonjer’.
Perhaps ex bon jour! — but prob. not. (Notes
and Queries, Oct. 13, 1934.)

bonk. A short, steep hill: circus s.: from ca.
1840; ob. C. Hindley, Adventures of a Cheap Jack,
1876. Adopted from dial. (In S.E., † form.)

bonk, v. To shell: military: 1915—18. Gen. in
passive; prob. ex plonk, q.v. (B. & P.)

bonner. A bonfire: Oxford undergraduates’:
from late 1890’s. ‘Oxford -er.’ Perhaps in allusion
to ‘Bishop Bonner, who certainly lit up many bon-
fires—Smithfield way’, Ware.

* bonnet, bonneret. — 1812, — 1841 resp., both
e. in origin: a gambling cheat or decoy; a decoy at
auctions. Possibly ‘a reminiscence of Fr. deux fois
dans un bonnet, hand and glove’. W. — Cf. 2, a pre-
text or a pretence: Vaux, Flash Dict., 1812; orig.
c., † by 1890. — 3. A woman (cf. petticote, skirt):
ca. 1870—1900; coll.

bonnet, v. Act as a decoy (see the n.); cheat;
 illicitly puff: C 19—20, low; ob. — 2. To crush a
man’s hat over his eyes: coll. (1837; ob.); Dickens
often uses the word; vbl.n. not uncommon either.—
3. See bonet for.

bonnet, have a bee in one’s. See bee in . .

bonnet, have a green. To go bankrupt: C 18—
19; coll. Ramsay,—in fact it is mainly Scottish.
Ex the green cap formerly worn by bankrupts.

bonnet-builder. A milliner: coll. (1839); ob.
Jocular.

* bonnet for. To corroborate the assertions of,
put a favourable construction on the actions of:

bonet-laird. A petty proprietor: Scot; coll. ca.
1810—90. ‘As wearing a bonnet, like humbler folk’,
F. & H. (revised).

bonet-man. A highlander: coll. verging on

bonnetier. A decoy (see bonet, n.). — 2. A
brushing blow on the hat: ca. 1840—1910.

bonnets so blue. Irish stew: rhyming s.
(1859); ob. H., 1st ed.

bonny-clabber, — clappit, — clatter, —clab(h) ’(r)e.
Sour butter-milk: coll. (17 — 18). Jornado, 1630;
B.E. Ex Irish baine, milk + claba, thick: E.D.J.

bono. Adj., good: Parlayre: from ca. 1840.
Via Lingus France. Cf. bona.

bono-Johnny. An Englishman: London’s East
End (1890) and ‘piggin’ English (1909). Barrère &
Leland; Ware. Ex preceding. As it were ‘honest John (Bull)’.

bonos. See bone — bonet. See bonzas.

bonas. An additional dividend: (1808); money
received unexpectedly or additionally: from ca.
1770. Both senses were orig. money-market s.;
by 1830; coll.; by 1800, S.E. *Bona is mock-Latin
for bonum, a good thing. Cf. bunce, q.v.

** bony. See honey.

bonyphile, bonyfide. Bona-fide: sol., or low
coll., mostly Cockney (1887). Baumann.

bonza. See bonos or bonzer; loosely, bonzo.

(Austr.): C 20. Perhaps ex bonanza. Also adj. Cf.
boshita.

boo to a goose. See to a goose.

boobies’ hutch. More gen. booby’s hutch, q.v.

boob. A booby, a fool, a ‘soft ’ fellow; hence
loosely, a fellow: U.S. (—1912), anglicised in 1918. Collinson. (O.E.D. Sup.),—2. (the a.) A detention-cell; prison; military, G.W. +. Ex body-hutch.

booby, beat the. See beat the booby.


booby-hutch. A dug-out: military: G.W. +. Ex:—2. In late C. 19—early 20 c. or low, a police station, a coll.;—3. In late C. 18—early 19, it meant a one-horse chaise or a buggy. Also a leather bottle. (Green, Scull, et al.)


booby’s hatch. A barracks’ drinking-point open after the canteen closes: military: ca. 1860—1910. Ware, ‘Satire . . . upon the fools who have never had enough’: Ca. body-hutch, I.


*boogot. An itinerant tinker’s basket: c. of ca. 1560—1640. Harman. Perversion of † S.E. budget, a bag or wallet.

boohoo; booo-hoo. To weep noisily: coll. from 1830’s. Barham, Echic. 

book. (Sporting.) A bookmaker’s arrangement of his bets on a given day’s racing or other ’bookmaker-able’ competition. (The bookmaker tries so to arrange his bets that he will be unlikely to lose.) Coll.: from ca. 1830; in Henrietta Temple, 1837, Disraeli, ‘Am I to be branded because I have made half a million by a good book?’ Hence, a betting-book: from ca. 1850; coll. Both senses have, since 1900, been j.—2. A libretto: C. 18—20, coll.; the words of a play: from ca. 1850; coll.—3. The first six tricks at whist (—1890), at bridge (—1910) these coll. terms soon > j.—4. A bookmaker: Australian: (—1910). C. J. Dennis. 

Abbr. book, q.v.


book, beside the. (Utterly) mistak’en: from ca. 1870; ob. Coll. >, by 1700, S.E. Walker, 1672 (Apperson). Cf. beside the lighter, q.v.

book, bring to. Cause to show authority, genuineness; investigate; hence, detect: coll., C. 19—20. Orig., to ask chapter and verse for a statement.

book, by (the). In set phrases: late C. 16—20; brig. coll. but soon S.E. Shakespeare, ‘You kiss by th’ bookes.’


book, know one’s. To come to a decision; see one’s potential advantage: coll.; from ca. 1850; ob. book, let run for the. (Of a bookmaker) not to bet against a horse: from ca. 1870. H., 5th ed.


book, speak like a. To talk excellent sense; informatively, accurately: coll.; from ca. 1840; prob. from U.S., where ’talk like a book’ occurs as early as 1829.

book, suit one’s. To be opportune, very suitable: coll. (—1851) >, by 1890, S.E. Prox. ex betting.

book, take a leaf out of a person’s. To follow his (gen. his good) example: C. 18—20; coll. till C. 20, when S.E.

book, without. Late C. 17—20; occ. without his book. Without authority; from memory. Orig. coll., soon S.E.


book-chambers. See books, 2.

book-form. Theoretical form, at first of horses; coll. (—1880); in C. 20, j. in racing, S.E. elsewhere.

book-holder. A prompter: theatrical (—1864); ob. by 1890, † by 1920.


book-maker, bookmaker. A professional taker of the odds at races of any sort. (Contrast with the professional punter, who deposits money, i.e. backs a horse, with the bookmaker and who bets only on certain races.) He keeps a book (lays the odds) and operates from a stand on the course or from an office. (—1862) coll.; by 1880, S.E. See esp. O.E.D. and F. & H.—Hence a bookmaker’s pocket (a sporting coll.), a breast-pocket, inside the waistcoat, for notes of high denomination: from ca. 1850.

bookmaker’s pocket. See book-maker (at end).


bookie. See booby.


books. A pack of cards: C. 18—20. Mrs. Centlivre; H. Cf. devil’s books.—2. Winchester College usages:—The prizes presented, C. 19, to the Senior in each division at the end of ’half’—at the book, fifth book, and ceasing to exist ca. 1865—fourth book; up at books, from ca. 1860 up to books, in class; book-chambers, a short lesson without a master; get or makes books, to make the highest score at any game.
books, get or make. To make the highest score: coll. (—1890); slightly ob. books (or cards), get one's. To be paid off: Public Works' coll.: from ca. 1924. On being paid off, a workman receives his insurance-card.

books, in a person's good or bad. In favour, or disfavour, with him: coll. C. 19–20. In C. 16–18, the phrase was in or out of a person's books: coll. > S.E., though Grose has it.

books, plant the. 'To place the cards in the pack in an unfair manner'; Lex. Bul.: c. of ca. 1810–70.

books, shut the. To cease from business operations: coll. (—1858); ob. Booksellers' Row. Holywell Street: book-world coll. ca. 1850–60. See also Row, the.

booky, often bookie. (In all such words, the -y form is preferable.) A bookmaker: sporting s.: 1881, says Ware; in C. 20, coll. See Stang at pp. 241–7 for a dialogue in bookies' s.—2. A bouquet: low, mostly Cockney (—1887). Bauman.

booky, adj. Bookish: from ca. 1880; coll. Presumably from U.S., where used as early as 1833: Thornton.

boom. A rush of (esp. commercial) activity; effective launching of any goods or stocks; vigorous support of a person. Orig. (—1875) U.S.; anglicised as a coll. ca. 1883, S.E. in C. 20. Bauman.

boom, v. and t. To go, set, off with a rush, at first of a ship, then in commerce, then in publicity. In its fig. and mod. senses, orig. (1850) U.S.; accepted as coll. in England ca. 1885, in C. 20 S.E. Perhaps ex some such phrase as 'a ship comes booming,' 'she comes with all the sail she can make' (See Dict., 1708): W. On this word n. and v. see esp. F. & H. and Thornton.

boom off, top one's. To start: nautical (—1860); ob. H., 2nd ed., has—erroneously, I believe—tip one's boom off. (In Marryat, 1840, boom off is v.t., to push off with a pole. )—2. top your boom! See top . . .

boom-passenger. A convict on board ship: nautical, ca. 1830–60. Convicts were chained to, or took exercise on, the booms.


booming. Flourishing; successful. Coll., in England from ca. 1880; orig. (—1879) U.S. Coll.: boomlet. A little boom; Stock Exchange coll.: from mid-1890's; Ware dates it at 1866. (By 1920, S.E., as the O.E.D. (Sup.) shows.) Coll.: boomster. One who booms stock: money-market coll. (1898) >, by 1930, S.E. Ware. Ex U.S.

boon-companion. A drinking(-booth) companion; 'a good fellow' 1666, Drant: coll. >, by C. 18, S.E. whence boon-companionship, Nashe, 1592; In C. 18–20, S.E. boon.

boonish, the. Illiterate speech: C. 17. Shakespeare.

bound(6). See bordés. — Boone. See boose. — boose(e)y. See boosey.


booster. One who 'boosts' (see boost, v.): U.S. coll. (—1909) >, by 1912, English coll. verging now on S.E.—2. Hence, 'one who by false or misleading statements bolsters up a case': naval: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. (O.E.D. Sup.)


boot, v. To thrust; punish with a strap: military, C. 19–20; ob. At first with a jack-boot. —2. To kick, e.g. 'I booted him good and hard' coll.: from ca. 1880.—3. Hence (gen. boot out), to dismiss, get rid of: 1902 (O.E.D. Sup.).—4. To kick (the ball) exceedingly hard: football coll. (1914: O.E.D. Sup.). (Vbl.n., booting, in all four senses.)—5. V.i. and t., to borrow (money) on account: tailors': C. 20. Ex boot, n.—1. boot, give or get the. To dismiss; be dismissed: s. (1888, Rider Haggard) >, by 1920, coll. (O.E.D. Sup.). Cf.: boot, give or get the order of the. To dismiss or to expel; to be dismissed: C. 20: s. >, by 1930, coll. An elaboration of the preceding; cf. the order of the bath.

boot, put in the. 'To kick a prostrate foe', C. J. Dennis: mostly Australian (—1916). See also boot in.—2. To shoot: military rhyming s.: from ca. 1915.


boot-catch(6r). An inn servant that pulls off guests' boots: C. 18–early 19. The longer form, the more gen., is in Swift and Grose.

boot-eater. A juror who would rather 'eat his boots' than find a person guilty: 1880; ob. Coll. boot in, put the. A variant (likewise v.i.) of boot, put in the. Both > v.t. with suto for in.

boot is on the other leg, the. The case is altered; the responsibility is another's: coll. C. 19–20, ob. boot-4ack. A general-utility actor: theatrical (—1895). Ex a boot-jack's usefulness. (O.E.D. Sup.)


boot-logger. A dealer in and distributor of contraband liquor in the U.S.; orig. (—1919) U.S., anglicised ca. 1927 as coll.; 1932 +, S.E. From the old days when spirits, in flat bottles, was carried on the leg to the Red Indians: in this connexion, the word appears in U.S. as early as 1890 (O.E.D. Sup.). Whence boot-logging, the sale and distribution of illicit liquor in the U.S. See, e.g., James Spenser's Limey, 1933, and Godfrey Irwin's Americans Fom and Underworld Slang, 1931.

boot-luck. To toady (to) to undertake 'dirty' work (for): coll. Ex U.S. (1840), anglicised in the 1890's.
boot-linker. A toady; a doer of 'dirty' work; coll. (—1890). The U.S. form is boot-luxx.


boot out. See boot, v., 3.

boot serve for either leg, make one. To speak, rarely to act, ambiguously: C. 16–17; coll. > S.E. *booth.* A house, as in have a booth, rob a house: mid-C. 19–20.

booth-burster. A noisy actor: from ca. 1870; ob. Cf. barn-stormer and:

booth-star. A leading actor (or actress) in a booth or a minor theatre: theatrical coll. (—1900); ob. Ware.

booting. See boot, v.


boots, buy old. To marry, or keep, another's cast-off mistress: C. 18–19; coll. Cf. boots, ride in a person's old, q.v.

boots, go to bed in one's. See bed in...

boots, have one's heart in one's. To be much afraid: C. 19–20; coll. In C. 17–18, wish one's heart...

boots, in one's. At work; still working; not in bed. Gen. with dis. Coll. mid-C. 19–20. In S.E., die in one's boots or shoes is to be hanged.—2. Very drunk: late C. 19–20; ob.

boots, like old. Vigorously, thoroughlygoingly, coll., C. 19–20. Lit., like the devil. Variant with as: Miss Bridgman, 1870, 'She's as tough as old boots' (O.E.D.).

boots, not in these; not in these (trousers)! Certainly not! c.p.p., resp. of ca. 1807–1900 and C. 20 (ob.). Quotations Benham & Collinson.

boots, over shoes, over. Adj. and adv.: recklessly persistent: coll., ca. 1640–1820.

boots, ride in (a person's old). 'To marry or keep his cast-off mistress', Grose, 2nd; late C. 18–19. Cf. boots, buy old, q.v.

boots to, put the. To leap on (a person) with one's spiked boots. Canadian lumbermen's: C. 29. (John Beames.) Cf. put in the boot.

booty. Booty, playing booty: C. 17–18. See:

booty, play. To play falsely; covertly to help one's apparent opponent: C. 16–19. Until ca. 1860, c.; then s. merging into coll.; from ca. 1700, S.E. As in Dekker, Fielding, Scott, Disraeli.


boast, C. 18–20, rarely boost (late C. 17–18);

boast (C. 18–20); boas (C. 16–20, as is, also); bowse (C. 16–20); bowze (C. 18). (The O.E.D.'s quotation of ca. 1300 prob. refers to a drinking vessel.) Drink; liquor: c. (—1667) until C. 19, then low a.; in C. 20, coll. Harman, B.E., Bailey, Grose. Ex v., 1, q.v.—2. Hence, a draught of liquor: late C. 17–20. Implyed in B.E.—3. (Also ex sense 1.) A drinking-bout: 1786, Burns: love a. 1780, gen. a. > by 1900, coll.

*boost, etc., v. To drink, esp. heavily: tipple; in (C. 14, S.E.; it reappears as c. in mid—) C. 16–20; status thenceforth as form. Harman, Nase, B.E., Colman, Grose, Thackeray. Perhaps ex Dutch bussen (low Ger. bussen) to drink to excess: W.—2. Hence boost (etc.) i.t, mostly C. 17, always c., and v.s., C. 17–20, e.g. in Harington.—3. Vt. To spend or dissipate in liquor: mid-C. 19–20. Often boost away (e.g. a fortune).

boost, on the. On a prolonged drinking bout: low (—1889) >, by 1910, coll. (O.E.D. Sup.)

boost-fencer or -pusher. A licensed victualler: low London: from ca. 1860; ob. Ware.


boost the jib. (Nautical) to drink heavily; tipple: 1837, Marryat (O.E.D.); ob.


boosted-up. A C. 20 variant of the preceding.

boozed, etc. A drunkard (—1811): low. Cotgrave, Wolcot, Thackeray.—2. A public-house: chiefly Australian and New Zealand (—1914); also (1895) English c. and low s. The People, Jan. 6, 1895; Charles E. Leach, in On Top of the Underworld, 1933, 'Guy'nor, the "diddikkayen" are "ramping" a "tit" in the "spruce" there; they're "three-handed"; a "nose" told me in the "boozie"; there's nobody "scroving", as they don't think the "bussies" are "wise"; come along quick with the "mitten".'

boozing, etc., vb.l.n. Heavy drinking; guzzling.


boozing ken. A drinking den; an ale-house; c.; mid-C. 16–mid-19.

boozington; or, in derisive address, Mr. Boozington. A drunkard: Australian c.; ca. 1860–1910. Prob. after lushington.

boozey, etc. Drunken, esp. if mildly; showing the marks of drink: C. 16–20, ob.; low. Skelton, in his famous poem of the drunken Eleanor, 'Drunky and drowsie, | Sourry and loude, | Her face all bowzie; | Dryden, in his Juvelal, 'Which in his cups the bowzy poet sings'; | Thackeray, in The Book of Snobs, 'The boozey unshorn wretch'. (The earliest spellings of the boozie group are in -use, -use; the -oze form seems not to occur before C. 18.)


boracho. A drunkard: coll.: late C. 17–early 19. B.E. (as boracho); Grose. Also, perhaps earlier, as noted by B.E., a skin for holding wine; coll. Ex It. or Sp. The Partyares form is foroarco.

borak. See '2' in:

borak, poke. To impart fictitious news to a credulous person: to jeer. V.t. with at. Australian (—1888), ex a New South Wales Aborigine word; it had, by 1923, so spread that Manchon classifies it simply as military and nautical. (Perhaps, though not prob., the origin of to barrack, barracker, qq.v.) In G.W. +, borak was occasionally an Austrailian or New Zealand term for a pail or bucket or a bedpan or bedwater.
raptured, jocularly, to borax.—2. borak, banter, fun, occurrences independently in 1845. Morris.

boracoo. See borachio.—borax. See borak.—

bord. See bordo. bord you ! ( Properly, no doubt, you.) C. 1766. Nautical, in drinking : my turn next ! *borda(s). In c. of mid-C. 16–18, a shilling. Harman. Perhaps ex bord, a shield.—2. Whence half bord, a sixpence.


bordeillo. A brothel; late C. 16–18; coll. (bordel is S.E.) Gower, P. boro. Ennui (1766): 2; a boring thing, an annoyance (1778). Proh. ex next entry.—3. A wearying, an unconvivial, person (1785): Grose. Until ca. 1820, the second and third senses were coll. ; thereafter S.E.: the first hardly outlived the C. 18; the rare sense, 4, a bored, a listless person, arose in 1766 and soon died (O.E.D.). Of the third, Grose remarks that it was 'much in fashion about the years 1790 and 1781 ; it again > fashionable ca. 1810.


born days, in (all) one's. In one's lifetime; ever: coll.: 1742, Richardson.

born in a mill. Deaf: coll.: ca. 1570–1700. Whetstone, 1578; Ray, 1678. (Apperson.) l.c. deafened by the noise of a mill working at top speed. born under a threescore halfpenny planet, (never to be worth a great). Extremely unsuccessful: C. 17–19; coll.:

born weak. Nautical, of a vessel: weakly built. From ca. 1850; ob.


borough-monger. A rabbit; rare Scot.: C. 19. E.D.D.

borrow. To steal: jocularly coll.: from ca. 1880.

borrow, on the adj., adv. Cadging. C. 20; coll.

borrow trouble. To seek trouble; to anticipate it unnecessarily or very unwisely: coll.: from the 1890's.


*bos-ken. A farm-house: mid-C. 19–20 vagrants'. Mayhew, 1851. Ex L. bos, an ox: ken, a place or house. Cf.:


bosky. See 'Westminster School slang'.

Booch(e). See Boche, for which these two forms are erroneous.

boss. Abbr. bo'en, itself an eligible slurring of boos-soon. Both are nautical, the former dating from (?) the late C. 19, the latter from (?) the late C. 18. The former is often used in addressing that link between officers and deck-hands.

Bossey. See bosie, Bosie.


bosh, v. To spoil; mar: ca. 1870; ob. Ex bosh, n., 1.—2. Hence, to humbug, make fun of (–1883), as in Miss Braddon's Golden Calf.—3. Cut a dash: coll. from ca. 1709; †. Ex Fr. élanche, via English bosh, an outline or rough sketch (–1751); †. S.O.D., O.E.D.

bosh, adj. Inferior; 'wretched' (e.g. bosh boots): from ca. 1880; ob. Baumann. Ex n., 1. Cf. boshy.

*bosh-faker. A violin-player: vagrants' c.; from ca. 1860. In Romany, bosh is a violin; the use of faker as = maker is unusual.


Ex bosh, v., 1.

bosman. The same as bosh-faker: low or o. (–1853). O.E.D. (Sup.).

boshta, boshter. Like booker, a variant of bosna, q.v. C. J. Dennis.


bosie, Bosie; boney (or B.). A 'goggy' (ball or bowler); Australian cricketers' coll.: 1912–ca. 1921. Ex B. J. T. Bosanquet, who demonstrated the goggy in Australia early in 1903 (W. J. Lewis), in which year goggy (or -y) first occurs: s. >, by 1910, coll. >, by 1930, S.E.

bosken. Incorrect for bos-ken, q.v., as bosman perhaps is for bos-man.

bosker. A variant of bosna, q.v. C. J. Dennis.


bousa. A fat woman: ca. 1575–1650; coll. Lylly. Ex bosa, a prostitute; –2. As master, owner, manager; leader; s. 'swell': in these senses, orig. (1806), U.S.; anglicised ca. 1850. In England the term has a jocular undertone; in Australia and New Zealand, it looks that undertone.

Ex Dutch boas, master.—3. (Gen. with political.)

boss. v. To be the master or the manager of; control, direct. Orig. (1850) U.S.; anglicised ca. 1870, as in The Athenæum, March 9, 1872, 'A child wishing to charge his sister with being the aggressor in a quarrel for which he was punished, exclaimed, "I did not boss the job; it was sister".—2. To miss, v.t. and i.; to bungle; to fail in an examination: schoolboys' in the main: from ca. 1870. Baumann; Manchon. Perhaps ex boss-eyed (W.). Cf. boss, adj., 3.


boss, have a. To have a look: schoolboys' from ca. 1899. Collinson. Cf. boss-eyed(d).


boss up. To manage or run (a house, its servants); to keep in order: act as the 'boss' over: servants' coll.: C. 20. E.g. in F. Brett Young's The Cage Bird and Other Stories, 1933.


Boston wait. (Gen. in pl.) A frog: jocular coll. (—1769); ↑ by 1850, except in dial.—and even there, now virtually ↑. (O.E.D.)


bot. See bot-fly. —2. A germ: New Zealand medical: from ca. 1928. Perhaps ex the bot-fly, which, in horses, lays eggs that are said to penetrate into the animal when they hatch.—3. Hence, a tubercular patient: id.: from ca. 1929. Cf. bots biting, q.v.


botanical excursion. Transportation, orig. and properly to Botany Bay, Australia: c.; ca. 1820—70. 'Jon Bee.' Cf. sense 3 of:

Botany Bay. 1. Worcester College, Oxford, (1853); 2, a portion of Trinity College, Dublin (1841). The former in 'Cuthbert Bede', Verdani Green, the latter in Lever, Charles O'Malley. Because of their distance from (a) other colleges, (b) the rest of the college, the reference being to Botany Bay in New South Wales—so far from England.—3. In, penal servitude: ca. 1790—1900. Ex the famous penal settlement (1787—1807) at that place. Cf. botanical excursion and next two entries.—4. 'The Rotunda of the Bank; the Jobbers and Brokers there being for the most part those who have been absolved from the house opposite', Bee: London commercial: ca. 1820—50.

Botany Bay, go to. To be transported as a convict: euphemistic coll.: ca. 1810—60. Baumann.

Botany Bay fever. Transportation; penal servitude. Ca. 1815—60. (Egan's Grove.)

Botany-beer party. 'A meeting where no iniquitous are drunk': Society: ca. 1882—1910. Ware.


both ends of the busk! A late C. 18—early 19 toast. Grose, 3rd ed. Ex the piece of whalebone stiffening the front of women's stays. Cf. best in Christendom, q.v.


bother, v. (The n. is gen. considered as S.E.) To bewilder (with noise); confuse, fluster; mostly Anglo-Irish: ca. 1715—1850. Perhaps ex pother, but perhaps ex Gaelic (see J. J. Hogan, An Outline of English Philology, 1935.)—2. Hunco, to pester, worry: from ca. 1740. V.i., to give trouble, make a fuss: from ca. 1770. All senses are coll., as is botheration (1800), the act of bothering, a petty annoyance. Both bother and botheration are used as exclamations. O.E.D.—3. 'I'm or I'll be bothered is a disguised form of swear word (see bugger, v., 1): coll.: prob. from the 1860's.

Bother, General. Boths, the Boer general: from late 1899; ob. He made himself a general nuisance, though he was an excellent general.

Botherams (uns). The nickname of a latter-C. 18 convivial society. Grose (Botheram).—2. (Rare in singular.) Yellow marigold: agricultural (—1860); ob. except in a few localities. Ware. They are 'very difficult to get rid of'.

botheration. See bother, 2.—botherment. Variation of botheration: coll.: mid-C. 19—20; ob. (O.E.D.)

bothered!, I'm or I'll be. See bother, 3.

bots, botts, the. Colic; belly-ache. From ca. 1770; coll. when not, as usually, dial. Orig., an animal disease caused by maggots.

bot biting? how are the. How are you? New Zealand medical: from ca. 1929. See bot, 2, 3.

bottle, v.i. To collect money for, e.g., a 'chamber': vagrants' c.: C. 20.—2. V.t., to fail: Public Schools: C. 20. Alec Waugh, Public School Life, 1922.

bottle, not much. Not much good: grafters.
bottle, over a. In a sociable way: from ca. 1770; coll.; in late C. 19–20, S.E.
bottle, turn out no. To fail: sporting: from ca. 1870; ob. Baumann.
bottle-ache. Drunkenness; delirium tremens; mid-C.19–20; ob. F. & H.
bottle and glass. The posterior: low rhyming on area: C. 20. B. & P.
bottle-areas; bottle-arsed. (A person 'broad in the beam') low coll.; late C. 19–20; ob.—2. (bottle-arsed only). See:
bottle-arsed, adj. (Printers' concerning type) thicker at one end than at the other: coll.; ca. 1780–1910; in C. 20, of type wider at the bottom than at the top.—2. See preceding.
bottle-boy. A barber's assistant; a doctor's page; coll.; ca. 1855; slightly ob.
bottle-head, n. And adj. (A) stupid (follow): the n., ca. 1654; the adj. (variant, as in Grose, bottle-headed), ca. 1890. Coll.; in C. 19–20, S.E. but archaic.
bottle-hold, a. Second at a boxing-match (1753; in C. 20, ob.); coll. Smollett in Count Fathom. 'An old bruiser makes a good bottle-holder.'—2. Hence, a second, backer, supporter, adviser; (—1851); coll. Punch in 1851 had a cartoon of Palmerton as the 'judicious bottle-holder', for he gave much help to oppressed states; bottle-holder > his nickname. Whence bottle-holding; journalistic, ca. 1860–1900, for support, backings.
bottle of cheese. A drink of Guinness: publichouses; (—1835).
bottle of smoke, pass the. To counteract a white lie: coll.; Dickens, 1855; ob. (O.E.D.).
bottle of spruce. Twopence; rhyming s. on dwce, two. (—1850; ob.) H., 1st ed.—2. Nothing; almost nothing; (almost) valueless; non-possess; late C. 18 mid-19. Ware. Ex spruce beer, which was inferior.
bottle of water. A daughter: rhyming s. (—1831).
bottle-sucker. Nautical, ca. 1850–1914: an able-bodied seaman, b.s. being humorously expanded.
bottle-tit or -tom. The long-tailed tit, from the shape of its nest: coll., ca. 1845.
bottle-washer. Often head cook and b.-w. A factotum: jocular coll.; 1876, C. Hindley, 'Fred Jolly being the head-cook and bottle-washer.'
bottle-ches. Arrested, stopped, glued in one place: low coll.; 1898; ob. Ware, who considers that it partly arises from the bottleling-up, in Santiago, of the Spanish fleet by the U.S. squadron.
bottled belly-ache. Cheap beer: C. 20; tramps' c.
bottled-up, be. To be fully engaged and therefore unable to accept any further engagements: low (—1887); ob. Baumann.

*bottler. A collector of money for a band, a singer, an instrumentalist on the street: tramps' c. (—1835). Cf. nobber.
bottles. Barrett's Brewery and Bottling Co.'s shares: Stock Exchange, ca. 1880–1914.
bottom. The posteriors; 1794, Dr. Darwin: coll. See Slung, p. 138. Ex lit. sense, as prob. is:—2. Capital, property: C. 17, coll.—3. Stamina, 'grit': 1747; ob. Captain Godfrey, in The Science of Defence, was apparently the first to use the term in print, thus: '... Bottom, that is, wind and spirit, or heart, or wherever you can fix the residence of courage'. Little used after 1850; prior taking its place. Semantically: that on which a thing rests, or that which is at the base, is dependable.—4. Spirit poured into a glass before water is added; coll.; from ca. 1850, Trollope having it in 1857, Theodore Martin as a v. in 1854.
bottom, stand on one's own. To be independent: C. 17–20; coll. till ca. 1900, then S.E.; cf. the proverbial let every tub stand on its own bottom: C. 17–20.
bottom dollar. See bet your boots.
bottom facts. The precise truth; coll., from ca. 1890, but not much used. Orig. (—1877) U.S. (Thornton).
bottom of, be at the. To be the actual, not merely the supposed, author or source of: coll. in C. 18, S.E. in C. 19–20. Steele has the equivalent be at the bottom on't.
bottom of a woman's 'tu quoque', the. 'The crown of her head', Grose, 3rd ed.: late C. 18–early 19. See tu quoque.
bottom out of, knock the. To overcome, defeat; expose (the fallacy of). Orig. (—1000) U.S.; anglicised ca. 1905 as a coll.
bottom-wetter. See wet bottom.
bottomer. In drinking, a draught or a gulp that empties the glass or tankard: C. 19–20; coll.
Bottomley's Own. The 12th Londons: 1916–17. Because this regiment, which had been in camp for some time at Sutton Veny and Longbridge Deverill, was suddenly despatched to the front as the result of Horatio Bottomley's article (in John Bull) on Armies Rotting in England. By the way, they pronounced it 'Bumley's', in accordance with a very famous and presumably apocryphal story about Bottomley calling on a Cholmondeley (pronounced Chumley).
botty. An infant's posteriors: orig. and mainly
bougie, bouge, boogie. See bows—bougie. See bogee.


bouman. A companion or friend, a 'pal!'; also as term of address: Dublin lower classes: from ca. 1910. Perhaps cf. bouman, 2.

bounce. A boastful lie, a pretentious swagger: coll. >, by 1800, S.E. (archaic in C. 20); Steele, 1714, *'This is supposed to be only a bounce.' Ex † bounce, the loud noise of an explosion.—2. Hence, an exaggeration: coll — (1765); as in Goldsmith, Whyt-O-Melville.—3. Impudence: coll; from ca. 1850; as in Blackwood's Magazine, May, 1850, 'The whole heroic adventure was the veriest bounce, the merest hunkum!' Admiration in Ned Ward in 1703 (Matthews). Ex sense 1, 2—4. A boaster, swaggerer: from ca. 1600; as in B.E.—5. Hence, a flashy dressed swindler: from ca. 1800; low. Vaux. All these five senses are practically †; the only operative extent one being that wholly C. 20 bounce = a bluff, esp. if constitutional, regular, or persistent.—6. Cherry brandy: low from the 1890's. Prob. ex its exhilarating effect.—7. A big dog-fish: nautical: late C. 19—20. Bowen. Ex its bounding ways.—8. A prepossession, an illicit surplus: military: C. 19. P. & Gibbons.—9. Dismissal; esp. get or give the bounce: mostly military: from ca. 1910. Ibid.

bounce, v.i. and t. To bluster, hect: boast; bully; scold: C. 17—20; ob. Coll.; but all except the last > S.E. ca. 1750.—2. V.i. and (with out of) t., to lie (†), cheat, swindle: from ca. 1750. Foote, 1762, *'If it had come to an oath, I don't think he would have bounced.' Cf. the n., senses 4, 5, q.v.—3. To scold severely: colloq.—4. (N. Y.) Cf. sense 1 of the n.: semantically, 'blow up.' O.E.D.—4. To bluff (a person): military: late C. 19—20. P. & Gibbons.—5. To coit with (a woman): low: late C. 19—20. F. & H. (revised).

*bounce, give it to 'em upon the. To escape from the police, even to extract an apology from them, by assuming an appearance of respectability and importance: e. of ca. 1810—60. Vaux.


bouncible. See bounsable.


bouncing, adj. Big rather than elegant; lusty, vigorous; mid-C. 16—20; coll.; but after ca. 1700, S.E.—2. Of a lie: C. 19, coll. Cf. a thumping lie.

*bouncing ben. A learned man: c. (—1844); †. H., 3rd ed.


bound, I dare or will be. I feel certain; certainly: coll: from ca. 1530; the dare form being rare after ca. 1800.

bounded, ppl. passive. Catastrophic for bound; bounden: late C. 16—20. O.E.D.

bounder. A four-wheeler cab, a 'growler': ca. 1855—1900.—2. (University) a dog-cat: ca. 1840—1900.—3. One whose manners or company are unacceptable: Cambridge University, from ca. 1883. Lit., one who bounds 'offensively' about.—4. Hence, a vulgar though well-dressed man, an unwelcome pretender to Society, a vulgarly impoverished person—gen. a man—within Society: from ca. 1885.


bount. See bung, n., sense 3—boun-nipper. See bung-nipper.

bourn(e). A realm, domain: catastrophic: C. 19—20. O.E.D.

Bournemouth. The Gaiety Theatre: theatrical: late 1882—mid-1883. Ware. That theatre was icy that winter; Bournemouth is much affected by the weak-chested.

bous(e), bouz(e); bousy, etc. See bouse.

bourt. A coll. abbr. of about: almost S.E. in C. 13—18; but esp. in words of command, e. g. 'bou' turn, it is mainly naval and military: C. 19—20.

bouze. A variant of boozey, q.v.

bow. (Boating, competitive or otherwise) the rower sitting nearest to the bow: coll: from ca. 1830.
bow, by the string rather than by the. By the most direct way: late C. 17-18; coll. > S.E. (O.E.D.)
bow, draw the long. To exaggerate; lie. From ca. 1820; coll. Byron.
bow, shoot in another's. To practise an art not one's own: C. 17-18; coll. soon > S.E.
bow, two or many strings to one's. With more resources than one, with an alternative: coll. > S.E.; from ca. 1650. In C. 19-20, gen. in reference to suitors or sweetheart. Ex archery.
bow-catcher. A kiss curl: ca. 1854-1900. H., 2nd ed; Waro. Corrup of bow-catcher, which is a variant form.
bow-hand, (wide) on the, adv. and adj. Wide of the mark; inaccurate: C. 17-18; coll. soon > S.E.
bow up to the ear, draw the. To act with alacrity; exert oneself: coll. from ca. 1850; ob.
bow-wow. A dog: jocular and nursery coll.: from ca. 1750. Grose, 1st ed.; 1860, Cowper. 'Your aggrieved bow-wow'. Ex the bark. Cf. moo-cow, etc.—2. A lover, a 'danger': mainly in India; from ca. 1850. Ex his 'yapping'.
bow-wow! You gay dog! coll.: C. 20. Manchon.—2. See wow-wow!
bow-wow mutton. Dog's flesh: ca. 1780-1800. Grose, 1st ed. Ware, 1909, '(Naval) [Mutton] so bad that it might be dog-flesh:'.
bow-wow's shop. A salesman's shop in, e.g. Monmouth Street: late C. 18-early 19. Grose, 2nd ed.; 'So called because the servant [at the door] barks and the master bates'.
bow-wow word. An echoic word: from ca. 1850. Academ coll. (coined by Max Muller) >, by 1890. S.E. The (always S.E.) bow-wow theory is that of human speech imitating animal sounds.
bow-wows, go to the. To go to the dogs': jocular coll.: 1808. Dickens. (O.E.D. Sup.)
bowl a gallon. To do the hat-trick: cricketers' at Eton: ca. 1800-90. Lewis. Thus, the bowler earned a gallon of beer.
bowl and try for timber. To propel the ball at the bateman's 'cricketers' coll.: ca. 1890-1914. Ware, 1909, remarks, 'Discountonanced in later years—rather as a waste of time than with any view of repression of personal injury'. An interesting sidelight for the great cricket controversy began late in 1932.
bowl out. To overcome, defeat, get the better of: from ca. 1810. Ex cricket.—2. In o., gen. in passing, to arrest, try, and convict: C. 19-20. Vaux.—3. For the n., see bowl.
bowl over. To defeat, worst; dumbfound (—1862). Ex skittles. Another variant (Dickens's) is bowl down, 1865.
bowls, but gen. in pl. (bowls) or in pl. used as singular. A round tart made of sugar, apple, and broad: ca. 1820-1900; coll. Mayhew, 1851 & ex the Anglo-Indian bowls, a portmanteau.
bowed. (Winchester College) 'ploughed' in an examination. C. 19-20, †. Cf. croppled.
bowler (1822); bowler-hat (1861); occ. boler (—1890). A stiff felt hat; fairly low in the crown and gen. black: coll. In its etymology, it was long regarded as a bowl-shaped hat, but it almost certainly derives ex the name of a London hatter (W.: Words and Names). Dates: O.E.D.
bowler, be given one's. To be demobilised: military: late 1918-19. F. & Gibbons. I.e. a civilian bowler in exchange for one's 'biting-bowler'.
bowler hat, be given a. To be sent home or 'sacked': military: 1915-18. B. & F.
*bowman, excellent, adopt; mostly bowman priq, an eminent Thief . . . a dexterous Cheat', A New Cauting Dict., 1725: c. of ca. 1720-1840. † bow. (fine).—2. Whence bowman, n., a thief: c. (—1823); † by 1890. Egan's Grose. Perhaps cf. bowman.
bowman, all's. All's safe: o.; from ca. 1820; † by 1890. Cf. bow.
*bowman ken. See bob ken.
bows, wide in the. 'With wide hips and posteriors,' Lex. Biol., where, as in Egan's Grose, bows is spent boubs: nautical coll.: ca. 1810-70.
bowsie, bowser, boway, etc. See boozie, etc.; but—
bowse, v. To haul hard, is nautical coll.: C. 19-20. Bowen. Perhaps cognate with dial. bowse, to rush, as the wind.
bowsprit. The nose; see bollspie. Bowsprit in parenthesis, have one's, to have one's nose pulled: C. 19, orig. nautical (officers').
bowa, etc. See boozie, etc.
box. A small drinking-place: late C. 17-18; coll. B.E. Cf. the mod. Fr. boîte.—2. In C. 19 o., a prison cell.—3. (the box.) 'A fielding position between point and the slips': cricketers' a. (1913) >, by 1920, coll. >, by 1930, S.E.—but ob., for the guilty is much more gen. Lewis.—4. (the box.) bow coffin; esp. put in the box: military coll.: late C. 19-20. F. & Gibbons.—5. 'A safe of the old-fashioned kind': o.; late C. 19-20. James Spenser, Limey Breaks In, 1934, 'It is easy to rip off the back.'
box, v. To take possession of, 'bag': Winchester School, from ca. 1850; ob.—2. Overturn in one's box, in reference to a watchman or a sentry (—1861, ob.); esp. box a charley, cf. charley.—3. To give a Christmas box: coll. from ca. 1845; o.—4. In C. 19 racing, esp. as box carefully: (of a bookie) to see that one's betting liabilities do not exceed one's cash in hand.—5. V.t., to manipulate the figures of returns, esp. muketry returns, for purposes of deception: military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons.—6. To mix (two books or

box, be in a. To be cornered; in a fix: coll., C. 19–20, ob. Prob. ex: box, in a or the wrong. Out of one's element, in a false position, in error. Coll., mid-C. 16–20. In C. 16, Ridley, Udall (J. not N.); later, Smollett, Marryat. The original allusion appears to be lost; was it to the boxes of an apothecary? †, O.E.D.

box, on the. On strike and receiving strike pay: workmen's, mainly in North England: ca. 1890–1910.

box!, the. Prepare for battle; naval coll. (— 1823); † by 1870. Egan's Grose.

box about, box it about. To drink briskly: C. 17–18. B.F. Cf. the C. 19–20 S.E.


box hat. A tall silk hat: lower class a.- (1800) verging on coll.

*box-iron, iron. Shoes: ca. 1780–1830; e. George Parker, 1789.

box-lobby loungers. A 'fast' London coll. of ca. 1820–60; thus in Bee, 1825, 'The ante-room at the Theatres is frequented by persons on the Town of both sexes, who meet there to make appointments, lounging about.'


box on. To keep fighting; hence, to continue doing anything important or strenuous: Australian: C. 20.

box open, box shut! A soldier's c.p. indicating that though he was offering cigarettes, 'the donor's generosity was limited by hard circumstance' (B. & P.): G.W.

box the compass. To answer all questions; to adapt oneself to circumstances: orig. and mainly nautical; coll.; mid-C. 18 20. Smollett, 1751, 'A light, good-humoured, sensible wench, who knows very well how to box her compass'. Ex the nautical fact of naming, in order, backwards, or irregularly, the thirty-two points of the compass.


boy. A hump on a man's back; lower class, from ca. 1800. Whence him and his boy, a hunch-back (H., 5th ed.).— 2. In India, hence South Africa and Australia: a native servant: C. 17–20; coll. 'Influenced by Telugu boyi, Tamil bori, a caste who were usually palankeen bearers', W.—3. (Often the boy.) Champagne: from ca. 1880; ob. Punch, 1882, 'Beaustly dinner, but very good boy. Had two magnums of it.'—4. See b'boy.—5. In C. 20 s. and gen. in pl.: a prisoner. Cf. boys, q.v.—6. (Also the boyo.) Always the boy, the penis: late C. 19–20.

boy, my or old. A term of address: coll., though sometimes it is, clearly, familiar S.E.: C. 17–20. Shakespeare, Richardson.


boy, yellow. See yellow boy.

boy Jones, the. A secret, or unnamed, informant: 'a virtual c.p. to the detective': London; mid-C. 19. Ex an inquisitive boy that wormed his way several times into Buckingham Palace. See esp. Horace Wyndham, Victorian Sensations, 1933.

boy with the boots, the; the nailer; Old Nick. The Joker in a pack of cards: Anglo-Irish: late C. 19–20. Ex its effectiveness.

boyno! A friendly valediction or, occ., greeting: nautical (— 1800); slightly ob. Ware. Ex or via Lingua Franca for 'good'.


boys; always the boys. The fraternity of bookmakers and their associates: racing: from ca. 1850. —2. The lively young fellows of any locality: from ca. 1860; coll. Cf. lads of the village.

Boys, Angry or Roaring. A set of young bloods, noisily mannered, delighting to commit outrages and enter into quarrels, in late Elizabethan and in Jacobean days. Greene, Tu Quoque, 'This is no angry, nor no roaring boy, but a blustering boy'. Coll.: since ca. 1660, S.E. and merely historical. Cf. Mohawks.


boyza. A term of address to a boy or, rarely by father, to son of any age whatsoever: coll., mostly Australian: C. 20. Isabel Cameron, Boycie, 1929; Christina Stead, Seven Poor Men of Sydney, 1934. Cf. boyo, 1, and dial. boyzin.

Bozzy. Boswell: ca. 1780. See Bearleader, the. For the form, cf. Dizzy.

brace. Two 'noughts' in a match: 1912. But b'ay a brace, to be twice dismissed for 0, occurs as early as 1887; the ob. brace of ducks in 1891. All are >, by 1920 at latest, coll.

brace, face and. To bluster, dominate; be defiant: C. 16: coll. Skelton; Latimer, 'Men ... woulde face it and brace it and make a shewe of uppright dealynge', O.E.D. Cf. brace (up), brace oneself.

brace or couple-of shakes, in a. In a moment; almost immediately: from ca. 1830. Barham, Ouida. Egan's Grose, 1823, has '(in a) brace of snaps. Instantly' and classifies it as nautical.

brace tavern, the. Late C. 18–early 19 only; low: 'a room in the S.E. corner of the King's Bench, where, for the convenience of prisoners
BRACE UP

residing thereabouts, beer purchased at the tap-house was retailed at a halfpenny per pot advance. It was kept by two brothers of the name of Partridge, and thence called the "Brace," Grose, 2nd ed.

*brace up. To pawn stolen goods, esp. at a good price: C. 19-20; ob. Vaux. Ware suggests that it may derive from Fr. c. braser as in braser des fesses, to fabricate false papers.

bracelet. A hand-cuff: from ca. 1680. Always low; in C. 17-18, prob. c.; ob. Vaux. & O.E.D.Turning to C. 18-19, 'What you need is a bracelet.' The medical sense, which was S.E., has long been †; as another word for a strong drink (cf. tonic, q.v.), a coll., from ca. 1860: ex U.S. (1825: O.E.D. Sup.).


brad. See bradbury.


bradbury. occ. abbr. to brad. A Treasury note; esp. a £1 note: 1916; ob. (These notes, by the way, were hardly artistic.) Ex Sir John Bradbury, the Secretary of the Treasury, which circulated the 10s. and £1 notes from late 1914 until November, 1929, when the nation's note issue was consolidated in the Bank of England; the Treasury's notes ceased to be legal tender on July 31, 1933. See the third leader and the City Editor's note, The Daily Telegraph, Aug. 1, 1933. Cf. Fisher, q.v.

brads. Money; copper coins. From ca. 1810 (Vaux recording it in 1812); low until ca. 1860, by which date the 'copper' sense was †. Prob. ex the shoemakers' rivets so named.—2. Cigarettes: military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. For semantics, cf. coffin-nail.

brads, tip the. To be generous with money; hence, be a gentleman: ca. 1810–40; low.

bradshaw. The complete time-table to the trains of Great Britain: from ca. 1845; soon coll.; in C. 20 S.E. Abbr. Bradshaw's Railway Guide.—2. Hence, a person very good at figures: middle-class coll. († 1909); low †. Ware. Ex that Manchester printer who in 1839 published the first railway time-table, in 1841 issued the first monthly railway-guide. (W.) 'O mighty Bradshaw, speaker of the thunderous line' from an unpublished and unpublished ode.


*bragadocia, -io. Three months' imprisonment to reputed thieves, who prob. boast that they can do it 'on their heads': c.; ca. 1850–70. Dickens in Reprinted Pieces, 1857.

Bragg. See Old Bragg.

Brahma. *Something good. Also a flashily dressed girl! Regular Army: late C. 19–20. F. & Gibbons. Ex Brahma, the Hindu deity; the idols being often bejewelled. Hence bramma, q.v.—2. See Bramah knows.

brain, bear a. To be cautious; have a brain, i.e. some intelligence: C. 16-early 19; coll. soon > S.E. Skelton.

brain, have on the. Be obsessed by, crazy about: mid-C. 19–20. Coll. in C. 19, then S.E.

BRANDY AND FASHODA


brain-storm. The same as brain-wave but with the connotation of a more sustained mental effort: from ca. 1926; now verging on coll. Ex the S.E. sense, 'a succession of sudden and severe paroxysms of cerebral disturbance'(Dorland, 1901: O.E.D. Sup.).

brain-wave. A sudden, esp. if a brilliant, idea: from ca.1914; since 1933, coll. Ex telepathy.

brains. The paste with which a sub-editor sticks his scissors-cuttings together: printers' (— 1887); slightly ob. Baumann.

brains, beat, break, cudgel; drag; busy, puzzle one's. To think hard, in order to understand or to contrive: C. 16–20, except break († by 1800): all coll.; but all, since ca. 1860, S.E.

brain, have some guts in one's. To be knowledgeable: late C. 18–early 19: coll. Grose, 3rd ed.

brains, pick or suck someone's. To elicit information, knowledge, 'brain-wave', and utilise it (without permission). Coll. (— 1838), very soon S.E. Lytton.

brains as guts, if you had as much. (Gen. followed by what a clever fellow you would be!) A c.p. addressed to a person fat and stupid: ca. 1780–1820. Grose, 2nd ed.

brains on ice. See have one's brains on ice.

brainy. Clever: coll. late C. 19–20; now verging on S.E. Ex U.S. (— 1873) and, even now, more typically U.S. than English.


brake, set one's face in. To assume a 'poker' face: coll.: C. 17. Ex brake, 'a framework intended to hold anything steady' (O.E.D.). Variants with looks, wizard, etc. Chapman in that fine, ranting tragedy, Bussy D'Amboise, 1607, 'O (like a Strumpet) learn to set thy looks | In an eternal Brake.'


bramble. A lawyer: mainly Kentish, hence and partly Cockney, s.: ca. 1850–1914.


bran mash, bran-mash. Bread soaked in tea or coffee: military, from ca. 1870; ob.


brancho is incorrect for brancho: mid-C. 19–20. O.E.D.


brandy, all. See all brandy.

BRANDY BLOSSOM

brandy blossom. A red-pimpled nose: coll. (— 1887). Baumann. Ex b.b., a pimple that, on the nose, is caused by drink, esp. by brandy.

brandy-faced. A drunkard; late C. 17—early 19. Cotton, ca. 1867, 'You goodman brandy-face'. Whence:

brandy-faced. Red-faced, esp. from liquor: from ca. 1700. Grose; Salis, 'brandy-faced viragos'.

brandy is Latin for (a) goose, later fish. The former (ob.), from late C. 16; the latter (1), from ca. 1850. Coll. Mar-Prelate's Epitome, 1838; Swinburn, (Aperson.) Brewer has thus neatly stated the semantic equation; 'What is the Latin for goose? (Answer) Brandy. The pun is on the word answer. *Anser* is the Latin for goose, which brandy follows as surely and quickly as an answer follows a question.' Concerning fish, Mayhew tells us that the richer kinds of fish produce a quassy stomach, restored only by a drink of brandy. Cf.

brandy is Latin for pig and goose. Halliwell, 1847: 'An apology for drinking a dram after either'. Coll.; extremely ob. A variant on the preceding entry.


brandy-pawnee (occ. pannee). Brandy and water. India and the Army: coll. From ca. 1810. Thackeray, 1848, 'The refreshment of brandy-pawnee which he was forced to take'. See pawnee, brandy-shunter. A too frequent imbiber of brandy: non-aristocratic: from ca. 1880; ob. Ware. On booze-shunter, q.v.


brass along. To go gaily and/or impudently ahead; from ca. 1918. (R. Blaker, Night-Shift, 1934.) Ex brass, 2.


brass-bound and copper-fastened. (Of a lad) dressed in a midshipman's uniform: nautical; mid-C. 19—20; ob.


brass-face. An impudent person: coll.; ca. 1820—60. 'Jon Bee.' Ex brass, 2.

brass-farth. A farthing—or less. Coll.; mid-C. 17—20; S.E. after ca. 1850.


Brass Heads, the. The 3rd Bombay European—now the Leinster—Regiment: military: 1858, when they excellently endured the sun in Sir Hugh Rose's campaign in Central India. F. & Gibbons.

*brass-knocker. Broken virtuals: scraps of food: vagrants' c. (— 1874); ob. H., 5th ed. ? ex the hardness, or possibly, via India, ex Hindustani basi khana, stale food; it affords an interesting comment on Yule & Burnell's brass-knocker.

brass monkey. See monkey, cold enough...

*brass-nail. A prostitute: c. C. 20. Rhyming s. on tail. (Also among grifters: Philip Allingham.)

brass-neck. Impudent; military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. 'A brass-neck lie.'


brass-plater. 'A man of the merchant class': from ca. 1920. (O.E.D. Sup.) Ex preceding.—2. (brass- or door-plater.) A doctor: C. 20. Manchon. Ex the brass name-plate at his door.

brass-rags. See part brass-rags.

brass-tacks, get down to. To come to, to face, realities; to consider the practical aspect: coll.; U.S. (1903), Anglicised by 1910: O.E.D. (Sup.) (In U.S., there is the variant ... brass nails.) I suspect, however, that brass tacks may have arisen before C. 20 and be rhyming s. for facts.

brass up. To pay (up), gen. v.i.: C. 20. In Feb., 1917, subscriptions to the War Loan were solicited in Nottingham (and elsewhere) by brass up, legendleging the tramcars (W.). The term is more gen. in the North and the Midlands than in the South.

brasser. A bully: Christ's Hospital, C. 19—20; ob. Ex brass, 2.

brassy. Impudent; shameless: coll. (— 1736); S.E. after 1800; in C. 20, ob. Wolcott, i.e. Peter Pindar, 'Betty was too brassy.' Cf. the S.E. usages.

brat. Brother; 'one behaving in a manner not befitting his years': Bootham School: late C. 19—20; Anon., Dict. of Bootham Slang, 1925.

bratchet. A little brat: endearing or pejorative coll.: from ca. 1600; ob. by 1900.

bratttery. A nursery; pejorative coll.: from ca. 1780. Beckford, 1834, 'The apartment above my head proves a squalling nursery.' (O.E.D.)

brave. A bully; assassin: late C. 18—17, coll.; thereafter S.E.; ob. by 1850; † by 1890.

Brave Fifteenth, the. The 15th Hussars: C. 19—20: military coll. now verging on j. and obscurities. F. & Gibbons, 'From an old regimental song':"The Brave Fifteenth".

bravo. 'A mercenary Murderer, that will kill any body,' B.E.; Steele, 'dogged by bravoes'. Late C. 18—19, coll.; thereafter S.E.; by 1930 slightly ob.


bravan, hawk one's. (See the quotation at braver.) To be a male prostitute (i.e. a man offering his 'charms' to women); to be a passive homosexual for money: low (esp. Corkneys): C. 20.

bravyo, Hicks i. Splendid i; music-halls and minor theatres: from ca. 1830; ob. by 1910; † by 1930. Ware, 'In approbation of musical demonstration ... From Hicks, a celebrated ... actor ... more esp. "upon the Surrey side" ... [In late C. 19—early 20] applied in S. London widely; e.g. "Bravyo Hicks—into 'er again."' Cf.

BRAYVO, HICKS!
break-down.


bread and salt, take. To curse and swear: C. 20. Manchon.

bread-artist. An artist working merely for a living: art: from 1890's; very ob. A variation of pot-boiler with a pun on bred.


bread-barge. The distributing tray or basket of biscuits: nautical, C. 19-20; ob.

bread-basket. The basket: from ca. 1750. Fоеe, 1753, 'I let drive': made the soup-maigre rumble in his bread-basket, and laid him sprawling.' Cf. bread-room, dumpling depot, porridge-bowl, and victualling-office: all pugilistic.

bread buttered on both sides. Great or unexpected good fortune: coll.; mid-C. 17-20. Ray, 1678; Lockhart. (Apperson.)

bread crumbs! A naval e.g. (C. 20) uttered by the senior subaltern officer in the gun-room: an order for all junior midshipmen to put their fingers in their ears to avoid conversation unified for their youth.' (Bowen.)

bread is buttered, know on which side one's. To seek one's own advantage: C. 16-20; coll.; in C. 19-20, S.E. Heywood, Gibber, Scott, Vachell. (Apperson.)

bread out of one's mouth, take the. To spoil or destroy a person's livelihood; to remove what another is on the point of enjoying. From ca. 1700; coll. till C. 19, then S.E.


break, v. To 'cut' (a person): middle-class (— 1909); ° by 1920. Ware. Abbr. break away from.—2. To leave the employment of a person; to discharge (an employee): tailors: C. 20. E.g. The Tailor and Cutter, Nov. 20, 1928, both senses.


break a lance with. To enjoy a woman: C. 19-20. Coll. Eligible only when jocular, otherwise a mere S.E. euphemism. Ex S.E. sense: to enter the lists against.


break-bulk. A captain that appropriates a portion of his cargo: C. 17-20; ob.; coll. till ca. 1700, then S.E. Ex S.E. to break bulk, to begin to unload.


bread and scrapes; nursery coll. (-1923). Manchon.

bread-basket; or with capitalcs. The Mediterranean Squadron: naval: late C. 19-20. Bowen. Because it is 'cushy'.


bread and butter, adj. Boyish, girlish, esp. schoolgirlish, as in a bread-and-butter miss: coll. from ca. 1860.

bread and butter letter. A letter thanking one's recent hostess: Society: anglicised, as a coll, ca. 1906 ex U.S. Occ. abbr. to bread and butter: from ca. 1925.

bread and butter of mine, no. No business of mine: no potential profit for me: coll. from ca. 1760; ob.

bread and butter squadrion (or with capitals). The Mediterranean Squadron: naval: late C. 19-20. Bowen. Because it is 'cushy'.


bread and butter wicket. A wicket extremely easy for batsmen: cricketors' coll.: 1887. Lewis.


bread and cheese in one's head, have (got). To be drunk: mid-C. 17-18; coll. and proverbial.

Ray, 1678. (Apperson.)


also coll., a convivial gathering: in C. 20, both senses are S.E. and, by 1930, ob. Also, from ca. 1870, as v., to dance riotously, to boisterously convivial, and adj., riotously dancing, noisily convivial.


break (e.g. it) down to. To tell (a person) something: tailors: C. 20. E.g. The Tailor and Cutter, Nov. 29, 1928.

break-neck. A ball that, with a very big break, takes on a strike: cricketers' ca. 1850-80. Lewis.

break one's back. To become bankrupt: coll., C. 17-18, as in Shakespeare's Henry VIII. To cause to go bankrupt: C. 17-20, coll., as in Rowley, 1632; and in H., 3rd ed.; and in Baring-Gould's The Gamecocks, 1887. (Apperson.)

break one's duck. See duck, the cricketing n.

break one's leg. See broken-legged.—break one's shins against. See Covent Garden rails.

break out again. To do again something that is unpleasant, ridiculous: C. 20, coll. Perhaps a development of:

break out in a fresh place. To commence a new undertaking; assume (lit. or fig.) a different position: ? orig. U.S. and anglicised ca. 1905.

break-pulpit. A noisy, vigorous preacher: late C. 16-17; coll.


break square(s). To depart from or to interrupt the usual order; do harm. If it breaks no square, it does not matter, was proverbial. From ca. 1650; coll. till ca. 1620, then S.E. The proverb is ob., the phrase ↑. Apperson.


break the balls. To begin: sporting, from ca. 1870; ob. In billiards, the phrase = to commence playing.

break the ice. To begin; get to know a person. From ca. 1500. Coll.; by 1860, S.E. Nashe, Shirley, Dickens. (Apperson.)

break the back of. See break the neck of.

break the neck, the back of. To have almost completed; to accomplish the major, or the most difficult, part of any undertaking. From ca. 1860; in C. 18; coll.; in C. 20, S.E.

break up, break-up. (As v., idiomatic S.E.) The end of a school-term, or of any performance. From ca. 1840: coll. soon > S.E.

breakfast, think about. To be absorbed in thought: coll.: late C. 19-20; ob. E. C. Bentley, Trent's Last Case, 1913. 'He was thinking about breakfast. In his case the colloquialism must be taken literally: he really was thinking about breakfast.'


breathing one's neck for (a drink, etc.). To long for a (drink, etc.): coll.: late C. 19-20. Perhaps ex to (be willing to) break one's neck for the sake of . . .

*breathing-up of the spell. 'The nightly termination of performance at the Theatre Royal, which is regularly attended by pickpockets of the lower order': Vaux n. of ca. 1810-80. Here, spell = operation, performance, theatre.


breamy l, that's. That's bad !: a military o.p. of C. 20. F. & Gibbons. ↑ = 'That's flaky,'

breast fleet, belong to the. To be a Roman Catholic: late C. 18-early 19. Grose, 1st ed. Ex the crossing or beating of hands on the breast.

breast of, make a clean. To confess in full. From ca. 1760: coll. till ca. 1800, then S.E.

breast up to. To accost: (low) Australian (—1916). C. J. Dennis.

breast work. The carrying of a woman's breasts: C. 20, somewhat pedantic and seldom heard. Punning breastwork, a defensive fieldwork breast-high.

breath strong enough to carry (the) coal, with a. Drunk: U.S., anglicised ca. 1905; virtually ↑. Ware.

breathe again. To be and feel relieved in mind: C. 19-20, anticipated by Shakespeare; coll. > S.E. 'Hew! we breathe again.'


breed, gen. in passiv. To flog, be flogged on the breast: in C. 16-18, coll. if not S.E.; in C. 19-20, schoolboys' s., ob. Tusser, 'Maides, up I beechec yee [Least Mistress doo breech yee]'; Massinger, 'How he looks! like a school-boy that . . . went to be breech'd.'—2. In C. 20 c., to steal from the back trouser-pocket.

breech makes buttons, one's. See buttons, one's . . .

*breeched. Rich; in good case: o. ca. from 1810; ob. Vaux. Cf. bays (off), have the, q.v., and Fr. déboulet, bankrupt.

breeches. Trouser: coll. and jocular (also in dial.): from ca. 1850. In S.E., breeches come no farther than just below the knee.

breeches, wear the. (Of women) to usurp a husband's authority, be 'boss': from ca. 1850, though the idea is clearly indicated in C. 16. Coll. until ca. 1700, when it > S.E. Nashe, 1601. 'Diverse great storms are this yere to be feared, especially in houses where the wives ware the breeches.'

breeches Martyrs. W. O'Brien and several other Irish M.P.'s, imprisoned in 1889. Dawson addsuce that they 'refused to put on the prison dress'.

breeches-part. A role in which an actress wears male attire: theatrical (—1805); ob.


breech-bite. A causer or fomenter of bate, i.e. strife: late C. 16-20; ob. Coll. >, by 1620, S.E. Shakespeare, 'No tel-tale, nor no breede-bate', 1598.

breeding. Parentage: low coll.: ca. 1567-1620. Shakespeare. Ex primary S.E. sense. O.P.D.

breeding-cage. A bed: low: ca. 1810-1920. W. E. Henley, in an unpublished ballad written in 1875, 'In the breeding cage I cops her, | With her stays off, all a-blowin'! | Three parts sprung . . .'

breef. See brief, sense 3.—breefs. See briefs.


breeze (along). To move or go quickly: from ca. 1920. Cf.:

breeze in. To arrive unexpectedly: from ca. 1920. On blow in.

breeze in one's breech, have a. To be perturbed: coll.: C. 17. Beaumont & Fletcher; Ray. A breeze is a gaudy. Apperson. Whence breeze, n., i, q.v.

breeze up or vertical, have the. To 'have the wind up', which it deliberately varies: 1916: orig. and mainly military. Whence breeze:


brevet-wife. 'A woman who, without being married to a man, lives with him, takes his name, and enjoys all the privileges of a wife', F. & H. Coll.: ca. 1870-1914.

brew, n. See brewer.—2. 'Drink made on the spot': Bootham School: late C. 19-20. Anon., Dict. of Bootham Slang, 1925. Ex.—3. A study-

tea: certain Public Schools': mid-C. 19-20. Cf.:
brew, v.i. To make afternoon tea: Marlborough and hence other Public Schools: mid-
C. 19-20, ob. Hence brewing, the making thereof.—2. V.i., to have afternoon tea: at certain other Public Schools: late C. 19-20.

brewer, fetch the. To become intoxicated: from ca. 1840; ob. Cf.:
brewer's flime. Beer; so: 1714, Ned Ward, The Republican Procession; † by 1800, and never common. (W. Matthews.)
brewer's horse. A drunkard. Late C. 16-20; ob. Shakespeare, 1597, Falstaff speaking, 'I am a peacorn, a brewer's horse': Halliwell, 1847. In late C. 19-20, mainly dial. Often in semi-

proverbial form, one whom (a) brewer's horse hath (or has) bit: Cf.:

brewerish. See bruising the bed.

Brian o'Lynn, occ. o'Linn. Gin: rhyming a.

(—1857, ob.). 'Ducange Anglicus.'
briar, properly briar. A brier-wood pipe: coll., from ca. 1870; now virtually S.E. Ware.

brick. A loyal, dependable person (orig. only of men); a 'good fellow': 1840: a. >, ca. 1890, coll. Barham, 'a regular brick'; Thackeray, 1855, 'a dear little brick'; George Eliot, 1870, 'a fellow like nobody else, and, in fine, a brick'. Prob. ex the solidity of a brick; a fanciful etymology is Aristotle's πετριωδὸς φρίγη, a man worthy of commemoration on a monumental stone.—2. A marketman: Peckham: Peckham Schools: 1906, P. G. Wodehouse, Mike. Cf. v.: 1.—A piece of bread; bread: Charterhouse: late C. 19-

20.—4. A mallet; a 'terrific sore': ibid.: C. 20.


brick, drop a. Make a faux pas, esp. of tact or speech: (—1923), now verging on coll. Manchon. Perhaps ex dropping a brick on someone's toes.

brick, like a; like bricks; like a thousand (of) bricks. The second seems to be the oldest form (Dickens, 1836; Barham); the third to have been orig. (1842) U.S. Vigorously, energetically, thoroughly, very quickly, with good will. Coll. >, by 1890, S.E.—2. But swim like a brick is the coll. opp. (—1927) of S.E. swim like a fish. Collinson.

brick walls, make. To eat one's food without masticating it: lower classes: late C. 19-20.

brickduster. A dust-storm: Sydney (—1880); coll. See brickfielder.

Brickdusts, the. (Military) The Fifty-Third Regiment of Foot, which, from ca. 1881, has been the King's Shropshire Light Infantry. Ex its brick-red facings. Also called The Old Five-and-Three-

pennies (ex its number and the daily pay of an ensign).

bricked. Smartly or fashionably dressed: late C. 16-17: f. orig. c. Greene.

brickfielder. (Less often brickduster; cf. (souther-

ly) buster.) A Sydney coll. for a cold dust- or sandstorm brought by southerly winds from nearby brickfields and sand-hills. Ca. 1830-90. But from ca. 1860, and predominantly from ca. 1890, the word has meant a severe hot wind, with dust or without. The change in meaning was caused largely by the disappearance, ca. 1870, of the brick-

fields themselves. Morris's Australian English gives an excellent account of the word.

brickish. Excellent; 'fine', 'jolly': 1856, A. Smith (O.E.D.). Ex brick, n., 1: q.v.

bricklayer. A clergyman. From ca. 1850; ob. Perhaps ex the part played by ecclesiastics in architecture. For interesting suppositions, see F. & H.


bricks. A sort of pudding: Wellington College, from ca. 1870; ob.—2. See brick, like a.


bricky, adj. Fearless; adroit; like a 'brick', (q.v.): 1864; perhaps orig. schoolboys'; slightly ob. (O.E.D. Sup.) Cf. brickish.


bridge. (Cards) A cheating trick by which a particular card is located, and made operative in the cut, by previously imparting to it a slight curve; that curve produces an almost imperceptible gap in the resultant pack. From ca. 1860; after ca. 1870, J. Mayhew, Lever, Yates. Vbln., bridging.—2. Hence (?) an absentee from a meeting: printers': from ca. 1880; very ob. Ware.—3. In New Zea-

land post-G.W. c., a look, a glance.

bridge, v. To betray the confidence of. Variants: throw over; break bridge: o. or low a. (—1812); † by 1900. Vaux.

bridge, a gold or a silver. An easy and attractive means of escape: late C. 18-20; ob. Coll. > S.E. in C. 17.

bridgeting. The plausible acquisition of money from Irish servant girls, for political—or allegedly political—purposes: 1866; ob. Ware. Bridget (Biddy), a Christian name very gen. in Ireland. bridget-cull. A highwayman: low or c.: ca. 1740–1800. Fielding. See cull.


briefless. Ticketless: from ca. 1870. Low in C. 20; earlier, c.


brier. See haw.

briers, in the. In trouble: C. 16–18; coll. Briers, vegetation(a), is S.E., C. 18–20, ob.


bright in the eye. Slightly drunk: from ca. 1870: s. till C. 20, then coll.; ob. (Lyell).

bright specimen, a. A silly, foolish, rash, stupid, bungling person. (Always complementary to the verb to be.) Coll. (—1888).


brim, v. (Of a man) to have intercourse; v.t., with. C. 17–18, sporting. B.E. Ex the copulation of boar with sow.

brimmer. A hat with a brim, esp. if big: mid-C. 17–early 18; coll. at first, then S.E.—2. A variant of brim, 1, q.v.: c. of ca. 1820–50. Bee. brimstone. A virago, a spitfire: from ca. 1700; coll. verging on S.E.; ob. by 1890. 'Oh, madam,' said the bishop, 'do you not know what a brimstone of a wife he had?'; Bishop Burnet, 1712.—2. Also, a harlot: from ca. 1890. B.E. Both ex brimstone, sulphur, which is notably in-fammable.

brimstone; Brimstone Spurgeon. Charles Had- don Spurgeon, the great preacher (1834–92); ob. Baumann. Because he spoke so eloquently of the fires of Hell.


bring. To steal: ca. 1820–80. Bee, who cites a v.i. sense: 'Dogs are said "to bring well", when they run off with goods for their masters.'

bring down the house, bring the house down. To
be heartily applauded (—1754). Coll. until ca. 1896, then S.E. His apprehension that your statues will bring the house down: The World, 1754; 'Why it would be, bring down the house,' Cuthbert Bede', 1853.


bring home the bacon. To succeed in a given undertaking: 1924, P. G. Wodehouse (O.E.D. Sup.).

bring in. (Of a jury) to find, e.g. guilty. Coll. (—1888). 'The jury brought her in not guilty.'

bring up, v.i. and t. To vomit: coll.; from ca. 1830.

briny, the. See briney.

bris-à-bris, brisé-à-bise. Incorrect for brisé-bise, a net or lace curtain for the lower part of a window: from 1920. O.E.D. (Sup.).

brisky. A coll. form (1923) of brisé-bise: see bris-à-bris. Ibid.

brisk as a bee or as a bee in a tar-pot. (C. 18-20, latterly dial), as in Fielding, and brisk as bottle ale (C. 18), as in Gay. Very lively: coll. Apperson. Cf. body-louse, q.v.

brisk up (occ. about). To enliven or animate; coll.: 1864. Dickens. O.E.D.


bristler; gen. pl. A (better-class) motor-car commandeered, in that Spanish civil war which commenced in July, 1936, by the combatants, who therein rush about the streets and shoot indiscriminately all such persons as come within range: among the English colony in Spain: 1936, The Times, Aug. 6.


Bristol. A visiting-card: Society: ca. 1830-1914. Ware, 'From the date when these articles were printed upon Bristol—I.e. cardboard'.

Bristol man. 'The son of an Irish thief and a Welsh whore': Lex. Bal.: low: ca. 1810-60. Because both of those worthies would geographically tend to drift to Bristol.

Bristol milk. Sherry: esp. rich sherry: from ca. 1600; coll. till ca. 1800, then S.E. Pryme, Fuller, Grose, Macaulay. Ex the large quantities of sherry imported, in C. 17-18, into England by way of Bristol.

Bristol stone. Sham diamond(s): C. 17-18. In S.E. to which the term Bristol diamant or gem or stone denotes a transparent rock-crystal found in the limestone at Clifton, that beautiful outer suburb of Bristol.

Brit. See Brit, 2.


British constitution, unable to say. Drunk: coll.; late C. 19-20; ob.

British Museum religion. Anglican monalists advocating the precise following of medieval usage: ecclesiastical pejorative coll.: ca. 1890-1902.

British official. n. and adj. Unreliable (news): military coll.: Oct. 1915-June 1918. Before and after these dates, official communications were trustworthy and regarded as such. See esp. B. & P.; cf. bulletin, q.v.

British roarer. The heraldic lion: non-aristocratic: from ca. 1880; ob. Ware.


Brits's. See violet. Brit's.

Brit(t), the. The Britannia Theatre: Cockney: ca. 1880-1910.—2. (As Brit.) A Briton: coll.: C. 20.

Britannia is a frequent error for Britannia: C. 18-20.


brooch claret. To draw blood: boxing: from ca. 1820; ob.


broad, adj. Alert; 'knowing': late C. 19-20; ob. Suggested by wid, q.v.

broad, the. The Broad Street, Oxford: Oxford undergraduates: from the 1890's. Collinson.

broad and shallow. adj. Middle-way: applied to the 'Broad' Church, as opp. to the 'High' and 'Low' Churches: coll.: ca. 1854; ob. Cf. high and dry and low and slow.

broad-armed. (A person) 'broad in the beam': low coll.: late C. 19-20.

broad as it's long (or long as it's broad), it's as. It makes no difference; it comes to the same thing either way. From the 1870's; in C. 19-20, S.E. Ray, 1878; 'Hudibras' Butler. (Apperson.)

Broad-bottoms. The coalition ministry of 1741 was called the Broad Bottom: ... the reigning cant [i.e. vogue] word, ... the taking all parties and people, indifferently, into the ministry' Walpole. A similar ministry in 1807 was described as the Broad Bottoms. Both were coll.; in histories, however, they are S.E.: cf. Rump, the.


broad-brimmer. A broad-brimmed hat: coll.: ca. 1855-1900.

broad-cooper. A brewers' negotiator with publicans; he is an aristocrat among 'commercials'. Brewers, ca. 1850-1914. H., 3rd ed.

*broad cove. A card-shaper (—1821; by 1920); c. See broads.


*broad-talking. Card-playing, esp. if shady; also three-card trickery; c.; from ca. 1855. H., 2nd ed., erroneously gives it as broad.

*broad-tongued. A 'correct card' seller at horse-races: c.; from ca. 1850. H., 1st ed.

*broad-gauge lady. A large-lipped woman: railway officials' (ca. 1880) >, by 1884, gen.; by 1900. Ware.
broad in the beam. See beam, broad in the.


*broad-nosed. The *broad* member of a pair: c.: late C 19-20. David Hume.

*broad-player. An expert card-player, not necessarily a sharer; c. (-1812); ob. Vaux.


*broadcast* is incorrect as the past tense of (to) *broadcast* on the wireless; the past ppl. is either *broadcast* or *broadcasted*.


*broadside, fake the work the broads. To issue counterfeit coins; to play dishonestly at cards: both low verging on c. (-1923). Mancheon.

*broadside, fake the. See also *fake the broads*.


Cf. *broad-man*.


*broadly-worker. A seller of vile shoddy as excellent and ex. cap., stolen material: ca. 1845-1914; c.

Brodbignag(ian). Sol. for *Brodbignag(ian), as in* Swift, 1718: c. from ca. 1730. Dinsdale.


*brock's benefit*. Very lights, star-shells, etc., over the front line: military: 1916-18. F. & Gibbons, *From the annual firework display at the Crystal Palace*.


*brock*dric. The peaked cap worn by the British soldier: from ca. 1902: military s., > by 1925, coll. >, by 1930, j. Ex St John *Brodric*, Secretary for War (1900-3). W.:2. *Brodric* or *little Brodric*, a soldier of inferior physique: military coll.: 1903-ca. 1914. Ex his lowering of the standard. (O.E.D. Sup.)

*broganer, brognerian*. One who has a strong Irish pronunciation or accent*: Grose, 1st ed.: coll.: latish C 18-early 19. Ex *brogue*.

*brogues. Brooches: Christ's Hospital, C 19-20; ob. Coll. rather than s., for in mid-C 19 S.E. it meant either hose or trousers.

*broiler. A very hot day: from ca. 1815: in C 20, S.E. Cf. *roaster*, *scorch*.

*broke. Bankrupt; very short of money. Often —e.g. in N. Kingsley, 1861-—dead or —e.g. in G. R. Sims, 1873.—stone broke. Coll.: from ca. 1820. (In S.E. C 16-18.) A form of broken now f in S.E. but gen. enough as a sol. Cf.: *broke* to the world. Penniless: from ca. 1915. An elaboration of the preceding.

*broken feather in one's wing, have a. To have a stain on one's character: C 19-20, ob.; coll. verging on S.E. Mrs. Oliphant in *Phoebe*, 1880.

*broken her leg at the church-door, she hath*. From a hard-working girl she has, on being married, become a slattern: coll. and (mainly Cheshire) dial. Apperson. Contrast the phrases at *broken-legged*.

*broken-kneed. Of a girl or woman seduced: C 18-20; ob.; coll. Ex farriery. Cf. ankle (sprint one's) and:

*broken-legged, ppl. adj. Seduced: C 17-20; ob. Coll. More gen. is the semi-proverbial coll. form, she hath broken her leg (occ. elbow) above the knee. Beaumont & Fletcher, Gibber, Grose. Cf. the C 19-20 Craven dial. he hath broken his leg, of 'a dissolute person on whom a child has been filiated', and contrast *broken her leg* (as above).

*brocker. A pedlar or monger: pejorative: late C 14-16; S.E. till C 17, when it > coll.—2. In late C 19—early 17 c., a receiver of stolen goods. Greene in 2nd *Cony-Catching*.—3. brocker; gen. dead-broker: occ. sturdy-broker: A person either ruined or penniless: coll.: from ca. 1890.

*brockered, be*. To suffer a visitation by the brokers: lower classes': from 1897; ob. Ware.

*brolly*. An umbrella: from ca. 1873; in C 20, coll. H., 5th ed., 1874; *Punch*, June 6, 1885. F. & H.: 'First used at Winchester, being subsequently adopted at both Oxford and Cambridge Universities'.


*bromide*. A commonplace person or saying; a cliché: U.S. (1900), anglicised by 1909; by 1930, coll. E.g. C. E. Beechofer Roberts, in *The Passing Show*, June 16, 1934, 'Bassett occasionally put in a booming bromide'. Ex *bromide*, a dose of bromide of potassium taken as a sedative (O.E.D., Sup.).

*bromide*. Of the nature of a 'bromide' (q.v.): U.S. (1906) anglicised ca. 1910; now coll. (Ibid.)

*Brompton Boilers. See *Boilers*.

*Bronch(h)o. The inevitable nickname of Jon sur-named Rider (Rydber): military: C 20. Cf. *Buck* q.v., and:


*broody*. Very thoughtful and taciturn; sullenly silent, with the implication of hatching a plan; in the Army, lethargic, slack, sleepy: coll.: C 20. F. & Gibbons. Ex fowls inclined to sit, a C 16-20 S.E. sense. (Earlier in dial.)

*brooks*. (A pair of) trousers: South African coll. (—1913). Ex Dutch. (Pettman.)

*Brooks of Sheffield*. This conveys a warning to be careful as to names: middle classes' c.p.: ca. 1850-1910. Ware. Ex *David Copperfield*, where David is thus referred to by Mr. Murdstone.

*broom*. A warrant: C 18-19, coll.; mainly dial. Also, the *pudenda muliebra*: C 19-20, low; whence *broomstick*, the male member. Cf. C 19-20 Scottish beam, a low woman.


*broom-squires*. Mainly Gypsy squatters that, esp. in the New Forest, earn a living by making
brooms out of heath: C. 19-20; after ca. 1900, S.E.

broom up (at the mast-head), she carries the. She's a whore: a seaport c.p. of ca. 1820-90. Bee. Ex that broom which, attached to the mast-head, signified that a ship was sold.

brombean. See brumie.


broomstick, jump (over) the; hop the broom- (stick); marry over the broomstick. The first, C. 18-20; the second and third, C. 19-20: all coll. and ob. Though unmarried, to live as man and wife: in reference to the pretense-marriage ceremony performed by both parties jumping over a stick. The ceremony itself = a broomstick wedding.

Cf. broom, jump the, and Westminster wedding.

broseley. A pipe, esp. in cock a broseley, smoke a pipe. Ca. 1850-80. Broseley, in Shropshire, is— or was—famous for its 'churchwardens'.

brozier, brozier. A boy with no more pocket-


brozier- or brozier-my-dame, v. and n. (To make) a clearance of the housekeeper's larder: Eton College: from ca. 1835.


broth, in lunatic's. Drunk: 1902, The Daily Telegraph, June 20; ob. Cf.:

broth, take one's. To drink (liquor): mid-


broth of a boy, a. A real, an essential boy: coll.; Byron in Don Juan, 1822. Orig. and mainly Anglo-Irish. Ex the effervescence of broth; or perhaps rather 'the essence of manhood, as broth is the essence of joy and meat': P. W. Joyce, Synonymes, 1936.

brother blade. A fellow-soldier; one of the same trade or profession (cf. brother chip): coll.: C. 19-

20, ob.—2. In mid-C. 17-18, brother of the blade, a swordman, hence a soldier. Coll. B.E., Grose, Ainsworth.


brother chip. A fellow-carpenter: C. 18. In

c. 18-20, one of the same calling or trade: as in Clare's Poems of Rural Life, 1820. Mainly pro-

vincial. Coll.

brother of the angle. A fellow-angler; an angler:

from ca. 1650; ob. Coll. > E.S. Walton.

brother of the blade. See brother blade, 2.

brother of the brush. An artist: coll.: late


brother of the bung. A brewer; a fellow-


brother of the gusset. A pimp, a procurer, a


brother of the string. A fiddler; a musician:

coll., late C. 17-20, ob. B.E.

brother of the whip. A coachman: coll., mid-


brother-where-art-thou. A drunk man: late

C. 19-20. Manchon, '... Que cherche toujours son camarade en lui demandant où ça-tu ?'


Broughton's mark. See mark, n., 7.

brown. A halfpenny; a 'copper': from ca.


brown, v. To do perfectly; hence, to worst:

from ca. 1870, †. Abr. do brown.—2. Understand: from ca. 1830; ob.—3. To fire indiscriminately at: 1873: coll. >, by 1910, S.E. Ex brown, into the; see sense 2. (O.E.J. Sup.)


brown, do. To do thoroughly; hence, to worst; to cheat. From ca. 1830; gen. as done brown, completely swindled. Barham, 'We are all of us done so uncommonly brown.' There is an anticipation in 'Ha! brown done me!' in the anon. John Bon, ca. 1600. In U.S., do up brown: see Thornton.—2. do it brown, to prolong a frolic or a spree, to exceed sensible bounds: from ca. 1850; ob.

brown, into the. (Shooting) at the brown stripe on the side of an antelope; the brown is also applied to a moving herd of springbok. South African coll.: 1898, G. Nicholson, Fifty Years in South Africa. (Pettman.) Ex.—2. fire into the brown, i.e. 'into the midst of a covey instead of singing out a bird': coll. (1871) >, by 1910, S.E.—3. Hence, fig. ca. 1885: coll. >, by 1910, S.E. (Likewise O.E.D. Sup.)

*brown, roast. See roast brown.

brown Bass. A harlot: C. 17, coll.—2. The old

regulation flint-lock musket: coll., C. 18-19. Recorded first in Grose, 1st ed., but prob. used much earlier; brown musquet occurs in 1706. Ex the brown stock, the frequent browning of the barrel, and the soldier's devotion to the weapon: cf. the G.W. soldier's best friend, a rifle, and the Ger. Braun, the soldier's bride.—3. In rhyming s.: yes (—1859); ob. H., 1st ed.

brown Bass, bug. To serve as a private soldier:


brown George. A loaf of coarse brown bread
prob. munition-bread; late C. 17—early 19: orig. naval and military s., then gen. coll. Randle Holme; Grose.—2. Also, a hard, coarse biscuit: late C. 18–19; coll. Smyth.—3. Hence, ca. 1780–1850, a brown wig; coll. in C. 19.—4. Hence also, an earthenware jug, orig. and gen. brown: from ca. 1860; soon coll. and, in C. 20, S.E. Hughes, *Tom Brown at Oxford*. (The O.E.D. gives all four senses as late S.E., but the very name almost proves a s. or coll. birth.)
brown Joe. Rhyming s. for 'no'! (Cf. brown BooE, yes!) From ca. 1855; ob. II., 1st ed.
brown madam. (Variant Miss Brown.) The monosyllable: late C. 18–early 19; low. Grose, 2nd ed.
brown off. To become tired of: Royal Air Force: from ca. 1920; slightly ob. Perhaps = S.E. get rusty.

*brown-paper men. Low gamblers: o. of ca. 1860–1900. II., 1st ed. They play for pence or 'browns'.
brown-paper warrant. A warrant for boatswains, carpenters, etc., granted and cancellable by the captain: naval: C. 19. Bowen. Ex colour thereof and in allusion to the uses to which brown paper is put.
brown saliva. A term indicative of surprise coupled with understanding: ca. 1850–70. H., 1st ed.
brown talk. Very 'proper' conversation: coll., from ca. 1700; ob. Cf. *brown study*, C. 16–20, serious thoughts, in C. 20 an idle reverse.—B.E., by the way, considered it as either s. or coll. for 'a deep Thought or Speculation'. Contrast blue, immoral.
brown to, v.t. To understand, to 'twig': low (—1900); ob. Ware, *Prob. from a keen man of this way': H.; II., 2nd ed., records it as American.

Brown Un, The. *The Sporting Times*: sporting: ca. 1870, when its colour was brown. See *Pink Un*.
browned-off. Depressed; disgusted; having given up hope: Royal Air Force: from ca. 1920; slightly ob. Ex *brown off*, q.v.
browse. To idle; take things easily: Marlborough and Royal Military Academy, C. 19–20; ob. Whence:

Brow hounds. Irish Free State special tax.
BRUMMAGEM

horses ran more or less, finally quite, wild. (The Brumby family now lives in Tasmania.)

**BRUMMAGEM.** Birmingham: from ca. 1860; except as dial., low coll.—2. Base money: in late C. 17—early 18, counterfeit groats; C. 18—20, any counterfeit money, esp. of copper, as in Martin’s Dict., 1754, and in Southey’s fascinating farrago—“omnibus,” The Doctor. Ex the local spelling, which—and still often is—phonetic of the local pronunciation. **BRUMMAGEM** — Bromwicham (after Bromwich) a corruption of Birmingham, the old form of **Birmingham.** (W.) Faked antiques, etc., are still made at Birmingham.—3. Hence, a spur: from ca. 1830; ob.

BRUMMAGEM adj. Counterfeit; cheap and pretentious; coll.: 1637, *Bromedgham blades* — inferior swords. Ca. 1890, B.E., *Bromingham-conscience, very bad [one],* Bromingham—protestants, Deserters or Whiggs [see the O.E.D.], Bromingham—wits, Balderdash, *Sophisticate Taplash.* The C. 20 connotation is that of shoddiness or of showy inferiority: as such, it is coll. See the n.

BRUMMAGEM buttons. Counterfeit coin, esp. of copper (—1836); ob. Cf. Brummagem.


BRUMMAGEM Johnson. Dr. Samuel Parr (1747—1820). Dawson, *He imitated the manner of Dr. Johnson.* Perhaps rather a sobriquet than a nick-name.

BRUMMAGEM. Counterfeit; doubtful; inferior; coll.: from ca. 1800; slightly ob. Cf. brum.


bruch, v. To depart hastily; run away. Late C. 17—20, ob. In C. 17, c. or low; in C. 18, s. then coll. Post-1800, coll. and then S.E. ‘Sergeant Matcham had bruch’d with the dibs’, Barham. Also bruch along or off: C. 19 (Bee).—2. To flog: Chaucer’s *House of Bread,* C. 19—20.

bruch, at s or at the first. At first; immediately; coll.: C. 18—18.

bruch, brother of the. See brother of the bruch.

*bruch, buy a.* To run away: o. of ca. 1670—1830. Also, C. 19—20 (s., not o.c), *show one’s brush* (Manchon). Cf. brushe, n. and v.


bruch can. For his colour: mil. bruch (of dust one’s jacket): coll.: ca. 1860—1820. Bunyan.

bruch up. To revive one’s knowledge of; coll.: C. 20? By 1833, thanks to the Bruch Up Your (e.g.) French series of books, S.E.

brush up a flat. To flatter, ‘soft-soap a person’; C. 19—20, low.

brush with, have a. To fight with a man, lie with a woman: mid-C. 18—20, ob. Grose, 1st ed.


brusher, give! To depart with debts unpaid; e.g. ‘He gave them brusher’: Australian-bush a. (—1898). Ex brusher, a small and lively wallaby. Morris.

BRUSSEL sprouts. Brussels sprouts: sol. contemporaneous with the correct term.

*Brussels.* A variant (ca. 1920) of, and ex. carpet, n. (i.e. Brussels carpet.)


brunner. See -nuver. A little-known Army song (1914—19, and after) runs: ‘Why should we be pore? My brunner ‘awks is brahn; Why should we be pore? My sister walks the tahn. Farver’s a bit of a tea-leaf, [Muver’s] a West-End ‘ore, [An] I’m a bit of a ponce meself—Why should we be pore? ’ which is reminiscent of Villon.

bry or Bry. Abbr. *Brian o’ Lynns,* q.v.: 1868, says Ware.

Bryant and Mays. Stays: rhyming a.: C. 20. B. & P. Cf.:

BRYANT & MAY’S chuckaway. (Gen. pl.) A girl working in that firm’s match-factory: East London: 1876; ob. by 1910, ↑ by 1920. A chuckaway is a lucifer match; such match-making used to be unhealthy.

Brydport. See Bridport dagger.—Bryan o’ Lynn. See *Brian o’ Lynn.*

B’s. Members of the Patriotic Brotherhood, or Irish Invincibles: Fenian: 1883; ↑ by 1920. Ware.

*bub.* Strong drink, esp. malt liquor: from ca. 1670; ob. C. until ca. 1820, then low. Head. Often as bub and grub, food and (strong) drink. Either echoic or ex I. *bink, to drink; Dr. Wm. Matthews says: abbr. of bubble. —2. A brother, rare, C. 18; C. 19—20, (mostly U.S.) a little boy. Perhaps ex *Ger. bube,* boy (w.).—3. A woman’s breast, C. 19—20; rare in singular and not very frequent in this abbr. form: see bubby.—4. ‘One that is cheated; an easy, soft Fellow’, B.E.: late C. 17—19; c. until ca. 1810. Abbr. bubble, q.v. bab, v. To drink: C. 18—19; c. until ca. 1820, then low. Prob. ex *bub,* n., 1.—2. To bribe; cheat: C. 18—early 19; rare; low, as in D’Urfey, 1719, ‘Another makes racing a Trade . . . And many a Crimp match has made, By bubbing another Man’s Groom.’ Ex bubble, v. Cf. bub, n., 4.

bub, humming. Strong beer or ale: ca. 1820—90. Bub. See bub, n., 1.


*bubbery.* Sense 3, colour; ‘a wordy noise in the street’: — (—1823); ↑ by 1900. Bub. A corruption of *bobby,* q.v.

**BUBBLE**

**bubble.** A dupe; a gullible person: ca. 1638–1840. Sedley, Shadwell, Swift (‘We are thus become the dupe of the bubbles and balles of Europe’), Fielding, George Barrington (who left England ‘for his country’s good’). Coll., >, ca. 1800, S.E. Cf. and presumably ex:

*bubble, v.* To cheat, swindle; delude, humbug; overreach: coll., but S.E. after ca. 1800: 1664, Etheredge; Dryden; Fielding. ‘He... actually bubblebabbled several of their money’; Sheridan; McCarthy the historian, 1880, ‘the French Emperor had bubbled [Godden]’. Also bubble (a person) of, out of, or into: 1675, Wycherley. Perhaps ex bubble, ‘to cover or spread with bubbles’ (O.E.D.); more prob. via ‘delude with bubbles’ or unrealities, as W. proposes.

**bubble, bar the.** ‘To except against the general rule, that he who lays the odds must always be adjudged the loser; this is restricted to bets laid for liquor’, Grose, 2nd ed.: drinking: late C. 18—early 19. Funning bubble, a deception, + bub (or bubble) + drinking term.

**bubble and squeak.** Cold meat fried with potatoes and greens, or with cabbage alone. Coll. From ca. 1770: Grose, 1st ed., being the first to record it in a dictionary; it occurs, however, in Bridges’s *Homier*, 1772. After ca. 1830, S.E.; Lytton has it in *My Novel*. Ex the sound emitted by this dish when cooked. Cf. bubbling, q.v.

**Bubbe and Squeak.** Sir Walter Wynne, 5th baronet (b. 1705), Dawson. 2. Thos. Sheridan, scholar. Ibid.


**bubbling or boy.** A lady’s tweecer case: ca. 1704–60: s. > coll. Pope. (= beau-befooler). O.E.D.

**bubbe buff.** A balliff: C. 17. Rowlands.

**bubble company.** A dishonest firm: coll. passing to S.E., ca. 19–20. Adumbrated in C. 18: see Martin’s Dict., 2nd cd., 1754. ‘...a name given to certain projects for raising money on imaginary grounds’: the South Sea Bubble was semantically responsible.

**bubbleable.** Gullible: temp. Restoration. Rare: coll.

**bubbed, p.p. adj.** Gulled, befuddled, deluded. Coll., late C. 17–20; ob. Defoe: Who shall this bubled nation disabuse, While they, their own felicities refuse?


**bubbling, adj.** Cheating: ca. 1675–1750. Wycherley. (The n. is late—1730—and S.E.)


**bubbly, the.** A turkey cook. Orig. (—1785) Scotch; but well acclimatised in England by 1840; Thackeray and Besant & Rice use it. Grose, 1st ed. Either it is ex the turkey’s ‘bubbly’ cry or it is an early rhyming synonym (see Slapg., p. 274).—2. Hence, a stupid boaster: C. 19.—3. Hence, a conceited, pragmatical fellow; a prig; a cad: from ca. 1860; ob. G. A. Sala, 1883.

**Bubly Jocks, the.** Some Scottish regiment that

**F. & H. (revised) does not name:** military: late C. 19—early 20. F. & Gibbons, however, defines it as the Scots Greys and derives it from bubbly Jock, 1, ex the colour.

**bubbly water.** See bubbly.

**bubby.** A woman’s breast. Rare in singular.

**bubly Jocks, the.** Some Scottish regiment that

**F. & H. (revised) does not name:** military: late C. 19—early 20. F. & Gibbons, however, defines it as the Scots Greys and derives it from bubbly Jock, 1, ex the colour.

**BUCK, GO TO**


**buck, v.** To falsify—an account or balance-sheet: commercial, from ca. 1870; ob. Cf. cook, sense 4.—2. (Also buk, bukh; Manchurian) (bak.) To chatter; talk with egotistical super-abundance: Anglo-Indian coll.: 1830. Ex Hindustani bakh. Yule & Burnell. (Cf. buck, n. 11.) Whence buck-stick, a chatterer (—1888).—3. Also, v.l., to object, be reluctant (v.t. with at): coll., from ca. 1890; mainly Australia and New Zealand.—4. In C. 20 c., to fight against, withstand. Perhaps ex S.E. buck off.


**buck, go to.** A low coll. of C. 18, as in *A New Cantina Dict.*, 1725, ‘She wants to go buck.’...
of a woman, a term of address: from ca. 1830; ob. by 1910 but not yet quite †. Cf. old horse.

buck, run a. To poll an invalid vote: late C. 18—early 19; origin. and mainly Anglo-Irish. Grose, 2nd ed. Cf. buck, n., 9; perhaps, however, a pun on run amuck.

buck a (blessed) hurricane or a town down. Resp. — 1870, 1881, both ob.: Australian coll.: "a horse" to buck furiously. A. C. Grant: Bush Life in Queensland, 1841, at I, 131, for both.


*buck bail. 'Bail given by a sharper for one of the gang', Grose, 2nd ed.: late C. 18—early 19; c. and low. In F. & H., misprinted b.-bait.


buck down. To be sorry; unhappy. Winchester College, from ca. 1860; ob. Cf. bucked.

buck face, buck's face. A cuckold: late C. 17—early 10. B.E.


buck fitch. An old lecher or roué: late C. 17—early 19. B.E., Grose. Fitch = fitchew = polecat. [buck, jump, in its various senses and forms, is S.E. There is a tendency to regard it as coll. or even a., perhaps because of its Australian or, less prob., American origin. See Morris.]

buck of the first head. See buck, n., 2.

buck one's stumps. To get a move on (lit., stir one's legs): Conway Training Ship (− 1891). Masefield.


*buck the horse. To make trouble in prison by resisting searches, etc.: C. 20 c.

buck the tiger. To gamble heavily: U.S. (ca. 1802), anglicised before 1909; ob. Ware.

buck tooth. A large tooth that projects from: ca. 1750; in C. 18—19, S.E.; in C. 20, coll.

buck up. Orig. (− 1854), v.i. and t., to dress up. Ex buck, a dandy. Then, 2; ca. 1860, to make haste, or—esp. in the imperative—to become energetic, cheerful. Also, 3, from ca. 1875, to encourage cheer up, or refresh ("A spot of b. and s. bucked him up no end"); and as v.i., to be encouraged; esp. in buck up! bucked.

bucked. Tired: Uppingham, from ca. 1800; ob. Contrast buck up,—2. Encouraged, elated; cheered, cheerful: from ca. 1905. Cf. buck up, 3.

bucksey. A variant of buckie. (The Tailor and Cutter, Nov. 29, 1928.)


*buckser, v. To deceive, cheat, swindle, ruin: from ca. 1810; until ca. 1850, c. or low. Vaux, Scott.—2. To ride (a horse) hard: from ca. 1850: coll. in C. 20.] Often as vbl.n., bucketing (Whyte-Melville, 1856).—3. In rowing: to take the water with a scoop; swing the body; hurry unduly the body's forward swing: from ca. 1860; coll. in C. 20 rather j. than coll. (Besant & Rice, 1876.)

buckle. A glass of spirits: low Ayrshire: 1870, John Kele Hunter, Life Studies of Character, 'A rest for two-three minutes, and a bucket the piece would be acceptable.' In the E.D.D. (Sup.), it is classified as c., but I doubt this.

buck, give the. (With indirect object.) To dismiss from one's employment: coll. (− 1863). Cf. (give the) sack.

buck, kick the. To die: late C. 18—20. Grose, 1785; Wolcot, 'Pitt has kicked the bucket', 1796. Prob. ex the beam or yoke from which, as in Norfolk, pigs are hung; bucket in this sense is C. 16—20 S.E.


buck, afloat. A coat: rhyming s. (− 1874); † H., 5th ed. Often contracted to bucket, now i. The term current in C. 20 is I'm afloat, q.v. Soldiers use bucket and float (B. & P.).


buck shop. An unauthorised office for the sale of stocks: orig. (− 1881), U.S., anglicised ca. 1887; Ware prob. erra when he dates its English use as early as 1870. In C. 19, coll.; C. 20, S.E. Ex bucket, 'the vessel in which water is drawn out of a well' (Johnson) or ex bucket, to swindle, or ex the bucket into which falls the recording-tape or 'ticker'.

*bucketing concern. The vbl.n. of bucket, v., 1, q.v.: c. of ca. 1810; 80. Vaux.


buckhorse. A blow, or a smart box, on the ear: coll.; from ca. 1850, ex Buckhorse, actually John Smith, a celebrated pugilist, who, for a small sum, allow one to strike him severely on the side of the head. Often as vbl.n., buckhorsing: see Blackwood's Magazine, 1864, vol. II, the Public Schools' Report—Westminster.

buckie. A refractory person: coll., when not, as gen., Scottish: C. 18—19; ob., except among tailors, who, in late C. 19—20, use it also of a bad tailor or of a shoemaker.


Buckinger's boot. The monosyllable: ca. 1740—95. Ex Matthew Buckinger, a dast limbless fellow married to a 'tall handsome woman', Grose, 3rd ed. buckish. Foppish, dandylish: from ca. 1780. Until ca. 1870, S.E.; then coll.; ob. Mme D'Arblay's Diary, at 1782; Wolcot; George Parker; Combe; George Eliot.—2. (Of persons) in good spirits, in excellent fettle: from ca. 1912. Ex buckish, (of horses) inclined to buck. O.E.D. (Sup.).


buckle, v. To be married: late C. 17—19, extant as vbl.n., buckling. Marry, v.t.: C. 18—20. Both are coll.; the former in Dryden, 'Is this an age to buckle with a bride? ', the latter in, e.g.


buckle down. To settle down: mid-C. 19–20; coll.


buckle down. To settle down: mid-C. 19–20; coll.


buckle-hole (of one's belt), be reduced or starved to the last. To be near death by starvation: Cockney (d. 1877). Bauermann.

buckle my shoe. See buckle, n., 2.

buckle of the girdle (or C. 19, belt), turn the. To prepare to fight: coll. (Cromwell, 1656, 'an homely expression'); late C. 10–19; extant in dial. Ex the turning of the buckle to the back, so that the belly be not injured thereby.

buckle to, v.i. Set to with a will, apply oneself energetically (1712). Coll. A development from buckle, v.i., to grapple, as in Butler, 'He with the foe began to buckle', 1663. – 2. V.t., understand: C. 19.


*Buckley's (chance). A forlorn hope: Australian: from ca. 1875. G. J. Dennis. 'Buckley was a declared outlaw whose chance of escape was made hopeless', Jice Doone. (There have been many other explanations.)

bucko. (Pl. -eas.) A swashbuckling, domineering, or blustering man; occ. as term of address; swagger or bluster: nautical (– 1900). Ex buck, n., 2. + o. O.E.D. (Sup.); – 2. Hence, corresponding adj.: nautical (– 1924). Ibid.

buckra. A white man: orig. (1794) in negro talk; then, since ca. 1860, among those Britons who live in the wilder parts of the British Empire. Coll. ex Calahar backra, master. (W.)


buck's face. See buck face.—buckshee. See bakshaesh.(ah).

buckshot rule. A political coll. for the upholding of government only, or chiefly, by a constabulary armed with rifles. Orig. applied to the Ireland of 1881. Buck(-)shot is large shot.

buckskin. An American soldier during the Revolutionary war; also, ca. 1820–60, a native American. Ex U.S. sense (1755 –): a Virginian.

bucksome. Happy; in good spirits: a C. 19 survival, at Winchester College, of C. 17–18 'buck-som, wanton, merry', B.E. Bucksome is from buck (up), q.v., and influenced by husom, of which, needlessly, E.'s buckum is merely a variant spelling and nowise related to buck.

buff


buff, v. To strip oneself, often as buff it. From ca. 1850; ob. Mayhew. Ex buff, n.; i., perhaps imm. ex buffing the dog.—2. To maintain a statement; swear to a person’s identity (buff to); inform on. If absolutely buff it: ‘Do you buff it?’ From ca. 1880. Vaux. (Cf. U.S. sense: Thornton.) Perhaps ex to buff or to buff.—3. To polish with a buff: coll. in metal trades from ca. 1880. O.E.D.—4. See buffing the dog.


buff, stand. To bear the brunt; endure without flinching. V.t. with to or against. Coll. from temp. Restoration; ob. by 1850, † by 1800. Cf. buff, n., and S.E. be a buffer, buffer state. Butler, in Hudibras’s Epil. ca. 1860: ‘And for the good old cause stood buff ’Gainst many a bitter kick and cuff.’ Fielding; Dyche’s Dict.; Scott.

buff and blue, or blue and buff. The Whig party: ca. 1690–1830: political coll. Ex its former colours.

buff-ball. C. 19–20; ob.; c. and low. Greenwood, In Strange Company, 1880: ‘The most favourite entertainment at this place is called buff-ball, in which both sexes—innocent of clothing—madly join.’ Cf. bullum runcum and buttock-ball.


Buff Howards, the. The 3rd Foot—from 1881 the East Kent—Regiment: military s. (ca. 1740) >, by 1800, coll. F. & Gibbons. Ex its colonel of 1738–49 (Thomas Howard) and the colour of its facings. Contrast Green Howards.


buff nor buff, say neither. To say nothing at all; coll.: late C. 15–17. A C. 16–19 variant is not to say buff to a wolf’s shadow. Here, buff, like buff, is prob. echoic. (O.E.D.)


*buff to the stuff. To claim stolen property: late C. 19–20 c. Ware. See buff, v., 2.


buffalo boy. A negro comic: music-halls (—1900); ob. by 1920, † by 1930. Ware.

*buffer. A dog: in mid-C. 16–early 19 c.; after ca. 1830, low; ob. The C. 16–17, occ. the C. 18, spellings are buf (q.v.), buffs, buffs. Lover, in Handy Andy, 1840: ‘It is not every day we get a buffer ... I’ll send for my buffer ...” spanning sport.”—2. In late C. 17–18 c., ‘a Rogue that makes horse play for their Skins.’ B.E.—3. A man, in C. 19 often, in C. 20 gen., as old buffer. Recorded in 1749; Barham; Anstey, ‘an old yellow buffer.’ Perhaps ex buff, the bare skin, but cf. dial. sense, a foolish fellow.—4. One who, for money, takes a false oath: C. 19. Cf. to buff, 2nd


*buffer’s nab. A false seal, shaped like a dog’s head (nab = nob), to a false pass. Late C. 17–18 c. B.E. Cf. buffe’s nob.

buffing the dog. The practice of killing such stolen dogs as are not advertised for, stripping them of their skins (cf. buff, n., 1 and v., 1), which sell, and giving the flesh to other dogs: c. (1781) ; app. † by 1860 or so. G. Parker, 1781. Prob. ex buff, n., 1.

buffe. A fellow: mid-C. 16–18; coll. † by 1720, S.E. Ex Fr. buffe, a buffalo, and abbr.: buffe-head. A fellow; an ignorant fellow: mid-C. 17–18; coll. till ca. 1700, then S.E. Whence: buffe-headed. Foolish; stupid: late C. 17–19; coll. until ca. 1750, then S.E.

*Buft. The Third Regiment of Foot (now. and since 1811, the East Kent Regiment). Also the old Bufts (—1806), the young Bufts being the 31st Regiment, raised in 1702. From ca. 1740, ex its 1737–49 colonel, it was called the Buff Howards, a name that, in C. 19, yielded to the old name, the Bufts. The regimental facings were buff-coloured. See Tinsley’s Magazine, April, 1888. N.B., the Ross-shire Bufts = the old 78th Regiment (now, and from 1861, the 2nd Battalion of Seaforth Highlanders).

buffy. Drunk: from ca. 1869; ob. H., 1st ed.; Yates, 1866, ‘Flextor was fine and Buffy when he came home last night.’ Perhaps a corruption of budgy, q.v., or ox beyvy, q.v.

*buff. Either a decoy (buff) or a bully: late C. 16 c. Greene.


bug, v. To exchange ‘some of the dearest materials of which a hat is made for others of less value’, Grose, 1st ed.: late C. 18–early 19: hatters.”—2. To bribe: late C. 17–19 c.; of bug the wrath, q.v. Whence vbl.n., bugging, the police’s taking of bribes not to arrest: late C. 17–19 c. B.E.—3. Also, to give; hand over (bug over): c. (—1812); †, Vaux.—4. To obtain shadily from: c. or low: C. 20. John G. Brandon, Th’ Big City, 1931, ‘Supposin’ one of them [harlots] bugs a bloke for a few Brass in a taxi ... ’ Semantion: sting as an insect does.

bug-blinding. A bout of whitewashing: military, from ca. 1870; ob.

bug-hutch. 'A small hut or sleeping place'; military: 1915; ob. F. & Gibbons. Cf. booby-hutch.

bug in a rug, snug as a. See snug as . . .


bug the writ. (Of bailiffs) to refrain from, or postpone, serving a writ, money having passed: c.: late C. 18–early 19. Grose, 1st ed. 

build. (Of clothes) make, cut, tailoring: coll.: from ca. 1840. 'Cuthbert Bede', Verdant Green, 1853; Punch, Jan. 10, 1880, in the delightful contribution on The Spread of Education. Cf. build up, q.v.


*build up. 'To array in good clothes, for trade purposes': c.: late C. 19–20. Ware. Cf. build, q.v.

built by the mile . . . See cotton-box.

built that way. (Gen. in negative.) Like, such a person as, that; of such a nature or character. Orig. (—1890), U.S.; anglicised ca. 1900 as a coll.

bulk. See buck, n., 11, and v., 2.—bulk. See buck, v., 2.

bulka, adv. To-morrow: mostly New Zealanders: in G.W.; and diminishingly afterwards. Ex Arabic for 'to-morrow'.

bulchin. Lit. a bull-call. A term of contempt or endearment to boy, youth, or man: coll., ca. 1615–1830.—2. B. E. has it for a chubby boy or lad: coll., C. 17–18. Also as bulkin (late C. 16–17) and, in Grose, bulkchin.


bulge (on a person), get the. To obtain an advantage: U.S. (1860), partly anglicised ca. 1890; ob. Ware; Manchon; O.E.D. (Sup.). Whence: bulge on, have (got) the. To have the advantage of: 1909, P. G. Wodehouse, Tales of St. Austin's, 1903.

bulker, n. and adj. (Anything) large. Coll. (—1859); ob. H., 1st ed.


bull. An Old Shanty has: 'Clear the track, let the bulgine run.' Bowen.

*bulk, a thief's assistant, late C. 17–mid-19, is certainly c. as in bulk and file (pickpocket and his jostling accomplice): Coles, 1876.—2. bulker, the name and of some period in prob. c.: but bulker, a low harlot, if c. in late C. 17, > low s. in mid-C. 18. Lit., one who sleeps on a bulk or heap.

bulker. See preceding entry. B.E.—bulkin. See bulchin.


bull at a (five-barred) gate, like a. Curiously; impetuously; clumsily: coll.: late C. 19-20, coll.

bull-bait. To bully; hector. Dickens in Great Expectations, 1860. ? a nonce-word.


bull-beef, big as. Stout and hearty; very big; big and grim: coll.: late C. 17-18; thereafter, dial. W. Robertson, 1881; Motteux, 1712. Apperson.


bull-beef, like. Big and grim; esp. with bluster and look: C. 17-19; coll. B.E. Wolcot. See bull-beef, big as.

bull-beef, self yourself for. Often preceded by go and. A C. 19 coll.: run away; don't be silly! H., 3rd ed.


bull by the tail, trust one as far as one could fling a. I.e. not at all: coll.: 1853, Readie; ob.


bull chin. See bulbchin.


bull-dose or -doze. A severe flinging, as is bull-dozing, which also = violent, esp. if political, coercion. Orig. (—1876) U.S., anglicised ca. 1881 as a coll. Ex.

bull-doze, v. To fog severely; hence coerce by violent methods, esp. in politics. Orig. U.S., anglicised ca. 1880 as a coll. Hence bull-dozer, an applier of violent coercion. Lit., to give a dose strong enough for a bull; W., however, thinks there may be some connexion with † Dutch doose, to strike violently and resolutely.

bull(-)finch. A fool; a stupid fellow: coll., C. 17-18. In hunting, a high quickest hedge that, with a ditch on one side, is too—or almost too—difficult for a horse to jump. From ca. 1830; by 1890, S.E., G. Lawrence in Guy Livingstone, 'an ugly black bull-finch'. Perhaps a perversion of bull-fence. Whence: bull-finch, v. To leap a horse through such a hedge: from ca. 1840; coll.—2. Hence bull-fencer, a horseman that does, or is fond of doing, this; coll., from ca. 1850. Also, such a hedge; coll. (1862).

bull-finch. Beastfulness; swagger: coll.: 1820; † by 1890. F. & H.


bull in trouble. A bull in the pound: † (—1823); † by 1890. Edgar's Ghost.

bull-jine. A locomotive; nautical: from ca. 1850; ob. Perhaps ex U.S. Running engine: hengine, hen-gine or -jine. Also bulging, q.v.

bull money. 'Money extorted from or given by those who in places of public resort have been detected in flagrant delicto with a woman, as a bribe to silence', F. & H.; low coll., from ca. 1870; ob.

bull-nurse. A male attendant on the sick: nautical: ca. 1840-1900. The Graphic, April 4, 1885, 'Years ago (it may be so still) it was the sailors' phrase...'

bull-point. An advantage: a (point of) superiority; coll.: C. 20. O.E.D. (Sup.). Why?


bull-ring. A training-ground, at a base, notorious for severity of the drill and surly insensibility of the instructors: military: from 1915. B. & P.; 'From Spanish bull-fights... The most notorious was at Etaples.'

bull-shit. Nonsense; empty talk; humbug: (ging): mostly Australian, C. 20; 1 ex U.S. Often abbr. to *bullish or *bull (mostly Australian and New Zealand) and bull (naval: C. 20. Bowen).

bull the (or a) barrel or cask. To pour water into an empty rum cask and, after a sensible interval, to drink the intoxicating resultant: nautical: (— 1834); ob. If the officers, to keep the wood moist, used salt water, even the ensuing salt-water bull was sometimes drunk. One speaks also of bulling a teapot; cf. bull, n., 6.


bullet, get and give the. To be dismissed and to dismince, resp. Get the b. seems to be the earlier: from ca. 1840 and recorded in Savage's Dict. of Printing, 1841; get the instant bullet is to be discharged on the spot. Shake the bullet at one (from ca. 1850); to threaten with dismissal. Ex the effectiveness of a bullet.

bullet has its bullet, every. See bullet, every bullet has its.


bullet with (e.g. my) name on it, there is (was, etc.)

bulletin, false as a. Inaccurate; false: coll., ca. 1795–1820, when, according to Carlyle, it was a proverbial saying: cf. British Official in the G.W. bullies. See bully, n., 6.

bulléf.; bulléf., {bulléf.}. See bull-finch, v.

bullish. (Stock Exchange) aiming at or tending to a rise in prices: from ca. 1880; coll.; in C. 20, S.E. 'Bullish about cotton', 1884 (S.O.D.). Ex bull, n., 5.


bullock, v. To bully, intimate: coll., from ca. 1715. M. Davies, 1716; Fielding; Foote; Gros. Since ca. 1900, dial. only.—2. See bullock's horn.


bullock's heart. A fart: rhyming s. (— 1890).—2. A single... order to print, of two hundred and fifty copies only, the lowest paying number in the scale of prices... Not a "fat," but a "lean" job, hence the comparison to a bullock's heart, which, unless suffering from "fatty degeneration", is the essence of leanness', Jacob in Barrère & Leland, 1890: printers: from the 1880's.

bullock's horn. To paw: rhyming s. (— 1874); often abbr. to bullock. H., 5th ed.—2. Also = in paw, ca. 1870–1910; occ. abbr. to bullocks, which is extant.

bullocky. A bullock-driver: Australian, from ca. 1888. At first s., then coll. Also, as in Boldwood's Colonial Reformer, 1890, an adj. Cf. bullock, n., 4.


bull's-eye villains. The small open tents used by the Volunteers at their annual gathering: ca. 1870–1914.

bull's-feather, give or get the. To cuckold or be cuckolded: C. 17–early 19; coll. Nares quotes a C. 17 song entitled *The Bull's Feather*, and Richardson uses it in Clarissa Harlowe. Cf. the Fr. se planter des pinces de bouef and the C. 16–early 10 variant wear the bull's feather (as in Grosse, 1st ed.).

bull's foot. See B from a battledore.

bull's noon. Midnight: low: 1839; very ob. and mainly provincial.

bull's-wool. The dry, tenuously fibrous 'inner portion of the covering of the stringy-bark tree', Morris: Australian, esp. Tasmanian (— 1898); coll.—2. Hence, esp. in Tasmania, a youth with a mop of bushy hair: C. 20.

bullion. See bull-shit.

bully. A protector and exploiter of prostitutes: from ca. 1690; coll. until ca. 1760, then S.E. B.E.; Defoe in his *Jure Divino*, 1706, 'Mars the celestial bully they adore, And Venus for an everlasting whore.' Ex the S.E. C. 16–17 sense of sweetheart.—2. Companion, mate: from ca. 1820: nautical (and dial.).—3. In Eton football, a scrimmage (cf. Winchester College hot): recorded in 1865, it has since ca. 1890 ranked as a coll. and it may now be considered S.E.—4. Abbr. bully-beef or corruption of Fr. bouilli: pickled or tinned beef: 1888; coll. in C. 19, S.E. in C. 20. —5. A C. 20 South African juvenile coll. name for the bird more properly known as a yellow seed-eater *serinus sulphuratus*. Pettman.—6. 'The lapep of a King's scholar's gown', Ware: Westminster School: late C. 19–20. Ex its wearer, a good follow.

bully, adj. Eribel-rated, champion: splendid: Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, from ca. 1880, ex U.S. 'The roof fell in, there was a "bully" blaze', Meade's *New Zealand*, 1870. Ex the late C. 17–18 S.E. bully, worthy, admirable, applied only to persons.
BULLY

bully about the muzzle. 'Too thick and large in the mouth'; Ware: dog-fanciers': 1833, Miss Brawn.

bully-back. A brothel's bully and checker-out; a bully supporting another person; C. 18–early 19. A. H. Smith, 1726, 'old lecherous bully-backs', and Grose, who describes some of this scoundrel's wiles and duties. Occ. bully-back. Also as v.

bully-beef. (Cf. bully, n., fourth sense.) In the Navy, boiled salt beef; in the Army, tinned beef. Bully may be the earlier form, bully-beef an elaboration after bull-beef. From ca. 1844. Coll. till ca. 1840; then S.E.

bully-beggar. A sol. form of bull-beggar, which may itself be a corruption of bugbear. C. 18–early 19.

bullybul. See bull-a-bull.


bully top. A brainless, silly, talkative fellow, apt to hector: ca. 1860–1800. B.E. describes as c., but I very much doubt it.

bully for you !, capital !, reached England ca. 1870 after having, in 1864–6, enjoyed a phenomenal vogue in the U.S. It has seldom been heard since the G.W.


bully-rag, occ. bully-rag. To intimidate; revile; scold vehemently: from late 1750's, Thomas Warton employing it in his Oxford Newman's Versec, 1780. Coll. (and dial.), as is the derivative vbl.n., bully, occ. bully, ragging, recorded first in 1863 but doubtless used a century earlier. Etymology obscure: perhaps, semantically, to 'make a bully's rag of ' (a person).

bully-rock or -rock. A boon companion: late C. 18–early 18: coll., as in Shakespeare.—2. Ca. 1690–1720, c., then low s. for a hired ruffian or a 'boisterous, hectoring fellow', Martin's Dict., 1764. The rock form is not recorded before 1653 and may be in error for rock. B.E. has -rock, but B.E. contains a few misprints—some of which have been solemnly reproduced by other writers.

bully ruffian. A highwayman that, in attacking, uses many oaths and imprecations: late C. 17–18. B.E. Grose.

bully the troops I, don't. A military c.p. 'rebuke to anyone talking too loudly or too much ': from ca. 1910. F. & Gibbons.


bully up. To hurry, gen. in imperative: Upningsham School: mid-C. 19–20; ob.

burlam, seek or find a knot in a. To look for—or find—difficulties where there are none: late C. 16–18; coll. till ca. 1700, then S.E.

bush. See bull-shit.

bust. The posteriors: dating from M.E.; not abbr. bottom, which, in this sense, dates only from C. 18; prob. echoic: cf. It. bust, the sound of an explosion. Shakespeare, Jonson, Swift. This good English word began to lose caste ca. 1790, and ca. 1840 it > a vulg. and has been excused.—2. Abbr. bust-bailiff: ca. 1860–1850 (but extant in Anglo-Irish for a sheriff's assistant); coll. Butler, 1863, 'Sergeant Bums'; Ned Ward, in The London Spy, 'The Vermian of the Law, the Bum.'—3. A child's, and a childish word, for a drink, drink! : coll., C. 16–17.—4. A birching: public schools', C. 19; cf. the C. 17–18 v., to strike, thump.—5. A beggar; a cadger: C. 20; ex U.S. See hobo; cf. v., 3.—6. See bum ball.


bum, adj. Inferior, bad; reprehensible; dishonest: from ca. 1917: s., >, by 1930, coll.; orig. (1890's), U.S. Ex bum, n., 5. bum. A coll. contraction of by my: ca. 1570–90. Edwards, 1771, 'Bum broth, but few such roisters come to my years.' O.E.D.


bum, toe—occ. hoof—one's. To kick one's behind; 'check out'. Low coll.: from ca. 1870.


bum-bailiff or buly. 'A bailiff of the meanest kind', Johnson. Recorded in 1601 (Shakespeare), it was coll. in C. 17, S.E. in C. 18–19; in C. 20, archaic. Blackstone considered it a corruption of bound bailiff, but prob. the term comes ex the constant and touching proximity of bailiff to victim.

bum ball (1870); less gen. bum (1867). A cricketers' catechism for a bumpy-ball. Lewia.


bum-boat. A scavenger's boat: C. 17–early 18: coll.—2. A boat carrying provisions or merchandise to ships lying in port or at some distance from the shore: s. (—1789) > coll. s., >, by 1830, S.E. bum buster. A desperate drinker: theatrical (—1909); ob. Ware.


bum clink. Inferior beer: Midland Counties s., from ca. 1830; ob. (Clink, a ringing sound.) Cf. clink.

Bum Court. The Ecclesiastical Court; a low nicknamed: ca. 1540–90. O.E.D. Perhaps ex the members' long sessions on their backsides (see bum, n., 1.)

BUMP-CURTAIN. (Cambridge University) a very short gown: 1835; †. Esp., until 1835, the Caius College gown. After that date, esp. the St. John's gown. See Charles Whibley's delightful Three Centuries of Cambridge Wit, 1889.

bum-feas(u)e, feas(e), feas(g) To thrash, esp. on the posterior: jocular coll.: late C. 16—early 17.

bum-fiddle. The posterioris: late C. 17—early 19, low. Cotton, Grove, Southey. For the pun, cf. *ara musica.* Fletcher, 1620, has 'bum-fiddled with a bastard', i.e. saddled with one: but bum-fiddled, v., is also used to mean use as toilet paper: and dates from ca. 1550. The derivative bum-fiddler, f. a fornicator, is C. 17 and rare. O.E.D.


bum-fodder. Trashy literature: from ca. 1720; S.E. till ca. 1800, then coll.; † by 1890. The Next's Magazine, April, 1733.—2. Toilet paper: from ca. 1835, coll., by B.E. and Grove. Often, in C. 18—20, abbr. to bump, q.v.


bum one's load. To lounge in the canton while one waits for a comrade to come and pay for one's drink: military († 1925). Manchon.


bum-shop. A brothel; the pudendum mutilère: low: mid-C. 19—20; ob.

bum-suck; often bumsuck. V.i., to toady; coll.: late C. 19—20. Ernest Raymond, The Jesting Army, 1930.


bum the chat. See bomb the chat and bump, v.4.


bum up. To compliment a person; military: from ca. 1820.

bumble; bumbler. A blunderer; an idler; resp. late C. 18—mid-19, mid-C. 19—20.—2. (Only bumble.) Hence, a headle: first in Dickens's Oliver Twist, as a person's name, and then, 1856, any headle; coll., soon S.E., as was bumbledom, stupid and pompous officiousness, 1856+)

bumble. To fornicate: Restoration period. E.g. in Dryden's The Kind Keeper. Cf. bum-shop. Bum and buck. The game of crown and anchor: military: 1915; ob. B. & E. (For an excellent and very interesting account of this game, see Stephen Graham, A Private in the Guards, 1919.)

bumble-crow. Corporations, vestries, and other official bodies: from ca. 1860; coll.


bumble-puppy. Family, i.e. inexpert, whistle (− 1854); coll.; ob.—2. Also, ca. 1800—80, a public-house version of the ancient game of troule-in-madame: coll. H.


bumbo; ooc. bombo. The female pudend; mid-

C. 18—19, West Indian; orig. a negroes' word. Grose, 1st ed. — 2. A drink composed of rum, sugar, water, and nicotine (SloMell, 1748: earliest record), or of brandy, water, and sugar. (Grose.) A Northern variation was made with gin. † by 1920; coll. passing to S.E. Cf. It. bumbo, a child's word for a drink (S.O.D.), but prob. ex bump, childish for drink, after rumbo, q.v. (W.) N.B.: in America, it was occ. called mimbo and was there made of rum, hot water, and sugar (see W. E. Woodward, Washington, 1928); the same drink is served to-day as grog americain in certain cafes in Paris.

bumf. A schoolboys' and soldiers' abbr. of bum-fodder, toilet paper: mid-C. 19—20. Hence, from ca. 1870, paper: hence, the Wellington College bump-hunt, a paper-chase. In G.W.+, chiefly among officers: orders, instructions, memoranda, etc., especially if of a routine nature, e.g. "snowed under with bump from the Division", B. & T.


bummaree, v.i. and t. To retail fish on a large scale: mid-C. 19—20, coll. >, by 1900, S.E. Hence, v.t.: bummareeing (it), such retailing: G. A. Sals, 1859. Ex preceding.—2. To run up a score at a newly opened public-house: ca. 1820—80. (E.D.D.)

bummer. A bump-bailiff: ca. 1670—1810.—2. A severe pecuniary loss: racing: ca. 1870—1914.—3. A beggar, a sponger, a loafer: orig. (1850), U.S.; anglicised ca. 1870. † ex Ger. bummier, an idler; a tramp; esp. in ca. 1890, a beggar-tramp. A bombardier; military; C. 20; ob. F. & Gibbons.—5. An officer's batsman; military; from 1916. Ibid.


bumming the chat. A variant of bombing the chat (see bump etc). F. & Gibbons.

bummy. (Cf. bummer.) A corruption of bombing-bailiff, v.q.v.: C. 18—19.

bump. A human faculty: coll.: from ca. 1820. Ex bump, a cranial prominence as in phonology: (1815) likewise coll., though in C. 20 almost S.E.

bump, v. To touch an opposing boat and thus win the race: Oxford and Cambridge. The intransitive is make a bump. From 1820. At first coll., but by 1870 both forms were S.E. The Vbl. n.: bumping (Thackeray, 1840) seems coll. S.E.; cf. bumping race, S.E., †—2. A c. variants (from ca. 1915) of U.S. bump off, to murder (1910: O.E.D. Sup.) Wallace.—3. To meet; to accost aggressively: low Australian (− 1916). C. J. Dennis.—4. To shell (v.i. and t.): military: 1915; ob. F. & Gibbons. Ex the noise and the impact.

bump, feel (a person's). To know what he is thinking: coll. (− 1923). Manchon.

bump off. To kill, destroy, criminally: an Americanism anglicised by 1933. See, e.g. David Eadie's article in The Daily Mirror, Nov. 18 of that year.

bump-supper. A supper to celebrate a college boat's success in Sloggers or Taggers, Mays or Eights: Cambridge, Oxford. From ca. 1860; coll. until C. 20, then S.E. 


bumping. Large: coll. from ca. 1860; somewhat ob. Cf. bumper, 3.

bumping on the bottom. (Of market prices) that have reached their lowest level: Stock Exchange (—1835). Ex boating.

bumpkin, See bumpkin.

bumpology. bumposopher. The 'science' of cranial bumps; one learned therein: jocular coll.: 1834, 1836. O.E.D.


bumpster, -sy. Drunk: coll.: C. 17. Tarleton's Jests, 1611 (Hallwell). 'Apt to bump into people' is a possible suggestion as to origin.

bump's rush, get or give the. To be kicked out, or to kick out: low: C. 20. E.g. in John G. Brandon, The One-Minute Murder, 1934.

bumpious. Self-assertive: coll. from ca. 1800.

Mme. D'Arlay, Dickens. Other senses, S.E. the same applies to bumpitiveness (Hughes, 1857) and bumpitously (M. Collins, 1871). Prob. ex bump, a sudden collision or a dull heavy blow, on some such word as 'punch'.
with a blue handkerchief which married seamen in a Home Port usually take ashore with them when going on leave.'


bundle off. To send away hurriedly: from ca. 1820; from 1880, S.E.

bundle-tail. A short lass either fat or squat; late C. 17–18. B.E.

bundook; occ. bundook or barndook; even, says Manchon, bundoo. A rifle; earlier, a musket; earlier still, cross-bow. Ultimately ex the Arabic banadik, Venice, where cross-bows were made. (Native Egyptians still call Venice Bundoooka.)

The Regular Army stationed in India used the term as early as C. 18, and in the G.W. it > commonly. In the navy, a big gun (C. 20. Bowen). Yule & Barnett; B. & P. Whence:

bundook and spike. A Regular Army term, from ca. 1850, for rifle and bayonets. See the preceding entry.

bungs. A brewe; a landlord of a 'pub', esp. in sporting circles; (nautical) a master's assistant supervising the serving of grog. From ca. 1850; all senses ob. Hence, bung-hall, the annual dance held by the brewers: London trade (— 1860), Ware.—2. In c. of mid-C. 16–early 19, a pursuivant. Harman, Greene, Grosse. Cf. A.-S. and Frisian pung, a pursuivant (O.E.D.)—3. Hence, in c. or low s. of late C. 16–17, e.g. in Shakespeare, a cutpurse. Hence bung-knife, late C. 16, is either a knife for purse-slitting or one kept in a purse.—4. (Also bung-hold.) The anus: low: late C. 18–20. —5. Only in tell a bung, to tell a lie: schoolboys' (— 1887); ob. Baumann. Perhaps the corruption of a noted liar's surname.—6. Cheese; military: C. 20: military. Ex its costiveness. Also bung-hole and bungy. F. & Gibbons.

bung, v. Gen. as bung up, to close up the eyes with a blow: C. 19–20 coll., esp. among boxers. But in C. 16–18 early 18, S.E., and applicable to mouth, ears, etc., and fig.—2. Often as bung over, to pass, hand (over), give; (not before C. 20) to send (a person, e.g. into the Navy; or a thing, e.g. a letter to the post) coll. Shakespeare, Beaumont & Fletcher.—3. To throw forcibly: dial. (— 1825), ca. 1890. E. E. O. J. (Sup.)—4. To deceive with a lie: C. 19. Cf. cram, stuff.


bung. adv. Heavily; *smack; coll.: late C. 19–20. Esp. (go, etc.) bung into. Kipling.—2. Precisely, absolutely; coll.: C. 20. Manchon, 'He's bung in the fairway.' bung, go. To explode, go to smash: from ca. 1890; ob.—2. Hence, mainly in Australia, slightly in New Zealand, to fail, exp. to go bankrupt: from ca. 1880: prob. influenced by go bong or bungy, to die, a 'pigdin' phrase (— 1881) ex East Australian aborigine adj. bong, bung, dead: cf. Humpy-(Bong) lit. the dead houses, a suburb of Brisbane. Morris.

bung-ball. See bung, n. 1.

bung-eyed. Drunk; fuddled; low: mid-C. 19–20; ob. Marrow. Ex Scottish bung, tipsy.—2. Hence, cross-eyed; low: from ca. 1860; slightly ob.


Bung-ho, Peter.' Perhaps on cheer-ho.—2. Also as an upper-class toast: 1928, D. Sayers, The Unpleasantness at the Bellona Club. Perhaps with a reference to the bung of liquored casks.

bung in it, put a. See put a bung in it.—bung-hole. See bung, n. 4 and 6.


bung off. To depart: from ca. 1905. John G. Brandon, 1931, 'He... bung off, respected by everyone.' Cf pop off.


bung-starter. Nautical: (a) the captain of the hold: (b) an apprentice serving in the hold. Both (— 1867) are ob.


bung upwards, adv. On his face; prone: late C. 18–19 (orig. brewers'). Grosse, 2nd ed. Suggested by arcus upwards, q.v., or by bung-hole, the anus.


bungaloid, adj. Infested with bungaloons; esp. in bungalooid growth after fungoid growth. Coll. quickly promoted to S.E.; from ca. 1926.

bungalow, top of the bleeding. See top of the house.


Bungay! go to. Go to hell! C. 19; mostly dial. Bungay is a township in East Suffolk; it has vestiges of a castle built by that aristocratic family, the Bigods.

Bungay fair and broke(a) both his legs, he's been to. He's drunk; he got drunk: C. 19 coll. Cf. preceding entry and breaky leg.

bungary. A tavern: mostly London (— 1900); ob. Ware. Cf. bung, n. 1. Also bungaree, q.v.


bungole. A frequent New Zealand military corruption of bung-hole: in G.W.


bungy. See bung, n. 6, bungas and bungie.


and take you for a walk."—3. At Wellington College: to expel; ca. 1870–1915.4. bunk (it), to slope in a bunk: coll. Orig. and mainly U.S.: anglicised ca. 1886.

**bunk, do a.** To depart hastily: from ca. 1865. Cf. bunk, v., 1.

**bunk, do so.** See also do a bunk.


**bunk in with.** To 'share a bivvy or a bunk-hole' with (another soldier): Canadian military coll. from 1914. B. & P. Ex bunk, v., 4.


**bunkered, be.** To be in a situation difficult of escape: coll.: 1890 (O.E.D. Sup.) Ex golf. Cf. stymied.


**bunko.** (Of persons) shiftly; discrepate: sea-port (esp. Liverpool), from ca. 1905, ex U.S. Cf.: bunko-steerer.

**bunko-steerer.** A swindler, esp. at cards: orig. (— 1879), U.S.; anglicised ca. 1895, but never at all gen. Ex bunko, occ. bunco, a swindling card-game or lottery.

**bunkum or buncombe.** In England from ca. 1850; ex U.S. (— 1827). In C. 19, coll.; in C. 20, S.E. and rarely spelt buncombe. Talk, empty or 'tall'; humbug; claptrap; insinuance eloquence. G. A. Sais, 1869: ... "bunkum" (an Americanism I feel ought to be anglicised to use, as signifying nothingness, insipidness and irremediably fire-perforated windbaggery, and sublimated cucumber sunbeams ...). Ex Buncombe County, North Carolina. See esp. Thornton, O.E.D., S.O.D.

**bunny.** Awkward; badly finished: *Christ's Hospital*, C. 19–20; ob.

**bunick (up).** To settle; dispose of; thrash; *Cockney*: ca. 1880–1914. *Punch*, July 17, 1886. "We've bunicked up Gladsting" (Gladstone); Baumann. Perhaps cognate with *bunker* (bunkered, q.v.).

**bunny.** A rabbit: in C. 17 s, then coll. The S.O.D. records at 1606; B.E. has it.—2. In C. 20, an occ. variant of *rabbit*, a very poor player of any given game.—3. Also, C. 19–20, a nickname, as for H. W. Amuse. England's most classical lawn tennis player since the Dohertys.—4. The female pudend: C. 18–20. D'Urfey, 1719. Diminutive of bun, 3, q.v.

**bunny-grub.** Green vegetables: Cheltenham College: mid-C. 19–20. Cf. gras and:


**bunney, bun.** See bunco.


**bun, v.** Knock; butt; 'to run against or jostle'; Grose, 2nd ed. Except when used of animals, this (— 1788) is coll. and dial. Perhaps ex *but + bounce (or bunch)*, as the O.E.D. suggests.


**bunter.** A low, esp. a low thieving, harlot: from ca. 1700. Ned Ward, 1707, *Punks, Strolers, Market Dames, and Bunters*; Goldsmith, 1765. In this sense until ca. 1900. Perhaps ex *bunt*; i.e. a sifter of men, not of meal.—2. Derivatively, ca. 1730–1900, any low woman. Attributively in Walpole's *Parish Register*, 1769, 'Here Fielding met his bunter Muse.'—3. (Semantically, cf. sense 1.) A gatherer of rags, bones, etc.: from ca. 1746. Dyche's *Dict*, 1748; Mayhew.—4. A woman that, after a brief sojourn, departs from her lodgings without paying: ca. 1830–1900. Mayhew. Too early to be ex *bunk*, to depart; cf. senses 1 and 3.

**bunting.** A coll. endearment, esp. as *baby bunting*: from ca. 1660. Perhaps ex Scottish *buntin*. bunting time. Late C. 17–mid-18, coll.: 'when the Grass is high enough to hide the young Men and Maid's': B.E. Cf. bunt, v., q.v.

**bunting-tosser.** Occ. bunts or bunting(s). A signaler: naval (1905); D.B., (O.E.D. Sup.) Ware, 'Signals are small flags made of bunting.'


**bunts.** See bunco and bunting-tosser.

**buntuck.** A New Zealand soldiers' variant of *bundook* (q.v.): in G.W.


**buoy, round the.** (To have) two helpings from a dish: nautical: C. 20.

**bup.** See:

**bupper.** Bread and butter: children's, whence lower classes': C. 19–20. By 'infantile reduction', says Ware, who notes the occ. abbr. bup.

**Bups; B.P.** (General) Baden-Powell: 1900 (War). Burberry or *-bury*. Burbure in France: military in G.W. (F. & Gibbons.)

**burbie.** To talk continuously with little per- tinence or sense: C. 20. Cf. the C. 16–17 S.E. burble, to make a bubbling sound.

**Burdon's Hotel.** Whitecross Street Prison: o. ca. 1850–1910. Ex a Governor named Burdon.

**burrick.** See burrick.

**Burford bait.** See take a Burford bait.

**burr.** A town; a city: coll., U.S. partly anglicised (thanks to the 'talkics') by 1932. C.O.D., 1934 Sup. Ex Gur.

**Burglar.** (Gen. pl.) A Bulgarian: military: in G.W. (F. & Gibbons.)

**burruga, burgue.** Oatmeal porridge: from ca. 1740; in C. 19, coll.; in G.W., military s. Mayryat, Sala. In G.W., the Tommy preferred the latter pronunciation, the Australians the former: the 'Aussies', moreover—prob. on a rhyming-basis—occ. used it loosely for stew (eto). Ex burghul, Turkish for wheat porridge. Whence burguo-eater. A Scottish scamian: nautical: late C. 19–20. Bowen.

**burrick, occ. burrick.** At first (— 1812), a prostitute, a low woman: o. Vaux. From ca. 1850, a lady, esp. if showily dressed: low. Mayhew, 1851. From ca. 1890 the word has increasing-ly meant, chiefly among Cockneys, a wife, 'old woman'. The etymology is obscure; but burrick may perhaps be found to derive ex the Romance
burn, a breast, pl. burnets, or to be a corruption of Scotia burn, a loose woman, recorded by E.D.D. for 1807.

burke. To dye one's moustachios: military, ca. 1870–80. Dyed for uniformity, the semantic key being burke, to smoother, as did the celebrated criminal executed in 1829. (Burke, to hush up, from ca. 1840, was at first a coll. development from its natural meaning, to strangle or suffocate, which arose in 1829.)

*burn, in a., to cheat, swindle: C. 17–18. (Extant in dial.) Cf. burn the ken, q.v. burn one's ears. To feel that somebody is speaking of one: coll.; from ca. 1750, but in other forms from C. 14 (e.g. Chaucer).

burn (a hole) in one's pocket. Of money and gene. preceded by money: to be eager to spend one's money, a definite sum often being mentioned. Coll.; 1738, Tucker, concerning children, 'As we say, it (money) burns in their pockets', O.E.D.


burn daylight. Lit., have a light burning in the daytime, hence to waste the daylight. At first (ca. 1587), coll.; soon S.E. Shakespeare, in Romeo, 'Come, we burn daylight.' Apperson.

burn-fire. A C. 18–19 corruption, either sol. or palaeoasthetic of dial.: a bonfire.


burn my breeches, like dash my wig, is a jocular oath. Both are in Moore's Tom Crim.

burn one's or the candle at both ends. To work early and late, or to work early and pursue pleasure till late, in the day. From ca. 1650. Coll. > S.E. by 1800. Ex the Fr. phrase recorded in England as early as Cotgrave. —2. (Only ... the ... ) To be very wasteful: coll.: mid-C. 18–20. Smollett. (Apperson.)

burn one's fingers. To incur harm, damage by meddling. From ca. 1700. Coll. > S.E.


*burn the ken. To live at an inn or lodging-house without paying one's quarters: C. 18–early 19: e.g. A New Cunting Dict., 1725; Grose, 1st ed. Cf. burn the town.

burn the parade. To warn for guard more men than are necessary and then excuse the supernumeraries for money—ostensibly to buy coal and candles for the guard: mid-C. 18–early 19, military. Grose (Captain and Adjutant of Militia), 1st ed.

burn the planks. To remain long seated. Coll. varying on S.E.: from ca. 1840; ob. Carlyle. (O.E.D.)

burn the Thames. To do something very remarkable: coll.: Wolcot, 1787; ob. A jocular variation of set the Thames on fire.

burn the town. (Of soldiers and sailors) to leave a place without paying for one's quarters: late C. 17–18. B.E. Cf. burn the ken, q.v.

burn the water. To spear salmon by torchlight. From ca. 1800; s. > coll. by 1850; S.E. by 1890.

burn you! Go to hell! (low) coll. (—1837); ob. Baumann. Ex dial., where it occurs as early as 1760 (E.D.D.).

burned, burnt, p.p.l. adj. Infected with venereal disease. Late C. 18–20; ob. coll. Shakespeare's pun in Lear: 'No heretics burned, but wenches' authors'; B.E., 'Pox, or swingingly Clapt'. Cf. the mid-C. 18–early 19 sailors' 'be sent out a sacrifice and come home a burnt offering', of catching a venereal disease abroad (Grose, 1st ed.).


burner, burning. A venereal disease: the latter (coll. > S.E.) from ca. 1760; the former (s. > coll.) from ca. 1810 (Lex. Bal.) and ob.

burner of navigable rivers, to be no. To be a simple or a quite ordinary person: mid-C. 18–early 19. Grose, 2nd ed. Cf. burn the Thomas.


burnt, n. See spots on burnt.—2. Adj. See burned.

burnt cinder. A window: rhyming s. (—1914) on winder.


burnoo or brew. An employment-exchange: Publio Works' coll.: from ca. 1924. I.e. bureau.

burn(r). A hanger-on, a persistent 'clinger': late C. 16–20; until ca. 1750 (B.E. has it) it was coll., then it > S.E.; slightly ob.

burn(r), v. To fight; scrimmage; 'rag'. Marlborough College: mid-C. 19–20, ob.

burn-pump. The old manual bilge-pump: nautical coll.: mid-C. 19–20; ob. Bowen. Because it so often 'stuck'.

burra, adj. Great, big; important, as burra shahib. Chiefly in India: from ca. 1800.

burra beebee. A lady claiming, or very apt to claim, precedence at a party: Anglo-Indian: recorded in 1807; ob. In Hindi, lit. great lady. Yule & Burnell.

burra khana. Lit., big dinner, it is a great, gen. a solemn, banquet: Anglo-Indian (—1890).

burra mem. The chief lady at a station: Anglo-Indian (—1903). Lit. burra, great, + mem, white lady. See mem and mem-sahib; cf. burra beebee.

burrow. To hide; live secretly or quietly. From ca. 1750. Coll. in C. 18, then S.E. The S.O.D. quotes 'to burrow in mean lodgings', Mrs. Paty.


burst at the broadside. To break wind: drinkers': ca. 1670–1850. Ray. (Apperson.)

burst him (her, etc.)! Confound him: low coll. (—1887); ob. Baumann.
burst one’s crust. To break one’s skin: *boxers*: ca. 1880-90. W. War.

burst up. To be greatly perturbed, angered, excited: coll.; late C. 19-20; ob.

burst. Burst (past tense and pl.): since ca. 1800, dial. and, otherwise, sol.


bury a Quaker. To defecate, evacuate: orig. and mainly Anglic-Irish: from ca. 1800. F. & H., at bury, gives a long list of synonyms.

bury the hatchet. (In C. 14-18, hang up the hatchet.) To swear peace, become friendly again. Ex U.S. (ca. 1784), anglicised ca. 1790 as a coll. that, in C. 20, has > S.E.; Wolotch uses it in 1794. Ex a Red Indian custom. (Apperson.)


bus, v. Also bus it. To go by bus: coll.: 1838 (O.E.D.)

bus! See bus, n., 4.

bus, miss the. To lose one’s opportunity: coll.: from ca. 1915. C. J. Dennis.


*bus-napper and b.n.’s kinchin. See buzz-napper.

bush. Either any or some special so-named tavern where a ‘pigeon’ is plucked: c. of ca. 1855-95. Greene.—2. The cat-o-nine-tails: c.: from ca. 1890. O.E.D. (Sup.).

bush or bush it. To camp in the bush: from ca. 1895; not much used.—2. be bushed, be lost in the bush (—1856); hence, 3, to be lost, at a loss: from ca. 1870; all three are Australian coll. Both voices occur in B. L. Farjeon’s in Australian Wilds, 1889. With sense 3, cf. the early C. 19 o. bushed, penniless. destitute.

bush, beat or go about the. To go deviously (fig.); coll., from ca. 1550; the latter † by 1860; the latter S.E. in C. 20.

bush. Go. To go wild: Australian coll.; C. 20. Ion L. Idriess, Lasserre’s Last Ride, 1931. ‘Most of their camels “had gone bush”.

bush, take to the. To become a bushranger: Australian coll.: ca. 1835-90.


*bush-boat. A gypsy: c. (—1823); † by 1900. ‘John Bee’, 1823, says, ‘From their lodging under hedges, etc.’

bush lawyer. A layman fancying he knows all about the law—and given to laying it down: Australian coll.: from ca. 1850’s. H. G. Turner, 1896 (Morris). See also lawyer.

bush-ranger. A convict, later anyone, living on plunder in the Australian bush: recorded in 1806; coll. soon > S.E. Now usually bushranger.

bush-scrubber. A bushman’s word for a boor, bumpkin, or slatternly person: Australian coll.: 1896. Morris. Ex the scrub, whence such a person may be presumed to have come.

bush-whacker. Australian, ex U.S.: an axe-man, feller of trees, opener of new country; hence, in C. 20, one who lives in the (more remote) country districts. The orig. sense has > S.E., the latter remains Australian coll.


bushel and peck. The neck: rhyming s.: late C. 19-20. B. & P.


bushy. A dweller in ‘the bush’ or remoter country districts: Australian coll.: from late 1890’s.


*Bushy Park, at; in the park. Poor o.: from ca. 1810; virtually †. Vaux.


business. Sexual intercourse: C. 17-18, coll. Taylor the Water Poet, 1630, ‘Leis ... asked Demosthenes one hundred crownes for one night’s business.’—2. (Theatrical) dialogue as opp. to action: S.E., late C. 17-early 18; but from ca. 1750, as in The World, 1753, and Scott, in 1820, it has meant by-play and as such it is coll.—3. A matter in which one may intervene or meddle: late C. 17-20; coll.—4. In deliberately vague reference to material objects: coll.: 1654, Evelyn; 1847, Leigh Hunt, ‘A business of screws and iron wheels’. Cf. affair. O.E.D.—5. A difficult matter: coll.; from ca. 1840. Carlyle, ‘If he had known what a business it was to govern the Abbey ... ’; 1845.

business, do one’s (for one), v.i. and t. To kill; cause death of. From ca. 1690; S.E. until ca. 1800, then coll.

business, mean. To be in earnest: coll.: 1857, Hughes (O.E.D.)

business, mind one’s own. To abstain from meddling in what does not concern one. Coll. From ca. 1860; earlier, S.E. (O.E.D.)

business, send about one’s. To dismiss, send packing, just as go about one’s business — to depart. In C. 17-18, the latter, S.E.; in C. 19, both coll.; in C. 20, both S.E.

business end, the. The commercial part of a firm’s activities: coll.: late C. 19-20. From o.
BUSINESS END

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bust up. (Or hyphenated.) A great quarrel, "row," or excitement: 1899, Kipling; coll. now on verge of S.E. (O.E.D. Sup.)


bust, come a. To fall, or be thrown, heavily from a horse: coll.: Australian (—1880).

bust, old. See old bust.—busters. See bust, 7.

bustle. A dress-improver. Recorded in 1788 and presumably coll. for a few years before becoming S.E., as in Dickens, Miss Mitford, Trolley.—2. Money: from ca. 1810. At first c., but fairly gen., low s. by ca. 1860; ob. Vaux, Hotten.

bustle, v. To confuse; perplex: coll., from ca. 1860. Cf. the transitive S.E. senses.

buzzy. See Bizzy.

*buzzy, occ. busy fellow. A detective: e. C. 20; mostly American. Edgar Wallace's crime stories; Charles E. Leach.

buzzy, get. To become active: coll.: U.S. (1905), anglicised by 1910. O.E.D. (Sup.).


buzzy as a hen with five chicks. Anxious; fussy; ludicrously proud: C. 17–20 (ob.); proverbial coll. Shirley, 1832; Grosz.

buzzy as the devil in a high (in mid-C. 19–20, often in a gale of wind). In a great flurry: low coll.: from ca. 1780; ob. Grosz, 2nd ed.


but, for that, after it is not unlikely, impossible, etc., is sol.: first, but ca. 1800. —2. but, expressing 'mere surprise or recognition of something unexpected', as in 'I say! but you had a narrow escape,' 'Excuse me! but you have smut on your nose,' is coll.: from ca. 1850.—3. For the conjunctive but that generates a redundant negative (for but properly = that ... not), see Fowler.—4. When placed at the end of a sentence, as however often is, but is coll. vering on sol.: C. 20. E.g. 'I didn't do it but!'

but... however, where either but or however (not both) is needed, is catachrestic: mid-C. 19–20. Fowler.

but what. In e.g. 'I don't know but what ...', = but that. Coll.: C. 19–20; earlier, S.E. (Fowler.)

1910, this use of end has been extended: thus one can speak of the selling and the buying end of a retail business.—2. The part that matters: coll.: C. 20. E.g. the business end of a sword is the point or the blade. Ex:

business end of a tin tack, the. The point of a tack: U.S. (—1882), anglicised in 1883 (The Daily News, March 27). Ware. Cf. get down to brass tacks.


busnack; gen. as vbl. n. To pry; to interfere unduly, be fussy: naval: late C. 19–20; ob. Prob. ex the buzz of a fly. Whence buzz-nagger, q.v.

buss. A variant of bus, n. 2. H., 1st ed.


bust. Sol. for burst, n. and v. Apparently unrecorded in England before 1830, Dickens being one of the earliest sources: Oliver Twist (bursting, adj.); Nicholas Nickleby, 'His genius would have busted'; Martin Chuzzlewit, 'Keep cool, Jefferson... don't bust'; Two Cities, 'Bust me if I don't think he'd been a drinking!


bust, v. To bust; explode: sol. except when jocularly deliberate. Dickens, 1838.—2. To put out of breath: from ca. 1870. E.g. in Taking Out the Baby, a broadside ballad of ca. 1880.—3. In c. (occ. as bust), to rob a house, v.t., rarely v.i.: also, v.t., to inform the police, whence the vbl. n., busting. Both C. 19–20, the latter ob.—4. To degrade a non-commissioned officer: military coll.: late C. 19–20.

bust! Dash it! New Zealander's: C. 20. Also bust it! Cf. bust me, q.v.


*bust, do a. To break into a place: C. 20 a.

*bust-maker. A womaniser; a seducer. Low coll.: C. 19. Ex the boom's enlargement in pregnancy and putting the S.E. sense.

bust me! A mild oath: non-aristocratic: 1859, Dickens. Also bust it, bust you (or yer)!
butcher. To be a butcher, act as or like a butcher. In late C. 18–early 19, S.E.; thereafter, and still, dial.; but in non-dial. circumstances it is, from ca. 1900, coll. (cf. buttle, q.v.): so too with the vbl. n. butchering.


butcher. Mid-C. 18–early 19, nautical and military: a jocular comment (on need of bleeding) when a comrade falls down. Grose, 1st ed.

butcher about. To make a din; humbug or fool about. Wellington College: late C. 19–20, ob. Perhaps a euphemism for b*ger about.

butcher and bolt. See bolt, butcher and.

butcher-catcher, s., and adv. Far; much; great(ly): low: from ca. 1870; ob. Eg., 'a butchering sight too forward' (J. Greenwood). Cf. bloody and other violence, Baumann.

butcher's. See butcher's hook.

butcher's bill. The casualty list of a battle, esp. of those killed: coll. (—1881). Occ. for the mone
tary cost of a war: coll. (—1887). If this term, in either sense, is employed sarcastically and indi
gnantly, it is then, for all its cynicism, rather S.E. than coll.

butcher's dog, be or lie like a. To 'lie by the beef without touching it; a similar often applicable to married men', Grose, 2nd ed. Low coll.: late C. 18–early 10.


butcher's horse by his carrying a call so well, that must have been a. A c.p. jest at the expense of an awkward rider. So Grose, 2nd ed.; Ray, in English Proverbs, 2nd ed., 1078, gives it in a slightly different form. Coll.: C. 17–20; ob.


butter. Butch meat had on credit and not yet paid for: late C. 18–19 jocular punning the S.E. sense of the phrase. Grose, 3rd ed.


butler-English. 'The broken English spoken by native servants in the Madras Presidency ... thus I telling = "I will tell"; I done tell = "I have told; done come = "actually arrived"... Masters as well as servants used it: C. 18–20; ob. by 1903. Yule & Burnell.)

butler's grace. A 'thank-you' but no money: coll.: 1809, Melton; ± by 1700. Apperson.

butter. A buttock; also the buttocks: low coll. in C. 1000 after being, in C. 15–17, S.E. (Also dial. and U.S.)

butter in. To interfere; interrupt: v.t. V.t., butt into, rare. From ca. 1895; coll. >, by 1920, S.E.

Butter-nut. A soldier in the Southern Army in the American Civil War (1863) and soon anglicised. Ex the brownish-grey uniform.

button. One's button on both sides. To be wasteful.

Coll.: from ca. 1600.

button-print. A child, esp. if illegitimate: Fletcher, 1616; † by 1800. Cf. buttercup. (O.E.D.)


butter the flesh. To win at cards: from ca. 1920. Manchon.

butter upon bacon. Extravagance; extravagant; domestic coll. (1699). Ware.

butter-weight. Good measure: ca. 1730–1900. Coll. Swift, 1733, 'Yet why should we be (as) so strait? I'll give my monarch butter-weight.' (O.E.D.) Ex b.u., formerly 18 (or more) ounces to the pound.

butter when it's hot, it will cut. Of a knife that is blunt. Coll. from ca. 1860.

butter will stick on his bread, no. He is always unlucky: C. 17–19; coll. B.E.; Scott. With clause: C. 16–17.

butter would not melt in one's mouth, (look) as if. (To seem) demure. Coll. from the 1530's; Pulgaro (O.E.D.), Latimo, Sedley, Swift, Scott, Thackeray. In reference to women, Swift and Grose add: yet, I warrant you, cheese would not choke her, the meaning of which must be left to the reader who will look at cheese.


buttered bun(s). A mistress: ca. 1570–90, as in W. Cullin, 1679, in reference to Louise de Querouaille,—2. (In C. 19–20 only buttered bun.) A harlot submitting sexually to several, or more, men in quick succession: late C. 17–20; slightly ob. B.E.; Grose, 1st ed., 'One lying with a woman that has just lain with another man, is said to have a buttered bun.'—3. (buttered bun.) 'A Man pretty much in Liquor', A New Catering Dict., 1726; low: ca. 1720–60.—4. See 'Dupes' in Addenda. Matthews, however, may err in distinguishing it from sense 3.

butterfly. A river barges: nautical: from ca. 1870; ob. Ironical.—2. The reeves-guard afixed to the top of a hansom cab: cabmens', from ca. 1870; ob. Coll.; in C. 20, S.E.


buttering-up. Fulsome flattery or praise: coll., ca. 1815–60. Tom Moore, 1819, 'This buttering-up against the grain'.

buttery. Addicted to excessive flattery: from ca. 1840; coll. passing to S.E. Cf. butter, v., 2.—2. The adj. to butter-fingers, q.v.: cricketers' coll. 1894. Lewis.

buttery Benzie. A Scottish Universities s.

synonym for bezan, q.v.: from ca. 1840; ob.

buttkin. A shop; c. (–1867); † by 1890.

'Ducange Anglica'. While ken = a place, buttin prod. = Fr. boutique.

[butter in Collinson is Northern dial. rather than coll. (A piece of bread and butter.)]


buttsnake, v.i. To interrupt, esp. when one's presence is undesired: N. Zealand soldier's: 1915.

bottle. To act or serve as a butler: in C. 20 coll.

Earlier, dial. Cf. † suttle ex suter.

*buttock. A low whore: ca. 1660–1830: o. Head, Shadwell, B.E., Grose. buttock and tongue. A shrew. C. 18–19, † punning c. buttock and twang (late C. 17–early 19), a common prostitute but no thief (also a down buttock and sham file, Grose, 1st ed.) and perhaps glancing at c. buttock and file (late C. 17–early 19: B.E.), a prostitute that is also a pickpocket; if in the latter c. phrase sham is inserted before file, the sense of the former c. phrase is obtained.

buttock and trimmings. See rump and dozen.

buttock-bank. A dance attended by prostitutes.


buttock-broker. A procurers; the proprietress or manager of a brothel: a match-maker. Late C. 17–early 19; low. B.E., Grose. In the first two senses, buttock = a harlot, in the third a check of the posteriors.


button, have lost a; be a button short. To be slightly crazy: proletarian: late C. 19–20; ob. F. & H., revised.

button, not to care a (brass). Not to care at all.


button, take by the. To button-hole. C. 19–20. Coll., soon S.E.


button-burster. A low comedian: theatrical; from ca. 1870; ob. It is the audience that suffers.


button-hole. Abbr. button-hole flower(s) or bouquet. Recorded in 1879. Coll.—2. The female pudend: low: mid-C. 19–20. Hence button-hole worker, working, penis, colition, and button-hole factory, a brothel, a bed.

button-hole, v. To button-hole, i.e. to catch hold of a person by a button and detain him, unwilling, in conversation. Orig. (–1862) coll., in C. 20 S.E. and displacing button-hole.

button-hole, take one down a; occ. take a h-h. lower. To humiliate; to de-conceit: coll. from late C. 16. Shakespear.

button loose, (have) a. (To be) silly, crazy, slightly mad; military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Ex buttons on one, q.v.


button on, have a. To be despondent; temporarily depressed. ‘Tailors, from ca. 1860; ob. button on to. To get hold of (a person): to buttonhole (him); to cultivate (his) company: 1904, Charles Turley. Perhaps ex *buttonhole* (v.) + cotton on to.


button short, be a. See button, have lost a.

button up. To refrain from admitting a loss or disappointment: coll.; from ca. 1800. Ex U.S. stock-brokering (1841).

**buttoner**. A decoy (see button, v.): o. > ca. 1870, low; from ca. 1830. Ob. Brandon; Blackwood's Magazine, 1841; Cornhill Magazine, 1882.


buttons, boy in. A page: from ca. 1855; coll. until C. 20, when S.E.

**buttons, I, dash my.** A coll. and often jocular exclamation of surprise or vexation: ca. 1840–1914. (O.E.D.)

buttons, have a soul above. To be, actually or in presumption only, superior to one's position: coll.: C. 19–20. Adumbrated in Colman, 1795, luminous in Marryat and Thackeray.

buttons, it is in one's. One is bound to succeed: coll.; late C. 16–17. Shakespeare, 1598, 'Tis in his buttons, he will carry 't.' O.E.D.

**buttons, one's arse or breech makes.** Also make buttons (C. 17–19). To look or be sorry, sad, in great fear: coll.; mid-C. 16–early 19. Gabriel Harvey, captious critic, laborious veriteer, and patterning prosateur; playwright Middleton; Grove, 3rd c.: His a-s-a make buttons, he is ready to befoul himself through fear; in Ainsworth's Latin Dict., 1808, we find his tail maketh buttons (O.E.D.). Apperson. Ex buttons, the excrata of sheep.

**buttons on or one on, not to have all one's.** To be slightly mad; weak-minded. Mid-C. 10–20; ob. H., 2nd ed. in dial. the affirmative form, indicative of great shrewdness, is common.

**buttons on, put one's.** To 'bet one's shirt' on; hence, to trust absolutely in military: (— 1929). Manchon.

**butty.** A comrade, a mate; a policeman's assistant (†). Coll. and dial.: from ca. 1850. Henry Kingsley, 1859. Either from mining, where butty = a middlemann, or from Romany body-pal, a fellow workman, or, most prob., ex Warwickshire butty, a fellow servant or labourer (Rev. A. Macan, *Story of Claywood*, 1791). See esp. O.E.D., F. & H., and Words at 'Terms of Address'; also Irwin.

**buvare.** Any drinkable: Pariyarde and low: from ca. 1840. Cf. beware, q.v.

**buxa.** An occ. variant of baakeeck, q.v.

**BUZ(z)-GLOAK**

Buurn limp. 'The hobbling walk of invalids taking the waters': Society, esp. at Buxton: 1833-ca. 1890. Ware. On Alexandra limp, q.v.

**buy.** A purchase; an opportunity to purchase: Stock Exchange coll.: from ca. 1925. In Time and Tide, Sept. 8, 1934, 'Securities'写作 thus: '[Anglo-Dutch rubber] looks ... one of the soundest of the solid buys, as opposed to the exciting gambles, in the market.'

**buy, v.** To incur, hear, receive, be 'landed with' (something unpleasant) with one's eyes open or very credulously: C. 20. Cf. ask for it.—2. To wangle (something): military: 1915; ob. F. & Gibbons.

*buy a brush. See brush, buy a.*

**buy a prop!** The market is flat (with no support): Stock Exchange, ca. 1880–1900.

**buy a pup.** See pup, buy a.

**buy a white horse.** To squander money: nautical: late C. 18–20. Bowen. Ex the fleeting splendour of a 'white horse' wave.

**buy and sell.** To betray for a bribe; coll. verging on S.E.: C. 18–19.—2. To be far too clever for (a person); coll.: C. 20.

**buy on the.** Actively buying: commercial coll.: 1929; earlier in U.S.A. (O.E.D. Sup.)

**buy it, I'll.** Tell me the answer or catch: c.p.: from ca. 1905. Ex buy, v., I, q.v.

**buy money.** To bet heavily on a favourite: racing: C. 20. Ex the short odds. (O.E.D. Sup.) buy one's boots in Crooked Lane and one's stockings in Bandy-Legged Walk. To have crooked or handy legs: a mid-C. 18–early 19 c.p. Grove, 3rd ed.

**buy one's thirst.** To pay for a drink: U.S., anglicised in 1884; virtually † by 1909. Ware.

*buy oneself out.** To get oneself discharged: Australian c.: 1932, The Melbourne Age, April 29. Irony.

**buyer.** A 'fence', a receiver: C. 20 o. Charles E. Leach.

**buzz.** A parlour and a public-house game, in which the players count 1, 2, 3, 4, etc., with buzz(s) substituted for seven and any multiple thereof: coll., then, by 1900, S.E. From ca. 1860; ob. Miss Allcott, *Little Women*, 1868.—2. (Gen. the buzz.) In c., the picking of pockets: late C. 18–early 19. Cf. buzz, v., 2.—3. A rumour: naval coll.: late C. 19–20. Bowen. Ex ob. S.E. buzz, a busy or persistent rumour.

**buzz(s), v.t.** Drain (a bottle or decanter) to the last drop. Coll.: late C. 18–19. Germ in Grove, 1785; clearly in The Gentleman's Magazine, 1795; Moncrieff; Thackeray. † buzz, corrupted. See buzzes.

In C. 19, to share equally the last of a bottle of wine, when there is not a full glass for each person.—2. V.i. and t., to pick pockets: from ca. 1800; o., then—ca. 1800—low. Whence the late C. 18–19 c. terms, buzz(t)-man, buzz(t)-gloak, buzz-bloks or -cove, and buzz-napper, a pickpocket.—[buzz, v.] 3. To cast forcibly, throw swiftly: coll.: 1893, Kipling, 'Dennis buzzed his carbine after him, and it caught him on the back of his head' (O.E.D. Sup.).—4. To pass by, esp. buzz the bottle: University: C. 20.—5. Often buzz off. To depart; esp. to depart quickly: from ca. 1805. Edwin Pugh, *The Cockney at Home*, 1914.

**buzz-box.** A motor-car: from ca. 1930. (The Passing Show, May 12, 1934.)

*buzz(t)-taking. Pocket-picking. C. 19 o. Ware has buzz-faker.

*buzz(t)-gloak. See buzz, v., 3.*


**Buzza(n)ers' academy.** A school for the training of thieves: late C. 18—mid-19 c. George Parker, 1781; see, e.g., Oliver Twist.

**Buzza(n)er's kinchin.** A watchman; late C. 18—early 19 c. Grosio, 2nd ed.

**buzz off.** See buzz, v., 5. An occ. variant is buzz away.


**buzz.** An early form of to buzz, sense 1: late C. 18 only. Grosio, 1st ed.: 'To buzz one is to challenge him to pour out all the wine in the bottle into his glass, undertaking to drink it', i.e. the whole of the wine, 'should it prove more than the glass would hold': commonly said to one who hesitates to drink a bottle that is nearly out'. In the 3rd ed., he adds: 'Some derive it from buzz all, i.e. drink it all.'


**buzzed, be.** To be killed: military: late 1914; ob., F. & Gibbons. Ex the buzz of a bullet.


**buzzy.** Crazy: ca. 1880—1914. F. Brett Young, in Jim Redlake, 1930, 'Ladyliko poses and high-class music and scenery that sends you buzzy' (a description of Russian ballet). Lit., making one's head buzz.

(by) occurs in many oaths, strong or (e.g. by golly) mild, blasphemous or ludicrous or innocuous senseless. Although many of these are neither s. nor coll., some of the funny or witty ones are coll., or s.: e.g. by the jumping Moses, by the living jingo, by my bootlace. The psychology of oaths is akin to that of s., but that fact does not make an oath necessarily s. See Words; also Slang; also, e.g., Robert Graves, Lara Porsena, 1927.

(by) (properly agential) is in C. 20 used more and more for the merely instrumental with: it is a pity that this useful distinction—L. a(b) and cum—is disappearing.—2. In South African coll.: late C. 19—20. E.g. 'He is by', he is in, 'the house.' Ex Dutch bij, by, with, in. Pottman.

(by and by). Presently: soon. C. 18—20; coll., but S.E. (though not dignified) after ca. 1700.

(by the by(e)). Incidentally. In conversation only. C. 19—20; coll. > S.E. So, too, by the way.

(by the wind). In difficulties: short of money: C. 19—20 (ob.), nautical.

(by-blows). A bastard: late C. 16—20; coll. till ca. 1800, then S.E. Robert Browning, 'A drab's brat, a beggar's by-blows'. Cf.:


(by-scape). A bastard: mid-C. 17; coll. verging on S.E. Cf.:

(by-slip). A bastard: late C. 17 18; coll. soon > S.E. 'Ungracious by-slips', Hallack, 1693, in the Life of Williams, one of the great biographies.


(bye-bye). A sound made to induce sleep in a child; coll. C. 17—20. Hence go to bye-bye. orig. an imperative, > go to sleep, fall asleep: go to bed: C. 19—20; coll. In C. 20, often go to (to) bye-byes.


(bye-byes). Good-bye! But go to bye-byes is to go to sleep. C. 20. Both occur, e.g., in H. A. Vachell, Martha Penay, 1934.

(bye-commoner). One who mistakenly thinks he can box: pugilistia: ca. 1820—50. 'Jon Bee', 1823. Ex commoner, 2.

(by-e)-drink or (drinking). A drink, gen. stronger than tea, at other than meal-times. From ca. 1760; coll., but S.E. in C. 19—20; ob.

(bynearly). See binebly.

(byng boys, the). The Canadian troops: Canadian military: 1917—18. Ex Lord Byng, commanding them in 1917, and 'The Bing Boys Are Here', a very popular revue. F. & Gibbons; B. & P.

(bye). See bite, of which it is a frequent C. 17—18 spelling.

c.o.d. (or C.O.D.), a or that's a. A military c.p. applied to a heavy gun just fired: 1915—18. F. & Gibbons. I.e. 'there would be the due to pay'—cash on delivery—when the shell landed.

c.p. or C.P. A euphemistic abbr. (—1923) of e.t. pensioner, q.v.; Blanchon.

C.T. See cock-teaser.

C.T.A. The police: circus and showmen's: from ca. 1860. Origin?

C3. Inferior; highly unfit: coll.: 1915 +. Ex the G.W. classification of physical fitness, C3 being the lowest.—2. A 'bradbury' (q.v.): military (esp.
CA'-CANY

Australian in G.W. Ex the emaciated figure of St. George.

cab-canny. Adj., applied to an employee's policy of working slowly, 'going slow.' Coll., recorded in 1890 and, since 1918, considered as S.E. Ex Scottish; lit., call shrewdly, i.e. go cautiously.

ca-sa or ca-sa. See CASS, 1.

cab. Abbr. cavalier influenced by Sp. caballero; ca. 1650-1710. Coll. (S.O.D.—2). Abbr. cabriole, a public carriage, two- or four-wheeled, seating two or four persons, and drawn by one horse, introduced into England in 1820, the term appearing seven years later, at first a-, then soon coll., then by 1860 S.E. Occ., a cab-driver (1850, Thackeray: O.E.D.). Also, from ca. 1910, an abbr. of taxi-cab; coll., comparatively rare. — 3. A brothel: ca. 1800-50. Ex. It. 'How many hats have you in your cab? i.e. how many girls have you in your bawdy house?' Prob. ex cabain. — 4. (Universities and Public Schools) from ca. 1850 as in *Cuthbert Rede's* *Verdant Green*, 1583: 'Those who can't afford a coach get a cab,'—one of this author's best puns—'*alias a crib, alias a translation*'. Ex cabage, n., 5, q.v.— 5. The second gig of the *Convoy*: *Convoy* Training Ship s., in the 1890's. Massiefield.

cab; gen. cab it, v. To go by cab; coll.: from ca. 1830; Dickens has it in *Pickwick Papers*; ob.— 2. (Schoolboys) to use a crib: from ca. 1855. Like the corresponding n., ob. by 1830. Ex cabbage, v., 2.—3. To pilfer: schoolboys' (— 1891); ob. Perhaps ex Scotia: see E.D.D.

cab-moll. A harlot professionally fond of cabs and trains: low; ca. 1840-1900.


cabbage, v. To purloin: orig. and mainly of tailors: from ca. 1700; soon coll. and by 1800 S.E.; Arbuthnot, in *John Bull*, 1712.— 2. (Schoolboys) to 'crib,' from ca. 1830, recorded 1837: this precedes the n. cabbage, whence cab, a 'crib'. Vbln., cabbaging: pilfering; cribbing: C. 19–20; ob.


Cabbage Gardens, the. Victoria (Australia): Australian nickname: from ca. 1920.


Cabbage-head. A fool: coll.: from ca. 1660. A broadside ballad of ca. 1880: 'I ought to call him cabbage-head, | He is so very green.' In F. & H., a synonym.


Cabbage-looking. See green as I'm cabbage-looking, not so.


Cabbage-plant. An umbrelia: c.: ca. 1820–60. Egan's Grove, where also summer cabbage.


Cabbageites. See cabbage-tree mob.


cabin-cracker, -cracking. A thief breaking into a ship's cabins; the act or action: nautical (— 1887). Baumann.


Cabinetable. Fit to belong to the Cabinet: political and journalistic coll.: 1890 (O.E.D. Sup.).


cable, slip one's. See slip one's cable.


cable has parted, one's. One dies: nautical coll. (— 1887). Baumann.

Cable home and, nothing to. Unimportant, ordinary, unexciting: Australian coll., G.W. +. Cf. nothing to write home about, the more gen. locution.

cabman's rest. A female breast; gen. in pl.: rhyming s., from ca. 1870.
cabobbled. p.p. adj. Perplexed; confused; nautical, c. 19-20, ob. Perhaps an intensive (see ker-) of bubble, to deceive; the word occurs also in dial. which has bobble, a ground swell of the sea (E.D.D.).


caboodle, the whole. The whole lot (persons or things): orig. (1848), U.S., anglicised ca. 1895. Prob. via < cab to < cabala (the whole kit and caboodle [kit and being slurred to ca], ex English kit [see sense 2] and U.S. boatle, 'a crowd (Thorneton), itself perhaps ex Portuguese cavedal, 'a stock, what a man is worth': W.

cacaueno. A spiritre; bragrant; bully: C. 17-18. Until ca. 1680, S.E.: ca. 1680-1750, coll.; then Phases. Dict.; Ex. E.; Grose. Its descent in the wordy world was due to its lit. meaning, shit-fire, for ca. 1750 it began to be considered vulgar.

cacagogue. Incorrect for cacacogue (an ointment): c. 19-20. O.E.D.
cackle. Jon Bee's spelling of cackle. 
cackle. Idle talk. Without the it is S.E.; with inexpressable the, it is coll., as in Punch, Sept. 10, 1887, 'If a feller would tackle [A feminine fair up to Dick, he's got to be dahn at the cackle.' C. 19-20. Ex —2. (As for sense 3; cackle.) The patter of crows: from ca. 1840. —3. Hence, the dialogue of a play: from ca. 1870. Cf. v., 2.
cackle, v.i. To reveal secrets by indiscrimet or otherwise foolish talk: late C. 17-20 c. and low; ob. B.E.—2. The v. corresponding to n. 2 and 3: theatrical: same periods.
cackle, l. cut the. 'Shut up!' late C. 19-20. Occ. in other moods, esp. in cut the cackle and come to the losses, which, however, — to get down to business (e.g. D. Sayers, Unnatural Death, 1927).
cackle, up to the. See up to the cackle.
cackle-chucker. (Theatrical) a prompter: from ca. 1860; ob.
cackle-merchant. (Theatrical) a dramatic author: from ca. 1860; ob.


[caddee. A thief's assistant or abettor: c. according to Banham, but S.E. according to O.E.D.]
caddie, caddy. 'A bush name for a slouch hat': Australian (—1898). Morris. Perhaps a corruption of cady, q.v.—2. (Caddie.) The Academy literary weekly: printers' (—1887); † by 1920. Banham. Cf. Athie, q.v.
caddish. Offensively ill-bred: from ca. 1860 (recorded, 1868); coll. Shirley Brooks in Sooner or Later, Mrs. Lynn Linton in Patricia Kemball. In C. 20 it tends to mean glaringly deficient in moral and/or aesthetic delicacy.

Cade, the. Burlington Arcade: Society, from ca. 1870; ob.

cady. See cady.

cadge, v. To go about begging: from ca. 1810.— 2. V.t., to beg from (a person): low (—1811). Lex. Bal.—Also, 3, beg, obtain by begging: recorded in 1848. Low coll. N. and v. are recorded in Vaux's Flash Dict., 1812, and since ca. 1880 the words have occ. been used jocularly and inoffensively. Perhaps imm. ex Dutch, ultimately ex Fr. cope, a wicker basket carried on back of cager (pedlar) or his pony: W. For a synonymy, see F. & H.

cadge, do see do a cadge.


cadger. A beggar, esp. if whiming: from ca. 1820; low coll. (But in Scots as early as 1737: see E.D.D.) Egan's Grove, where wrongly classified as a.—2. Wheneve, a genteel, despicable 'sponger': coll.; from ca. 1880. A transitional use occurs in James Greenwood's The Little Ragamuffins, 1884. For synonymy, see F. & H.

cadging. Esp. cadging-bag and cadging-face. Vbln., abject begging; 'sponging'. Coll.; re-
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corded in 1839 (Brandon), but much earlier. Henry Kingsley, James Greenwood. — 2. Applied esp. to 'cabmon when they are off the ranks, and soliciting a fare': ca. 1855-1860. 'Ducange Anglicus.'

cadi. An occ. and, by 1930, † variant of cady.

cads on castors. Bicyclists: ca. 1880-5. The Daily News, Sept. 10, 1885. (Ware.)

cady; occ. cady or kadi. A hat. From ca. 1886. (Recorded in Lancashire dial. In 1869: see E.D.D.) Walford's Antiquarian, April, 1887: 'Sixpence I gave for my cady. [A penny I gave for my stick.]' Perhaps ex Yiddish; perhaps, however, a corruption of Romany stadi, a hat, itself prob. ex Modern Gr. ουάνια (Samjison). Cf. caddie, q.v.—2. Hence, a Kilmarnock or Balmoral cap worn by Scottish regiments: military: C. 20; esp. in G.W. (F. & Gibbons).—3. Hence also, a straw hat: New Zealanders: from ca. 1920.


[cagian is erroneous in B.E. and repeated by Grose and Egan, for cassian, cassian, i.e. choose. Owing to the old-fashioned long a.]

caffre's lighter. See Kaffir's lighter.


cag-mag. See cagmag.


caggy. Unfit to eat: dial. and low coll., now † as latter: 1848, Marryatt. O.E.D. Ex: cagmag; cag-mag. (Of food, esp. meat) odds and ends; scrap, refuse. From ca. 1810; †. Coll. ex dial. Lex. Bal, 1811. Mayhew, London Labour, 'Do I ever eat my own game if it's high? No, sir, never, I couldn't stand such cag-mag.' Also as adj., tainted, inferior (1860); ob. Origin obscure: but prob. the term derives ex cag(?)mag(?), an old goose (see Grose, 2nd ed.).—2. Illence, gossip, idle talk: Cockney: coll. from ca. 1860. Manchon. (Also in dial.)
cain. Canadian military: G.W. Ex a Fr. Army term via the French Canadians; orig. an Annamite word. F. & Gibbons; B. & P.

Cain, rake. To make a disturbance, a din; to quarrel noisily. Orig. (ca. 1840), U.S., anglicised ca. 1870. App. euphemistic for raise the devil (W.). Cf. raise hell and Tommy and come upon Abel.


calm, add a stone to someone's. To honour a person as much as possible after his death: coll.; C. 18-19. Ex a Celtic proverbial saying, recorded by traveller Pennant in 1772.

cake, cakey. A fool, gull, or blockhead: late C. 18-20, ob. In C. 19-20, coll. Grose, 1785; J. R. Planché, 'Your resignation proves that you must be [The greatest cake he in his land could see!'; Mrs. Henry Wood. From either the softness of some cakes or the flatness of others; in either case, a pun.—2. At Christ's Hospital (cake only), C. 19-20, ob., a stroke with a cane.—3. (cakey only.) Half-witted: Glasgow (—1934). Ex Northern and Midland dial. (—1897: E.D.D.). Cf. batchy for the semantics.

cake, v. (Christ's Hospital) to canoe: C. 19-20, ob.

cake, get one's share of the. To succeed: coll.; C. 17-18. Cf.: cake, take the. To carry off the honours; be the best; (theatrical) 'fill the bill': coll. from ca. 1880. Ex U.S. In C. 20, also = be impudent, a piece of impudence: coll. 'The allusion is not to a cake walk', as Thornton suggests, for cake-walk is later; perhaps a jocular allusion to Gr. ἔπαυσις, prize of victory, orig. cake of roasted wheat and honey awarded to person of greatest vigilance in night-watch,' W. See also bun, take the, and biscuit, take the.

cake and has paid (her) a loaf, the devil owed (her) a. A great instead of a small misfortune has been fallen her. Coll.: C. 17-19. B.2.

cake is dough, one's. One's project, or one's business, has failed: mid-C. 16-20: coll. Becon, 1659; Shakespeare; B.E.; Hardy. The S.O.D., app. misled by Nares, says †, but this is incorrect, though the phrase may—only may—be ob. A Scottish variant (Ramsay, 1737) is one's meat is dough (E.D.D.).

cake-walk. 'A raid or attack that turns out to be unexpectedly easy': military coll.: 1914; ob. B. & P. Ex that easy-motioned pre-War dance. (2) Money very easily obtained: Glasgow coll. (—1934).

cakes, Land of. Scotland: C. 18-20; coll.
cakes, like hot. Very quickly, promptly; esp. self or go like... Orig. U.S., anglicised ca. 1888.
cakes and ale. Pleasant food; good living; coll. from ca. 1870. Shakespeare, 1601, 'Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more Cakes and Ale?'

cakey. See cake, n., 1.

cal. Abbr. Culvert, the common hangman: ca. 1870-70.
calaboose, n. and (rarely) v. Prison, esp. a common gaol. Nautical ex Spanish via (1797) U.S. Dana, 1840, has the Sp. form, calabobo.

CALCOGRAPHY. Incorrect for chalcography: late C. 17-20. O.E.D.
calculate. v. Think, believe, expect, suppose; intend. Coll., anglicised ca. 1870 ex U.S. (-1812) usage. John Galt in Laurie. (Thornton.)

Caleb Quotem. A parish clerk; jack of all trades. Coll., ca. 1860-80. From a character in The Wags of Windsor.

calendars, give out. To issue unemployment cards prior to dismissing employees: workmen's (-1835),
cally. Ordinary stock(s) of the Caledonian Railway: Stock Exchange, from ca. 1880.
call. A meek, harmless, (and occ.) brainless person: C. 16-20. S.O.D. gives as S.E., but it is surely coll. † Hamilton Atidé, Morals and Mysteries, 1872, 'She had a girlish fancy for the good-looking young calf.'
call, slip or cast the or one's. (Of women) to have a miscarriage; to suffer abortion: C. 17-18: facetiously coll. Pepys.
call, i;—call. a. You do weep a lot, don't you! ; c.p. — (182). Mochan. Perhaps influenced by the Fr. tu pleureas comme un veau.
call in the cow's belly, eat the. To anticipate unduly: mid-C. 17-20 proverbial coll.; ob. *Puller; Richardson in Clariss Harlove. (Aperson.)
call-love. A youthful and romantic attachment: coll.; from ca. 1820; in C. 20, S.E.
*call-sticking. The selling of worthless, on the pretence that they are smuggled, goods: ; ca. 1850-1920.
callies, cow-, and bull-week. Coll., ca. 1830-80. The 1st, 2nd, and 3rd week before Christmas: among operatives, who, during this period, worked hours increasing in length in each successive week, until in bull-week they had extremely little time free. The Echo, Dec. 4, 1871.
call's head. A very stupid fellow: late C. 16-early 19; coll.
callskin, smack. To swear on the Bible: low; mid-C. 19-20; ob. Baumann.
calibash. A New South Wales farmers' term (ca. 1860-1900), thus in R. D. Barton's Reminiscences of an Australian Pioneer, 1917: 'In those days ... everyone [on the station] was paid by orders, 'calibashes' we used to call them, drawn on himself by the person paying. The townships all followed the same system.' Prob. ex some Aborigine word.
calicate is incorrect for calcyate. O.E.D.
calico. Thin, attenuated; wasted. Coll.: C. 18-20; ob. N. Bailey, Colloquies of Erasmus, 1725; Sala, 1861.
calico (sense 2); 'cad'; trade; ca. 1885-1910. Ware. Ex coll. Fr. calicots, a countess-jumper.
calidifly. Incorrect for calidifly; C. 17. O.E.D.
California or Californian. Gen. in (-ns) pl. A gold piece: from ca. 1860; ob. by 1915; now almost †. H., 3rd ed. Ex the gold-fields rush (1849) and wealth of California.

California. A red, a hard-dried, herring: from ca. 1850; ob. Actually, Scottish herrings, the name coming from the Californian gold-discoveries. Cf. Atlantic ranger.
calix, calyx. 'Distinct (but cognate) words, though now usually confused by writers on botany,' W.
calk. See caulk.—2. To throw: Eton College, C. 19-20, ob.
calkes. 'Literate spelling of calix', O.E.D.
call, n. The time when the masters do not call 'absence': Eton coll.: C. 19-20.
call, v. To beg through (e.g. a street): ca. mid-C. 18-20. Banfieldy-Moore Carew, 'I called a whole street.' Ex the v.1, to call, to call at a house to beg; which is S.E.—2. (Nearly always in passive.) Abbr. call to the bar: legal: from ca. 1880. Dickens in Sketches by Boz.—3. To blame: lower classes' coll.: late C. 19-20. 'Don't call me sir, if I'm a bit clumsy at first.' Ex call down, q.v., or call names.
call have the. To be in the most demand: from ca. 1840; coll.; by 1880, S.E.
call a go. See call it a day.
call down. To reprimand: late C. 19-20; coll. Cf. † S.E. call down, to denounce.
call in. (At makes it v.t.) To visit a place incidentally: coll.: from ca. 1700.
call it a day. To state one's decision to go no further, do no more; rest content, e.g. with one's gain or loss. Occ. call it a night, if night lends point to the location, as in James Spenser, Limey Breaks In, 1934, 'There were at least sixty pounds [£60] there, and I quickly collared the lot and called it a night.' C. 20; coll. Perhaps ex low call a go, to change one's stand, alter one's tactics, give in: mid-C. 19-20. H., 1st ed.: itself prob. ex orilbage.
call it eight bells! A nautical c.p. serving as an excuse for a drink before noon, before which hour it is not etiquette to take liquor: C. 20. Ware.
call of, within. Near. From ca. 1700; coll. soon S.E.
call one for everything under the sun. To abuse thoroughly, vilify vigorously: coll.: late C. 19-20. Cf. the C. 17-early 19 (then dial.) call, to abuse, vilify.
call one's bluff. See bluff, call one's.
call air and something else. To address as sirrah; hence, to speak contemptuously to: coll.: ca. 1600-1800.
call the game in. To cease doing something; to admit one has had enough: New Zealand coll.: from ca. 1912.
call upon, have a. To have the first chance of or with. Orig. (—1888) U.S.; anglicised ca. 1895, but never very gen. Coll.
calla. Incorrect for the white arum (Ethiopian lily): 1870. O.E.D.
calles. A cloak; a gown: c. of ca. 1670-1840. Coles; B.E. Ex ?
callers. The correct form of kollas.)

Calico-Layla, the. The Egyptian Labour Corps: military: 1914-18. Ex kam laya, kam yom (how many nights, how many days), ‘the droning chant of the men leading camels on the march’ (F. & Gibbons).

*calip (C. 19) or kelp (C. 18-19). A hat: ca. 1750-1850. John Fowler. Cf. culpo(k), a Turkish and Tartar felt cap (recorded 1813); any oriental or exotic cap. (S.O.D.)

Camel's Entire. The Fourteenth Foot: from ca. 1835 to ca. 1880. Sir Harry Calvert was its Colonel in 1806-26 and, when Adjutant General, he had three entire battalions maintained. The name was suggested by the earlier (from ca. 1770) Calvert's entire, which, as in Tomlinson's Strand Pastoral, 1780, meant liquor, esp. if malt, Calvert being a maker of malt liquors.

Camels gone to grass. Spindle shanks, meagre calves. Late C. 17-20 (ob.); coll. Ray, 1678, ‘His calves are gone down to grass.’ A late C. 18-19 variant is veal will be cheap, calves fall (Grose, 2nd ed.).

Calves’ heads, there are many ways of dressing. I.e. of doing any, but esp. a foolish thing. C. 19-20; ob.

Calves’ heads are best hot. A jeering apology for one who sits down to eat with his hat on; coll. C. 19-20.

Calves’ (or even calves) liver. Calf’s liver: a frequent eating-house catalogue: mid-C. 19-20.

call. (Eton College) the goal line in football. Not recorded before 1864. Ex the L. word.

calyciform. Incorrect for calyciform, as calyx is for calicle: late C. 18-20. O.E.D.


Cam roads. ‘Retreat to Cambridge by way of a change,’ Egan’s Grose: Oxford University: ca. 1820-40.

Camrachas, the. The 79th—from 1881 the Cambridge—Highlanders: military: C. 19-20. Ex Old Cia Ma Tha (lit., old how-are-you), the nickname of its first colonel, Sir Alan Cameron. F. & Gibbons.

Cambridgeshire Death-trap, the. The Surrey Canal: Cambridge (London): ca. 1870-1900. Ware. Ex the number of children that, playing on its crumbling banks, were drowned there.


Cambridgeshire oak. See Cambridge oak.


came up! Come up! London cabmen to their horses: ca. 1890-1916. Ware.

came (often come) up, before you. Before you joined up: military o.p. by an experienced to bumptious young soldier: 1916-18. B. & P. See also at before you came up.


Camel Corps, the. The infantry: jocular military of 1915-18. Because they were so heavily laden, B. & P.

camel night. Guest night on a warship: naval: late C. 19-20. Bowen. ‘Why? Perhaps because, on that night, one did not ‘get the hump’, for lucea a non lucendo etymologies are fairly common in s.


cameleon. See chameleon (B.E.).


camelia. A frequent mistake (C. 18-20) for camellia: cf. fuschia for fuchsia.


camel’s complaint. The ‘hump’, low spirits. From ca. 1870; ob.


—2. Turkish, or Egyptian, cigarettes: New Zealand soldiers: in G.W. Ex their odour.

camera obscura. The posterior (—1900) face tious. Perhaps ex U.S.

Camronians. The 26th Regiment of Foot, British Army (now the 1st Battalion of Scottish Rifles). C. 18-20 military coll.: ? ob. Ex Richard Cameron, whose religious followers espoused the cause of William the Third.


cami. Abbr. camisole: from ca. 1900; shop and women’s. Also cammy and cam. Cf.:

—cam-knicks. Abbr. cami-knickers (1916): from ca. 1917; shop and women’s.

camisa, camiscia. See camisa.

—camister. A clergyman: c. (—1851). Ex L. camais, an abb, after minister; cf., however, camister, 2.

camouflage. Disguise; pretense, ‘eye-wash’: ex military j., itself ex Parisian s. camouflage, a person’s description by the police (i.e. standard-French signalement), and camouflage, to disguise. Also as v. ‘Naturalised with amazing rapidity early in 1917’, W. G. B. Shaw, ‘I was in khaki by way of camouflage’, The Daily Chronicle, March 5, 1917 (W.). For its military senses, see, e.g., B. & P.

camp. To sleep or rest in an unusual place or at an unusual time (—1885): Australian coll.—2. Hence, ‘to stop for a rest in the middle of the day’, Morris: idem: 1891. Occ. as a n.—3. To prove superior to: Australian: 1886, C. H. Kendall; very ob. Morris. Perhaps ex the S.E. camp, to contend, and camping, warfare.

camp, adj. Addicted to ‘actions and gestures of exaggerated emphasis . . . Prob. from the Fr.’, Ware; pleasantly or, in manner, affected: London streets’ (—1909) > by 1920. Uranian. (Perhaps rather ex the C. 19-20 dial. camp or Kemp, unouth, rough; see esp. the E.D.D.—2. Whence, objectionable; (slightly) disreputable; bogus: Society: from ca. 1930.—
camp, go to. To go to bed; lie down to rest: Australian coll., from ca. 1880. Also have a camp, to rest for a while. Cf. camp, v. 2.
camp, take into. To kill. From ca. 1880. orig. U.S.; ob. (Mark Twain.)
camp-stool brigade. The early waiters outside a theatre, etc.; coll., from ca. 1880.
campaign cost. A late C. 17 mode in men's dress; orig. military and S.E.; then loosely and coll.: the word > † ca. 1750.-2. In C. 18 c., a tattered cloak worn to move compassion. A New Catching Dict., 1725.
campainaloger. Incorrect for campanologer: C. 19-20. O.E.D.
Campbell's academy. The hulks. Ca. 1770-1820; c.: then low. A Mr. Campbell was the first director. George Parker, 1781; Grose.
can back, take the. See take the can back.
can, in the. See 'Moving-Picture Slang', § 6.
can do. I can (do it); can you (do it)?: 'pidgin': mid-C. 19-20.—2. Hence, all right ! military: late C. 19-20.
can I help you with that? A non-aristocratic c.p. (1805; ob.), implying 'I'd like some of that.' Ware: 'When said to the fair sex the import is different.'
can it! Be quiet! Stop talking: from ca. 1918; ex U.S.
can you say uncle to that? A dustmen's c.p. (—1909), in which say uncle = reply.' Ware notes that the c.p. answer is yea—I can. Perhaps there is a pun on dust-bins.
Canack. See Canuck.
canadé. A Canadian canoe: Oxford undergraduates (—1909); ob. Ware. By 'Oxford-ar'.
canadé. A drink from a can: rare: C. 17 jocular coll. Histro-Mastix, 1610. 'And now, my maisters, in this bravadoe, | I can read no more without Canadé. | Omenes. What ho! some Canadé quicklie!' (O.E.D.) ? can + d'eau, macaronic for a can of water, the water being eau de vie.
canaller. One who works or lives on a canal-boat (1864); a canal-boat (1887); coll.: mostly U.S. (O.E.D.)
*canakin. A variant of canniken, -kin, q.v.
Coles's spelling.
Canaries, the. The Norwich City 'soccer team: sporting: late C. 19-20.; ex yellow jerseys.
canary-bird. See preceding, senses 1-4.
cancer, catch or capture a. (Rowing, university) 'catch a crab'. Coll., ca. 1850-1900. Hood in Pen and Pencil Pictures, 1857. Ex L. cancer, a crab.
candle, not able or fit to hold a, followed by to. Not fit to be compared with; 'not in the same street' (q.v.). From ca. 1640; a col., that was S.E. by 1800. Developed from the affirmative form of the phrase (to help as a subordinate): C. 15-18 and S.E.
candle, sell or let by inch of. To sell or let, have to do anything, under fantastic or trivially precise conditions. Coll.: from ca. 1650; S.E. after ca. 1750. Ex an auction at which bids are received only while a small piece of candle remains burning. (Variant: by the candle.)
candle, the game is not worth the. Of any activity not worth the cost or the trouble; coll., from ca. 1650; in C. 18-20, S.E. Ex the playing of cards.
candle at both ends, burn one's or the. See burn one's candle.
candle-ends, drink off or eat. Lit. and fig., thus to express devotion while drinking a lady's health: ca. 1800-1640. The O.E.D. gives as S.E., but this is prob. because its users are Shakespeare, Fletcher, Ben Jonson: orig., it was prob. coll.
candle-keeper. (Winchester College) A privileged senior not a prefect: C. 19-20, ob.
candle-shop. A Roman Catholic chapel, or Ritualistic church—from the plentitude of lights', Ware; Low Churchmen's (—1690).
candle to the devil, hold or set a. To be actively evil: C. 19-20; coll.; the earlier sense (mid-C. 15-18), with before instead of to, is to placent with a candle, i.e. to treat the devil as a saint. The two senses tend to overlap.
candle-waster. One who studies, one who dissipates, late at night; coll.: late C. 16-20; rare after C. 17. Shakespeare in Much Ado about Nothing.
candles, see. See see stars.
candy. Drunk: mid-C 18-early 19. Rare outside of Ireland. Grose, 1st ed., 1788. B. E. A balliff, process-server: Northern, from 1844; ob. Ex an 1844 army of eejitarians among whom were a few 'candymen' or hawkers of sweets; the term spread rapidly.

candy-slinger. A vendor of toffees that he has pulled into wisps: gratters': C. 20. Philip Allingham, Cherryjack, 1834.

*can. A thievish 'jimmy', q.v.: C. 20 c. Charles E. Leach, can. (Gen. in passive.) To punish (e.g. with C.B.): military: G.W. (F. & Gibbons.)—2. To damage considerably, to shell heavily: id.: id. (Ibid.)—3. Hence, to treat badly, e.g. a motor-car; from 1918.


cannibal. Doggerel verses: jocularly pedantic coll.: 1872. Ex L. caneis, a dog, O. E. D.

canine. A dog: jocular coll.: from 1869; ob. 
canister. The head: from ca. 1790; mainly pugilistic; ob. Moncrieff, 1821, 'I've nobb'd him on the canister.'—2. See canister-cup.—3. A clergyman; a preacher: London streets (— 1909). Ware proposes derivation ex a preacher surnamed Kynman (or even Kynaston); more prob. a corruption of canister, q. v.

canister-cap. A hat: from ca. 1820. Ca. 1870 it was abbr. to canister.

*caned. Tijwy: C. 20 c. and low s. Charles E. Leach. A G.W. military variant was canned up (F. & Gibbons).

*cank; in C. 17, occ. canke. Dumb: from ca. 1670: c. >, in C. 18, s.; >, in early C. 19, dial.; ♠ by 1885. Coles, 1870; B. E.; Grose. Extant in dial. is cank, to galile, chaffer, gossip.

*cannaken, -kin. An occ. variant of canikken, .kin, q.v.

cannibal. C. 17-18 coll. : 'a cruel rigid Fellow in dealing', B. E. Ex lit. S. E. sense.—2. (Cambridge University) A College's second boat that beats, i.e. 'bumps', its first, or a third that beats its second: from ca. 1880. Earlier (— 1864), a training boat for freshmen, i.e. a boat racing in 'sloggers' also its row. In the former sense, cannibalism is pumped-on, while in the latter cannellipull is jocularly corrupted.

*cannikin, kannikin. The plague: c. of ca. 1670-1820. Coles, 1870; Holme; B. E. * etymology: perhaps cognate with S. E. canker.


*cannot (gen. can't) seem to. Seem (to be) unable to; be apparently unable to; cannot, apparently: coll. (and ecart.) C. 20. Thus Kathleen Norris in The Passing Show, Dec. 6, 1933, 'I must be nervous this afternoon. I can't seem to settle down to anything.' Careless thinking, perhaps via I cannot, it seems, do (something or other) and I don't seem to be able to.

canoë, paddle one's own. To be independent, Orig. (1829) U.S., angleised ca. 1875: coll. (O. E. D. Sup.)

canoë it. To travel, or go, in a canoe: coll.: from ca. 1880 in U.S., soon adopted in England.


canoneer. One skilled in canoe law, i.e. a canoeist. Ca. 1640-1680: 'jocular coll. after canoeerer. Baxter, 1669, 'We turn this Canon against the Canoneere.' (O. E. D.)

canoondle, v.t. and i. Fondle; bill and coo. Coll. Orig. (— 1859) U.S., thoroughly angleised by G. A. Sala in 1804. Perhaps ex canny, gentle, on fieryoodle; but cf. the Somersetshire canoodle, a donkey, which may be noodle (fool) intensified.—2. As also n., though canoodling (Sala, 1850) is more gen.—3. To coax: from ca. 1870; ob. —4. At Oxford University, ca. 1860-70, to propel a canoe. By a pun on canoe.—4. To make off; C. 20; ob. Manchoon.

canoodler. A persistent bills and cooer. From ca. 1860. See canoodle, 1.

canooer, -er. Sol. (— 1887) for connaisseur. Baumann.


Can is the 'secret' speech of the underworld. This word cant dates from ca. 1700—canting is much earlier—and was long contemptuous and almost coll., as is the v., which dates from ca. 1600; likewise canter, canting. See my Stang; Grose, P.; O. E. D.; F. & H.; and Weeckly.

*can't. In c. (vagrants'), both food (— 1800) and (— 1839) a gift (see cant of togs).—2. (Pugilistic) a blow: coll.; from ca. 1750. Ex S. E. sense: a toss, a throw.

*can't, v. In c., v.i. and t.: to speak; to talk: mid-C. 16-19. Harman.

can't. Abbr. cannot, the C. 20 form of can not: coll.; C. 18 20.

can't a slug into your bread(-)room! Drink a dram! Nautical: mid-C. 18-early 19. Grose, 2nd ed.

can't be did! See did, 3.

*can't of dobbin. A roll of ribbon: c. : ca. 1810-60. Vaux. See Dobbin.

*can't of togs. A gift of clothes: beggars' c. (— 1839). Brandon. Ware shrewdly remarks, 'The mode of begging for clothes affords a word to describe the present or benefit gained by canting.'

can't see a hole in or through a ladder. Of a person very drunk. From ca. 1855. 'Ducange Anglicus', 1st ed. Sometimes, and at least as early as 1882, 'a forty foot ladder (Ware).

*can't see it! I don't see why I should! no: non-aristocratic coll. (— 1909). Ware.

*can't show itself (or oneself) to. To be inferior to: lower classes': 1880; ob. Ibid.

can't you feel the shrimps? Don't you smell the sea? : Cockney c.p.: 1876; ob. Ib.


cantabank. A common or inferior singer of ballads: from ca. 1840; coll. Earlier, S.E. for a singer upon a platform. Ex It. cantambenco.

cantankerous. Cross-grained, ill-humoured; scarily self-willed; quarrelsome. Coll.: ♠ coined
by Goldsmith in *She Stoops to Conquer*, 1772; Sheridan, *The Rivals*. Perhaps, says O.E.D., ex M.E. *contak*, contention, after canter(e); II., 3rd ed., suggests a corruption of contentious; W. thinks that the word may be of Irish formation (as suggested by O.E.D.).—2. Also, adv. with *-ly*, abstract n. with *-ness.*


canteen eggs. A gas attack: military: 1917-18. "The ago of eggs used at the canteen was not guaranteed" (F. & Gibbons).

canteen-keeper. See canteen.

canteen medal. A beer stain on one's tunic; military: from ca. 1875. —2. A good-conduct medal: military: late ca. 19–20. F. & Gibbons. Many of those who wore it were hard drinkers—but they had even harder heads.


canteen rat. 'An old soldier who constantly hangs about by the canteen, in order to be treated': military coll.: C. 20. B. & P.


canter. See canteen crew.


Canterbury tale or *oec. story*. A story long and tedious: from ca. 1540; at first coll., but soon S.E. Latimer, 1549; Turberville, 1579; Gross, 1st ed. (Apperson.) Ex the long stories told by pilgrims proceeding to Canterbury.


Canuck, oec. *Canack, (a)muck*. A Canadian: in England, from ca. 1915. Orig. (1850) a Canadian and American term for a French Canadian, which, inside Canada, it still means. Etymology obscure: perhaps *Canada + uc* (tuq), the Algonquin n.-ending; W., however, proposes, I think rightly, ex *Canada* after *Chinook*.—2. Hence, a Canadian horse (or pony): coll.: U.S. (1800) >, ca. 1920 anglicised. (O.E.D. Sup.)

*canvas, receive the.* To be dismissed: C. 17, coll. Shirley in *The Brothers*. Cf. get and give the bag or the sack, q.v.


*canvas town.* A mushroom town: coll., from ca. 1850; Dickens, 1853.—Hence, 2, the Volunteer Encampment at Wimbledon (not since ca. 1905) or Bisle where the National Rifle Association meets.

*canvas, cold.* See *cold-canvas.*

*canvas(s)man, (sailor)* a sailor's canvas trowsers: coll.: C. 19–20, ob.


*cap, v.* (University and Public School) to take off one's cap or hat in salutation of: late C. 16–20, ob. Coll., S.E. by 1700. '... To cap a follow', *Gradus ad Cantabrigiam*, 1803.—2. In e., to take on a oath: late C. 17–early 19. B.E.; Gross.

*cap, not to have come back for one's.* (Of an aviator) to have been killed: military: 1918. Manchon.

*cap, put on one's considering or thinking.* To think, take time to think: coll., from ca. 1690.


*cap after it, fling or throw one's.* To do something that is no longer of use, esp. when a project or a business is past hope. Coll.: late C. 17–19. B.E.

*cap at, cast one's.* 'To show indifference to, give up for lost': C. 16–17; coll. In proverbial form: *cast one's cap into the wind.*

*cap at, set one's.* (Of women only) to try, and keep trying, to gain a man's heart—or hand. Coll., from ca. 1770. Goldsmith, Thackeray. Ex navigation: cf. Fr. *mettre le cap sur* (W.).


*cap be made of wool, if his or your.* As sure as his cap is made of wool, i.e. indubitably: C. 17–18; coll.


*cap on nine hairs, (with his),* Jaunty or jovial, the cap being worn at an extreme angle: naval: late C. 19–20. Bowen.

*cap, or cast, one's skin.* To strip naked: C. 19:20 (ob.) e.

*cap set, have one's.* Variant: *have (enough) under one's cap.* To be drunk: coll.: C. 17–18. *Cf.*


*cap the quadrangle.* C. 18 university: (of undergraduates) ' to cross the area of the college cap in hand, in reverence to the Fellows who sometimes walk there', Gross, 2nd ed.


*Cape, the.* The Cape of Good Hope: coll.: > S.E.; from ca. 1660.—2. Hence, Cape Town: 1828 (Pettman); † by 1860.—3. And Cape Colony: coll.; from ca. 1845.—4. And, even, likewise coll. (—1913), South Africa in gen. Pettman.


*Cape doctor, the.* A strong S.E. wind: Cape Colony coll.; C. 19–20. 'In the earlier days... when the Cape was used by Anglo-Indians as a sanatorium, they were wont to term these winds the *Cape Doctor* and they still retain the name,' Pettman, 1913.
CAPE FLYAWAY


Cape Horn. double. See double Cape Horn.


Cape smoke. A brandy manufactured in nearly all the vine-growing districts of the Colony, Pettman: South African coll.: 1848, H. H. Methuen, Life in the Wilderness. Described in 1879 as 'a poison calculated to burn the inside of a rhinoceros'. Pettman. It is of a cloudy colour.

Cape Stiff. Cape Horn: nautical: mid-C. 19–20. Bowen. Because, to a sailing ship, it was stiff work to beat round. The.

Cape Turk, not to have rounded. See Turk, not to .


caper. A doddle, device, performance: coll., orig. (— 1851) low. The London Herald, March 23, 1861, "He'll get five years penal for this little caper," said the policeman. Ex the S.E. senses and cf. play the giddy goat, for ultimately caper is the L. caper, a goat.—2. Whence, a chorister boy; a ballet-girl: low: mid-C. 19–20; ob. Mayhew (O.E.D.).


caper (up) on nothing, cut a: o. cut capers . . . Like cut caper sauce, = to be hanged: low coll., C. 18–19. Hanging has many synonyms, some much grimmer than these.

caper-debswoe, o. caperdochy (as in Heywood, 1600) or cappadochio. Stocks; a prison. Low: late C. 16–17.

capital. Excellent: coll., from ca. 1760; S.E. after ca. 1820. Often as exclamation. Ex capital, impatient. Cf. the tendency of awful, capital, work. To commit a capital offence: o. or low; from ca. 1830; † by 1920.

capital out of make. To turn to account. From ca. 1850; coll. almost imm. S.E.

capitation drugget. Cheap and inferior drugget: coll., late C. 17–18. Ex the capitation tax on this clothing-material. B.E.

capevi, capivy. Sol. for balasi copasih, a popular doddle for goonrashes. From ca. 1830.

capevy, cry. To be persecuted to death, or near to it: sporting s., from ca. 1840; ob. Orig. a hunting term, as in Surtees, Hanbury Cross, 1843.


Cf. captu.
CARDS, ON THE

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CARDS, ON THE


card, v. To torture with a boon-card: from ca. 1550; coll., passing to S.E. In C. 10, an Irish political diversion. *The Scots Observer*, 1889, 'to card a woman's hide'. Ob. The n. is *carding*.

-card, a* cooling. Anything that cools enthusiasm: ca. 1570-1750; coll. Ex an obscure card-game.

-car, a* leading. An example or precedent: coll.: C. 17-19. B.E.

-car, one's* best. A last resort; more gen., one's best plan or action. Coll.: C. 19-20.

card, speak. the. To speak precisely, most accurately: Coll.: C. 17-20; S.E. in C. 19-20. Shakespeare in *Hamlet*, 'We must speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us.'

card, that's a* sure. That's a safe device or expedient, or one likely to bring success; also of such a person. C. 16-20; coll. *Thesaurus, an Intertude*, ca. 1637; B.E.


card of ten, brag or face it out with a. To assume a bold front: ca. 1540-1700; coll. Ex cards; a card of ten pips being none too high.

cardiography. Cardiography: incorrect: from ca. 1870. O.E.D.


cardinal is *come*, the. A variant of *card* is . . . ,

-q.v. Gros, 3rd.

-Cards. Adrian Quiet, the Australian lawn-tennis player (b. 1932—), who is very fond of bridge.


cards, get one's. See also books, get one's.

cards, have or go in with good. Reasonably to expect success: late C. 16-18: coll., > S.E. in C. 17.

cards, on the. The Possible; almost probable. Coll. ‡, by 1880, S.E.; gen. from 1840, when popularised by Dickens; in use earlier, being adumbrated by Smollett in 1749. Opp. to out of the cards, which lasted only ca. 1810-70. Perhaps ex cartomancy (O.E.D.).
cards . . . play one's. With badly, well, etc. To act clumsily, cleverly, etc. From ca. 1640; coll. soon S.E.
cards, show one's. To disclose one's power or plans: from ca. 1580; coll. soon S.E.
cards, throw up (or down) one's. To abandon a project, a career, etc. From late C. 17; coll.
Cardwell's men. Ca. 1860-90, military coll.: officers promoted not by purchase but on merit (and
still, inevitably, by influence). Edward, Viscount Cardwell (1815-80) was in 1866 appointed Secretary
for War; he thereupon reorganized the British Army. (D.N.B.)
care a pin, farthing, rap, a damn, three damns, a
tinker's curse, a fig—not to. These phrases are all
coll., resp. — 1633, 1709, 1800, 1785, 1760, 1830, 1850; in C. 20, the first three and the last one are
all S.E. There are others: e.g. . . . a button, a
chip, a cent (mostly U.S.).
—care-grinder, gen. preceded by vertical. The
treadmill: o. 1: ca. 1860-1860.
care if I . . . I don't. I am disposed to . . .
From ca. 1840; coll., now on verge of S.E.
care if I do, I don't. Yes, all right. Orig.
(— 1870), U.S., anglicised ca. 1900. (Gen. in
acceptance of a drink.)
careening; careened. Physic-taking; forced to
take physic: naval: ca. 1820-60. Bce. Ex lit.
S.E. sense.
careful. Mean in money matters: coll.: from
c. 1890.
F. & Gibbons. Perhaps a corruption of carpenter
influenced by dial. carf, a notch in wood.
cargo. Contemptuous for a person: C. 17; coll.
Money: c. and low, late C. 17-18. B.E. For
semantics, cf. caraven, 2, q.v.— 3. (Winchester
College) a hamper from home: from ca. 1840;
ob.
cargo, despatch one's. To ease oneself (of the
major need): euphemistic, yet rather objectionable
cargo (or C.) Bill. A R.N. Reserve officer serving
Before the G.W. he used to be considered a 'passen-
ger'.
Call the caretaker's in charge! This is a quiet
sector (of the line): military c.p.: 1915-18
(Western Front). This imaginary German was oc.
called Minnie's husband (see minnie) or Hans the
grenadier (ex the bombing-parties). F. & Gibbons.
Carlo Khan. Charles James Fox. Ex his
magnificence. (Dawson.) Cf. Young Cob.
Burns uses it of Satan. Ex the Fr. revolutionary
song O.S.T. (O.S.D.)
carmine. Blood: sporting (— 1860); † by 1900.
carnal. Sol. for cardinal: mid-C. 16-20. See
also cardinal.
O.E.D.
carney, carney. Seductive flattery: suave hypocr.
isy. From ca. 1820; coll. (See carneying).
More common as v.t. and i.
carn(s)ly. v. To coax, wheedle inauspiciously;
coll. (— 1811) and dial. † ex It. carne, flesh. Cf.
the n. and the next two entries.
carn(s)ly. Sly; cunning, artful: low and milit.
tary (— 1914). F. & Gibbons. Ex the n.; cf
carriage. See Queen's bus.
carriage-company. People—orig. merchants and tradesmen—having their own carriages: coll. > S.E.; from ca. 1830; ob. Thackeray, 1855, "No phrase more elegant than . . . 'seeing a great deal of carriage-company'": (O.E.D.)
carried. Married: rhyming s. (> 1909); ob. Ware.
carrier. in († late C. 17—C. 18—early 19 c., is a criminal band's spy or look-out. A New Canting Dict., 1725.
carrier pigeon. (Racing) a person running hither and thither with 'commissions'. From ca. 1850. In C. 20, however, it is also racing s. for a thief, according to Manchon: but I suspect an error here. >—2 in., a victimiser of lottery-office keepers: mid-C. 18—early 19 C. G. Parker, 1781.
carrion-case. A shirt; a chemise. Low: C. 19—20; ob.
carrion-nest. A place where inferior meat is sold: ca. 1720—1800. Swift.
carric. Incorrect for carrera, coracle. O.E.D.
carrot. Take a. A low and insulting c.p. (> 1874); ob. H., 5th ed. Orig. said to women only and of a scabrous implication: contrast have a banana /, the C. 20 innocent phrase that soon came, in certain circles, to be used obscenely. Cf. the ob. French Et ta saur, aime-t-elle tes radis ?
carrot-nob. See carrots. — carrot-pated. See carrot.
carroty. carrots. Red hair: coll.: Wesleyan père seems to have been, in 1856, the first to print the term, as B.E. was the first to record it of a red-haired person; as the latter, a rather uncouth nickname, with the C. 20 variant, carrot-nob (Manchon).
carroty. Having red hair: from ca. 1740; coll. >, ca. 1780—1800, S.E. Smollett in Roderick Random, Thackeray in the Newcomes. Mark Lemon, the mid-Victorian humorist, noted of the Greeks that all the Graces were Xipharas. Earlier was carrot-pated (B.E.), likewise coll. (Often misspelt carotty.)
carry. The distance for which an occupied stretcher is, or has, to be carried: Royal Army Medical Corps coll. in G.W.—and since, Philip Gosse, Memoirs of a Camp-Follower, 1894.
carry a (great) stroke. To have, wield much influence: ca. 1640—1800; coll. > S.E.
carry an M under one's girdle. See girdle, ne'er an . . .
carry coals. To endure, put up with an insult or an injury: late C. 16—17: coll. >, by 1620, S.E. Shakespeare, in Romeo and Juliet, 'Gregory, o' my word, we'll not carry coals.'
carry corn. To behave well in success: mid-C. 19—20. gen. as: '. . . doesn't carry corn well'; Ex the behaviour of corn-fed horses. Doubtless adopted from dial. (E.D.D. records it for 1845) and at first mainly rural.
carry dog. See dog, put on.
carry Matilda. See Matilda.
carry me out and bury me decently! An exclamation indicative of the auditor's incredulity or, occ., displeasure: coll. from ca. 1780. After ca. 1870, gen. abbr. to carry me out! Post-1850 variants, all † by 1930, were carry me out and leave me in the gutter, carry me upstairs, carry me home, and whoa, carry me out: cf. let me lie and good night, q.v. (Ware.)
carry on. To behave conspicuously; frolic; flirt. Coll.: from ca. 1850. Whyte-Melville, 1856, 'Lady Carmine's eldest girl is carrying on with young Thrifless.' Prob. nautical in origin: ex carrying on sail. See carryings-on. —2. To endure hardship; show quiet and constant fortitude: a C. 20 coll. popularised by the G.W. An imperative, orig. a military order, then (1717) = go ahead!, continue!, esp. continue as you are now doing. Cf.: carry on or carry under. A c.p. slogan employed by old sailing-ship captains, 'whose crew was to clap on sail regardless of risk' (Bowen): C. 19—20; ob. Cf.:
carry on, Sergeant-Major! Go ahead; Oh, you do that! I've finished, you can do as you like: military (rarely among officers) c.p.: from 1915. B. & P., 'Often a lazy or incompetent officer's evasion, [it] was originally the Company Commander's order to his S.M.'
carry out one's bat. See bat.
carry-tale. A tale-bearer: ca. 1570—1840; coll. in C. 10, then S.E.
carry the banner. To tramp the road; be a tramp: vagrants' c., C. 20.
carry the can. To be reprimanded: naval: late C. 19—20. Bowen. Prob. suggested by carry the key, q.v. In the form carry the can back it means, since ca. 1820 in the R.A.F.: to be made the scapegoat; to do the dirty work while another person gets the credit.
carry the key. A e. pun on cag, carry the, q.v.: 1812, Vaux; † by 1890. Whence distiller, walking, q.v.
carry the stick. Applied to the operation whereby a woman, in conversation, robs a well-dressed elderly, or drunk, man, and her male associate, masquerading as a detective, makes a fuss and enables her to depart. Scottish thieves': ca. 1890—1920. The London equivalent, same period, is to trip up.
carrying three red lights. Drunk: nautical: C. 20. Bowen, 'From the "Not under Control" signal'.
carryings-on. Conceivably behaviour; frolics; flirtation: from ca. 1840; coll. G. A. Sala, 1859. A much earlier coll. sense is: questionable proceedings, as in Butler, Hudibras, 'Is this the end to which those Carrying-ons did tend?' Cf. going-on.
cart, v.t. To defeat, surpas, do better than: Oxford and Cambridge University: from ca. 1860; † by 1954. To esp. as we carted them home, defeated them badly. Cf. the next entry.—2. To arrest: low Glasgow (—1934). Alastair Baxter; Alex. MacArthur & Kingsley Long. Gen. in the passive.—3. To hit vigorously at crickets: Public Schools'
from ca. 1800. W.l. in P.G. Wodehouse, A Prefect's Uncle, 1903: v.t. in id., Tales of St. Austin's, 1903.
cart, in the. Wrong; in the wrong; in a' fix.
Ex. A trundling and gymnastic performance: theatrical, from ca. 1849; ob.—2. Beer: in Tasmania, then slightly on the Australian continent: from ca. 1880. Ex the cascade water from which it was made: the firm that, at Hobart, makes it is known as the Cascade Brewery Company.
cascade, v. To vomit: low coll., from ca. 1780. Smollett's 'She cascaded in his urn', 1771, is only analogous; Grose, however, has it (2nd ed.).
*case. A bad crown-piece: c. and low, ca. 1835—1900. Brandon. Hence, the sum of five shillings: C. 20 low. Prob. ex Yiddish casey.—2. An eccentric person, a 'character', a 'cure'. Orig. (—1833) U.S., anglicised ca. 1850. H., 1st ed.—3. The female pudendum: C. 17 (e.g. in Fletcher's The Chances).—4. An unfortunate matter, end, as in 'I fear it's a case with him': from ca. 1864.—5. The certainty to fall in love: from ca. 1870, as it 's a case with them.' Miss Braddon, in To the Bitter End, 1872.—6. A love-affair: schoolgirls', from ca. 1880; ob. H., 2nd ed.—7. A 'love-affair' between two boys: Public Schools': C. 20.—8. See caso, 2.—9. Hence, occ., a water-closet: or low s. (—1864). H., 3rd ed.—10. In C. 20 racing c., a fool, a 'mug'. Wallace in The Twister.—11. (Westminster School) the discussion by 'seniors' and 'upper election' of a thrashing, likewise the tanning itself: from ca. 1860; ob.—12. That which is, in the circumstances, to be expected: coll. (—1924). O.E.D. (Sup.)—13. Often very loosely and unnecessarily used: C. 19—20. (See esp. Fowler; Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch also has written with effective and, one hopes, effectual caustica on the subject.)
case, v. In C. 20 c., to report (a prisoner) for slackness; punish with solitary confinement.—2. To spoil; delay inevitably: c. (—1934). James Spenser, 1934. 'Well, this cases things for a while. We'll have to lie low.'
*case. Abbr. in case (= to ensure against the possibility, or the fact, that): coll. : from ca. 1890.
case-fro. Variant for caso-fro. B.E. case-hardened. 'Tough': of one who is a hard case: both coll., the latter (orig. U.S.) from ca. 1860, the former from ca. 1700 and S.E. by 1800.
case-keeper. The keeper of a brothel: (t C. 19,) C. 20 c. See caso, 2.
† ex catch a crab.
case of pickles. An incident, esp. if untoward; a break-down, up: Coll.; from ca. 1870. † by 1920.
case of stump, a. (E.g. he is) penniless. Coll.: ca. 1870—1900. Cf. stumped.
case-vrow. C. 18—19; caso-fro, late C. 17—18. See caso, 2. The vrow is Dutch for a woman, the fro indicates German influence thereon.
casein(e). 'The correct thing'; punning the cheese, q.v. Rare. † by 1900. Charles Kingsley in a letter of May, 1866. The -ine form is incorrect.
case. A crown-piece; the sum of five shillings: c. (—1874). In C. 20, the same, but low racing, Ex Yiddish.
CASH

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cash, equal to. Of undoubted and indubitable merit. Coll.: from ca. 1840; orig. (—1835) U.S.
cash a dog. (Gen. as vbl.) To cash a cheque against non-existent funds: bank-clerks' (esp. Anglo-Irish): C. 20.
cash a prescription. To have a prescription made up. Coll.: from ca. 1880; ob.
cash in, v. and t. Settle a debt: pay: from ca. 1830; ob. Barham; Dickens, in Martin Chuzzlewift: Sals, 'They'll never cash up a farthing piece.'
cashed-in. Dead; killed; military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Ex cash in, 2, q.v.
cashel. Great Southern and Western of Ireland railway stock: money-market: from ca. 1878; ob. The line had, at first, no station at Cashel.
cask. A (small) brougham: ca. 1853–1900; Society. Less gen. than pill-box.
cask, bull the. See bull the cash.
cask, the. The Caínio, a low-class music-hall at Manchester (on the site now occupied by the Manchester Social Club); also known as Mr. Burton's Night School, because run by a Mr. Burton: mostly Mancunians: ca. 1890–1910. John o' London's Weekly, Oct. 13, 1934.—2. (cass.) See cash.
cast, at the last. At one's last chance or shift: ca. 1450–1750; coll.: by 1600, S.E. Ex dicing.
cast an optic. To look: sporting (—1699); slightly ob. Ware.
cast beyond the moon. To make wild guesses: coll. soon > S.E.: from ca. 1540; ob. Haywood.
cast-iron horns. See horrors in: the cast-iron.
cast from Sixth, the. The 8th City of London Rifles: military: C. Salto; F. & Gibbons—Ex endurance in training on Salisbury Plain.
cast—me—down. Cassidoy, i.e. French laven-
der: sol.: ca. 1580–1800. Gerard, in his famous Herbal (1597), speaks of the 'simple people' who 'do call it Castie me downe'.
cast stones against the wind. To work in vain: C. 17–18; coll. soon > S.E.
cast up one's accounts. See accounts.
castilian (of the Muse) and castillian (of Castile) are occ. confused: C. 17–20.
Peake in his comedy, Comfortable Lodgings, 1827.—


does a. See to do a cat.
*cat, flying. See flying-cat.

cat, grin like a Cheshire. See Cheshire cat.
cat, not room enough to swing a. Cramped for space; very small: coll. >, in late C. 19, S.E.; from ca. 1770. Smollett.
cat on hot bricks, like a. See hot bricks.
cat', s'elp (or 'telp)' the. A variant of bob, s'elp me, q.v.: low (— 1890); ob. F. & H. See also sweep.
cat, shoot the. To vomit: C. 19-20; coll. Lex. Bal., 1811; Marryat in King's Own, 1830, 'I'm currently inclined to shoot the cat.' A C. 17-18 variant, jerk the cat; a C. 17-20 ob. variant, whip the cat, as in Taylor the Water Poet, 1630.
cat, whip the. To indulge in a certain practical joke: C. 18-19; coll. In C. 17-18, draw or pull someone through the water with a cat, as in Jonson's Bartholomew Fair, 1614, in B.E., and in Grose: for an explanation of the origin of the phrases, see Grose.—2. (Orig. of tailors), to work at private houses: coll.; from ca. 1785; ob. Grose, 2nd ed.—3. To cry over split milk: Australian coll. (— 1910). C. J. Dennis.
cat', who ate or stole the. A c.p. against pilferers: C. 19-20; ob.; coll. Perhaps ex an actual incident.
cat, who shot the. A stock reproach to the Volunteers: from ca. 1850. Extant in O.T.C.'s.
cat, who shot the? A (Of married couples) to be constantly quarrelling: coll., from ca. 1660. B.E. has agree like Dog and Cat.
cat and I'll kill your dog, you kill my. An exchange of (the lower) social amenities: C. 19-20; coll. Cf. Scottish cat me, cat thee.
*cat-and-kitten hunting or sneaking. The stealing of quart and pint pots (see cat, n.; 7): c. (— 1850); ob. H.; 1st ed.
cat and kitten rig. The ca. 1810-60 form (Vaux) of the preceding.
cat and Mouse Act. 'The Prisoners (Temporary Discharge for Ill-health) Act of 1913 to enable hunger-strikers to be released temporarily': 1913, Punch, July 23. O.E.D. (Sup.)
cat and Mutton lancers. Militia: East London: 1870; † by 1920. Ware. They often drilled on Cat and Mutton Fields.
cat-burglar. A burglar that nimbly enters houses from the roof: from ca. 1919; coll.; S.E. by 1933. Cf. gavroche and dancer.


[Catatrophies. Most of those catatrophic usages—incorrectnesses, confusions, vagueunesses of sense—of the C. 16-mid-19 which appear in these pages are taken from the O.E.D.: this is not to say that I was ignorant of all or even most of them; but since it was the O.E.D. which reminded me of the catatrophes that I knew, I wish to ‘render unto Caesar’. Nevertheless, I have added a certain number that are not to be found in the O.E.D., nor in Webster.—See also ‘Solecism’, where I animadverted upon the interesting fact that an illiterate mistake is stigmatised as a solecism (or, in certain dictionaries, as a vulgarism), but a literate mistake is palliated as a catatrophy.]

[Catatombs, the. This name for the great multi-cellular dig-out in Northern France is inexcusable, despite the frequently held opinion.]

catalepsy. Incorrect for catalepsia, catalepsy: C. 16. O.K.D.

catamaron. ‘An old scrappy woman’, Grose, 3rd ed.: from not later than 1791. Whence the soon prevailing name—a cross-grained person, esp. if a woman; a vixenish old woman: coll. (—1833). MARRYAT; Thackeray, in The Newcomes, ‘What an infantile terror and catamaron!’? A corruption of cat ‘o’ mountain (as in Fletcher’s The Custom of the Country, 1618), which, in U.S., has, since ca. 1830, meant a shrew.

cataphract. A cataract: cataleptic: late C. 16–mid-17. O.E.D.

cataract. A black satin scarf worn by ‘commercialis’ for the surface and effect it offers to jewellery: ca. 1830–70. Ware.

catachrozophile. The tail, the end. Late C. 18–early 19, jocul. coll., as in Shakespeare, (Falstaff): ‘I’ll tickle your catachrozophone.’


catch. A person matrimonially desirable: coll.; anticipated by Dryden’s ‘The Gentleman had a great Catch of her, as they say’, and Jane Austen’s ‘on the catch for a husband’, the term > gen. only ca. 1820–45. (S.O.D.)—2. In c., C. 17–19, a prize, a booty.


catch the wind of the word. Quickly to apprehend (cf. catch on): orig. Irish. C. 19–20; ob.

*catch the sig.* To get 'done'; 'buy a pup': C. 20 racing c. John Morris: see Slang, p. 243.

catcher. To interrupt, "pull up", correct (a person): from ca. 1840; coll. till ca. 1900, then S.E. Dickens, in Barnaby Rudge, 'You catch me up so very short.'


catched. Caught: S.E. >, by 1800, sol.

catch in English for catch, as haves for have: C. 18–20.

catcher. In ball games, a catch; esp. knock up a catcher, q.v.: coll.: C. 20.

catcher, knock up a. See also knock up a catcher.

catching harvest. A dangerous or thorny obstacle on account of congested roads: coll.: C. 18–mid-19.

A New Cannyng Dict., 1725.

catchup (ca. 1000), catchup (1730). Incorrect, via slovenly pronunciation, for ketchup. O.E.D.; W. catchy. Attractive, esp. if vulgarly so: 1831; coll., as orig. were the senses: soon popular (e.g. of a tune), from ca. 1880, and tricky (as of examination questions), from ca. 1884. But from ca. 1880 all three meanings have been S.E. (S.O.D.)—2. Inclined to take an (esp. undue) advantage: (1890). Col., 1880–90. Sm. and Non-Ed. 1887; England, 1883. O.E.D.—4. Merry: Scots coll.: 1804, Tarrant, O.E.D.


category. Inferior. Second- or third-rate: military coll.: late 1915–18. F. & Gibbons, 'This is a category sort of road.' Ex the 1915-18 military j. category man, a man pronounced unfit for front-line service or for very heavy service elsewhere.


caterwaul. To make sexual love: late C. 18–20 (ob.); coll. until ca. 1700, then s. The vbl.n. caterwauling is more gen. Nashe; Congreve; Smollett, concerning the servant-maid in Humphry Clinker, '... junketing and caterwauling with the fellows of the country'.

catew, n. and adj. (A) queer (affair), (B) bad or inferior (thug). Low and Part'yare: from ca. 1840. The spelling is various. Ex It. catteino, bad.


Catherine or Catherine wheel, do a. To do a lateral somersault, a 'cart-wheel': coll., ca. 1850–1900.

catharin fashion. 'When People in Company Drink cross, and not going about from the Right to the Left ', B.E.: drinkers: late C. 17–18. Ex Gr. καθαρισμός, to drink. The early form of cat-
haring-fashion, q.v.


Catherine Hayes. A drink made of clarat, sugar, and nutmeg: ca. 1858–1900; Australian. Prob. ex the Irish singer so popular in Australia. Frank Fowler, 1859.

Catherine wheel. See Catharine wheel.

Catholic. Incorrectly, by Anglicans, pronounced carthusian ca. 1870–1910. John Gibbons (private letter, 1/5/36), Catholic for Roman Catholic is a catchphrase noticed as early as 1876 by Elisia Coles, whose English Dict. has not received the attention it deserves.

catcalls, catoller. A noisy fellow, either prating or foolish—or both. Early C. 19. Pierce Egan used it of a foolish betting man (1825).


Cat's. (Cambridge) St. Catharine's Hall; from ca. 1870. (Oxford) St. Catherine's Society; from 1900–i.e., this smithery or the stick and ш. Coll., 1836. Non-Col.; delegate Legality attained St. C.S.—and often as St. Cat's. Hence, Cat's man: a member of either college.


cats and dogs, rain. To rain hard: coll.: Swift adumbrated this coll. in 1710 and employed it in 1738 (date of printing; written ca. 1708); Shelley; Barham. C. 19 humorists often added pitchforks and shovel.


cat's foot, live under the. To be hen-pecked: coll.: late C. 17–19. Ray, 1678; Grose; Spurgeon. (Apperson.)

cat's head. The end of a shoulder of mutton: Winchester College, from ca. 1830; ob. Cf. dispair, q.v.


cat's neck, who shall hang the bell about the. Who will take the risk? C. 17–18 coll.: = bell the cat, q.v.

cat's nose of nine tails of all prices, he has. A late C. 18–early 19 low c.p. applied to the hangman. Grose, 3rd ed. (at cart).

cat's party. See cat-party.

cat's paw. A dupe: late C. 18–20; coll. until ca. 1820, then S.E. Cat's foot was so used a century earlier.

cat's pyjamas, the. Anything very good, attractive, etc.: American (—1920) anglicised by 1923 but † by 1933. Cf. the bee's knees.


cat's whisker. A thin wire for establishing contact on a crystal (wireless) set: from ca. 1920; ob.

cat's whiskers, the. A variant of the cat's pyjamas (see above): 1927, Dorothy Sayers in Unnatural Death; virtually †.

catin. See cat-skin.

catkin Earls. The three senior earls in the House of Lords: Parliamentary; from ca. 1860. The etymology is obscure: see F. & H.

catto. The male member of the. C. 17–early 18. Also, same period, a scamp; rogue, 'cullion'. The former sense, recorded in 1702, precedes the other by six years. Also an exclamation with later form gado. Ex the It. cazzo, the membro virile, the word has, in its different senses, several very English parallels.
catsoo'd. Drunk (1915-18); ex catsoo, a drink of beer at an estaminet (1914-18), the price—in the early days of the War—being quatre sous, approximately 2d. F. & Gibbons.
catnap. See catchup.
catching. vbl. n. 'Drawing a Fellow through a Pond with a Cat', B.E. ; late C. 17-19 ; coll. Cf. cat, (whip the), q.v.—2. A vomiting : C. 19-20, low: see cat, (shock the).—3. Running after harlots and near-harlots: late C. 17-early 19. See cat, n. cattle, a pejorative fairly strong term: mid-16-18, fairly mild (as in little cattle = women) in C. 19-20, applied to human beings: Gosson, 1579, 'Poets, and Pipers, and such peevish Catel' ; Shakespeare, in As You Like It, of boys and women; Evelyn, ... concubines, and cattell of that sort ; G. R. Sims, in The Dagonet Ballads, 'Queer cattle is women to deal with.' Strictly, S.E.; but the contemptuous usage makes the term analogous to collar. To it is the etymological kinship with cattles which prompted,—perhaps rather it determined,—the contempt. Note, too, that in the late C. 17-early 18, the word was wholly coll. in the sense recorded by B.E. : 'Cattle, Whores. Sad Cattle, Impudent Le wd Women ', with which cf. Evelyn's phrase, preceded as it is by a reference to ' Nelly ', i.e. Nell Gwyn. In C. 18-early 19, and cattle also meant gypsies, while in c. black cattle = liege ; in C. 19 low coll., small cattle = vermin, lie (Bau mann).
cauty. Spiteful and sly; gen. of women: from ca. 1885 ; coll. >, by 1910, S.E. Cattish, S.E. in the same sense, occurs a few years earlier. (S.O.D.)—2. Agile, smart; skilfully careful; Canadian (esp. lumbermen's) coll. : C. 20. John Beames.
cacus as a pejorative was, at first (say 1878-90), so close to being a collar as makes no difference. Its other senses, ex the U.S., have always been S.E. For this interesting and significant word see esp. the O.E.D., Thornton, Weekley, S.O.D.
cauge-pawed. Left-handed; coll. and dial. : mid-C. 17-20 ; ob. B.E., Gros of.cock, car. and caw-hand, also lefthy and ma(e)y.
caul, be born with a. To be born lucky; coll. : C. 17-20, ob. Bon Jenson; Dickens.
cauliflower. A clerical wig modish temp. Queen Anne; hence, v.i. and t., to powder a wig: both soon ?.—2. Whence, ' any one who wears powder on his head ', Bos : ca. 1820-40.—3. The female pudend : C. 18-19. See Gros; (1st ed.) for a witty, broad, and improbable origin.—4. The foaming top to (e.g. a tankard of) beer: from ca. 1870, ob. Ex Soote, where recorded as early as 1813: E.D.D. Contrast the Fr. un bock sans faux-col.—5. In pl., the 47th Regiment of Foot (after 1881, the North Lancashires); military: from ca. 1840. Ex its white facings. Known also as the Lancashire Lads.—6. Short for cauliflower ear: coll. : from ca. 1925.—7. A green, orange, or yellow lady with cauliflowers and other green-stuff that had come from the Channel Islands ; railwayman's: late C. 19-early 20.
caulk or caulking. A (short) sleep: nautical: from ca. 1820. Marryat. Perhaps ex.—2. A dram: nautical: from ca. 1800. Marryat. 'something to keep out the wet' or 'the damp'.
caulk, v. To sleep, esp. if surreptitiously: nautical: from ca. 1850. Cf. n., 1.—2. V.t., to cease, ' shut up ': nautical, from ca. 1880. W. Clark Russell (O.E.D.). Ex the lit. sense.—3. Also nautical: to copulate with: from ca. 1840. Cf. the M.E. cawk, (of birds) to tread, ex L. calcar.
caulk my wits—higher: derivation; nautical: (— 1887). Baumann. Cf. damn my eyes !
caulk up. To stamp, with one's spiked boots, on (a man): among Canadian lumbermen (playful little fellows) : C. 20. John Beames.
cause. 'A particular local organization, enterprise, mission, or church', O.E.D.: religious coll. (— 1893) >, ca. 1920, S.E. Ex make common cause (with).
causa. Because. In mid-C. 14-early 17, S.E.; ca. 1840-1780, coll.; thereafter, sol. (and dial.).
'cause why? or Why? Why the reason why; the reason. In C. 14-16, S.E.; 17-18 coll.; 19-20 dial. and, elsewhere, increasingly sol. As for 'cause alone, the pronunciation, as a sol., varies from cause through coz and cuz, to even cause.
causic Barebones. Thos. Bridges (fl. 1750-76), the dramatist and parodist. Dawson.
cautious. A person or a thing wonderful, unusual, or, esp. odd, eccentric: coll.: anglicised by Whyte-Melville in 1853 (Dickly Grand ; again in Good for Nothing) ex U.S. (— 1835). I.o. one with whom caution should be employed.—2. Hence, at Oxford, from 1865, a ' cure ', a 'character' ; and this has, in England, been the predominant usage, likewise coll.
cautions, the four. A mid-C. 18-early 19 a.p., explained thus by Gros; 1st ed. : ' I. Beware of a woman before.—II. Beware of a horse behind.— III. Beware of a cart sideways.—IV. Beware of a priest every way.'
cavalier. To play the cavalier, escort a lady; coll. : >, by 1890, S.E. : ca. 1890-1910.
cavality curdle. A curate that, in a large parish, rides a horse in the discharge of his duties: from early 1890's; coll. >, by 1920, S.E.; slightly ob. (O.E.D. Sup.)
cave. (Political) a small group of politicians seceding, on some special bill or cause, from their party; the assencion: 1886. (Cf. Adulterines.) Orig. case of9 Adulters—see L. Scand., 22.—2. Coll. abbr. Cavalier : ca. 1847—81. A. Beoma, in Songs, 1661.
cave, v.i. See cave i., 1.
CAVE

cave! Schoolboys'. If from Eton College, for 'beware!' Direct ex the L. word. From ca. 1760 (?).


cave in, vi. To yield, esp. when further opposition is futile or impossible; occ. cave. With in, coll.; without, s. Anglicised ca. 1855 ex U.S. (-1840) ex East Anglian dial., as is the v.t., to break down, smash, bash in; Anglicised ca. 1865; but cf. the S.E. case (16-20), to hollow (out), and cave in, to subside concavely (late C. 18-20)—2. (Political) to form a 'cave', a cabal: ca. 1880-1900. cave-man. A 'he-man', a rough and virile fellow: coll.: from ca. 1895. Hence cave-man stuff, rough treatment: C. 20. Cf. shirk, q.v.

cave of antiquity. 'Depot of old authors', Egan's Grose: Oxford University: ca. 1820-40. More prob., Cave of Antiquity, the Bodleian Library. cave out. (Gen. ppl. adj., caved out.) To come to an end, be finished; coll. Anglicised (-1910) ex U.S. 'From the metal ceasing in a tunnel', Ware.

caves is the Winchester College pronunciation of calves (of the legs). Wrench.

cavey. See cavy.

caviar(e). The obnoxious matter 'blackout' of foreign periodicals by the Russian Press Censor: from ca. 1888. St. James's Gazette, April 25, 1890, uses caviar(e) as a v.t. In Tzarist days, irreligious or socialistic matter; temp. Soviet, powerfully religious or insidiously capitalistic opinions. The word, a good example of literary s., is ob.

cavial. See cavy.

caving. See cavalling.

cavort. To prance (of horses); make a horse prance. Hence, to frisk, lit. and fig. Anglicised ca. 1900 ex (-1834) U.S.; coll.—rather low coll.—after ca. 1918. 'Perhaps cowboy perversion of cavel', W.


caw-handed, late C. 17-20 (B.E.); caw-pawed, late C. 18-20; both ob. Awkward. In dial., caw is a fool, whence caw-baby, an awkward or timid boy: E.D.D. Cf. cawdige-pawed, q.v.

cawful. 'A badly found ship: marine: 1876, the date at which Samuel Plimsoll (d. 1898) finally got the Plimsoll line incorporated in law; ob. A corruption, or rather a Cockey pronunciation, of coffin.

cawk. See caulk.

caxon, cahton and Caxton, (theatrical) a wig, C. 19-20, ob., is perhaps a corruption, after Caxton the printer's name, of caxon, which = an old weather-beaten wig, says Grose (1st ed.), but 'a kind of wig', says S.O.D.; the latter gives it as S.E. as it was. *caox, in C. 16 c. is cheese. As good as cax, easy to do, a 'sure thing': Vaux. Cf. (the) cheese.


casemate. See casuality, n.


celebrate, v.i. To drink in honour of an event or on; hence, to drink joyously: C. 20; coll. Ex S.E. celebrate (e.g. an occasion).

CEPHALEOMANCY

Celestial. A Chinese: from ca. 1860; coll.: by 1880, S.E.—if jocular, for otherwise the word is pure journalese, which has been described as 'not the language written by journalists but that spoken by politicians'.—2. A jocular coll. applied to a turned-up nose: from ca. 1865. It points to heaven. Cf. star-gazer, q.v.—3. See Celestials, 2.

celestial poultry. Angels: low coll.: from ca. 1870; virtually †.

Celestials. The 97th Regiment of Foot, which in 1881 became the West Kents: military: from ca. 1830. Ex its sky-blue facings.—2. (Rare in singular; celestials.) Occupants of the gallery: 1884, The Referee, Oct. 5; ob. Ware. On the gods.

celestial poultry. Angels: low coll.: from ca. 1870; virtually †.

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Celestial poultry. Angels: low coll.: from ca. 1870; virtually †.
A & L


chaffing-crib. A man's 'den'; the room where he receives his intimates. Moncrieff in Tom and Jerry, 1821. Low coll.; ↑ by 1900.


chaff. 'Chafed' = see chafe.

chaf. Tea. In C. 17, among merchants and in middle-class society, chaff was oc. used in England; in C. 19, revived among soldiers as chaf, it > s. Ex Chinese.

chain ? who pulled your ? Who asked you to interfere ? a (low) c.p.: from ca. 1910; ob. Ex the noise resultant on pulling a w.c. flushing-chain.

chain-breaker. An under-vest or singlet: military: from ca. 1920. Formerly, those men taking part, as principals, in a strong-man act, wore only a vest.


chain up ! 'Shut up !' low (— 1923). Manchester. Ex chain up that dog !

Chains Tenth, the. The 10th Hussars: military: from the mid-1820's. F. & Gibbons. Ex the chain-pattern belt ' of the officers' uniform introduced in 1820'.

chair, call a. To appoint a president 'at a tavern-party, when discussion ensues', Bee: public-house: ca. 1820–60.


chair, the. The electric chair (for criminals): coll.: U.S., anglicised by 1931. C.O.D., 1934 Sup.

chair-bottomer. A cane-plaiter of chair-bottoms: proletarian coll. (— 1887 †), by 1920, S.E. (Bau-

mann.)

chair days. Old age: Society coll.: 1808, Sir E. Arnold; virtually ↑. Ware.

chair-marking. To write or figure, the date in, or heavily to endorse, a cab-driver's licence, as a hint of the holder's undesirability: cab-owners', from ca. 1885. The Pall Mall Gazette, Sept. 15, 1890.

chair-warmer. A physically attractive woman 'who does nothing on the stage beyond helping to fill it', Ware: theatrical: C. 20; ob.

chal. A man, fellow, chap (the feminine is chai, chal): Romany; in C. 19–20 used oc. in low coll. Its ultimate origin is unknown: see esp. Sampson at chal. Cf. pal, much more gen.

Chal'dee, Ch'al'dees. To trick, cheat, impose upon. Butler, 'He . . . Chaws'd and Calde'sd you like a blockhead', Hudibras, II. Ca. 1660–1720; coll. ↑ ex Chal'dee = an astrologer.

Chalk, v. To make (a newcomer) pay his footing: nautical, ca. 1840-1900. -2. In C. 18-19 c., to strike or slash, esp. a person's face. Cf. chalker, 2, q.v. -3. See chalk off, chalk up.

Chalk, adj. Unknown; hence, incompetent. Whence chalk-jockeys, jockeys unknown or incompetent, both: Racing: ca. 1870-90. See Addenda.

Chalk, able to walk a. Sober: coll. (orig. nautical or military): from ca. 1820. Scots, line for chalk. See also walk the chalk.

Chalk, by a long. By much: from ca. 1840; coll. C. Brontë in The Professor. Slightly earlier is by long chalks, as in Barham, while by many chalks appears ca. 1880, as in 'the best thing out by many chalks', Grenville Murray, 1883. Often with beat, and in C. 20 g. in the negative, Ex 'the use of chalk in scoring points in games', W.

Chalk, give (someone) a. To beat, defeat, or swindle: low (ca. 1923). Manchon.

Chalk against, n. and v. (To have) 'an unsettled misunderstanding or grudge'; Ware: lower classes: mid-C. 19-20; ob. Ex chalking a debt against a name.

Chalk down. See chalk out.


Chalk is up, one's. One's credit is exhausted: public-house coll. (ca. 1887); ob. Ex chalk up.

Chalk it up I Just look at that! I coll. (ca. 1923). Manchon ('Regarde-moi ça!).

Chalk marquis. A sham marquis: lower classes (ca. 1909); very ob. Ware, 'Never applied to any other title than this. [Prob. ex] some forgotten pun or play upon a name.' See chalk, adj.

*Chalk off, v.t. To observe a person attentively so as to remember him: e. (ca. 1867); † by 1920. 'Duange Anglicus', 1st ed. -2. (Gen. in passive.) To rebuke: Glasgow (ca. 1934).

Chalk out, occ. down. To mark out a course of action or conduct: from ca. 1570. Coll. in C. 16, thereafter S.E. (Contrast H. with F. & H. and with S.O.D.)

Chalk up, occ. chalk. To consider in a person's favour: coll., from ca. 1800. Ex the S.E. sense, C. 16-20, to put to one's account, orig. by chalking the (usually, drinking) score on a wall. Cf. chalk off, q.v.

Chalk up pull! Hold on!; steady I! printers' (ca. 1887). Baumann.


Chalking him in. 'The steward's action of drawing a chalk line round any Western Ocean passenger who sits in the captain's chair, the penalty for which is a drink for every steward in the saloon': nautical coll.: late C. 19-20. Bowen.


Chalks, make. (Often as vbl.n., making chalk.) To be punished standing on two chalk lines and bending one's back: the Royal Naval School at Greenwich: ca. 1840-1900.

Chalks, walk or stump one's. To move or run away; make one's departure. From ca. 1840; perhaps orig. U.S. for Haliburton uses it in 1840, and De Vere includes it in his Americanisms, yet H., F. & H., and S.O.D. say nothing about U.S.; cf. notably the evidence of the E.D.D. Bowen notes that walk one's chalks and walk Spanish, in late C. 19-20 nautical, = to desert. The origin is obscure: F. & H. notes a fanciful theory; perhaps the phrase derives ex the walking of a chalked line.

Chalks on, give. To be (much) superior to: late C. 19-20. Frank Richards, Old Soldiers Never Die, 1933, 'We all admired the Adjutant very much: he could give us all chalks on at swearing.'


Chalk it oop! Put it to my credit (esp. in a tavern): theatrical c.p., (ca. 1809) introduced, presumably, by some dialectal (?) Nottinghamshire comedian; ob. Ware.

Cham or chammy. Pronounced sham; whence many puns. Alb. champagne. All the Year Round, Feb. 18, 1871. Cf. hubby.

Cham, v. To drink champagne: from ca. 1875. 5.

Chamber-day. 'A day at the beginning of each half when "chambers" [the bed-rooms of scholars] were open all day for the re-arrangement of their occupants' (E.D.D.): mid-C. 19-20: Winchester a. verging on j. N.b., one says in (not in the) chambers.

Chamber of Horrors. The Peereases' Gallery in the House of Lords (contrast cage, 4): Parliamentary, from ca. 1870. Ex the room so named at Madame Tussaud's. Cf. sense 3, 4, -2. A sausage; gen. in pl. From ca. 1880. Cf. bag of mystery.—3. 'Room at Lloyd's (Royal Exchange) where are "walled" notices of shipwrecks and casualties at sea'; Ware: City of London: late C. 19-20.—4. The corridor or repository in which Masses. Christie (King Street, St. James's) locate the valueless pictures that are sent to them from all parts of the world as supposed genuine old masters', Ware: Society (ca. 1899).—5. A family album: workmen's (ca. 1935).—6. See House of Corruption in Addenda.


Chameleon diet. A very meagre diet: hence, nothing to eat: late C. 17-18; coll. B.E.


Champ. A champion: coll.: from ca. 1915. Cf.: 

Champ up. To chew (up); eat up; (low) coll. (ca. 1887); ob. Baumann. Ex horses eating.

Champagne shoulders. Sloping shoulders; Society: ca. 1860-80. Ware, 'From the likeness to the drooping shoulder of the champagne bottle as distinct from the squarish ditto of the sherry or port bottle.'
champagne weather. Bad weather:ironic. Society coll.:ca.1860-1910. Ware:
champion. A courtesan: music-halls: ca. 1880-1912. Ware. Ex the champagne formerly so frequently drunk by these perfect ladies.
champen. An Australian variant (—1915), e.g. in C. J. Dennis, of:
champion. Excellent; arrant: coll., from the 1890's. Esp. proactively, as 'That's champion!' Ex such phrases as champion fighting-cock, champion pupil. Altered: coll.; late C. 19-20.
chance, v.t. To risk, take one's chances of or in: coll.; from ca. 1850. Esp. chance it, used absolutely.
chance, main. By itself, the main chance occurs as early as 1597 in Shakespeare and notably in 1683, in ]ohn Dryden's translation of Persius: 'Be careful still of the main chance, my son.' An eye to the main chance appears first in Jonson's play, The Case Is Altered, 1660, it is often preceded by have (a variant is stand to the main chance, 1579), and it may have originated in the game of hazard. Orig. = the most important issue or feature or possibility, it has, in C. 19-20, very rarely meant other than the chance of profit or advantage to oneself. Prob. always coll. (except in C. 20, when it is S.E.), though the O.E.D. hints a. c. complexion.
chance, on the, adv., adj. (Acting) on the possibility of or that. Orig. (ca. 1780) coll.; by 1830, at latest, S.E.
chance, stand a fair, good, etc. To be likely to do, (with of) to get. From ca. 1790; still of a coll. cast though virtually S.E. since ca. 1860.
chance, take a. To risk it, esp. if the chance is a poor one: C. 19-20; coll. in C. 19, S.E.—though not yet dignified—in C. 20. Cf.
chance, take one's. At first, C. 14-19, S.E., to risk it; from ca. 1860, to seize one's opportunity: coll. till ca. 1860, then S.E.
chance child. An illegitimate child; from ca. 1830; coll. till C. 20, then S.E. and somewhat archaic.
chance it, and. A C. 20 variant and derivative of the next: lower classes' coll.
chance the ducks, and. Come what may, as in 'I'll do it and chance the ducks.' A pleonastic c.p., from ca. 1870; ob. Recorded in H., 5th ed., and Northall's Folk Phrases, 1894. Cf.:
chance your arm! Chance it, try it on! 1: coll., orig. tailors': from ca. 1870; ob. Among soldiers, chance one's arm meant 'to take a risk in the hope of achieving something worth while', from the late 1860's, the implication being the loss of one's stripes; the phrase, however, prob. arose ex boxing. The variant, chance one's mitt, belongs to C. 20, B. & P.; O.E.D. (Sup.). Cf. preceding entry. —2. Hence, make an attempt: late C. 19-20: tailors':
chancellor of the exchequer. Jocularly coll.: C. 20: the one who holds the purse-strings.
chancellor's egg. A day-old barrister: legal: late C. 19-20; ob. Ware.
chancer. A liar; also, an incompetent workman, or one too confident of his ability: tailors' > as to nuisance 1, military by 1914: from ca. 1870; coll.
chancery, in. Fig. from ca. 1835; coll. In parlous case, an awkward situation. Lit., pugilistic: the head under an opponent's weaker arm to be punched with his stronger: from ca. 1915 and as in Moore's Tom Crick's Memorial, 1819.
chance or chancy; chance. A sol. for chance: mostly Cockney, Australian (and American): since when?
chandler-ken. A Chandler's shop: (c. 1812); by 1890. Vaux.
chancy-eyed. One-eyed; rarely and t. glassy-eyed. Low coll.: from ca. 1860; ob. Chaney = chiney, China, China, or Chinese, hence with small eyes or eyes like those of a China doll.
change, v.t. and i. To 'turn', curlle (e.g. milk): coll. and dial.: from ca. 1830.—2. V.i., to change one's clothes: coll.; C. 17-20.
change, give. To 'pay out', punish: coll.: from ca. 1860. Gen. v.t., e.g. 'I gave him his change.'
change, give no. Absolute or (he gave me no change) v.t.: to give no satisfaction, esp. to reveal nothing. Coll., from ca. 1890.
change about or over, v.i. To change or be changed in position, circumstances, or post: coll.; the former from ca. 1840 (Dickens, 1844), the latter from ca. 1890.
change about one, have all one's. To be olver, esp. to be quick-witted. Coll., from ca. 1880.
change ariste, quick. (Music-halls) one who changes costumes for successive songs or scenes: from ca. 1870. Coll. in C. 19, S.E. in C. 20.
change bars. Knickerbockers for football, flannel trousers (orig. grey) for cricket: Eton College, from ca. 1855; ob.
change foot. To play the turncoat: coll.: C. 1860-1912.
change on, put the. To mislead, deceive. Dryden, 1677, 'By this light, she has put the change upon him!'; Congreve, Scott. Coll., from ca. 1860; by ca. 1900.
change one's note or tune. The former from ca. 1700, the latter from ca. 1857: coll. To alter one's behaviour, professed opinion, speech, expression.
change out of, get no. To receive no satisfaction from; fail to learn from. C. 20, coll. Cf. give no change.
change out of, take one's or the. To take the equivalent of a thing; be revenged upon a person. Coll.: from ca. 1825. John Wilson, 1829; Whyte-Melville, 1854; Henry Kingsley, on several occasions. Often exclamatory, to the accompaniment of a blow, a neat retort, a crisply decisive act: take your change out of that! change over. See change about.
changes, ring the. To change a better article for a worse (coll.), esp. 2, bad money for good (orig. c. >, ca. 1380, low s. > by 1860, gen. s. >, ca. 1900, coll.): from ca. 1860, ca. 1780 resp. Smollett has 'ringing out the changes on the balance of power'. In C. 20 it also, 3, = to adopt different disguises in rapid succession and with baffling effect. Ex bell-ringing; in sense 2, there is a pun on small change for larger coin (W.).
**CHARACTER**

undergraduate) to attend chapel twice daily for a specified period: university, passing to coll. and S.E.: from ca. 1845.


chapel, keep a. To attend chapel once: university, passing to coll. and j.: from ca. 1890.


chapel of ease. See chapel, n.

*chapel of little ease.* A police station; detention cell: c. (—1871); ob. Cf. chapel, n.

chaperon. 'The cicisbeo, or gentleman usher, to a lady,' Grose, 3rd ed.: mid-C. 18—early 19 coll.

[Chaperoness, chaperonless, chaperonship, are perhaps coll.—see the O.E.D.—but they much rather belong to semi-faceticious jargonese. They date from ca. 1854.]


chapper. The mouth: low London (—1909). Ware. 'From associations with chaps, chops, and cheeks': cf., however, chaffer, 2.

chapper, v. To drink: low London (—1909); ob. Ware. Ex the n.

chappie; occ. chappy. Coll., from ca. 1820. At first = little fellow, but from ca. 1880 it = chap, esp. as a term of address with old, my good or dear, etc., or as = a man about town; G. A. Sala, in The Illustrated London News, March 24, 1883, 'Lord Boodle, a rapid chappie always ready to bet on everything with everybody.' As a Society term it flourished in the '80's (Ware).


chappy. For the n., see chappie.—2. Talkative: a late C. 17—mid-18 coll. I.e. given to using his chops, chops, jaws.

chaps me that! (Galt's chaps is incorrect.) I claim that: Scottish children's coll.: mid-C. 19–20. Ex chap, to choose, bespeak. Cf. bags I.1, q.v. O.E.D.

chap. See chapped.

chapter, to the end of the. Always; to the end; until death: coll.: from ca. 1840. Occ. used in C. 20, in facetious endings to letters: cf. to the last drop, till hell freezes, for ever—and after.


char, chare, v. To come in to do the cleaning work in a house, shop, office, or institution. The S.O.D. records for 1732; in the C. 18, the meaning was simply, to do odd jobs. Coloride, of all people, uses the word in 1840 in its mod. sense. Vbl.n., charing or charring, C. 19–20.


chare. A lower classes' abbr. (1927, F. E. Bally: O.E.D. Sup.) of char-bânce. Also charry, -ée (1926): ibid.). Cf.:

charabanc (ch.-pron. tch.). Sol., from ca. 1835, for char-bânce (since 1918 gen. spell charabanc). Occ. charrybong (ch.-pron. sh.). The Fr. is char à bâtons.

character. An eccentric or odd person: coll.: Goldsmith, 1773, 'A very impudent fellow this! but he's a character, and I'll humour him'; Lamb, who...
was himself one. From ca. 1870, an odd person of much humour or wit: likewise, coll.

*character academy. 'A resort of servants without characters, which are there concocted'; F. & II., revised ed. (at academy): c. late C. 19–20.


char, char'ring. See char v. charge. A prisoner brought up for trial on a charge or accusation: from late 1850's. Sala.

charge, take. (Of a thing) to get out of control: coll.: 1890. (O.E.D. Sup.)


*chariot. An omnibus: c.; from ca. 1850; almost f. Whence chariot-buzzing (H., 1st ed.), pocket-buzzing in an omnibus; cf. the neater Fr. argotique faire l'omnivore.

charity-bob, the. 'The quick, jerky curtsay made by charity-school girls', a curtsy rapidly vanishing as long ago as 1883: coll.: ca. 1870–1915. Ware.

charity sloop. A 10-gun brig: naval coll. during Napoleonic wars. Bowen, 'Officially rated as sloops for the benefit of their commanders'.

charity, charily. Jocularly coll. for a charwoman: since the 1800's.

Charles James. Theatrical: late C. 19–20. As in 'Once I happened to mention to [a] manager... that my children would like to see the pantomime he was producing. 'Right you are, old man,' he said, 'give me a ring any time and I'll see there's a Charles James for them.' It took me some moments to realise that he meant a box, and I suppose that no one unacquainted with the peculiarities for [?] of rhyming slang would have realised it at all. Thus is Charles James Fox preserved in the memories of the people—an honour which so far as I am aware has never been conferred on any other politician': Edward Shanks in John o' London's Weekly, Dec. 8, 1934.

Charles O'Malley's Own. The 14th Hussars: an occ. military nickname of ca. 1842–90. F. & Gibbons. Ex Lever's novel (Charles O'Malley, 1841), 'in which the hero figures as an officer of the regiment'.


Charley Freer. Beer: sporting rhyming s. (— 1909); ↑ by 1930. Ware.


charley-man. A variant (ca. 1820–40) of charley, 1. 'Jon Ice'.

Charley Noble. The galley funnel: naval: mid-C. 19–20; ob. Bowen. Ex a Commander Noble (ca. 1840), who insisted that the cowl of the galley funnel be kept bright. (F. & Gibbons).


Charley Wag, play the. To play truant: from ca. 1865. Charles Hindley, 1876. Henley, in 1887, ellipsed the phrase to Charley-wag, but he created no precedent.

charleys or charlies. (Always in pl.) The paps of a woman: from ca. 1840. ↑ etymology, unless on analogy of funny, q.v.; if, however, the term was orig. c., it may derive ex Romany charia (or charro), to touch, meddle with, as in Smart & Crofton. (Ware suggests origin in the opulent charms displayed by the mistresses of Charles II). Hence oce. Bobby and Charley.—2. Thick twince-gloves: Winchester College, ca. 1850–80. Introduced by a Mr. Charles Griffith.

charlie. See charley, 1.

charm. (Always in pl.) A woman's breasts: C. 18–20. Until ca. 1940, S.E.; then coll. and, very soon, as in 'flashes her charms': displays ... ↑ ex Fr. apparas.—2. In singular, late C. 16–18 c. for a picklock. Greene; Grose. Cf. S.E. moral evasion.


charms. See charm, 1.


charring. See char, v.—charry. See char. charter. To bespeak or hire, esp. a vehicle: from ca. 1865: coll. Ex to charter a ship.

[Charterhouse s. is dealt with by A. H. Tod in his handbook, Charterhouse, 1900; all terms noted by him, and many others (owed to the kindness of Mr. David MacGibbon), are defined in the course of the present work. Cf. the entries at 'Eton', 'Harrow' 'Westminster' and 'Winchester'.]

Charterhouse. The. A great talker, esp. in reply to a husband: C. 16 coll. Tyndale, referring to the monks, says in 1528. 'Their silence shall be a satisfaction for her.' The foundation (1384) of this benevolent institution allows for women as well as men—Brothers and Sisters of Charterhouse.
chatter. Anything the name of which one has forgotten: theatrical (—1955). (Ex chat, n., 5, on thingummy.


chatty. Anything the name of which one has forgotten: theatrical (—1955). Ex chat, n., 5, on thingummy.


chattering-box. See chatter-box.

chattering. Persistent or systematic chattering: from 1862 (O.E.D.). Perhaps rather a pedantic jocularity than a chaff.

chatterer. A blow, esp. if on the mouth, that makes the recipient's teeth chatter: pugiliation: from ca. 1820; † by 1919. 'Peter Corcoran,' i.e. the poet Reynolds, 1827. Cf.


chattering. 'A blow given on the mouth,' Egans's Grosse: c. of ca. 1820-60. Ex its effect.

chatter-box. A diseasing chapel: Oxfordshire s. (—1905), not dial. E.D.D. (Sup.)

chattering-box. Tea: provincial (mostly Staffordshire) s., not dial. : from before 1897. E.D.D.


*chattery. Cotton or linen goods or, occ., separate article: 0. (—1821); ob. Haagcart.

chattering, vbl.n. To chat, v., q.v.


(g). Original and mainly at Millbank Prison.

chatts. See chatt.

chat. A pot-esp. if porous—for water: Anglo-Indian coll.: from ca. 1780.—2. A filthy man. Abbr. chatto doser (see doser). Ca. 1810-50: low.—3. Among sailors, it survives as 'any seaman who is dirty or untidy, or careless in his appearance' (Bowen).—4. (Chatty). The inevitable nickname of anyone surnamed Mather, nautical and lower classes: late C. 19-20. Bowen. 'From a celebrated character in naval fiction . . . whether the uncompromising meaning applies . . . or not.'


chanted, properly chanted. Celebrated, hence famous. Lit.: in street ballads. Reynolds in his boxery verses, The Fancy. Reynolds (not to be confused with the prolific trial-writer) was the latest-comer of the great 'pugilistio' trio of 1815-30: Tom Moore, Pierce Egan, J. H. Reynolds. chanter. See chanter.

*chanter cove. A newspaper reporter: o. from ca. 1810. cf. chasting cove.

*chanter-cull. A writer of street ballads, carols, songs, last dying speeches, etc., for ad hoc consumption: gen. to be found in a 'pub'. Not recorded before George Parker, 1781, but prob. existent from ca. 1780. C: by 1800, † by 1860.

*chantuer upon the leer. C. and low. ca. 1830-70: an advertiser. (By itself, chantier is c. for a street singer, C. 18-19: see chanteur.)


chanting. Sexual intercourse: Lingua Francæ (?) and low: from ca. 1840. Whence the low chanting donna or moll, a harlot. Cf. charrer, q.v. Etymology obscure: but there is perhaps some connexion either with Fr. chasser, to heat, with S.E. chafe, and with Northern dial. chawse, to become heated, to rub together or, more prob., with Romany chawro (or charra-er), to touch, meddle with.


To eat, or chew, noisily: C. 18-20. Until ca. 1850, S.E., then either low coll. or sol.—2. To bite: from ca. 1870. Kipling in The Scots Observer, 1890 (in a poem called The Oont), 'And when we saves his bloomin' life, he chaws our bloomin' arm.—3. (University) to deceive, hoax, impose upon: ca. 1860-1914. Cf. bite, v.—4. To defeat, overcome: coll. (—1887). Baumann.


chaw-jover. To report on one's words to satiety: low coll. (ex Yorkshire dial): from ca. 1820.

chaw the fat. A naval variant (late C. 19-20?) of chew the fat, q.v. (Bovon.)

chaw-jup. To destroy, smash, 'do for': from ca. 1840, mainly U.S. Dickens.


chay, pron. chay. A sol. for chapse, as in post-chay. From ca. 1702. Mackenzie, 1771, 'The pleasure of keeping a chay of one's own', O.E.D.

cheap, dirt or dog. The former from ca. 1835 (Dickens in Oliver Twist, 1838); the latter from ca. 1870 (Holinshed has it) and † by 1840. Coll. In C. 20, occ. cheap as dirt (Lyell).

cheap, feel. In ordinary sense, S.E., though not literary. In s., to feel ill after a bout of drinking: from ca. 1880; ob. Hence, cheapness: late C. 19-20.

cheap on the. Cheaply; economically. Coll.: from the late 1850's. H., 1st ed.

cheap and nasty. Either lit. or == pleasing to the eye, inferior in fact. In ca. 1830: coll. †, by 1860. S.E. The Athenæum, Oct. 29, 1864, '... or, in a local form, "nasty, like Short's in the Strand", a proverb applied to the deceased founder of cheap dinners'; this gibl no longer holds good.


cheap beer. *Beer given by publicans at night-time to officers' : policemen's (—1899). Ware.


cheapness. See cheap, feel.

cheaps, thn. A cheap edition, as of a '7-6. dial. re-issued at 3s. 6d. Publishers', booksellers', and bookbinders': from ca. 1910; since ca. 1830, coll.

Cheapside, come at it, or home, by (way of). To buy a thing cheap: mid-C. 18-19; coll. Grose, 2nd ed., Variant: get it by way of Cheapside.

*cheat. occ. chate, chete, etc., is a mid-C. 16-19 c. word—gen. == thing, article—appearing in many combinations, e.g. belly-cheat, an apron, and quack-ting-chet, a duck: in only a very few instances has this term penetrated English proper even to the extent of becoming a. Harman; Grose. Etymology obscure. The unpreceded pl. means the gallow: cf. cheat, n., last sense. (As a sham sleeve, it is S.E.)

cheat the worms. To recover from a serious illness: proletarian coll. (—1887). Baumann.

cheats. One who is cheated; coll.: from ca. 1860, very rare in C. 18, revived in C. 19.


*cheats. Sham cuffs or wristbands: c. and low, late C. 17-early 18.—2. In Randle Holme's Armoury, 1658, a showy, fur-backed waistcoat. (See also note on cheat.)

check. one's. To receive one's discharge, esp. from a medical board: military coll.: 1816-18. F. & Gibbons.—2. To be killed; military: late 1914-18. Ibid.

check, take. To be offended: coll. verging on S.E.: ca. 1860-1790. (O.E.D.) Ex dogs at fault, check it up or check up. To enter a theatre with another person's discarded pass-out check: theatrical and theatre-goes' (—1899); ob. Ware. checker. An inspector: busmen's coll.: from ca. 1825. The Daily Herald, Aug. 5, 1936.

*checks, hand in one's. See cash one's checks.

cheek-chie. Of mixed European and Indian parentage. An adj. deriving from a Hindi explanation == fe — 2. As a n., the miniced English of half-breeds; the half-breeds as a class. Both date from ca. 1780: best classified as an Anglo-Indian coll. Yule & Burnell.

cheek. Insolence to an elder or superior: coll.: from ca. 1830; recorded in Marywash's Poor Jack, 1840, a locus exemplifying give check == to check, q.v.; George Moore, The Minstrel's Wife, 1884, 'If he gives me any of his cheek, I'll knock him down.' Cf. bp.—2. Audacity, effrontery, assurance: coll.: from ca. 1850. Mayhew, of doctors: 'They'd actually have the cheek to put a blister on a cork leg.' Cf. face.—3. A share: from ca. 1820: low coll. Esp. in 'where's my cheek ?' and the set phrase, to one's own cheek, all to oneself, as in 'Jon Doe', 1823, and Lever's Charles O'Malley, 1841.—4. See checks.—5. A cheeky lout: London schools' (—1887); † by 1920. Baumann.

cheek, have the. To be insolent or audacious enough (to do something): coll.: mid-C. 19-20. Cf. have the face (or front).

cheek-ache, get or have the. To be made to blush; to be ashamed of what one has done: artisans' and tailors' from ca. 1860; ob.

check. To face it out: coll.: 1851, Mayhew (O.E.D.); 1857, Baumann (cheek it out). Ex cheek, v., q.v.


checkiness. Impudence; cool confidence; audacity; tendency to 'give cheek'. Coll., recorded in 1847: Aytoun & Martin; Trollope in The Three Clerks. Ex cheek, n., 1.


cheeks. The posteriors: coll., from ca. 1760. Grose, by implication. Cf. blind cheeks. When, in 1928–30, dresses were the soul of wit, London clubmen heard, prob. ex the Stock Exchange, the rhyme, 'If dressers get any shorter,' said the flapper with a sob, ['There'll be two more cheeks to powder, a lot more hair to bob,' sometimes known as The Flapper's Lament.—2. A jeering, insulting interjection: ca. 1860–80. H., 3rd ed.

cheeks and ears. A fanciful name for a headdress not long in fashion: coll.: c. 17. It occurs in The London Prodigal, 1605.

cheeks near cunnyborough, I ask. (Cf. cheeks, 1.) Ask my a**e! Mid-C. 18–early 19 low London c.p. used by women only. See cheeks; cunnyborough = cunny := ass. Grose, 1st ed.

Cheeks the Marine. Mr. Nobody. A character created by Marryat, who consciously popularized it: Peter Simple, 1833. Fifty years later, Clark Russell, in his nautical glossary, defined the term as 'an imaginary being in a man-of-war'. By 1850 there had arisen the now ob. tell that to Checks the Marine = tell that to the marines, q.v. Prob. ex cheeks, 1, q.v.


cheeky new fellow. See new fellow.

cheer, give (one) the. To bid a person welcome; proletarian coll.: from ca. 1870; ob. Baumann.

cheer or. See cheorio.


cheerio! cheerio! A parting word of encouragement; in drinking, a toast: coll.: resp. 1916 and ca. 1910. The former is rather more familiar, less aristocratic, esp. after G.W. See esp. B. & P. and O.E.D. (Sup.). Cf. cheery-no ho!—2. Hence, adj. (from ca. 1919), mostly upper-class in use, as in Dorothy Sayers, Clouds of Witness, 1926, "'He seemed particularly cheerful . . .", said the Hon. Freddy. The Hon. Finally, appealed to, said he thought it meant more than just cheerful, more merry and bright, you know." Ob.

cheers! Often three cheers! A coll. expression of deep satisfaction or friendly approval: from ca. 1905.

cheery. Cheerful, lively: C. 17–20. Also, apt to cheer or enliven: C. 18–20. Ob. On the borderline between coll. and S.E.; Johnson considered it a ludicrous word—"it is certainly unnecessary beside cheerful.

cheery-ho! A post-G.W. variant of cheerio / cheer. An adject.; a smart or a clever fellow: Public School and university: ca. 1860–1900. Ex the cheese, q.v.—2. See cheese, the.

cheese, v.t. Very rare except in cheese it /, be quiet !: low from ca. 1855; previously c. (c. 1812), when also = run away ! Vaux. Ex crase.

cheese, believe or persuade or make believe that the moon is made of. To believe firmly, or to cause another to believe, something astounding or impossible or absurd; hence, to be a fool, to befool another. Frith, ca. 1529; Wilkins the philosopher; Ainsworth the lexicographer. Coll.; in C. 18–20, S.E. Apperson.

cheese, hard. In comment or exclamation: bad luck! From ca. 1870; coll. and dial.

cheese, housing. An overdressed dandy or blood: Cambridge University, ca. 1860–1895. Prob. ex the next; cf. cheese, n., 1.

cheese, the. The fashion; the best; 'the correct thing'. Recorded in The London Guide in 1818, apparently soon after the birth of this phrase, which seems to have > gen. only ca. 1840. Barham; Read, 1863, a character, concerning marriages, saying 'I've heard Nudity is not the cheese on public occasions.' Prob. ex the Urdu chiz, a thing (see Yule & Burnell; F. & H.); but see cz. Cf. the derivative the Stilton.

cheese and crust! A proletarian perversion and evasion (c. 1900) of Jesus Christ!; ob. Ware.


Cheese?-mongers, the. The First Life Guards: from ca. 1788; ob. 'Come on, you damned Cheese-mongers! I was heard at Water-loo. Ob. Also, from before 1890, called the Cheese. The real 'etymology' is obscure; perhaps many tradesmen > officers.


Cheeses, the. See Cheese-mongers.—2. cheeses, make. (Schoolgirls) the making of one's dress and petticoat, after a rapid gyration of the body and a quick sinking to the ground or floor, spread into a cheese-like form. Hence, to curtsy profoundly. Coll.; from ca. 1855. Thackeray, De Quincey, Beant & Rice. Ex Fr. faire des fromages: even Littre records it.
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CHEESEY-HAMMY-EGGY-TOPSIDE. A savoury popular with those who have sailed with Chinese cooks: (nautical) officers: late C. 19—20. Cheese and ham with an egg on top.


CHEMNY. The game of chemin de fer: coll. from ca. 1920. — See y, 2.

CHEMOZZLE. An occ. variant of chemozzle, q.v.

CHENT. Incorrect for Kent: 1676, noted by Coles.

Chepemans. Cheapside Market: C. 17 c. See -mans.


Cherry. A charming woman: Society: ca. 1840—60. Ware, 'From Madame Montigny, of the Gymnase, Paris. Her stage name remained Rose Cherry. She was a singularly pure woman, and an angelic actress. Word used by upper class men in society... to describe the nature of their mistresses.' († rather chérie.)


CHEERRY-FOOTMAN. A small black bird: from c. 1790; but in Robertson's Phrasologia Latina, 1693, as cheerry-bounce. Cf. the S.E. sense, brandy and sugar.

CHERRY-BRACHES or -BUNAS. See Cherubims.


CHEST, OVER THE


Cherry-pie. A girl: from ca. 1870; ob. Cf. o. cherry.

Cherry-pipe. A woman: low rhyming s. on c. cherry-ripe, a woman. From ca. 1880; ob.


Cherry-ripe! A way of calling ripe cherries! Coll.: from ca. 1600. Herrick.

Cherry-tree class. Two British battleships of a tonnage reduced by Washington, the U.S. capital: post-G.W. Bowen, 'Because they were cut down by Washington', the cherry-tree hero of the truth.

Cherub. See cherubims, 3.

Cherub Dicky. Richard Suetts (d. 1805), a comedian. Dawson, 'Originally a choir-boy at Westminster Abbey'.

Cherubim, singular, and cherubims, pl., are in C. 19—20 sol. or low coll. whenever they are not dial. Dickens has the former in Dombey and Son, 1848.

Cherubims. Fievelish children: late C. 18—early 19; coll. facetiously allusive to 'To Thee cherubim and seraphin continually do cry' in the Te Deum. Gros, 1st ed.—2. (Military) the 11th Hussars: from ca. 1813. From their cherry-coloured trousers. Cherry-Pickers, because some of their men were captured when on outpost duty in a Spanish orchard. By low jocularity, Cherry-Bums. Also Cherry-Breeches. Cherubs, says the S.O.D., 'in early Christian art... were app. coloured red':—3. Chorister, mod. choir, boys: from ca. 1850; ob. Also cherubs. Perhaps ex the Te Deum verse.

Cherubims (or -me), in the. Unsubstantial: 'in the clouds': C. 16—17; coll. rare. Udall.

Cheeshire cat; often cat. An inhabitant of Cheshire: coll. nickname (—1884). Ware (at webfoot). Ex: Cheshire cat, grin like a. To laugh, or smile, broadly. Pejorative coll.: from ca. 1770. Wolcot, 'Lo, like a Cheshire cat our Court will grin'; Thackeray: 'Lewis Carroll' in Alice in Wonderland. In C. 19 one often added eating cheese, chewing gravel, or evacuating bones. Origin still a mystery. I surmise but cannot prove cheeser, a cat very fond of cheese, a cheeser having > a cheeser cat > a Cheshire cat; hence grin like a Cheshire cat would = to be as pleased as a 'cheesser' that has just eaten cheese. Or the development might be cheeser: Cheshire-cheeser: Cheshire cat.

Cheshire, the. 'The cheese', 'the correct thing', perfection: ca. 1870—1900. Ware.

Cheesey. Characteristic of good play at chess: coll.: 1883. O.E.D.

Cheest, chuck a. See chuck a. Cheest, chuck out one's. To pull oneself together; stand firm; coll.: from ca. 1860; ob. The C. 20 sense (likewise coll.) is to make oneself appear manly, to show confidence. An occ. variant, throw a chest.

Cheest, get it off one's. 'To deliver a speech; express one's feelings', C. J. Dennis; (mainly) Australian a. (C. 20)>, by 1890, coll.

Cheest, over the. See gum, over the.
chickens. Skill, dexterity, esp. in the arts; finish, style; elegance: coll.: from ca. 1855. Ex the Fr. Lever; Yates, 1866, 'A certain piquancy and chic in her appearance.'—2. 'Style': artists' coll.: late C. 19–20.

chick, v. 'To chic up a picture, or to do a thing from chic = to work without models and out of one's own head': artists' s. (—1891) verging on coll. F. & H. Ex preceding term.

chic, adj. Elegant, stylish: from late 1870's: coll. after ca. 1890. (Not so used in Fr.)

chick-a-trice. Nothing: no good; low and vagrant: C. 19. Egan's Grose has both forms and implies that the term was orig. Yiddish. Prob. ex Romany chicchi, nothing, and the source of shicer, q.v.


chickabiddy. A young girl: orig. (—1860) costers'. Ex the nursery name for a chicken often employed as an endangerment (—1785) for a child. Grose, 1st ed. The 'biddy may orig. have been birdy: W.

chickakalery cove. An artful fellow: costers'; from ca. 1860. The C. C. was one of the famous Vance's songs ca. 1869. Prob. chic = a bird, heary = suspicious, alert, wide-aweake: cf. downy bird, q.v.


chicken, no. Elderly. From ca. 1700: coll. Swift, '... Your hints that Stella is no chicken'; Fielding; Walpole; Sala, 'I am no chicken.'


chicken, the. M. A. Taylor, a noted barrister (d. 1834). Dawson, 'From his allusion to himself in his maiden speech (1789) as but 'a chicken in the profession of the law' '...


chicken-fixing. See galguy.


chicken got the axe, where the. I.e. 'in the neck'; severely, disastrously, fatally: a o.p. dating from ca. 1890; slightly ob. W. Cf. where Maggie wore the beads.


chicken-nabob. A man returned from India with but a moderate fortune: late C. 18–early 19 coll. Grose, 2nd ed.


chickens before they are hatched, count one's. Unduly to anticipate a successful issue. C. 16–20; coll. till C. 19, then S.E. Gosson, 1579; 'Hud-

chest and bedding. A woman's breasts: nautical (—1785); † by 1900. Grose, 1st ed. (at keel drum).

chest-plaster. A young actor: theatrical: 1883–ca. 1890. A satirical description by the older actors: 'From the heart-shaped shirt-front worn with a very open dress-waistcoat, and starched almost into a cuirass ... (See Shape and Shirt.)' Ware.

CHICKERY-POKERY

brae' Butler, its populariser. Cf. L. ane victoriam canere triumphantum.

chickery-pokery. See jiggery-pokery.

chioko, n. and adj. (A) very young (person, esp. a soldier): military: C. 20. B. & P. i.e. a mere chicken.


Chidley Dyke. The line between Cheltenham and Southampton Docks: railwaymen's: C. 20. ob. Known to the passengers as the Pig and Whistle Line.

chief. adj. occ. chal. See chal.

chief (the chief). The Chief Engineer, or, loosely, the First Mate: nautical coll.: mid-C. 19-20.—2. A Petty Officer, etc.: naval: C. 20.

Bowen.—3. (chief) A—gen. jocular—form of address: coll.; from ca. 1880. Partly ex sense I. Esp. in O.K., chief (post-G.W.): see O.K.


chief commander, the. A 1st lieutenant, R.N.: naval: C. 20. Ibid. He 'is responsible for the cleanliness and good order of the ship'.


*chief. An occ. variant of chive: see chive-fencer. Gruse, 1st ed. As is chief (Lex. Bal.).

chigger. A variant ofigger or jigger, esp. as a private still. 'Jon Bee', 1825.

chike, occ. chy-ack (or chick) and chi-hike: rarely chi-ak. A street (orig. coster) salute: a hearty word of praise; heartily spoken. From ca. 1855; low coll. H., 1st ed.; The Chickaleau Cove, where it is spelt chy-ike. Echioc. Etymology? Perhaps a corruption or perversion of chuck, v., 6 (n.b. esp. chuck a jolly).—2. Whence, in Australia, a joculating, a piece of 'chuck': from ca. 1880. Cf.: chike, chy-ack, v. To hail; praise noisily. Low coll.; from ca. 1855.—2. Among tailors: to chalk ruthlessly: from ca. 1865.—3. Whence, in Australia, to 'check', of which it is a corruption: from mid-1870's. Morris.—4. V.i., to make a 'row', a din: low coll.; from ca. 1880. O.E.D. (Sup.).

chike with the chill off, give. To reprimand, scold, abuse. From ca. 1866; ob.

child, eat a. 'To partake of a treat given to the parish officers, in part of commutation for a bastard child'; Grose, 1st ed. Mid-C. 18-19th (coll.).

child, this. Oneself: I, me: coll.; orig. (—1860) U.S., anglicised ca. 1890. At one time—before 1897, at any rate—there was a c.p.: not for this child. (Collinson).


childers. A holding in 25% Consols redeemable in 1905; Stock Exchange from 1884, when Mr. Childers originated this stock in an 'attempt to reduce the interest on the whole of the Three per Cent. Debt' (A. J. Wilson, Stock Exchange Glossary, 1895); by 1908, except historically.


child's play. Something very easy to do: coll. > by 1880. S.E.; from ca. 1829 but dating from late M.E. in form child's or children's game.

chill, v.t. and i. To warm (a liquid). Coll.; from ca. 1820. Dickens, in Bos, 'A pint pot, the contents . . . chilling on the hob'. Abbr. take the chill off, also coll.

chill off, with the. A comment or exclamation indicative of dissent or deprivation or disbelief. Coll.; from ca. 1840. Cf. over the left.

chilum. (Anglo-Indian, from ca. 1780) a hookah, the smoking thereof, a 'fill' of tobacco therein: coll. rather than s. The orig. and proper meaning is that part of a hookah which contains the tobacco. Ex Hindi chilam.

Chilly Charley. Charles Clark (1806-80), topographer and artist. Dawson.

Chileman Hundreds, accept the. 'To vacate a flavourable seat at the alehouse', Bee: public-house: ca. 1820-60. Punning S.E. sense.

chimbley(ey), chimley. A chimney: (dial. and) col.: C. 18-20.

*chime. In o., to praise, esp. highly; puff; canoodle mercenarily: C. 19.

chime in, v.i. To join harmoniously in conversation, etc.: from ca. 1830; coll. soon S.E.

chime in with. To be in entire (subordinate) agreement with: from ca. 1820; coll. soon > S.E.

chimley. See chimbley—chimmy. See the more gen. shimmy. (A. S. M. Hutchinson, 1908.)

chimney. One who smokes (esp. a pipe) a great deal: from ca. 1880; coll.


chimozelle. A variant (recorded in 1900) of hemozelle.

chimp. A C. 20 coll. abbr. of chimpanzee; orig. among the keepers at the Zoo.

chin. A talk: American s. (—1914) anglicised ca. 1920. (O.E.D. Sup.) Ex: chimp. v. To talk, esp. if loquaciously or argumentatively: orig. (—1880) U.S.; anglicised ca. 1890. From ca. 1920, also chin-chin. V.l.n., chimning, a talk.—2. To hit (a person): low from ca. 1910. Orig. on the chin, and esp. in Glasg.

chin, up to the. Deeply involved; extremely busy. Coll.; from ca. 1890.

chin-chin. A salutation; in C. 20, a c.p. toast. This Anglo-Chinese term dates from late C. 18, but it > popular, outside of China, only in G.W., though it was general in the Navy in late C. 19 and, by 1906, common in 'club society' (Ware). Chinese to-ching-te, nosing, please-please. (W.)—2. Hence also v., to greet: 1829, Yule & Burnell. Whence chin-chin joss.—3. See chin, v. 1.


chin-chopper. A blow under the chin: boxing, from ca. 1870; ob.

chin-music. Conversation: oratory. Adopted ca. 1875 (Besant & Rice, 1878) ex U.S. where popularised by Mark Twain. Note, however, that Berkshire dial. had it as early as 1852 (E.D.D.).

chin-strap. came in on one's. 'To finish a march or a carrying party so fatigued that (fig.) only the chin-strap kept the body upright', B. & P.: military coll.: 1914.

chin-wag, v.i. To talk: C. 20. Ex chin-wag, n., 2.

china; chiner. (In C. 20, often old china.) A pal, a mate: abbr. china plate, rhyming s. (from ca. 1890): C. 20, esp. in G.W.

China, not for all the tea in. Certainly not: on no account: Australian coll.: from the 1800’s.


China orange. See all Lombard Street.


China Tenth, the. The 10th Hussars: military: 1810; slightly ob. In that year the Prince Regent was its colonel; hence it was handled as carefully as valuable chins. F. & Gibbons.

Chinaman. A left-hand bowler’s leg-break: cricketers: from ca. 1905. Ex the manner of Chinese script, right to left.

Chinaman’s copy. An exact copy, including mistakes and emendations: typists’ coll. (–1930).


chinee. See chinese.


chiner. See china.

Chinese compliment. A pretended deference to, and interest in, the opinion of another when actually one has fully made up one’s mind: from ca. 1880; coll. soon S.E.


chink. Money, esp. in coins. In pl., either coin (collective) or ready cash: only the latter sense: (C. 16–20) has always been coll. After ca. 1830, chinker is very rarely used, chink taking its place. Shrewdly honest Tusser, ‘To buie it the cheaper, have chinks in thy purse’; Jonson.—2. The female pudend: low coll., C. 18–20.—3. (Chink.) A Chinese; mainly Australian; from ca. 1890. Cf. Chinkie and John (abbr. John Chinaman).—4. Prison: Devonshire s.: 1806, Eden Phillpotts in Black and White, June 27 (B.D.D.). Ex lit. S.E. sense of chink, a hole, on a chink, prison.

chinkers. Money, esp. in coin. Coll.: from ca. 1830. Sir Henry Taylor, 1834; Baumann in his Slang Ditty prefacing Londonismen, 1887. Derivatively developed from chink(s) and likewise echoe.—2. In C. 19–20 c., handcuffs joined by a chain.


chinqu soldi. (Properly cinquas.) Fivelpence: theatrical and Parlyarse from ca. 1840. Ex it. via Lingua Franca.


chip, brother. Orig. a ‘brother’ carpenter, then anyone of the same trade or profession. Cf. chips, q.v. Often = brother smut. Coll.; from ca. 1810.

chip at. To quarrel with; to criticise adversely: coll.: from ca. 1800. Cf. chip, v., and the U.S. phrase, with a chip on one’s shoulder. Cf.: chip at, have a. To make fun of, to chaff: coll. (–1923). Manchon.

chip in, v. To join in an undertaking; contribute a share; interpose smartly in a conversation, discussion, or speech: orig. (ca. 1870) U.S.; anglicised ca. 1890. Perhaps ex chips, 5.—2. Hence, to interfere: C. 20. F. & Gibbons.

chip in broth, pottage, porridge. Resp. C. 17–early 19, late C. 17–18, late C. 18–20 (ob.); all coll. for a thing or matter of no importance. The Church Times, June 25, 1880, ‘The Burials Bill ... is thought ... to resemble the proverbial chip in porridge, which does neither good nor harm’ (O.E.D.).

chip of the same or old block. See block.


chipping. Vbfln. (Ex to chip, q.v.) Impudence; the giving of ‘check’; Australian: from ca. 1890.—2. The action of giving a tip: C. 20. Manchon. Prob. ex chips, 3.


**chirography.** Incorrect when = chirography: C. 17–20. O.E.D.

**chirromancer.** See conjuror.

chirp. To sing; coll.: C. 19–20.—2. In c., to talk; hence (—1884), to inform to the police. H., 3rd ed.


as member of a gang, haunts music-hall doors, tries to blackmail singers, and, if unsuccessful, enters the auditorium and hisses, hoorts, or groans: music-halls, C. 1887–1914.

chirpiness. Liveliness; cheerfulness; pleasing pertness; coll., from ca. 1865.

*Very pleasant over a Glass of good Liquor*, B.E.; convivial: late C. 17–early 19—coll. Either the orig. of *cherry-merry*, q.v., or its explanation. (The Lancashire dial. form is *cheeping-merry.*) Grose, 1st ed., adds: ‘Chirping glass; a cheerful glass, that makes the company chirp like birds in spring.’

chirpy. Cheerful; lively; coll., from ca. 1835. Justin McCarthy; Besant.

chirrup. To cheer or hiss at a music-hall according as a singer has paid or not: coll.: from ca. 1888; ob. Cf. chirper, 4, and chirrupper.—2. Vbl.n., chirruping (*The Pall Mall Gazette*, March 9, 1888) suggests Fr. chantage.


chirrupy. Cheery; lively; ‘chirpy’. Coll.: from ca. 1870. Burnand, 1874 (O.Ed.); but in U.S. at least as early as 1861 (O.Ed. Sup.).

*chise; occ. chis.* A variant of chise(v), n. and v.: c. of ca. 1820–40. Bee. Cf. chisier.

chisel. To cheat: from ca. 1800. Prob. orig. dial., it > gen. only ca. 1840. Mayhew, who spells chisid; Sala, who prefers chizzle; also chizel; even chizzle. Hence the old comundrum, ‘Why is a carpenter like a swindler?—Because he chisels a deal.’

Chiseler and chiselling are natural but infrequent derivatives.


Chivwick. See ‘Westminster School slang’.

*chit.* A letter or a note: used by Purchas in 1605, while its orig., *chity* (esp. in use), is not recorded before 1873: Anglo-Indian coll.; since G.W., virtually S.E., esp. as = note, written authorisation, pass, an invoice.—2. Hence, an order or a signature for drinks in clubs, aboard ship, etc.: Society, ex India; from ca. 1875; coll.—3. As a very young or an undersized girl, always S.E., but as a pejorative for any girl or young woman it has a coll. flavour.

chit-chat. Light and familiar conversation; current gossip of little importance. (C. 18–20; coll., by 1780 S.E. By alteration-reduplication.

chitterings. Shirt frills: C. 18–19: s. > coll., then—thef rills going out of fashion—S.E. Lit., a pig’s (smaller) entrails. Cf. frill.—2. Hence, the human bowels: mid-C. 18–19. Grose, 1st ed., ‘There is a rumpus among my chitterlings, i.e. I have the cholick.’

chitty. An assistant cutter or trimmer: tailors’; from ca. 1870; ob.

chitty-face. One who, esp. a child, is pinched of face, C. 17. In C. 18–19, baby-face. A pejorative. Extant in dial., mainly an adj. in -d. S.O.D. ranks it as S.E., but the authors’ and the recorders’ names concern coll.: Munday, ‘Melancholy’ Burton, B.E., *A New Canting Dict*. (ca. 1726), Grose (1st ed.), H.


chivalry. Sexual intercourse: late C. 18–19; low: ex Lingua Franca. Cf. caiving, chauvery, horning, and:


chive-fencer. One who ‘fences’ or proteets murderers from arrest: c. (—1909) Ex.—2. A street hawkers of cutlery: costers’; from ca. 1850. See fencer(v); chive (or chit)—of Romany origin—is C. 17–20; for, a knife, a file, a saw; Romany and c. for to stab, to cut or saw (through), to ‘knife’; mid-C. 18–20 (Grose, 1st ed.).

*chiver. An occ. variant (—1887) of chive, esp. as v. (see chive-fencer). Baumann.

chivey. A knife: nautical ex Romany; from ca. 1890. Cf. preceding entry.—2. (Also chivery, chirvy.) A shout, greeting, cheer, esp. if rough or chafing; a scolding. Coll.; a corruption of chevy with sense deflected. From ca. 1810 (Lex. Ital.) and pronounced chivy.—3. In c., the face, with further variant chesy: from ca. 1860; ob. Cf. sense 4 of:

chiv[e]y, chivv[ée], v. To run, go quickly, as in Moncrieff’s *Tom and Jerry*, 1823, ‘Now, Jerry, chivey! ... Mizzie! ... Tip your raga a gallop! ... Bolt! ’ Perhaps ex S.E. Chevy Chase.—2. To chase round (—1850), as in H. Kingsley’s *Austin Elliot*, ‘The dog ... used to chivy the cates.’—3. Hence, to make fun of; ‘guy’, worry: from ca. 1850. All coll.—4. In c., to scold: C. 19–20.

*chiving lay.* The robbing of coachos by cutting the rear braces or slashing through the back of the carriage: mid-C. 18–early 19 o. Grose, 2nd ed.


*chivy. Adj., relating to the use of the knife as a weapon: C. 19–20 (ob.) o. E.g. chivy duel, a duel with knives.

chizel or chizzle. See chisel.—Chloe. See drunk as Chloë. chock; choker; choker. See chock, choker; chockey.

choc. (Gen. in pl.) Abr. chocolate: C. 20; since 1934, almost coll.

*chock.* To hit a person under the chin: Cockney coll.; from ca. 1860. A semi-dial. variant of chuck (under the chin),

chocks, pull the. See pull the chocks.

chocolate without sugar, give (a person). To repro\(v\)e military (\(\sim 1785\)); \(\dagger\) by 1890. Grose, 1st ed.

choice 1, you pays (yer or) your money and you takes (yer or) your. A C 20 o.p. = you take whatever you choose. Ex the cry of showmen.


choice spirit. The S.E. sense began with Shakespeare, but in C 18, the term meant ‘a thoughtless, laughing, singing, drunken fellow’. Grose, 1st ed.

choke. Prison bread: low: from ca. 1880; ob. choke, enough to make a black man. (Of medicine, food) extremely unpalatable: Cockney coll. (\(\sim 1887\)); ob. Baumann.

choke away, the churchyard’s near! (Cf. churchyard cough.) A late C 17-early 19 o.p. jocular admonition to anyone coughing. Ray, 1878; Grose, 3rd ed.

choke, chicken: more are hatching. A similar C. 18-early 19, then dial., Job’s comforting. Swift; Grose, 3rd ed. (Apperson.)

choke-dog. Choose: low coll.; orig. and mainly dial. From ca. 1829; ob.

choke off. To get rid of a person; put a stop to a course of action: coll. (\(\sim 1818\)), by 1890. S.E. (O.E.D.)

choke-pear. A difficulty; a severe reproof; a ‘settler’ (\(f\)); a gag (\(f\)): from C. 16. Ex the instrument of torture (so named from an unpalatable kind of pear) so called. Coll. > S.E. by 1700; first two senses, archaic.

choke you \(f\), didn’t that; it’s a wonder that didn’t choke you! C.p. comments on a bare-faced or notable lie: C. 19-20. Cf. the C. 17-18 semi-proverbial ‘If a lie could have choked him, that would have done it’ (Ray).

choke your luff! Be quiet: nautical: mid-C. 19-20; slightly ob. Bowen.

chokey. See chokey.

choker. A cravat: orig. a large neckerchief worn round the neck. Often white choker, q.v. First record, 1848, Thackeray (Book of Snobs): ‘The usual attire of a gentleman, viz., pumps, a gold waistcoat, a crust jacket, a sham frill, and a white choker’—2. A high all-round collar: from ca. 1868.


chokered. Wearing a choker, q.v. The London Review, April 7, 1866; O.E.D. records it at 1865.

chokey, chokey: rarely choaky or choaki. A look-up; a prison. In Anglo-Indian form C. 17, and adopted in England ca. 1800. Michael Scott has it in his Cruses of the Midge, 1836; Besant & Rice. Ex His Heart’s in the Midst, a very red-placed edifice or building: Yule & Burnell.—2. Hence, imprisonment: from ca. 1880; rare.—3. G.W. + a detention-cell, occ. a guard-room, ex the (\(\sim 1890\)) c. a dark cell. Hindi choakhi, a shed. Cf. Queen’s Chokey.—A. Derivatively, a prison diet of bread and water (1884).

choking (or cold) pie (or pye). ‘A punishment inflicted on any person sleeping in company: it consists in wrapping up cotton in a case or tube of paper, setting it on fire, and directing the smock up the nostrils of the sleeper,’ Grose, 3rd ed. coll. (\(\sim 1650\)); ob. by 1860; \(\dagger\) by 1890. Howell’s edition (1650) of Cotgrave’s Dict.

chokey. Having a gen. tendency or a momentary feeling of choking: from ca. 1855; T. Hughes, ‘To feel rather chokey’, 1867. Cf. the early and S.E. senses, which are, in C. 20, almost coll. : apt to choke the eater; suffocating. O.E.D.

chol(l)icky, colloq., -cicky. Incorrect for colic, colicky. C. 17-20. O.E.D.

chonkey(s). A mincemeat, baked in a crust and sold in the streets: low coll. mid-C. 19-20; ob. H., 1st ed. Etymology obscure: perhaps ex some noted pieman (Ware). chom’; properly, but less gen., chum. A term of address much used by the Australian and New Zealand soldiers to an unknown English (not Welsh, Scottish or Irish) soldier: 1915-18. Ex chum, n., 1.


choos. To wish to have; want: low coll. from ca. 1760. In C. 20, almost S.E.


chop, chopp. In mid-C. 18-early 19 boxing s., a blow with the fist. Grose, 3rd ed.

chop, adj. In ‘pidgin’, C. 19-20: quick: chop as in first-, second-chop, first- or second-rate or -class, rank or quality. Anglo-Indian and -Chinese coll, ex Hindi chhap, a brand. The attributive use is the more gen. and dates from late C. 18: thus Thackeray, ‘A sort of second-chop dandies’. Yule & Burnell, whence no chop (see chop, no).

chop, v. (The barter-exchange senses are S.E.)— 2. To eat a chop: ca. 1840-1900. Mrs. Gore, 1841, ‘I would rather have chopped at the “Blue Posts”.’—3. To eat (a human being), gen. in passive: West Africa, from ca. 1800; ob. But, simply as ‘to eat’, it is current, with corresponding n., ‘food’. Either ex \(\dagger\) chop, to devour, or suggested by chop-sticks. W.—4. In c., to speak, as in chop the whiners, to say prayers: C. 18-19. Cf. chop up, v.—5. Esp., however, to do, or speak quickly: c. C. 17-18.

chop, no, chopp, chop. Inferior, insignificant, objectionable: coll. from mid-1880’s; ob. (O.E.D. Sup.) [chop and change, v. and n., is, despite F. & H., S.E. in all senses. See O.E.D.]


chop-chop! Quickly; immediately: pidgin; from ca. 1860. James Payn. Prob. ex Cantonese dial.—2. Also as v., to make haste.


*chop up. To hurry through, esp. in e. chop up the whiners, to gallop through prayers: late C. 17–19. B.E.


chopper or button on, have a. To feel depressed: printers', from ca. 1850; ob. See also button on, have a.

chopping. (Of girls) vain and ardent; sexually overcome: late C. 19–20; ob. Coll. Ex the S.E. sense. Cf. the idea in Fr. avoir la cuisse gâte.

chopping-block. In boxing, an unskilled man that yet can take tremendous punishment. From ca. 1830: coll.


chops, down in the. Depressed; melancholy; sad. Coll. From ca. 1820; rare in C. 20, when the form (as occ. from ca. 1850) is down in the mouth, with sense of dejected.

chops, lock one's. To gloat: coll. in C. 17–18; S.E. thereafter, but hardly literary.


chores, do. To 'char' (q.v.), do the cleaning work of a house: from ca. 1745: coll. when not dial. More gen. in U.S.

chorde. To chuckle gurglingly or explosively. Coined by 'Lewis Carroll' ex chuckle + snort (Through the Looking Glass, 1872) and soon popular, e.g. in Besant & Rice, 1876. For a while considered coll., but by 1895 definitely S.E. See my Stang at Portmanente Words.—2. Hence, to sing: 1889, The Referee, Dec. 29, 'Chortle a chansonet or two'.—3. Hence, chortle about or over, to praise excessively: 1897, The Daily Telegraph, March 31 (War).

*chosen pals or pells. Highwaymen robbing in pairs, esp. in London: c. mid-C. 18–early 19.

Chose Twelve, the. See Apostles.—choler wal-lah. See arrow wallah. Cf. chooohah, q.v.

chounter. 'To talk pertly, and (sometimes) angrily,' B.E.; late C. 17–18. * ex chant influenced by counter; or is not rather cognate with Devon dial. ppl. adj., chouting (the v. is unrec. corded) = 'taunting, jeering, grumbling', E.D.D., which quotes it at 1746.

choose. A swindle, hoax, humbug, imposition: from ca. 1700; ex choose (= ch次要), a S.E. term of perhaps Turkish orig., the etymology remaining a partial mystery. From ca. 1850 at Eton and, as we see in R. G. K. Wrench, at Winchester, a shame, as in a beauty choose; or an imposition, whence (— 1864) chouser, a 'sharp' lad. See O.E.D., Yule & Burnell, F. & H., and W.

choose, v. To cheat; deceive; impose on: coll., from the 1560's; ob. Pepys, May 15, 1663, 'The Portugalls have choused us, it seems, in the Island of Bombay'; the anon. Hints for Oxford, 1823; Scottish Publick-Schools s. at least as late as 1884. Cf. diddle. Vbl.n., chousing.

chouser. See choose, n.

chout. An entertainment: East-End Cockney, ca. 1850–1910. H., 2nd ed. Etymology slightly problematic: * a perversion of shout; or rather an adaptation of E. Anglican and Norfolk chout, a frolic or a merry-making (see E.D.D.).


chow, v. To talk much; grumble: theatrical; from ca. 1870. Cf. n., 2, and:


chow, have plenty of. To be very talkative: theatrical; from ca. 1875.


chow-chow. adj. In Anglo-Indian coll., from ca. 1870:—Assorted, general, as in chow-chow cargo or shop; very good, very bad (as context shows), esp. when preceded by No. 1.

chow-chow chop. In Anglo-Chinese from ca. 1890; coll. rather than s. 'The last lightener containing the sundry small packages to fill up a ship', S.O.D.


chow-up. A hot argument; a quarrel, a squabble; military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Ex chow, n., 2.

chowdar. A fool: from ca. 1860. Anglo-Chinese, says H., 6th ed.; but is not an abbr. of the dial. chounder-headed, i.e. joker-headed?


christen. To call by the name of, give a name to: coll., from ca. 1640; in C. 20, almost S.E.—2. To change the markings on a watch: from ca. 1780 (G. Parker, 1781); orig. o.; not low s. until ca. 1850, as in H., 1st ed. (1859), and in Doran's Saint and Sinner, 1868. (Equivalent C. 19–20 c. is church.) Vbl.n., christening, late C. 18–20.—3. To add water to wines or spirits; any light liquor with a heavier: from ca. 1820. Scott, 1824, 'We'll christen him with the brewer (here he added a little small beer to his beverage)'. Cf. drown the miller.—4. To sow from a chamber-pot: from ca. 1870. A school and college ceremony that is on the wane; but youth finds a chamber-pot symbolically ludicrous and emblematically important.—5. To celebrate (a meeting, a purchase, a removal, etc.): late C. 19–20. F. & H.
christened by a baker. ('He carries the bran in his face,' i.e. he is) freckled. Grose. Coll.: mid-C. 18—early 19.

christened with pump-water, he was. He has a red face. Coll.: mid-C. 17—early 18. Ray.

christening, be out in one's. To be in error: proletarian coll. (—1887). Baumann.


Christie. An exclamation mark: authors' and typists' v. C. 20. Ex exclamatory Christ! Christian. A 'decent fellow': a presentable person. Coll. In Shakespeare's Two Gentlemen of Verona, 1591, and until ca. 1840, it meant merely a human being, not an animal, the mod. sense beginning, as so many mod. senses have begun, with Dickens (see Stang).—2. Ca. 1805-40, the term = a tradesman willing to give credit. Lex. Bull.—3. The. (of a person, 1577: humane; of a thing or action, 11-12: civilized, respectable) follows the same course. (O.E.D.)

Christian compliments. 'A cough, kibed heels, and a snotty nose,' Grose, 3rd ed.: C. 18-19. Grose meant to write Christmas—see his reference at compliments and his MS. addition to the B.M. copy of the 1st ed.; the 2nd ed. has 'Christmas compliments. A cough,' etc.


Christieable. As beast, fit for, a Christian: coll.: 1920. O.E.D. (Sup.)


Christmas, christmasing. Holly and mistletoe serving as Christmas decorations: from ca. 1820, 1840. Dickens, the former; Mayhew, the latter. S.O.D. says it is nursery slang, F. & H.—coll. (The latter, I think.)—2. Something special to drink at Christmas time: Australian coll.: late C. 19-20.

Christmas, v. To 'provide with Christmas cheer': very rare: late C. 10-17. Adorn with decorations for Christmas: from ca. 1825. Celebrate Christmas: from ca. 1890. All three senses, coll. See 'The Phiology of Christmas', in Words; also O.E.D.


Christmas box. A Christmas present: low coll. (and dial.); from ca. 1860.


Christmasing. See Christmas, n.

Christmas(e)y. Pertaining to, looking like, Christmas: coll.: from ca. 1880. Baumann.

Christy. A coll. (in C. 20, S.E.) abbr. of Christy's minstrels (—1873): Ruskin, in 1875, was app. the first to use the term in print. Ex one George Christy of New York.

chro. Abbr. chromolithograph, -io: coll.; 'in use shortly after 1850', O.E.D.

chronic. Unpleasant; objectionable; unfair; 'rotten'. (Rarely of persons: in same senses; hence, formidable, excellent: C. 20. Manchon.) Late C. 19-20, ex the S.E. sense, acute (pain), irritable (c. complaint). Ware, recording it for 1886, defines chronic rot as 'despairingly bad'. Whence:


chronometer. A watch, however small: coll., either jocular or pretentious: C. 20.

 chrony. A C. 17 variant of crony, 1.


F. & Gibbons. Ex Hindustani chuprowo.

*chubbingly. A late C. 17—early 18 c. variant of S.E. chubby. B.E., s.v. bulchin.

chubby or dumpy. A short, squat umbrella: coll.: 1925. Collinson.—2. Chubby is the nickname, since ca. 1920 among cricketers, of Maurice Tate.


chuck, v. In c., to eat (—1870). Hindley's Cheap Jack. App. later than and ex the n. 2nd sense.—2. As to toss, to throw with little arm-action, it has always been S.E., but as throw in any other sense, it is low coll. of C. 19-20.—3. (Pigeon fanciers') to despatch a pigeon: coll., then j.; from ca. 1870.—4. To spend extravagantly (—1876); coll. as is the gen. late C. 19—20 form, chuck-away.—5. To abandon, dismiss, discharge (from gaol); (v.l.) give up (in C. 20, occ. = go back on an invitation that one has accepted): often varied as chuck up; from ca. 1890. Whence chuck it up?, in C. 20 gen. chuck it! = 'drop it ! stop (talking, etc.)! —6. Also, in low coll, chuck often = do, perform (e.g. chuck a jolly, to begin bantering, chafing, to support heartily, noisily): the sense and the connotation of all such phrases will be obvious from the definition of the 'complementary' nouns.—7. V.i., to be sex-

**chuck, do a.** See do a chuck.

**chuck, get or give the.** To be dismissed, to dismiss: from ca. 1880; low coll.—2. Hence, of a proposal for marriage or a courtship: from ca. 1920. E.g. in Dorothy Sayers, Clouds of Witness, 1926, 'I got the chuck from Barbara and didn't feel much like bothering about other people's heart-to-hearts.'


*chuck a chest.* To 'tell the tale': C. 20 vagrants' c. Pro. ex. —2. To throw forward the chest, as though prepared to meet the world: streets: late C. 19–20. Ware.—3. Whence, 'to attempt to exercise undue authority', 'throw one's weight about': military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Cf. chuck out chest, q.v. at chest . . .

**chuck a jolly.** (Costermongers) from ca. 1890: see chuck, v., 6.

**chuck a shoulder.** To give (a person) the cold shoulder: costers' (—1900). Ware.

*chuck a stall.* To attract someone's attention while a confederate robs him: c. from ca. 1850. H., 2nd ed. See stall.

**chuck** [oneself] about or into. To move or act quickly, vigorously (—1860): coll. The into phrase also (—1880) = fall into.

**chuck-barge.** 'Cask in which the biscuit of a mess is kept. Also equivalent to [fig.] basket.' Ware: naval: late C. 19–20. Cf. chuck, n., 2.


**chuck-faring.** A parish clerk: late C. 17–early 18. B.E. Ex a character in the Satyr against Hypocrites.

**chuck her up!** In cricket, the fielding side's expression of delight: coll.: from ca. 1875.

**chuck-hole.** A coll. variant for the game of chuck-faring: from ca. 1830; ob.

**chuck in,** v.t. To challenge: boxing; from ca. 1820. Ex the old throwing a hat into the ring. Also, to compete. † by 1914.

**chuck-in, have a.** To try one's luck: ca. 1800–1914; sporting.

**chuck it!** See chuck, v., 5.

**chuck off,** to employ sarcasm; chuck off at, to banter or chaff: Australian (—1916). C. J. Dennis.

**chuck one's hand in.** To refuse to do, or stop doing, something: orig., military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Ex cards.

**chuck one's weight about.** To 'show off'; orig. military (—1900). Ware.

**chuck out.** To eject forcibly (—1880); to discard (thing or plan), from ca. 1910. Coll.—2. Hence, jocularly, to cause to leave; from ca. 1915.

**chuck out hints.** To hint (v.i.): low coll. (—1887). Baumann.

**chuck out ink.** To write articles; journalists' (—1909); ob. Ware.

**chuck over.** To abandon (e.g. a sweetheart): low coll. (—1887). Baumann.—2. Hence, n.: late C. 19–20.

**chuck seven.** To die: low: late C. 19–20. (John G. Brandon, West End, 1933.) A dice-cube has no '7'.

*chuck the dummy.* To feign illness; esp. to simulate epilepsy: c. (—1800). Whence chuck a dummy, q.v.

**chuck-up.** A salute; military: from not later than 1915. F. & Gibbons. 'From the act of throwing up the hand to the forehead in saluting' . . .

**chuck-up, give (a thing) the.** To abandon it, to send it 'to the devil': low coll. (—1923). Ex chuck up as at chuck up the sponge, 2.

**chuck up the bunch of fives.** To die: boxers' (—1909). Ware.

**chuck up the sponge.** See sponge. —2. Hence chuck up (often corrupted, says H., 5th ed., to jack up), to abandon: coll.: from ca. 1860.

**chuckaboo.** A street endearment: mid C. 19–20. Ware. Cf.:

**chuckaby.** A C. 17 endearment: coll. So is chucking. O.E.D. Cf. chuck, n.

**chuckaroo.** A boy employed about a regiment: coll. among soldiers in India (—1880). A corruption of Hindustani chuckora, a boy or younger. Yule & Bernal.

**chuckaway.** See Bryant & May's chuckaway.

**chucked.** Slightly drunk: from ca. 1880. †. Cf. screwed. —2. Disappointed; unlucky; sold'. From ca. 1870; ob., except among artists, who, from late C. 19, apply it to a picture refused by the Academy. Cf. that delightful ca. 1879 hallad, Chucked Again. —3. Abbr. chuckled out, forcibly ejected; see chuck out. —4. In c., amorous; 'fast': from ca. 1860. Ex chuck, v., 7.

*chuckered or chunked up, be.** To be acquainted or released: c. from ca. 1860.

**chucked all of a heap.** Fascinated; infatuated: London proletarian (—1909). Ware.

**chucked-in.** Into the bargain; for good measure. Coll.: from ca. 1875. Punch, Oct. 11, 1884, 'Arry at a Political Picnic, reproduced in Baumann's Londonsmen.

*chuck up. See chunked, be.**

**chucker.** In cricket, either a bowler apt to throw the ball or a defaulting player. Both are coll. and both date from ca. 1880, the latter † and, post-1918, replaced by guitter.

**chucker-out.** A man, often ex-pupil, retained to eject persons from meetings, taverns, brothels, etc.: low coll. (—1880). The Saturday Review, March 31, 1883.

**chucking-out.** Forceful ejection (see preceding entry): from ca. 1880. Oct. (1881) — an adj., esp. in chucking-out time, closing time at a 'pub'.

**chuckler.** Anglo-Indian coll.: a native shoe maker. From ca. 1750. Ex Tamil.


**chucks! Cave! Schoolboys': from ca. 1850. H., 3rd ed. Perhaps cf. shucks /

**chucky.** A coll. endearment (cf. chuck, n., 1): from the 1720's; ob. except in dial.—2. A chicken or a fowl: late C. 19–20; coll.

**chuff.** Impudent; low coll. (—1923) ex dial. chuff, happy (—1860). Manchon; O.E.D.

**chuff it! Be off! Take it away!** Coll.: ca. 1850; ob. H., 1st ed. Perhaps ex chuff as a term of reproach.
chugar(r)ow! A corruption of chabarow! or a contraction of chuck (or even sh*t) your row! : low: C. 20.

chul(l) or chullo! Hurry! Military and Anglo-Indian, from ca. 1800. In C. 20, gen. chello or, in G.W., jillo or jilli. Hindi chullo, go along. Sals, in *The Illustrated London News* of June 19, 1886, says 'in Calcutta chul is a word that you may hear fifty times a day'; and n.b. Yulo & Burnett.

chul(l), v. To succeed; be satisfactory: of things or plans, i.e. 'It won't chul', i.e. answer, do. In C. 1860. Etymology obscure; but perhaps suggested by chull / chum; in C. 18, occ. chamm. First recorded in 1864—Creed's dedication, 'To my chum, Mr. Hody of Wadhams College'—this term seems at first to have been university s., which it remained until ca. 1890; a contemptuous sense was 'a chamber-fellow, or constant companion', B.E. Almost immediately the term came to mean, also, an intimate friend, and, in C. 18, a mate in crime: cf. college chum, q.v. Either s. or coll. In C. 17-18, it has in C. 19-20 been coll. Perhaps by abbreviation and collision of chamber-fellow or -mate: of the Fr. chambre (a roomful of people, oneself included) and Grose's camerade. Cf. mate, pal, sorry, and the U.S. buddy. See Terms of Address, in Words—2. On the Convoy Training Ship, from ca. 1880 or a few years earlier, chum denoted anyone junior, new chum a newly joined cadet (Maslenid, *The Convoy*, 1933).—3. In Australia, a chum is an English immigrant from ca. 1890. It represents new chum, a newcomer—esp. from England: this term dates from (—1839), while old chum, an experienced selector, antedates 1846 (C. P. Hodgson, *Reminiscences of Australia*); the latter has never, after ca. 1890 (see Morris), been much used. This use of new and old comes ex that, s., in prisons for newcomers and old hands: o. (—1812); † by 1900. Vaux.—5. See choom.

chum, v. To live together: from ca. 1730 (Wesley); coll., as is the rare C. 19 v.t., put as a chum (Dickens in *The Pickwick Papers*).

chum, long-eared; long-faced chum; long-haired chum. A mule; a horse; a girl; military: the third is the original (the 1800's); the others are of C. 20. B. & F. & Gibbons.

chummings. See chum, n.


chummar. Friendship; friendliness: rooms shared with a friend: coll., from ca. 1870; never very gen.; ob. except in India, where it = 'a house where European employees of a firm ... live together' (Eylyl). Besant & Rice.

chumming or chumming-up. Same as chummage, esp. as to garnish, footing: C. 19.—2. In C. 20, the forming of a friendship: coll.


chummy, adj. Friendly, intimate; sociable: coll.: from ca. 1880. Besant.—2. Of (a motor-car) affording comfort and space for three or four persons: coll.: 1922. Hence as n. (likewise O.E.D. Sup.).


chump. (S.E. or coll. > S.E. in sense of a blockhead.)—2. The head; occ. the face: from ca. 1800. Esp. in off one's chump, very eccentric; mad to almost any degree. H., 3rd ed.: 'Master ... have gone off his chump, that's all,' Besant & Rice, 1877.—3. A variant of chum = friend: ca. 1880-1920. Punch, Oct. 11, 1884. *Chump, get or provide one's own. To earn one's own living: c.: ca. 1890-1914. See esp. that prison classic, *Five Years' Penal Servitude*, anon., 1877, not to be confused with James Greenwood's *Seven Years' Penal Servitude*, 1884.

chump, or chunk, of wood. No good: rhyming s. (—1859). Also, a 'chump' or fool, ca. 1870-1900.


chumpy. Eccentric; idiotic; insane. Ca. 1870-1914. Ex off one's chump.


chum of wood. No good: rhyming s., contemptuous variant of chump of wood, q.v.


chunkpappy, representing an object for which no English word exists, is ineligible; but]

chuprassy, in civilian use (—1865) a messenger, in military usage, an Indian orderly (from ca. 1880), is Anglo-Indian coll., direct ex Hindi chhuprasi, the wearer of a chapra or badge. See chump.

chuprow. See chum-a-row.

[church. Illicitly to disguise a watch by changing its 'innards': c.: from ca. 1835; gen. as church a yack. Brandon, 1839. Cf. christen, q.v.

church, go to. To get married: coll.; from late C. 16. Shakespeare, 1599, 'Counte Claudio, when means you to goe to Church?'

church, talk. To talk 'shop': coll.; from ca. 1850; ob.

church-by-hand. 'An emergency or makeshift performance of Divine Service on board ship on Sunday, when the regular service cannot be held': naval: from ca. 1914. F. & Gibbons.

church-folk. Members of the Church of England as opp. to 'chapel folk', Dissenters. From ca. 1870; coll. (Other senses, S.E.)


church-piece. A threepenny bit: Society (—1909); ob. Ware.

church-service. A church-service book, i.e. one containing the Common Prayer, the lessons, the

church-work. Work that proceeds very slowly; coll.; from ca. 1600. Ex church-building.

churchify. To render 'churchy' (q.v.): 1843, Miall (O.E.D.): coll. >, by 1900, S.E.

churchiness. The being 'churchy', q.v.: from ca. 1880; coll. >, by 1900, S.E.


churchy. 'Redolent of the Church; obtrusive in religious observance.' Coll.: from ca. 1860.

churchyard clock, as many faces as a. (Of a man) unreliable: naval; ca. 1860–1910. F. & Gibbons.


churchyard lock. The death of a child in a large, modern cementery: coll. (— 1909). Ware.


*church. A knife; n.; prob., however, a misprint.

chuzzle. See chisel.—ch-y-ack or -ike; chyacke. See chyke.

cicaboo. A ribbon-knot attached to hilt of sword, neck of walking-stick, etc.: ca. 1770-1820. Society. (S.O.D. gives as an unassimilated Italianism, but this usage of the word is slangy.) Ex the C. 18–20 sense, imported direct from Italy: a married woman's recognised gallant or 'servente'.

-cide, -icide. A suffix denoting -murder or -murderer. Often used in jocular coll. by the cultured, as in time'cide, a friable or a pastime, and the happier waricide, a pacifist. This sort of thing easily > pedantic or otherwise objectionable, and should be Poetrified.


cigarscage. Well furnished with cigars; smoking or 'sporting' a large or very expensive cigar. A jocular coll. (1839), in C. 20, almost S.E., after picturecage or pictureque.

glicia(n) and Sicilia(n) are still often confused, as they have been since ca. 1600.

cinch, v.t. (In Canada, as in the Northern States of America, the is hard; in England, as in the Southern States, it is soft; in other parts of the British Empire, it varies.) 'Corner', got a grip on, put pressure on: orig. (1875), U.S., anglicised ca. 1900, though never gen. But it's a cinch, the screw is on, it's as good as a certainty, has, during and since the G.W., been better received. F. & Gibbons. Ex cinch, a tight girth (Sp. cincho).


cinder, yours to a. See yours to a cinder.

cinder-carber. A female servant: late C. 18–


cinder-knotter. A stoker: naval (— 1900); ob. Ware.

cinder-sitter. A woman's hat with open-work brim, the edge of which was turned up perpendicularly: Society: ca. 1875–1912. Ware.

cinderella. Abbr. Cinderella dance, one ceasing at midnight: from ca. 1880; coll. >, by 1900, S.E. cinders. See cinder, 2.


[ (Cinema slang; see 'Moving-Picture Slang.]


cinquante. An old 'hand' or 'stager': ca. 1860–1880. Podantic; ex Fr. cinquante, 50.—2. A 'gamester and seruirious companion by profession': ca. 1600–60. (O.E.D.)

cinqué and sice, set at. 'To expose to great risks, to be reckless about' (O.E.D.): ca. 1530–1720: s. >, coll. >. S.E. Cf. at sires and sevens.


circular. Occupants of the dress-circle: theatrical (— 1900). Ware.

*circling boy. A 'rock', a swindle. A gambler's or a thief's decoy: C. 17 c. Jonson. Cf. run rings round, q.v. at rings round.


circuitbound. A roundabout way (lit.): coll.; from 1681 (Udryen); ob. Ex bend + L. circuim, around, + L. dative and ablative pl., -ibus.— Whence, 2, a long-winded story: coll.; from ca. 1750. Grose, 1st cd.


circumsession. Catastrophic for theological circumcision: mid-C. 17-20. O.E.D.

circus. A noisy and confused institution, place, scene, assemblage or group of persons: coll.; American anglicised ca. 1865.—2. A raiding-party that moves from sector to sector: military: 1917. Also travelling circus. O.E.D. (Sup.).—3. An aeroplane squadron: military: 1917. B. & F. and, esp. F. & Gibbons. The most famous was Richthofen's.—4. Artillery s., from 1914, as in R. Blaker, Medal without Bar, 1930; 'Cartwright rode at the tail of the firing battery with "the circus".—G.S. wagons, mess-cart, water-cart and the odd bicycle-pushers.'—5. Any temporary group of persons that housed together, are working at the same task, e.g. at an encyclopaedia (for the masses rather than the classes): coll.; 1932; Grose, 1st cd.

Circus, Kaifer. See Kaifer Circus.

*circuit cuss. A circus rider: c.: from ca. 1850.\footnote{abbr. customer.}

cirrous, cirrus. Incorrect for cirrus, cirrus: C. 18–20. O.E.D.
clap. As chatter, gossip, S.E.; as tongue, coll.: late C. 16–20; ob. Greene, 'Haud your clacks, lads.' As 'a prattler or busybody' (Dyche), coll.: C. 17–early 18—2. A loud talk or chat, coll.: from ca. 1810; ob. James Payn, 1888, 'The old fellow would have had a clap with her.' Esp. in cut your clap', 'shut up!': late C. 19–20 (Manchon).—3. The v. is S.E. The word is echoic.


claim, jump a. To seize, or gain possession of, fraudulently. Lit., S.E. ex U.S.; but fig. it is a col. anglicised ca. 1880.

*claimed. Under arrest. See claim, 2.

clam. One who says extremely little or is excessively secretive: coll.: C. 20. (The U.S. sense is, a close-fisted person.)

clang. In c., a pewter tankard: C. 19; late C. 17–18 (B.E.), a silver one. Hence, rum clank, a double tankard, as in B.E., who also records clank-napper, a stealer of silver tankards.


clan, a or the gathering of the. Any considerable, or indeed inconsiderable, gathering-together of people. gen. of the same or similar character or pursuit or purpose. From ca. 1890; coll. by 1933 S.E. Ex Scottish warfare of C. 16–18.

clap. Gonorrhoea: late C. 16–20; S.E. until ca. 1840, then low coll. Respectably: 'They sing, they dance, clean shoes, or curo a clap—almost the sole instance in Johnson's formal works (this occurs in London, an admirable satirical poem, 1738) of a monosyllabic sentence. Ex Old Fr. clapoir.

clap, v. To infect with gonorrhoea: from ca. 1650. S.E. until ca. 1840, then low coll.—2. Catchastically for clap (to embrace) and clepe (to call): C. 15, C. 17 resp. O.E.D.—3. To take, seize: low (~1857); ob. Ducasie Anglicus', 1st ed. Ex clap one's hands on.

clap, in a. Immediately; occ., instantaneously. Coll. from ca. 1630; ob.

Clap-em. See Clapham.

clap eyes on. To see, esp. unexpectedly or finally: coll.; Dickens, 1838.

clap in, v.i. To come or go decisively; enter vigorously; put oneself forward; coll.: ca. 1600–1780. Marvell, 1672, 'Hearing of a vacancy with a Noble-man, he clap'd in, and easily obtained to be his Chaplain.' (O.E.D.)


clap on, v.i. To 'set to'; apply oneself energetically: coll.; from ca. 1850. Surtees (O.E.D.).

Clapham (or Clap'em), he went out by Had'em and came home by. 'He went out a-wenching, and got a clap,' Grose, 1st ed.: mid-C. 18-early 19 c.p. Punning clap, n.

clapper. The tongue (human); esp. that of a very talkative person; coll.: 1838, H. Shirley; H. 1st ed. O.E.D.—2. In C. 17, ob. by 1932, a sandwich-man's boards.—3. A study ventilator: Shrewsbury School coll.: from ca. 1880. (Desmond Coke, *The Bending of a Twig*, 1906.) Ex the noise it makes as it is being closed.


- clap-dograwn or, more correctly, -dugeon. A beggar's or a scavenger's dog. Also as an insult. Mid-C. 16-19: c. till ca. 1800, then low c. with an archaic tinge. Harman; Jonson; Ned Ward; Sala. ? lit., one who assumes ('claps on') grief, indignation, distress. Or, as O.E.D. suggests, clapper + -dugeon, the hilt of a dagger.

clapster. A frequent sufferer from clap (q.v.); a very loose man. C. 19-20; low coll. clary. In piece-work, to earn as much as possible: factory-workers': 1932. (Slang, p. 181).

Clasrs, Caledon an Railway stock: money market: from ca. 1880; ob.

Clare Market Cleavers. Butchers of that district: London coll.: ca. 1850-1900. 'The glory of Clare Market ... was practically gone in '98,' Ware (whom see for an excellent account).

Clare Market duck. 'Baked hullock's heart stuffed with sage and onions—which gave a faint resemblance to the bird': Ware; London coll.: ca. 1850-1900. See the preceding.

Clarence. Like, though less than, Cuthbert, apt to be used as a jocular coll.: C. 20. See my *Name This Child*, 1936.

claret. Blood: from ca. 1600 (Dekker, e.g. in *The Honest Whore*, 1604). From ca. 1770, mostly in boxing 'circles' (e.g. in Moore's *Tom Cril's Memorial*, 1819). Ex the colour. Cf. badminton and bordeaux. Hence:

claret, tap one's. To draw blood: from ca. 1770; pugilistic: Grose, 1st ed. claret-christening. The first blood that flows in a boxing match: pugilistic (—1923). Manchon. See claret.

claret-jug. The nose: pugilistic; from ca. 1840; ob. Ex claret, q.v.


Clarion. A member of Clare, Cambridge University: from ca. 1850. Charles Whibley, witty Augustan, embalms it in *Cap and Gown* as 'stuke-struck Clarions'. Without the pun on clarion, the term would obviously not be unconventional.

Clarkeno. The Fourth Party in the House of Commons: political: late June-July, 1885. A telescoping of Mr. Edward Clarke and Co., as it was also called (*The Referee*, July 19, 1885). Ware.

clashy. Anglo-Indian (coll. rather than s.) for a native sailor or tent-pitcher, loosely for a labourer, a 'low fellow'; late C. 18-20. Ex Urdn.

class. Distinction; sheer merit; athletics and, slightly, the turf: from ca. 1850: coll. 'He's not class enough,' 'There's a good deal of class about him': he is not good enough; pretty good. Cf. classy, q.v., and:

*class man.* A 'prisoner who has passed out of the first stage', George Ingram, *Stir*, 1933: c.

class, no. Without distinction or merit; lower classes' coll.: 1807, 'Soldiers! Why, soldiers ain't no class.' Ware. Ex preceding.

*class, take a. (Oxford) to take an honours degree; mid-C. 19-20: coll. >, by 1880, S.E.

classic. Excellent, 'splendid': from ca. 1880: coll. Ex burlesque S. E. sense; 'approved, recognised "standard"', O.E.D.

classy. Stylish; fashionable; smart; well-turned-out: from ca. 1890: coll., lower middle class downwards. Cf. class, q.v.

[clar] in Manchon is an error or, more prob., a missprint for *clatter.*

clattery, adj. Clattering: coll.: from ca. 1880. O.E.D. (Also in Yorkshire dial.: E.D.D.)

*claw.* A stroke of the cat'-o'-nine-tails: (— 1870) c.; ob. claw me and I'll claw thee. The C. 17-early 19 form of the C. 16 claw me, claw ye and the C. 20 scratch my back and I'll scratch yours: coll.

claw off. Severely to defeat or thrash: late C. 17-19, low coll., as is the sense, vencrally to infect. B.E.—3. Also, to scold: same period and kind. Occ. c. away. Cf. earlier S. E. senses.

claw-back. See claw-poll.

claw-hammer (coat). The tail coat of full evening dress; coll.: from 1869 in U.S. (Thornton); anglicised in 1879 (O.E.D.). (The coat is gen. omitted.) Ex a claw-hammer.


[claws, in one's. In a person's power or possession; jocular of oneself, pejorative of another: late C. 16-20; S.E. till C. 20, then virtually coll.]


clay. Abbr. clay-pipes: coll.: from ca. 1860. Calverley in *The Ode to Tobacco*. clay, moisten or wet one's. To drink: from ca. 1700: coll. verging on S. E. In C. 19-20 also soak. Addison in *The Spectator*, 'To moisten their clay, and grow immortal by drinking'. Cf. S. E. mortal clay.


clean, v.i. To change one's clothes: naval: late C. 19-20. Bowen, 'If a man is to clean into dirty clothes is permissible.' clean, in several senses as adj. and adv. is almost coll., as in clean off his head.—2. But as 'expert, clever', it is wholly c. (—1811); ? by 1890. *Lex. Bal.*

clean, come. To tell, or confess, everything: U.S.: anglicised ca. 1920. Dorothy Sayers, *The Five Red Herrings*, 1931, 'I'11 come clean, as they say. I'd better do it at once, or they'll think I know more than I do.'

*clean, keep it. See keep it clean!*

clean and polish—we're winning the war. A military c.p., by the ranks condemnatory of 'spit and polish' (q.v.): 1915-18. *F. & Gibbons*. Cf.
CLEAN AS A BUTTON-STICK. (Of a soldier) smart in appearance: military coll. : C. 20. F. & Gibbons. A button-stick was a device for polishing buttons.

clean leg up, give (one) a. To help him (esp. to obtain a job): non-aristocratic coll. (— 1887); slightly ob. Baumann. Ex giving a person assistance over a fence.
clean one's front. See front, clean one's.
clean out. To deprive of money, gen. illicitly: orig., low, verging on c.: from ca. 1810. Vaux, 1812; Dickens, in The Old Curiosity Shop, 'He was plucked, pigeononed, and cleaned out completely.'—2. Ca. 1840–70, to thrash.
clean skins. (Rare in singular.) Unbranded cattle. Australia (— 1881).: coll. : in C. 20, S.E. Morris.
clean straw. Clean sheaths: Winchester College, f C. 16–20; ob. 'Before 1540 the bods were bundles of straw on a stone floor,' F. & H. The same meaning is extant at Bootham School: see Anon., Dict. of Bootham Slang, 1925.
clean the board. To clear the board, etc., of all it contains; make a clean sweep: coll. (— 1884). O.E.D.
clean up. To acquire (something) as profit or gain: coll. : C. 20; U.S., anglicized by 1910. O.E.D. (Surn.)
clean wheat, it's the. I.e. the best of its kind: coll.: ca. 1860–1910. Cf. A.I.
clear. (Exceedingly) drunk: c. and low: from late 1880's; ↑ by 1890. B.E.; Vanburgh, The Relapse, 'I suppose you are clear—you'd never play such a trick as this else.' Cf. clear as mud.
clear, in the. With no evidence against one; innocent, or appr. so: c. C. 20. (The Passing Show. May 1934.)
clear, the coast is. The w.c. is at your disposal: euphemistic c.p. (— 1923). Manchon. Ex the fig. S.E. sense.
clear an examination paper. To answer all the questions: coll. (— 1903). On the analogy of clear a view. O.K. and all contents.
clear as mud. Anything but clear; confused: coll.: from ca. 1890.
clear crystal. White spirits, esp. gin; loosely, brandy and rum: from ca. 1800; ob. clear drink. To clear the table after a meal: nautical coll. : mid-C. 19–20. Bowen.
clear off or out. To depart: from ca. 1830. The S.O.D. gives it as S.E., but in C. 19, at least, the term had a coll. taint, perhaps because it was used slightly earlier in U.S.—e.g. Neal, in Brother Jonathan, 1855, had 'like many a hero before him, he cleared out. Morally, clear out is gen. S.E., but as 'clear out', q.v., or 'run', it is coll. (— 1850), as in Thackeray's Pendennis.
cleave, v.i. To be wonted (said of women only): C. 18–early 19; low. The two opp. meanings of cleave—due to independent radicals—are present in this subtle term. A New Caxton Dict., 1725; Grose, 1st ed.
cleared. See cloven.
cleft stick, in a. In a very difficult position. From ca. 1700; coll. in C. 18; in C. 19–20, S.E.
clem. To starve: C. 20 vagrants', c., ex dial.—2. In C. 20 circus s. (perhaps ex U.S.), a fight.
clencher. See clincher.—clench-poop. See clinch-poop.
clergyman. A chimney-sweep: C. 19. ('chimney-sweep.'
clergyman or clerk, St. Nicholas's. See at Nicholas.

[Clergymans] diction in the Church of England. The following passage, caustically true of many clerics, occurs in Ernest Raymond's Mary Leith, 1951 (Part I, ch. iii): "'All," when Mr Bradley was in high emotional state, showed a strange tendency to become "ull"—'Brethren, shall we all now rise and sing a hymn'—the holy Apostles, on the crest of the wave of very strong feeling, changed most distinctly into 'Thy holy Apostles, O Lord'; and at times—at really stirring times—'Lord enriched and strengthened itself into something very like 'Lorder'. This passage is preceded by an equally pertinent one on clerical clichés.)
clerk. To impose upon; swindle: c. and low coll. : C. 18–early 19. A New Caxton Dict., 1725; Grose, 1st ed. Ex ignorance's suspicion of learning.—2. To act as a clerk: C. 19–20; coll. The vbl.n., clerking, occurs in C. 17, the ppl. adj. in mid-C. 16. Lamb, in 1834, 'I am very tired of clerking it.' (O.E.D.)
clerk of the works. 'He who takes the lead in minor affairs', Bee: public-house: ca. 1850–50. Punning S.E. sense.
clerks, St. Nicholas's. See Nicholas.
clever. "At first a colloquial and local word" S.O.D.; it still is coll. if 'cunning' or 'skillful' and applied to an animal or if 'well', 'in good health or spirits' (mid-C. 19–20). Esp. not too clever, indisposed in health; the health sense is common in Australia and New Zealand.—2. Convenient, suitable: coll. : ca. 1750–1820.—3. 'Nice'; generally likable or pleasant: coll. : from ca. 1780; ob.—4. (Of persons) well-disposed, amiable: coll. : ca. 1770–1830, extant in U.S. Goldsmith, 'Then come, the jorum about,' And let us be merry.


clever Dick. The same: schools' (— 1887); mostly London. Baumann. Cf.


*clew*; occ. *clyme* or *cleyn*. An artificial sore: ca. 1670–1830: o. Head; B.E. furnishes an excellent account of this beggar's device. Etymology, unless ex cly, to seize.


*clicks*: o. Clicks orクリック. An meeting with an unknown member of the opposite sex: G.W. +. Much rarer than the corresponding nuance of the 4th sense of the v.—4. Hence, a girl; a sweetheart: Glasgow (—1934)

click, v. To 'stand at a shop-door and invite customers in': Dyche, 1748. C. 18–early 19. Ex:—2. In c. and low, to seize; late C. 17–mid-19. B.E., Grose.—3. In printers', from slightly before 1860. 'A work is said to be "clicked" when each man works on his lines, and keeps an account thereof.' O.E.D. (Sup.)—4. In 1914 +, orig. military, 'to do a drill movement with a click'; 'to click for a fatigue or a duty (i.e. to be put down for one)'; (of a man) 'to click with a member of the opposite sex', i.e. get off with one, also absolutely in 'He's clicked',—hence (a sense that Collinson misses), to be successful, to have piece of very good luck (with variant 'he's clicked for something') and v.t. as in click a Blighty, to get a 'Blightly' wound (F. & Gibbons); (of a woman) to become pregnant, also to 'meet' a man, though the latter is gen. in form, click with (a fellow). 'In all these senses', says Collinson in 1926, and the remark holds good, 'the word is still not uncommon'. Ex the click one hears when a small mechanical object falls into position, or when a key is turned. Cf., however, Scots click in (or up) with, to take up with (a person); E.D.D.

click, one's ears go back with a. (Gen. his ears went...). An f. near o.p. indicative of pleasure manifested at good news: military: from not later than 1915. F. & Gibbons.

clicker. A shopkeeper's tout: late C. 17–19. Ned Ward in *The London Spy* : 'Women here were almost as Troublesome as the Long-Lane clickers.—2. A foreman shoemaker apportioning leather to the workmen: orig. (C. 17) s., soon j.—3. In printing, from ca. 1770. A foreman distributing the copy: soon j.—4. In C. 18–early 19 c., one who shares out the booty or 'regulars', q.v.—5. A knockdown blow: boxing, from ca. 1815; ob.—6. One who, once or esp., often, meets successfully with an unknown person of the opposite sex: G.W. +; ex to click; 4.

click. Sexual intercourse: o. or low coll.; late C. 17–18. Gen. as be at clicket. B.E., Grose. Ex the S.E. term, applied to foxes.


click. See cly, n.


*clift*. To steal: mid-C. 19–20; ob. H., 2nd ed. ↑ ex hare in a stick.

*cligh*. See cloy, v.

climacteric, climacteric, climatic are occ. confused: C. 19–20. (O.E.D.)


*climb the three trees with a ladder*: To ascend the gallows: c.: late C. 18–early 19. Grose, 2nd ed. Ex the three pieces of a gallows.

*climb Zion*: 'To rush up the fo'ce, chased by armed seniors', Mascield: *Conway Training Ship*, from ca. 1890.

clinh. See cliner.

*cliner*. A prison cell: mid-C. 19–20 o. (ob.): H., 3rd ed. Hence go, or kiss, the clinch or clink, to be imprisoned.


*cling-rig*. See clink-rig.

*cling*. A female dancing very close to her partner: from ca. 1890.


*clink*. To put in prison: from ca. 1860. Also see clinch.

*clink, kiss the*. To be imprisoned. Low: late C. 16–early 19. A C. 19 c. variant, get the clinch.

*clinging*: occ. corrupted to cling-rig. The stealing of (esp. silver) tankards from public-houses: c.: ca. 1770–1860. Ex clinch, q.v.

*clinker*. In c. of ca. 1690–1830, a crafty, designing felloe. B.E.—2. In c. C. 18–19, any kind of chain.—3. A hard, or smartly delivered blow: from ca. 1880; boxing. Thackeray. Ex S.E. clink, a quick, sharp blow.—4. A person or thing of excel-
clinker

clinker-knocker. A nautical term, especially used by sailors, to denote a tall, swift-sailed, heavily laden sailing ship, particularly one fitted with three masts. It was a term used by sailors to describe a ship that was heavily laden with cargo, and which required a large amount of ballast to keep it upright. The term was also used to describe a ship that was designed for speed and agility, and which was able to navigate rough seas with ease. The term was used in the 18th and 19th centuries, and was a reflection of the importance of trade and navigation in the maritime sphere.

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cloister. A small room or chamber, often used as a place of prayer or study, and typically found in monasteries or convents. The term was derived from the Latin word "closter," which means "twine" or "wreath," and was used to describe the coiled, intertwined branches of a tree or bush, which were said to resemble the arms of a monk or nun, who often tended to the gardens and orchards of monasteries. The term was also used to describe a place of peace and quiet, and was often associated with the concept of a "beloved body," which was a term used to describe a person who was beloved or loved by another person.

cloyster. A type of shellfish that is similar to clams, but which is more elongated and has a longer, more slender body. The term was derived from the Greek word "klaster," which means "a part that is separated," and was used to describe the part of a clam that is separated from the rest of the shell. The term was also used to describe a type of shellfish that is found in the Mediterranean Sea, and which is often used in salads and as an ingredient in soups and stews.

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clod-hopper. A type of plant that is a member of the family Dipsacaceae, and which is characterized by its small, round berries and its ability to grow in poor soil. The term was derived from the Greek word "klastos," which means "a part that is separated," and was used to describe the part of a plant that is separated from the rest of the plant. The term was also used to describe a type of plant that is able to grow in poor soil, and which is often used as a ground cover or as an ornamental plant.
clothes. Skilly: paupers', from ca. 1840; ob.
closet-room. At Winchester College, 'a kind of
general tournament', Mansfield. Dating from
early C. 19, † by 1890.
cloak. See cloak.
Clootie; Cloots. The devil: Scott coll. (and
Northern dial.): from the 1780's. Burns has both;
Barham (Clootie). Ex cloot, a division of a hoof;
the devil has a cloven foot. (O.E.D.)
close in. Shut up: C. 14-17; coll. soon S.E.
close as God's curse to a whore's arse or as shirt
and shitten arse. Very close indeed; mid-C. 18-
early 19 c.p. or proverb. Grose, 1st ed.
close as wax. Miserly; stingy; secretive: from
ca. 1770; coll. till mid-C. 19, then S.E. Cumber-
land, 1772; Charles Reade. (Apperson.) Cf. the
S.E. close-fisted (C. 17-20, regarded by B.E. as coll.
close call. A near thing; an incident almost fatal:
U.S. (1890's) anglicised in late 1900's. (O.E.D. Sup.)
*close file. A secretive or uncommunicative
person: c. or low, from ca. 1820; ob. File (cf. blade) = a man.
close mouth. A disreputable establishment or
close one's dead-lights. To 'hung up' one's
close thing. A narrow escape; an even contest.
cloak. Collective for Dutch seamen: mid-C. 18-
Nicolaas, a favourite Christian name in Holland.—
2. Hence, a seaman from the Eastern counties of
cloth. One's profession: C. 17-19; coll. > S.E.
in C. 18. Esp. the cloth: the Church; clergyman:
C. 18-20; coll. Swift, 1701; Dickens, 1836, of
another profession, 'This 'ere song's personal to
the cloth.'—2. Also, from ca. 1800 and coll., the
office of a clergyman.
cloth, cut one's coat according to the. To act in
sane accordance with the circumstances; esp.,
to live within one's means. Mid-C. 16-20. Coll.
till C. 18; late S.E.
cloth in the wind, shake (occ. have) a. To be
slightly drunk; nautical; from ca. 1830; ob.
cloth is all of another hue, the. That's a very
keen of another hue.
cloth market. (Or with capitaL) Bed. Late
C. 17-19; coll. (gen. with the). Ray, 1678;
clothes-line, able to sleep (upon a. Capable of
sleeping in difficult place or position; hence, able
to rough it; to look after oneself. Coll.; from ca.
1840.
B. 1890.
clothes-pin I am, that's the sort of. That's me!
That's my nature. (Of men only; cf. hair-pin.)
Coll.; from ca. 1865.
clothes sit on her like a saddle on a sow's back, her.
A late C. 17-18 c.p. applied to an ill-dressed
woman. (B.E.)
clothing-crumber. A 'ship's policeman superin-
tending the muddling of kits' naval: C. 20.
Bowen.
D.U.M.
clay, cligh, cly, to steal, is—like its derivatives—
clothy, chest or grab.
cloyer. A thief habitually claiming a share of
profits from young sharpeners: C. 17 c.—2. Also
in c., the less specialised sense: a thief, a pickpocket:
mid-C. 17–early 19. B.E.
cly, The membrum virile: low: C. 19.—2. A
very thick pigtail: coll.; 1760–1920; S.E. after
c. 1800.—3. Short for benefit club: coll.; from ca.
1890. To be on the club is to receive financial help
from a benefit club.—4. (The Club.) Blackheath
—5. An illicit drinking-den: Glasgow lower
classes: C. 20. MacArthur & Long, No Mean City,
1935.
cly, v. (Of an officer) to get one's men into an
inextricable position by confusing the order: from
c. 1805: coll.; > S.E. by 1890. Thackeray,
Whyte-Melville.
cly-fist. A man rough and brutal: late C. 16–
cly-land. The social district of which St.
James's (London) is the centre: coll.; from ca.
1870.
cly-bability. The possession of qualities fitting a
person to be a member of a club: coll.; from ca.
1875.
cly-are trump(s). Brute force rules, or is to
rule, the day: coll. in C. 19–20; S.E. in late C. 10–
18. Punning the card-suit.
cly. A heavy blow, gen. with the hand: mid-
C. 19–20: coll. (mostly Cockney) and dial.—2. In-
correct for a clyp: C. 19–20. (O.E.D.)
and dial. The ppl. adj. clyping = heavily
walking.
clymmor. A thick walking boot: coll., from ca.
1875. Ex clymp, an additional half-sole.—2. A
clympton. A countryman; a yokel; C. 16–
early 19; coll.
clympping. See clymp, v.
clymmy cleat. A wedge of wood against which a
harpooner, for steadiness, braced his left knee:
whalers' coll. verging on J. Bowen.
clymmy Dick. An awkward and/or clumsy
fellow: non-aristocratic coll. (1887); ob. Baumann.
etrash, easy; simple; 'caisy': c.; from ca.
1840; ob. by 1880, ℃ by 1900. Etymology ?
clysh, put in one's. To fall silent: motorists'
(ca. 1920) > gen. by: 1928, Galaway, Swan Song.
Ex motoring.
1800, then S.E. Adj., clysh, eated, as in B.E.
clysh, hand, the. Jocularly coll., C. 20;
from ca. 1800. A quartermaster-sergeant:
with: G.W. Prob. ex a lurid film so
named. F. & Gibbons.—3. A D.H.6 aeroplane:
Air Force: 1917–18. F. & Gibbons; a de Havill-
land used 'as an elementary training machine'.
clysh. A confused confusion, a mess or litter:
in C. 17–early 19, S.E.; then coll. and dial.
A variant of clysh (ex clot). Whence:
clysh, v. To litter confusedly and abundantly:
ca. 1670–1840, S.E.; now coll. and U.S. (S.O.D.)
clysh. A pocket: a purse; money: c., ℃ and
low: late C. 17–19. Indubitably c. is the late C. 17–
early 19 sense, meaning: B.E., Dyce, Grose. So is
tale a cly, late C. 17–18, to pick a pocket. As mid-
C. 18–18 v., to seize, take, to pocket, to steal: c.,
 ℃ and low. See clysh, n. and v.
cly, tale a. See take a cly.
cly, faken. A pickpocket: c. (1812); ob.
Vaux.—2. Hence the vbl.n., cly-faking (1851);
ob.
cly off. To carry off, away: C. 17 (18) o.
Brome in his Jonial Crew.
cly the ginks or jerk. To receive a whipping, a
lash: c. of ca. 1580–1850. See jerk.
clye. A C. 16–17 variant of cly.—cloy. See
clysh.
cly-pipe. A doctor: C. 17.—2. An
apothecary: C. 18–early 10. Both senses are lower,
the latter in Grose. Ex S.E. for a syringe.
c'm. Come (only in the imperative): sol., esp.
Cockney: C. 19–20. John G. Brandon, The One-
Minute Murder, 1934, 'C'm on and git it over.'
c. (Also c.) A shortening of cote or (q.v.)
core.—2. Co. or cuy, so pronounced, is a sol for
company; late C. 19–20. Esp., . . . and Co., and
the rest of them: coll.; from ca. 1880.—3, co.,
where used jocularly, is either pedantio or coll.,
according to circumstances.—4. in co; esp. act in
coll. to be longed together: coll. (1823); ob.
'Jon Rec.'—5. A co-resident: mostly Society
(1923). Manchon.
c. and. And the rest; et cetera: naval:
from ca. 1912. Hamish Maclear, The Private
Opinions of a British Blue-Jacket, 1929, 'For some
nose-eyelands and come after spise knut mags
[spice, nutmegs] and co—some times purs'.
Prob. suggested by the American co-ed, a girl at a
co-educational school or college.
c.-op; co-op store. A co-operative store:
the longer form, early 1870's: the shorter, early
1880's. Also a co-operative society: from early
1890's. O.E.D. (Sup.).—2. Hence, on the co-op,
on the co-operative principle: from ca. 1910: like
the others, it is coll. Ibid.
c. A private tutor: at first (1848, says
S.O.D.) a university word, orig. Cambridge; a., says
Frank Smolucy in Frank Fairclugh, 1850; but very
soon coll. If not connected with a college, he was,
until ca. 1880, known as a rural coach.—2. As
a trainer of athletes (1886), a coll. now almost S.E.
Whichsoever of cab, a 'crib' (q.v.), and coach is
the earlier, that one presumably suggested the other:
since cab comes ex cabbage, q.v., the earlier is prob.
cab.
c. V. To travel, go, in a coach: coll.: C. 17–
20; ob. Occ. with it.—2. To prepare (a pupil),
teach him privately: from ca. 1848; s. soon coll.,
orig. university, as in Thackeray.—3. To train
athletes: from ca. 1880; coll.—4. V.i., to read or
study with a private tutor: from ca. 1849; s. >
coll.
c. fellow, occ. companion. A companion,
fee worker, mate: jocularly coll.: ca. 1900–
1800. Shakespeare, in the Merry Wives, 'You, and
your Coach-fellow Nim'.
c. wheel. A crown piece: late C. 17–20;
ob. Grose. In late C. 17–19, for c-w., half a
'knight c-w., a crown. B.E.
c. whip. A Navy pennant: nautical: from
ca. 1890. Cf. dusker, q.v.
c. see, see, see. A coachman: late C.
18–20; ob. Coll. Thomas Moore, 1819, in Tom
Crib's Memorial, in form coaches. See —2.
(Coaches.) See Billy Blue.
coaches won't run over him, the. He is in gaol: coll. (— 1813); † by 1900. Ray, 1813 (Apperson). Cf. where the flies won't get at it (see flies).

coaching. Private instruction (actively or passively) : from 1845. Coll. — 2. (Rugby School) a fogging: C. 19; ob. by 1901.—3. The obtaining of high auction-prices by means of fictitious bidders: commercial (— 1860); ob. O.E.D.


coal-hole, n. Work down in the coal-hole, often given as punishment to a working hand: Conway Training Ship: from ca. 1890.


coal-scuttle (bonnet), n. and adj. A poke bonnet: from ca. 1830; ob., the fashion being outmoded by 1880—if not earlier. Dickens, in Nicholas Nickleby, ' . Miss Sneyvillie . . . glancing from the depths of a coal-scuttle bonnet at Nicholas'.

coal up. To eat (heartily); stokers' (— 1909); slightly ob. Ware.


coley, coale, coales. See coaly and Coal-Heavers.

coalis, the. See Coal-Heavers, the.

calling or coally. (Of a part) effective, pleasant to the actor: from ca. 1850, ob. Also, fond of, partial to: ca. 1870-1910, e.g. Miss Braddock in Dead Sea Fruit. Theatrical.

coals, blow or stir the. To cause trouble between two parties: coll.; resp. C. 17-20, C. 16-18; ob. Both soon > S.E.

coal, call or fetch or haul on the. To call to task: reprimand; address severely: coll.; resp. C. 19-20, late C. 16-18, late C. 18-20. Ex the treatment once meted out to heretics. See also haul, v., 2.

coal, carry no. To be unlikely to be imposed on, swindled, or tamely insulted: coll.: C. 16-19. B.E., whose definition is somewhat more racy. A C. 16-17 variant, as in Skelton, is bear no coals.

coal, let him that hath need blow the. 'Let him Labour that wants,' B.E.; also, stop no man from working. Coll. and proverbial: C. 17-18.

coals, precious. See precious coals 1

coals, take in one's (or one's winter). To catch a venereal disease: nautical, C. 19.

[coals of fire on the head of, heap] to return good for evil: has always, because of its Biblical connection, been S.E.E.

coal to Newcastle, carry. To do something ludicrously superfluous: late C. 18-20, being coll. till ca. 1850, then S.E. Heywood, Fuller, Scott. (Apperson.)


coast; coaster. To loaf, a loafer, about from station to station: Australian coll. (— 1890); ob. Morris.

coast is clear, the. See clear, the coast is.

coaster. See coast.—2. (Or G.) A white man living on the Gold Coast: coll.: late C. 18-20.

coast, v. To reprimand, esp. of a waiter reprimanding a prisoner: C. 2000. coast, waste or coil or pay a person's. To beat him: C. 16-18: coll. Cf. dust one's jacket.

cost, . . . cut one's. See cloth.

cost, get the run into a horse's. To allow a horse to rest from formal racing; hence, (of a trainer) to save oneself trouble: racing, from ca. 1880; †. The Standard, June 25 or 26, 1880: a forensic speech by Sir Charles Russell.

cost, turn one's. To desert one's cause or party: mid-C. 16-19: coll. >, by 1800, S.E.

cost, wear the King's. To serve as a soldier: from ca. 1750; coll. till C. 19, when S.E.; in C. 20, archaic. Cf. wear the King's uniform.

cost and badge. To cedge; military rhyming s.: C. 20. B. & P.


coax. One who coaxes, or is skilled in coaxing: coll. from ca. 1860. Ouida (O.E.D.).

cova. V. To hide a dirty or torn part of one's stocking in one's shoe: mid-C. 18-early 19; coll. Grose, 2nd ed.—2. Hence, to deface or alter (a service-certificate): nautical: mid C. 19-20. Bowen.

cob. A chignon: coll. ca. 1865-1914.—2. (Windsor College, ca. 1870-1930) a hard hit at cricket. Ex cob, v., 1—3. In c., a punishment coll: from ca. 1860; ob. Perhaps cognate with:

cob, cobb, v. To strike, esp. on the buttocks with something flat (gen. a hand-saw, says Hotten): nautical (— 1769). Marryat in the King's Own: 'Gentlemen, gentlemen, if you must cob Mrs. Skrimmage, for God's sake let it be over all,' i.e. with no clothes raised. Prob. echoic.—2. Hence, to humbug, deceive: coll., C. 19-20, ob., perhaps influenced by cod.—3. To detect, catch: schoolboys', C. 19. A variant of cop, v. q.v.


cob on, have a. To be annoyed: ship's stewards (— 1935). Perhaps ex dial. cob, to strike, or the game of cob-nuts.

Cobb, by. By coach: Australian coll.: from 1870's; slightly ob. Morris. The Cobb who started a system of coaches long before 1800 was an American.


Ex to cob, 3.

*cobble-coller. A turkey, late C. 17–18 c., was resuscitated by Dianselli in Venetio, his most picturesque novel. Cobble = cobble.


James Curtis, The Kid Kid, 1936.


Cobler's doon knock at the; give the cobler's knock. In sliding or, loss often, in skating, to rap the ice in series of three taps with one foot while one moves rapidly on the other. This tapping is occ. called the postman's knock. Dickens in Pickwick Papers. Coll.; from ca. 1820.

cobbler's marbles. Sol. for cholera morbus, itself catachrestic for malignant or Asiatic cholera: from ca. 1800; ob.

cobler's punch. See punch, cobler's.

cob's body, by). In oaths, a coll. corruption of God's body: C. 18. (O.E.D.)

cobweb, in late C. 17–early 18, seems to have been coll. for transparent or filmy: B.E. cites cobweb cheat, a swindler easily detected, and cobweb pretence.

cobweb in the throat, have a. To feel thirsty: coll.; from ca. 1830.—2. Hence, cobweb throat, a dry throat after drinking liquor: late C. 19–20; ob. A. H. Dawson's Dict. of Slang, 1913.

occam. An occ. form of occum, q.v.


cock. The penis: 1730, says S.O.D., but F. & H.'s example from Beaumont & Fletcher's scabrous play, The Custom of the Country, seems valid. Always S.E. but since ca. 1830 a vulg. Prob. ex cock, a tap.—2. A plucky fighter; hence, a coll. term of appreciation or address. Massinger, in 1639, has 'He has drawn blood of him yet: well done, old cock.'—3. As chief or leader, despite the coll. tang of cock of the walk, the school, etc., it has, since 1890 in any case, been S.E., the term arising in early C. 18. E. is not intended to run or, if running, to win: racing; from ca. 1840; ob.—4. In boxing, a cock = out, senseless, as in 'He knocked him a regular cock or simply '... a cock,' where the term > an adv: ca. 1820–1920, but ob. by 1900.—5. A fictitious narrative sold as a broadsheet in the streets; collied. recorded by Mayhew in 1851 but prob. in use as early as 1840; † by 1900. From ca. 1860 it derivatively meant any incredible story, as in The London Figaro, Feb. 1, 1870, 'We are disposed to think that cooks must have penetrated to Eastern Missouri.' Prob. ex cock and bull story.—7. In c., abbr. Cockney, cockney.—8. Among printers, a cock ensues when, in gambling with quads, a player receives another chance by causing one or more of the nine pieces to fall, not flat as desired but, crosswise on another: from ca. 1860, ob. by 1920.—9. Among tailors, from ca. 1840, a good cock is a good, a bad cock a bad workman.—10. In ancient oaths, cock = God.—11. See old cock.—12. See cooks.


cook. Adj. ex the n., 3; chief; foremost; coll.; from ca. 1860; ob. Etherege, in The Man of Mode, 'The very cook-fool of all those fools, Sir Fopling Flutter'.


cock-a-doodle. A 'donkey-drop' (q.v.); schoolboys: ca. 1880–1910. Ex its' high note'.

cock-a-doodle broth. Beaten eggs in brandy and water: 1856; very ob. (Very strengthening.)


cock-a-hoop (incorrectly-whoop). From ca. 1660; coll., in C. 20 S.E.: in C. 17–early 19, 'upon the high Ropes, Rampant, Transported' (B.E.), but only predicative or complementary; ca. 1830 it > an ordinary adj., Ex the earlier set (the) cock on (the) hoop or, as in Shakespeare, set cock-a-hoop, which Ray explains by the practice of removing the cock or spigot, laying it on the hoop, i.e. on the top, of a barrel, and then drinking the barrel dry.


cock a snook. See cock snooks.


cock-alley. Also c.-hall, -inn,-lane,-pit, and Cockshire. All low coll.: C. 18–20, the second and the third being 7, the fifth and sixth ob. Pudendum mutilum.

cock-and-breeches. A sturdy boy, a small but sturdy man: low coll.: from ca. 1830; ob.

cock-and-bull story. In this form from ca. 1700; as story or tale of a cock and a bull from ca. 1608: coll., passing ca. 1850 to S.E. At first, a long rambling tale, then (C. 18–20) an idle, silly or incredible story. John Day in Love Tricks, Stere in Tristram Shandy, Mrs. Henry Wood in Henry HUDLOW. Cf. the Fr. coq-a-Pâne.


cock-and-hen. (Gen. with club, coc, with house.) Adj.: admitting both sexes, for the once or constitutionally: coll.; from ca. 1815. Moore in Tom Crick's Memorial.

...admitting from c.-t., late obs. low a 4 coll. ob. Byron, coll. late from coll. Bycok-and-vooch. The beast hath affected by dandy of ca. 1820-30; † by 1900. Coll. (Cocked back and front and pinched up at the sides.)


cock-catch. See cock cocks.

cock-catcher. A girl or a woman permitting—and assuming—most of the intimacies but not the greatest: low coll. (the latter term is far the commoner): c.-c., C. 19; c.-t., C. 19-20.—2. Also low coll. is c.-c. = the pudendum mutiære, C. 19-20, while, 3, in c. of ca. 1860-90, it = the treadmill; the latter, (2nd, ed.) is unhyphenated.

cock-eye. A squinting-eye: recorded in 1825; cock-eyed, squinting: Byron, 1821. Both are coll. (O.E.D.).—Hence, 2, cock-eye and cock-eyed, from ca. 1895 = crooked; inaccurate; inferior. Lit., like a 'tilted' eye.

...See cock-eye, 2.—2. Tipsy: from ca. 1930. Maurice Lincoln, Oh! Definitely, 1933.


cock-fighting. beat. To be very good or delightful; to excel; coll.; C. 19-20, though overshadowed in Gauden's Tears of the Church, 1659.

cock-hall. See cock-alley.


cock-horse. Elated, cock-a-hoop, in full swing: ca. 1750-1870; coll. Ex (ride) a cock-horse, a child's improvised horse.


cock it! There it is! that's done it! gone it! lower classes' (—1923). Manchon.

cock it over (a person). To 'boss', to impose on: coll. (—1923). Manchon. Ex cock, n. 3.


cock-leaf. The head: mid-C. 17-18; coll. Fuller, 1646 (Apperson). Lit., a garret; cf. the proverbial all his gear is in his cock-leaf and garret and upper storey.

cock-maggot in a sink-hole, like a. Very annoyed or peevish: proletarian coll. (—1887); slightly ob. Baumann.

...See cock-o-wax.

cock-o-wax. See cock-o-wax.

cock-o-waxing. The nasal equivalent (—1909) of chuck a chest, q.v. Ware.

...Cock one's toes (up). To die: from ca. 1860; slightly ob. H., 3rd ed. Cf. the much more gen. turn up one's toes.

cock-plump. A supposed, rarely an actual, husband to a bawd; i.e. a harlot's bully: late C. 17-18 coll. B.E.


cock-queen. A man assuming himself unduly in women's affairs: either a sol. or a jocular perversion of cockney: ca. 1850-80.

...cock-robin. A soft, easy fellow: coll.; from ca. 1860; ob. B.E.; Grosse; Montagu Williams, Leaves of a Life, 1890.


cock-shot. Anything set up as a target; a shot throw: coll.; resp. ca. 1840, 1880. O.E.D.

cock-shut. Twilight (also an adj.): coll. > S.E. > dial. Recorded in 1598, 1604: 'perhaps the time when poultry are set up', S.O.D.

cock-shy. Coll.; in C. 20 verging on and by 1930 being virtually S.E. Cock-throwing and similar games: mid-C. 19-20. Mayhew.—2. A free 'sly' at a target: from mid-1830's.—3. The missile: rare and ob.: from late 1830's.—4. The target (lit. or fig.): 1836.—5. A showman's cock-shy 'booth', etc.; from late 1870's, O.E.D.—6. cock-shying: see 1 and 2; late 1870's. O.E.D.


...cock snooks or a snook. To put one's fingers derisively to nose: coll.; late C. 19-20.


Mostly (?) orig.) U.S.

cock-sure. Feeling quite certain (from ca. 1680); dogmatically sure of oneself (from ca. 1750). Coll. till ca. 1890, then S.E. Semantics obscure; perhaps ex the action of a cock or water-tap; perhaps a euphemism for God-sure (W.),—cf. cock for God in oaths.

cock-tail. A harlot: low coll.: C. 19-20, ob.—2. A person of energy and promptness but not a 'thoroughbred': from ca. 1850; coll. Ex racing j.—Hence, 3, a coward: coll.; from ca. 1860.—4. A whisked drink of spirits, occ. wine, with bitters, crushed ice, etc.; orig. (1809), U.S.; Anglicised ca. 1870; popularised in England during the G.W., when it > S.E. In senses 3 and 4, the usual spelling is cocktail, which, in C. 20, is the only spelling of sense 4.

...cock-tail, -tailed, adj. Unsoldierly; guilty of 'bad form': military, ca. 1890-1914. Either ex the n., 2nd and 3rd senses, or ex turn cocktail, i.e. to cock the tail, turn, and run.

cock-teaser. See cock-chaser. Often, as Manchon (1923) mentions, euphemistically abbr. to C.-T.

cock the eye. To wink; leer; look incredulous or knowing: from ca. 1750; coll. until ca. 1800, then S.E. Smollett, in Peregrine Pickle, 1751, 'He made such faces and, to use the vulgar phrase, cocked his eye at him.' (Cock an eye is merely, to glance.) Cf. cock the nose, (S.E. for) to turn it up in contempt.

cock-up. (Of a schoolmaster or monitor) to best; whence vb.in. cocking-up: Charterhouse: C. 20.
cock-up. (Printers’) a superior, i.e. a superior letter, as the o in N; from ca. 1860.

cock (up) on one’s toes. To die: c. and low; from early C. 19. *Fancy* Reynolds.

cock won’t fight. That. That won’t do! That’s a feeble story! Tell that to the marines! From the 1820’s; *coll. Scott, St. Roman’s Well*, 1824 (E.D.D.). Ex the cock-pit.


cockalorum (jig), hey or high. A coll. exclamation: from ca. 1800; ob. Prob. ex an old song-refrain.—As a schoolboys’ game (leap-frog), S.E.

cockatoa. A small farmer: orig. in the wool districts and by the big squatters. From ca. 1863.


cockatooer. A ‘cockatoo’ (sense 1); Tasmanian: *coll. ca. 1850—90*. Morris.

cockatrice. A harlot; a kept woman: late C. 16—18. Coll. Ben Jonson in *Cynthia’s Revels*; Marston in his most famous work, *The Malcontent*: ‘No courtier but has his mistress, no captain but has his cockatrice’; Taylor, 1630; Killigrew. —2. A baby: *coll.: C. 18—19*. Keep. ex the fascination of the fabulous monster’s eye, and the egg from which it was fabulously hatched.

cock-a-hafer. See cock-chaffer.

cocked hat, knock into a. To damage very considerably (things, persons, and fig.): *coll.; from ca. 1850. Orig. (1833): Thornton*, U.S. An officer’s cocked hat could be doubled up and carried flat.

cocked-hat club. ‘The principal clique amongst the members of the Society of Antiquaries.’ At their meetings, a cocked hat lies before the president: ca. 1800—90. H., 3rd ed.

cocker. A foreman: *tailor*: from ca. 1860.—


Cooker, according to. See at according to Cooker.

cooksman. See cock and hen, n. 3.

cooks. See cocky, 1. 3.


cootily. In a cookey manner: *coll.; from ca. 1860.

cootness. Conoci; undue self-assertion: *coll.; from early 1860’s.

cooking. Pert; impudent: ca. 1870—1830; *coll. The Spectator*, 1711, ‘The cooking young fellow’.


cooking-up. See cock-up.

cookin’. Wanton, uppish, forward’, B.E.: C. 18—20; *coll. > S.E. ca. 1800. As = lecherous

it is applied gen. to women and, except in dial., it > ob. ca. 1860.

cockies. (Always in pl.) *Lobia minora*: C. 18—20; low coll. *Play at hot cockies*—see Northall’s English Folk-Rhymes—is, in addition to its S.E. sense, *feminam digitus subigatori*: C. 18—20, low coll., ob.


cockies of the heart, rejoics, warm, tickle the. To please mightily, cheer up: *coll.; from ca. 1669. Eachard, in his *Observations*, 1671, ‘This contrivance of his did inwardly rejoice the cockies of his heart.’ The S.O.D. mentions the proposed derivation ex the similarity of a heart to a cockle-shell and that ex cardium, the zoological name for a cockle; F. & H. refers to Lower’s once famous *Tractus de Corde* (A Treatise of the Heart), 1699, where the term cockles is used. The first is the likeliest.

cockloche. (Apparently =) a foolish coxcomb: C. 17. *ex Fr. cocapouch.*

cockney or Cockney, n. and adj. (One) born in the city of London: 1600 +. Coll. till ca. 1830 and nearly always pejorative. Orig. and until ca. 1870, ‘born within the sound of Bow-bell’, B.E. Ex cockney = a milk-sop, earlier a cockered, i.e. pampered, child, a sense that developed from (?) cock’s eggs, small eggs. The full history of this fascinating word has not yet been written, but see esp. O.E.D., Sir James Murray in *The Academy* of May 10, 1890; also W. and Gros, P. For an account of Cockney ‘dialect’, see Slg., pp. 140—59. See also ‘Cockney speech’ in Addenda.


cockroaches, get. See box the Jesuit.


cock’s egg, give one a. To send on a fool’s errand, esp. on April the First. Coll.: rare before C. 19, and ob. in C. 20. Cf. pigion’s milk, strap oil, and see All Fools’ Day in Words /


Cockshire. See cock-alley.

cooky. Port: impudent; bumptious: 1825: (mostly schoolboys’) *coll.; in C. 20 E.S. Ex cocky after trickey*. For second spelling, cf.coxcombl ex cock’s-comb.

cocktail. See cock-tail.

Brisk, active, as applied to the money market: Stock Exchange, ca. 1800-1910. — Abbr. cockadoodie, q.v., a small farmer in Australia: ca. 1890 (Sala speaks of it in 1887) and very gum, often non-pejorative, in C. 20.

cocketr. See cockaletus.

cockily. Dear little bird: nursery and pet term (coll.): from ca. 1830.

cocky's joy. See cockies' joy.

cohoo-nut (here, as in S.E., erroneously coo-coo-nut); ol., coher-nut. The head: mainly boxing: from ca. 1830. Alawsworth. Cf. loco, q.v., and U.S. coco(a).

cocoa, for coco dates from an error in Johnson's Dict.; moreover, as used for the earlier cacao, cocoa was orig. (C. 18) erroneous. W. — 2. A schoolboys' perversion of toko, q.v.: late C. 19-early 20. Ware.

*cooco. To say, say so: c. rhyming s.: C. 20. James Curtis, The Gloo' Kid, 1936, 'I should cocoa.'

coco(a)-nut, have no milk in the. To lack brains; to be silly, even mad. From ca. 1850. See coco-nut.


cocum-(-am), cocum, kocum. Ability, shrewdness, cleverness; that which is seemingly, right, correct; luck, advantage: rather low (1831). Mayhew in London Labour; The Flippity Flop Young Man, a ballad, ca. 1888—2. A sliding scale of profit: publishers', ca. 1870-1914. Ex Yiddish c. kochem, wisdom. Cf.:

cocum, fight or play. To be cunning, wary, artful, esp. if illicitly: from late 1830's. Brandon, 1839; H., 1st ed. Likewise, have cocum, to have luck or an advantage; be sure to succeed. Perhaps cognate with Ger. gucken, to peer or pry into; but see preceding entry.


cod., To chaff, hoax; humbug; play the fool; v., to play the fool: from ca. 1870. H., 6th ed. Ex cod., n., 4.—2. To go on a drinking or a womanising spree: tailors': from ca. 1870; ob.—3. In C. 18 c., to cheat.


cod-banger. A gorgeously arrayed sailor: Billingsgate (1908). Ware. Cod are banged on the head in the market.


cod-heads. Boots (or shoes) burst at the toes: Glasgow proletarian (1934).


cod Preserves, the. The Atlantic Ocean: nautical: from ca. 1840; ob.


*codam, coddem, coddam. A public-house and extremely elementary guessing-game played with a coin or a button: from ca. 1880; coll. I.e. cod' em.

codder. One very fond of hoaxing or chaffing: from ca. 1860. Ex cod, v., I.

codding, vbl.n. Chaff, humbug; fooling: nonsense: from ca. 1860.

coddle. One who is coddled or who coddles himself: coll. (—1830, when used by) Miss Mitford in Our Village. O.E.D.

coddom. See coddam.


codger; occ. coqer. (Whimsically pejorative of) an old man: low coll.: 1766. Gen. with old, as in Colman's Polly Honeycomb. 'A clear coast, I find. The old codger's gone, and has locked me up with his daughter.' Smollett; Barham.—2. During the approximate period 1830-1900, it occ. = a fellow, a chap. Dickens? ex codger.


Codrington's Manors; Mostyn's Hunting District; Somerset Range; 'The three packs of hounds contiguous to Oxford': Oxford University: ca. 1820-40. Egan's Grose.


cods' eyes and bath-water. Tapioca pudding: Charterhouse: C. 20.

cod's-head. A fool: ca. 1690-1850. Dunton in his ironically titled Ladies' Dict., 1894.) In mid-
C. 19-20 (ob.), as cod's-head and shoulders. Both forms are coll. Perhaps the source of cod = a fool.

cod's head and mackerel (tail, with). A sailing ship with the greatest beam well forward: nautical: mid-C. 19-20; ob. Bowen.


*coe. See co, 1.

celebacy. Incorrect for celibacy: C. 17. O.E.D.

Cf. cele-o for color eyes.

*cofe. An early variant of cove, q.v. (E.g. in B.E.) Likewise coff: C. 16.

coffee-and-b. Coffee and brandy: night-
taverns': 1880; ob. Ware.

coffee-colour. (Applied to persons) of mixed
COFFEE-HOUSE

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coffee-house, -houser, -housing. To gossip during a fox-hunt, esp. while the huntsmen wait for hounds to draw a covert; one who does this: the act of doing this: sporting: from ca. 1875. HAWLEY SMART, in Play or Pay, ch. iv, 1878, speaking of horses: '... A hack, just good enough to do a bit of coffee-housing occasionally'. F. & H.; O.E.D. (Sup.).


coffee-milling, vbl.n. 'Grinding', working hard. DICKINS, 1837. AYTOUN & MARTIN'S 'coffee-milling care and sorrow' illustrates c.-m. as a v., to thumb one's nose at. Both ca. 1830-1900.

coffee-pot. One of the former small tank-engines of the Midland Railway: railwaymen's: late C. 19-20; ob.


Coffee Ship, the. H.M.S. Raleigh: naval: early C. 19. Captain Tyrone, who perished in the Victoria, established a canteen on board. (BoW.)

coffee-shop. See coffee-house, 2.

coffee-whack. See whack, n., last sense.

*cofin, the. A large box wherein, under a tarpaulin, an outbreak may sleep: gen. price, fourpence.

Post-War c. Orwell.


*coog. Money: esp. a piece of money: C. 16-mid-18 c., mostly gamblers'.

cog, v. To cheat, wheedle; beg: C. 16-mid-19. Orig. either dicing s. or gen. coll.: cf. B.E.'s cog a dinner, 'to wheedle a Spark out of a dinner'. The S.O.D., like the O.E.D., considers wholly s.E. Perhaps cog, a wheel.—2. Hence, v.l., to cheat by copying from another: Scottish Public-Schools': mid-C. 19-early 20.—3. V.l., to agree well with another, as cog with cog: C. 19; coll. (Running like cogs.):—4. 'In school slang, to chastise by sundry bumpings or "coggings" on the posteriors for delinquencies at certain games', E.D.D., 1898.


cooper. See cogger, -coyey. See cogyey.


coggging, the coggging of dice, may orig. (— 1532) have been c. or low s. G. Harvey in Four Letters.


cogue (occ. cog) the nose. To take, hot, a good strong drink: nautical: C. 19-20; ob. Ex coque, to drink brandy, drink drams.

Drunk: ca. 1820-60. 'Jon Bee,' 1823. Ex coque, a drum. It is recorded in Staffordshire dial., as copy, in 1816: E.D.D.

coll. Incorrect when used for guaich, a cup. O.E.D.

coin. Money: printer's (— 1909). Ware, 'A play upon coin and coigne or coin, or quoin, a wedge'.

coin up one's cables or ropes. To die: nautical: mid-C. 19-20. Bowen; F. & Gibbons. Ex slip one's cable.

coin post the. (Cf. post the coal.) To deposit money for a match: for a bet: sporting, ca. 1840-1900.

coin money. To make money both easily and quickly: from ca. 1860: coll. Cf.


coke, v. Catastrophic when applied to wood: C. 19-20. O.E.D.

coke, go and eat. Oh, run away! Pejorative coll.: ca. 1870-1920. F. & H. cites as a variant, go and sh*t cinders.

Coke upon Littleston. A mixed drink of brandy and text (a red Spanish wine) ca. 1740-1800. Ex the famous legal text-book. (O.E.D.)

*ocker. A lie: ca. 1670-1830; c. > low s. COLES, 1876; B.E.; Grose (= caulkter, v.q.). Cf. caulkter, corer: undetermined cognates.—2. C. 19-20 sol. for coco, esp. in coker-nut.

ocker-nut. See coco-nut.—2. In pl., 'Well-developed feminine breasts': low London (— 1909). Ware.

cokes. A fool, a simpleton: ca. 1580-1700. B.E. indicates that the term was first used at Bartholomew Fair and in plays; it is almost certainly (despite O.E.D.) either s. or coll., orig. at least. Perhaps ex cockeye.

*cokey. See coke, n.

cockum. An occ. variant of cocum, q.v.

col. A Parliarissue form of coke, or coal, money.

see cole.

colcher; occ. colsher. A heavy fall; esp. colema colcher: dial. (— 1888) >, by 1893, coll. O.E.D. Ex dial. colch, colch, a fall.


Cholchester clock. A large oyster: from ca. 1850; ob. A Londonism.


cold. Ignorant: from ca. 1920. Will Scott, in The Humorist, Feb. 10, 1934: 'You don't want to start cold.' Ex the disadvantage implied in cold, have a person, q.v.

cold, have a bad. To be in debt. A very bad cold indicates a rent-unpaid departure: ca. 1850-1920. Mostly a Londonism.—2. Gen., however, is the sense, to have gonorrhoea: C. 19-20.

cold, have or have got (a person). To have him at one's mercy or badly beaten: C. 20. Prob. ex U.S.

cold, leave. To fail to impress or convince or please: coll.: C. 20. 'My dear fellow, that leaves me cold.' Cf. the Fr. cela me laisse froid (F. & Gibbons).
cold, leave out in the. To neglect (a person); to ignore him: from ca. 1860; coll., by 1890, B.E.
cold, the matter will keep. The matter may rest without harm or loss: coll., ca. 1860-1890. B.E.
cold at that, you will catch. A c.p. or proverbial form of advice or warning to desist: coll.: midC. 18–early 19. Grose, 2nd ed.
cold blood. A house with an off-licence only: from ca. 1858 (ob.); licensed victuallers' and public houses: H., 2nd ed.
cold blood. (Of a person) having a slow circulation: coll. (–1803). O.E.D.
cold burning. A private punishment by the pouring of water down a man's upraised arm so that it comes out at his breeches-knees: mid-C. 18–early 19; military (rank and file). Grose, 1st ed.
cold by lying in bed barefoot, he (or she) caught. A mid-19th c.p. applied to a person fuzzy about his health. Grose, 2nd ed.
cold-canvas. 'Breaking in with just your visiting-card.' Best thing to do is to use your introductions first, and leave the cold-canvas until you've found your feet,' Michael Harrison in Spring in Tartarus, 1936: insurance s. verging on coll.: C. 20.
cold comfort. Articles that, sent out on sale or return, or on approval, are returned: tradesmen's: from ca. 1870.
cold cook's shop or cookshop. An undertaker's premises: from ca. 1830.
cold creams, the. The Coldstream Guards: military (–1909). Ware.
cold enough. . . . See brass monkey.
cold feet, get or have (got). To become, to be, discouraged, afraid: coll. (1904 (O.E.D. Sup.). The U.S. cold-foot has not caught on 'in England.
cold four. Inferior beer (four ale): public houses' (–1909). Ware.
cold-meat cart. A hearse: 1 earlier than 'Peter Corcoran 's Reynolds in The Fancy, 1820. Cf.: cold meat of one, make. To kill: prob. from ca. 1820 (cf. preceding entry). Dickens, in Pickwick, causes a game-keeper to say to a bad shot, 'I'm damned if you won't make cold meat of some of us!' Cf. cook one's goose.
cold-meat train. Any train plying to a cemetery: from ca. 1860. —2. Also, however, the last train by which officers can return to Aldershot in time for their morning duties: from ca. 1870. H., 5th ed.; R. M. Jephson in The Girl He Left Behind Him, 1878. Properly a goods train, it pulled one ad hoc carriage, called the larky subaltern.
cold pickles. A corpse: medical students': from ca. 1840.
cold pie (pye). See choking pie.
cold pig. The 'empties', i.e. empty packing-cases, returned by rail to wholesale houses: commercial travellers', from ca. 1870; ob. —2. In c., a corpse (cf. cold meat); a person robbed of his clothes: from ca. 1860.
cold pig, v. From ca. 1830: coll. Same meaning as:
cold pig, give. To awaken by sluicing with cold water or by pulling off the bed clothes: a, passing to coll. Grose, 2nd ed.; R. Planché: Tuckercray.
From ca. 1750 in this form (now ob.); but from ca. 1600–1750, the form is give a cold pie: see choking pie.
cold shivers, the. A fit of trembling: coll.; from ca. 1840.
cold shoulder of mutton. A mid-Victorian a variant of the S.E. cold shoulder in its fig. sense.
cold-water army. The generality of teetotallers: coll.: from ca. 1870; ob. Cf. water-waggon.
cold without. Spirits mixed with cold water without sugar: coll.; from ca. 1820. Barham; Bulwer Lytton, 1853, 'I laugh at fame. Fame, air! not worth a glass of cold without.'


cole, much more frequent than coal, though the latter (money = coal = the fuel of life) is prob. correct, is money collectively; there is no pl. From ca. 1670; it was c. until ca. 1730; in C. 20 rarely used except among Cockneys and second-hand booksellers: and at no time has it been applied to 'futures' such as bills, promissory notes, bonds. Head, 1673; Grose. (For alternative etymologies, see colliander and cf. cabbages, n. 1, for cole = cabbage; possibly ex foreigners' pronunciation of gold as gol.)
cole, tip the. Hand over money: c. then low: ca. 1680–1830. A C. 18–20 variant is post the cole (coal) or the coin.
cole (gen. coals) up! They're paying out! there's a pay-parade! military: late C. 19–20. B. & P. Ex cole.
collabilas. A water-closet at Trinity College, Dublin: from ca. 1820. Latinised Irish.
collisander or colliander (seed or seeds). Money: c. from ca. 1690. B.E. Possibly the orig. form of cole, q.v.

Colinderies. The Colonial and Indian Exhibition held in London in 1886. A fairly gen. term. Current only in late 1886, 1887, and for a year or two later. Prob. suggested by the telegraphic address, Colind, Ware.

**collah.** A railway carriage filled with women: nigger minstrels: ca. 1880-1900. Ware, "Collah being Yiddish for young girls".

**collar.** To "cave in"; suddenly lose courage: coll., from ca. 1860.

**collar, n.** See **collar and cuff.** Philip Allingham, Chapsack, 1934.

**collar, v.** To appropriate; steal: 1700. Leman Rede in *Sixteen-String Jack*; Dickens in *Bleak House.*—2. To seize: from early C. 17: coll. till ca. 1860, then S.E. though somewhat loose and undignified.

**collar against the.** (Working) against difficulties—or the grain: from ca. 1850: coll. till ca. 1860, then S.E.

**collar in; out of. In; out of: employment. Coll.: from ca. 1850. Ex the stable.

**collar, put to the pin of.** Driven to extremities; at the end of one’s resources. A coll. phrase ex hard-pulling horses: ca. 1850-1910.


**collar and elbow.** The Cornwall and Devon style of wrestling: coll.: from ca. 1820.

**collar-day.** Execution day: late C. 18—early 19; low. Grose, 2nd ed. Ex the hangman’s noose.

**collar (or get) the big bird.** To be hissed; theatrical: from ca. 1840; ob.

**collar-work.** Severe, laborious work: coll. from ca. 1870; in C. 20, S.E. Ex an uphill pull—all collar work—for horses.

**collared.** Unable to play one’s normal game; ‘funky’; C. 19—20, mostly gaming.

**collared up.** Kept hard at work, close to business: coll.: from ca. 1860; ob.


**collarers, collars.** Terminal examinations with interviews: Oxford, from ca. 1895. Ex *collections.


**collect, v.** To retrieve (objects) from a place: coll.: 1875. O.E.D. (Sup.):—2. Hence, to call for a person and then proceed with him: C. 20 coll.

‘I’ll collect you at Solfridge’s and we’ll tea at the Corner House.’—3. V.i. and v.t., to receive (something) as one’s deserts: Australian (—1910); C. J. Dennis.—4. To receive one’s salary or wages: coll.: from ca. 1860.


**college.** A prison: this gen. sense arose ca. 1720, the orig. sense (C. 17) being Newgate, as indeed it remained until ca. 1800, when, too, from o. the term > low a. "Welcome to the college, gem’t’mem,” says Samuel Miller in Dickens.—2. (Often preceded by *New*) The Royal Exchange: late C. 17—18; a. B.E.—3. (Gen. the college.) The workhouse: poor people’s: late C. 19—20. Ware.

**College, King’s.** See King’s College.

**college, ladies’.** A brothel: C. 18—early 19; low.

**college chum, collegiate, college.** The first, C. 19 and not very gen.; the second, C. 19—20, as in Dickins; the third, the commonest, from ca. 1660: the first and the third were c. before they > low a.: A prisoner (orig. of Newgate, the *City College*).—2. (Only college.) A shopkeeper to a prison: ca. late C. 17—early 19. B.E.; Grose.

**college-cove.** A turnkey: c. (—1823); † by 1860. Egan’s Grose. See college, 1.

**collegarian.** The square cap worn at universities: the mortar-board. University and Public School: from ca. 1880. Cf. the S.E. sense.

**colleges.** See *collecks.*—collige, *colligate.* See college chum.—collek(k)r. See *collec.*

**colli-mollie.** See colly-molly.

**colly shangle.** A quarrel: Society: 1884. Popularised by Queen Victoria ex Scotch.

**colliage.** Incorrect for † *colligance*: C. 17. O.E.D.

**Collins.** A letter of thanks sent by departed guest to hostess: 1904: coll. >, by 1930. S.E. Ex the Collins of Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice.* O.E.D. (Sup.) Cf. bread-and-butter.

**collogue.** To confabulate: from ca. 1810 (Vaux, 1812; Scott, 1811); coll., perhaps whimsical. The earliest sense, to wheedle or flatter, v.i. and v.t., may possibly be coll.—it is hard to be dogmatic with C. 16—17 words—as Naashe’s and Rochester’s usage and B.E.’s recording seem to indicate. † ex Gr. ἄγον, a word, influenced by colloque (or collogy) and colloque.

**colloquials.** Familiar conversation: Society: ca. 1890—1910. Ware.

**colly-molly; colli-mollie.** Melancholy, of which it is a C. 17 jocular perversion. Nares. Cf. solomon(ch)olly.

**colly-wobbles.** A stomach-ache; coll.; from ca. 1820. Egan’s Grose, 1823; ‘Cuthbert Bede’. Ex colic. Cf. the Australian wobbles, a cattle-disease from eating palm-leaves.

**Colney Hatch.** A match: rhyming a. late C. 19—20. B. & P.

**Colonel, the.** Abbr. Colonel Bogy (golf); coll.: C. 20.

**Colonel Grogg.** Walter Scott: ‘so called by his youthful associates’ (Dawson). Ex his martial tactos.

**Colonel Peerless’s Light Infantry.** N.Z. soldiers working at the base at Etaples: New Zealand military: latter half of G.W. Ex Colonel Peerless, the medical officer in charge.

**Colonial goose.** A boned leg of mutton stuffed with sage and onions: Australian (—1898); ob. Morris. Ex predominance of mutton as bushman’s diet.

**Colonial oath 1, my.** An Australian variant (late C. 19—20) of my oath, q.v. at oath/my, my. Cf. Henry Lawson’s story, ‘His Colonial Oath’, in *While the Billy Boils,* 2nd series.

**Colonies, the.** Australia and New Zealand: Merchant Service coll.: C. 19—20; slightly ob. Bowen.

**color.** See *colour.*

**colos.** Goldosh: a. 19—20 sol. or incorrectness.

**colour.** A coloured handkerchief; sporting, chiefly boxing: from ca. 1840; ob. Adumbrated in Pierce Egan; Mayhew.

COLOUR, OFF 171  COME AGAIN!

colour, off. Exhausted; debilitated; indisposed: from ca. 1860; coll.

colour of a person’s money, see the. To see his money; esp., to be paid. Coll.; from ca. 1710. Dickens. (O.E.D.)

colour one’s or the meerschaum. To > red-faced through drink: from ca. 1850; ob.

colour with, take. Ostensibly to ally oneself with: from ca. 1700; coll. > S.E. > t.

coloured on the card. With a jockey’s colours inserted on a specific-race card: racing; from ca. 1870; t.

coloury; occ. colory. Coloured; two-coloured; coll.; from ca. 1850. C. Bronté. (O.E.D.)—2. Hence of such colour as shows good quality; commercial col.: from ca. 1880. Ibid.


colher. See colher.

coll., to such C. Repeat, legal, from practise coll., dial.

Boot-ham coll., from from sol.* from t.* from sol.
a said 1884, from Greene, C. coll. coll.
two-coloured inserted money; commercial COLOUR, B.

COLOUR, (q)v. (Pron. comb.) Abbr. combination-room, the fellows’ common room: Cambridge University, from ca. 1860, ob.—2. A woman’s combination (s): from ca. 1870: Women’s, nursery, and shop. Cf. comb. 3.

combine. A combination of persons, esp. in commerce: orig. (ca. 1887) U.S., anglicised ca. 1910: coll. till ca. 1930, when it > S.E.


combs. See comb. 3.

come. The low n., noted by Manchon (1923); corresponding to, and ex, sense 1 of:

come. (Occ. come off.) ‘To experience the sexual spasm’ (F. & H.); low coll.: C. 19–20. Considered coarse, but it was orig. a euphemism and, in C. 20, how, if the fact is to be expressed non-euphemistically, could one express it otherwise with such terse simplicity?—2. To perform; practise: coll., recorded in 1812 (Vaux) but prob. from ca. 1800.—3. To play a dodge, a trick (v.t. with over): 1783; coll. Greenwood, in Top, Hag, and Co, 1883, ‘We ain’t two . . . as comes that dodge.’—4. To act the part of: O.E.D. records it at 1823; coll. see s.: cf. come the old soldier, q.v.—5. To attain to, achieve: from ca. 1885: dial, and coll.—6. To experience, suffer, as in come a cropper: this once coll. usage is now S.E. where the ’complement’ is S.E.—7. See come it.—8. Came: sol.: C. 19 (?) earlier)—20. E.g. ‘He come home yesterday.’—9. To become; esp. in come(s) of, happen(a) to: non-cultured Canadian (and U.S.) coll.: late C. 19–20. E.g. in the novels by John Beaumes.

*come, to. C. of ca. 1810–50, as in Vaux, 1812: ‘A thief observing any article in a shop, or other situation, which he believes may be easily purloined, will say to his accomplice, I think there is so and so to come.’

come about (one). To circumvent: C. 18; coll. Mentioned by Johnson.—2. To have sexual intercourse with: C. 19–20 (ob.); coll.: said of men by women.

come a colher. See colher.—come a cropper. See come, 6, and cropper.

come across. To be able to, compliant; v.t. with, to agree to; give, yield; lend: from ca. 1919. Ex U.S.—2. See also across, come, 2.

come again! Repeat, please! C. 20: ? ex U.S.

comb cut, have one’s. To be humiliated; hence, down on one’s luck. Coll. soon > S.E.; from ca. 1670. Middleton. Cf. Scott’s ‘All the Counts in Cumberland shall not cut my comb.’ But be comb-cut, to be mortified or disgraced, has always been coll. (— 1860); ob. H., 2nd ed. Ex cock-fighting.

come one’s head. To scold: C. 18–19. A C. 19–20 variant, esp. as to rebuke, is comb one’s head.—2. With the addition of with a joint or three-legged stool, it means—as sometimes it does in the shorter form—to beat, thrash. Shakespeare, 1596, ‘Her care should be, ’To combe your noodle with a three-leg’d stoole.’

come the cat. To run one’s fingers through the cat-o’nine tails in order to separate the tails: nautical and military; ca. 1800–95.

comb. (Proc. comb(t)). Abbr. combination-room, the fellows’ common room: Cambridge University, from ca. 1860, ob.—2. A woman’s combination (s): from ca. 1870: Women’s, nursery, and shop. Cf. comb. 3.

come and have a pickle! 'An invitation to a quick unceremonious meal', Ware; Society: 1878–ca. 1910.

come and have one! come and wash your neck! Come and have a drink! resp., gen. coll. (from ca. 1880) and nautical s. (from ca. 1890). Ware. Cf.: come and see your pa! Come and have a drink! C.p.: ca. 1870–1910.

come-at-able. Approachable; accessible: 1687 (S. O. L.). coll.: till ca. 1900, then S.E.

come back. To fall back, lose position: sporting; from ca. 1880; ob.

come back, make (occ. stage) a. To succeed after (long) retirement: (orig. sporting) coll.: from ca. 1920.

come-by-chance. A person or thing arriving by chance; a bastard. Coll.: from ca. 1760.

*come clean. To give no trouble to the police when one is arrested; to confess: 1840 (Coll. 20 C.).


come-day, go-with (with a person), it's. He's extravagant: military: ca. 1890–1915. Ware.


come-down. A social or a financial fall or humiliation or pis-aller: from ca. 1840; coll.: till C. 20, when S.E.

come down, v. To give, subscribe, or lend money (or an equivalent): from ca. 1700, perhaps ex late C. 17 (C. 10). come it, to lend money. V.t. with with, from a few years later; coll. The v.i. in Steele's play, The Funeral; Thackeray's Pendennis. The v.t. in Gay's Beggar's Opera: 'Did he tip hand somely?—How much did he come down with it!'—2. See down, be.

come down (up) on (a person) like a ton of bricks. To scold, blame, reprimand severely: coll.; from ca. 1850.

*come grass. To 'turn copper', i.e. to become an informer, or to involve a confederate in trouble: c.: C. 20. David Hume. Ex grass, a policeman.

come home. (Of lost gear) to be restored to its proper place; (of an anchor) to drag: nautical: late C. 19–20. Bowen.

come in if you're fat! A C. 18 c.p. Swift, ca. 1708, 'Who's there?... come in, if you be fat' (Apperson). A thin person is prob. more expensive to entertain.

come in on one's chin-strap. See chin-strap.


*come it as strong as a horse. (Of a criminal) to turn King's evidence: c. of ca. 1810–50. Vaux, who cites the synonymous be coming all one knows. Elaborations of come it; 2, q.v.

come it as strong as mustard. An intensive of come it, q.v., esp. in sense 3, or of come it, q.v.: low: ca. 1820–90. 'Jon Bee', 1823.

come it over or with. To get the better of: s., > coll. by 1900: from ca. 1840.

come it strong. To go to extremes; exaggerate; to lie; coll.: from ca. 1820. 'Jon Bee', 1823; Dickens in Pickwick; Barham; Thackeray. Cf. make it hot and see come it as strong as mustard. come it with. See come it over.

come off. See come, v. 1.

come off, v.t. To pay: coll.: ca. 1850–1750. Variant of come down, q.v.—2. (Gen. of the man.) To experience the sexual orgasm: see come, v. 1.

come off it. See: come off the grass! Not so much 'side!' Don't exaggerate, or tell lies! Ex U.S.; anglicised ca. 1890. In C. 20, often abbr. to come off it or even come off a.


come on, my lucky lad!; come on, you don't want to live for ever! These two c.p.p., which were sometimes spoken together, were the C.S.M.'s or R.S.M.'s cries to his men the moment before the jump-off for an attack: military: in G.W. See, e.g., the description of the great attack in Hugh Kimber's very arresting novel, Prelude to Calvary, 1933.

come on, Steve! A (mainly Cockney) c.p. ad- juration that one should hurry: from ca. 1925. Ex the fame of Steve Donoghue as jockey.

come out. (Of girls) to make one's début in Society, gen. by being presented at Court: from ca. 1780; a coll. that, ca. 1840, > S.E.—2. Abbr. come out on strike: coll. at first; since G.W., S.E.: from ca. 1890.

come out strong. To express oneself vigorously or very frankly: coll.; from ca. 1850. Cf. S.E. come out with, to utter, and coll. come it strong.—2. To be generous: Public Schools': from ca. 1890. P. G. Wodehouse, The Pothunters, 1902; "I'm a plutocrat." "Uncle came out fairly strong then!" "Rather. To the tune of one sovereign, cash!".

come over. (Cf. come it over, q.v.) To cheat; trick; impose on: C. 17–20: until ca. 1760, S.E., then coll. From ca. 1840, gen. get over; in C. 19–20, occ. come it over.—2. With faint, ill, queer, sick, etc., to become suddenly faint, etc.: coll.; from ca. 1850.—3. In C. 20 New Zealand c., to admit an offence: cf. come clean, q.v.


come over on a wheek-stall, (have). To be 'dressed to the nines': costers (—1909). Ware.

come round. To persuade; to make a deep impression on; influence; coll.; from ca. 1830. Thackeray, in Vanity Fair, 'The governor had come round everybody... had the upper hand of the whole house.'

come some. To fall heavily: boxing: from ca. 1815. Tom Moore, 1819.

come the acid. See acid.—come the bag. An occ. variant of come the old bag, q.v.

come the arthral. To try to deceive: coll.: from ca. 1840.

come the bat. See bat, n., 6.

come the don. See come the nob.

come the double. To take more than one's due or share: C. 20; orig. military. F. & Gibbons.
Esp. to try, unfairly, to obtain a second helping of food.

**come the gypsy.** To attempt to cheat or defraud: coll.; from ca. 1840. Cf. the two come the old . . . entries.

**come the heavy.** To affect a much superior social position: from ca. 1890.

**come the lardy-dardy.** To dress oneself showily: from ca. 1890. Mostly London.

**come the nob (occ. the don).** To put on airs: from ca. 1865; ob. Mostly lower classes.

**come the old bag or man or soldier.** (V.t. with over.) To bluff; to shirk; to dominate: late C. 19-20: resp. love, gen., and military. Manchon (bag); F. & Gibbons (the other two) . Ex: **come the old soldier.** V.t., over. To wheedle; impose on: coll. from (? —) 1825. Scott, in St. Ronan's Well, 'He has scared the incompetence . . . [Otherwise,] curse me but I should think he was coming the old soldier over me.' The idea is adumbrated in Shawdell's *Humours of the Army*: 'The Devil a farthing he owes me—but however, I'll put the old soldier upon him.—2. See preceding entry.

**come the Rothschild.** To pretend to be rich: ca. 1890-1914; coll.

**come the sergeant.** To give peremptory orders: from ca. 1865; coll.

**come the spoon.** To make love, esp. if sentimental: from ca. 1865. * come the Traviata. In (harlots') c. to feign pheidias: C. 10: + by 1891. *La Traviata* is a Verdi opera, in which the heroine is a consumptive *prima donna*, based, of course, on *La Dame aux Camelias*.

**come the ugly.** To make threats; from ca. 1870; coll.

**come through a side door.** To be born out of wedlock: coll.: from ca. 1860; ob. In a ca. 1890 broadside ballad, *The Blessed Orphan*.

**come to grief.** See grief.

**come to Jesus collar.** A full-dress collar: Canadian: C. 20. Because affected by revivalist preachers.

**come to stay.** (Adj. phrase.) With the quality of—possessing—permanency. Gen. as (it) has come to stay. Orig. (— 1888); U.S.; anglicised ca. 1895. Coll.: by 1893, S.E.

**come to that!** By point of fact 1, since you mention it!: lower classes' coll. (— 1923). Manchon. 'Come to that, it was nothing special!'

**come to the heath.** To give or pay money: c. of ca. 1810-40. Vaux suggests that there is a pun on *tipping + Tiptree Heath* (a place in Essex).

**come to the mark.** To abide strictly by any contract . . . to perform your part manfully . . .; or to offer me what I consider a fair price . . .; Vaux: c. of ca. 1860-80. Whence the S.E. come up to the mark.

**come to, or up to, time.** In boxing, to answer the call of time! ; hence, in sporting circles, to be ready, to be alert. Whyte-Melville, *M. or N.*, 1869.

**come tricks.** See come, 3.

**come undone, unput, unstuck.** To fall to pieces, lit. and fig.: to experience disaster: coll. (orig. naval and military): from late 1914.

**come up.** (Of favourites) to win: C. 20; racing c.

**come up, before you.** See came up, before you.

**come up and see me some time!** A c.p.: from 1934. Ex a 'gag' of Mae West's.

**come up smiling.** To shine though (esp. if heavily) 'punished': boxing; from ca. 1860.—2. Hence, to face defeat without complaining or flinching: coll.; from ca. 1870. John Strange Winter, *That Imp*, 1887, 'And yet come up smiling at the end of it'.

**come up to (the) scratch or the chalk.** See scratch.

**come Yorkshire over.** See Yorkshire.

**comedy-merchant.** An actor: ca. 1870-1914. (*Merchant, q.v., = chap, fellow, man.)*

**comether on, put one's or the.** To coax, wheedle; influence strongly: Anglo-Irish coll. (dial.): from ca. 1830. Ex come either.

**comf(able).** See comfortable.

**comfllogisicate.** To astound, or puzzle sorely: nautical (— 1823). Manchon. Cf.: **comfroozled.** Overcome; exhausted. Rare; t ca. 1830–1900. Perhaps coined by Dickens, when, in *The Pickwick Papers*, he makes Sam Weller say: 'He's in a horrid state o' love; regularly comfroozled, and done over with it.' Like the preceding term, it is an artificial facetiousness.


**comfort.** (Gen. with to do, occ. with that . . .) A cause of satisfaction: C. 19-20 coll.; earlier, S.E.

**comfortable.** Tolerable: coll. (— 1720) — 2. 'Peaceably self-satisfied': coll.: 1865. (S.O.D.)

**comfortable importance or impudence.** A wife: also a mistress virtually a wife: late C. 17–20; ob. B.E. Cf. Fr. *mon gouvernement*.


**comic cuts.** See cuts, comic.


**comic-song taker.** A writer of comic songs; music-halls: ca. 1880–1910. Ware.

**comical.** n. A napkin: ca. 1870–1910. (Mostly proletarian.)

**comical, adj.** Strange, queer, odd: 1793 (S.O.D.); coll.


**comical, be struck.** To be astonished; low coll. from ca. 1870; ob.

**coming.** (Gen. of women) forward; wanton: C. 17–20; coll. till ca. 1850, then S.E. Fielding.—2. Sexually capable: C. 18–19; low coll.—3. Pregnant: coll.; C. 17–18.

**coming! Directly! In a minute!** Coll.: from ca. 1700. Cf. coming?, so is Christmas, said, C. 18–20, to a slow person.

**coming all one knows, be.** See come it as strong as a horse.

**coming over . . .** See pin out.

**coming up in the next bucket.** A variant of up in Annie's room (see Annie's . . .). Ex mining.

**commo-bound.** A proof-reader: publishers' and authors': from ca. 1930.

**commandeer.** To gain illicit possession of, gen. by pure bluff: coll.: Boer War +. Cf. S.E. sense, *commandements*, the ten. The finger-nails or 'claws' of a person, esp. of a woman: from ca. 1540; ob.

**Commem.** Commemoration Day or Week: universities' : late C. 19–20. (Collinson.)
commend me to. Give me preferably, by choice: coll.; from ca. 1710. (Orig. of persons: post-1850, things.)

commercial. In c., a thief or a tramp that travels considerably: ca. 1855-1914.—2. Abbrev. commercial traveller: from ca. 1850; coll.; in C. 20 S.E.

commercial legs. Legs unfitted for drill; recruiting sergeants': late C. 19-20; ob. Ware.

commercial. Abbr. commissio更为, a percentage on sales: from ca. 1895.

commercial. The pantry: jocular coll.; from ca. 1915. Popularised by the G.W.


*commissioner. A rare variant (H., 1st ed.) of camisier (q.v.), a clergyman.

*committal. adj. Compromising; involving, committing; rashly revelatory: coll.: 1884, Punch. Ex non-committal. O.E.D.


common bounce. 'One using a lad as a decoy to procure a charge of unnatural intercourse': low, origin, perhaps c.: from ca. 1850; ob. in a.

Common Garden. A C. 17-19 facetious variant of Covent Garden.

common garden gout. Syphilis: late C. 17-18. B.E. Ex Covent Garden after common-(or-)garden.

common jack. A harlot: military; C. 19-20, ob.

common-roomed, be. To be brought before the head of a college: University coll. (i.e. 1886). Ex commoner.

common sewer. A drink; a taking or 'go' of drink: from ca. 1890; ob. H., 2nd ed. Ex sewer = a drain.—2. A cheap prostitute: low: from ca. 1870; ob.


commoner-grub. A dinner given, after cricket matches, by 'commoners' to 'college': Winchester College: C. 19, by 1890. (A 'commoner' is not on the foundation.)


common. house of. A privy: C. 18-early 19; coll. The S.E. form is common house.

*commonological. Possessing, marked with, common sense: coll.; from ca. 1870. 'The common-sensical mind 'occurs in Fraser's Magazine, Sept. 1880. After nonsensical; the S.E. term being common-sensible.

communicator. A bell: jocularly coll.; from ca. 1840. Esp. in agitate the communicator.

communique. A communiqué: sol.: C. 20. Very gen. in G.W. The

*communist. Ca. 1916 it > coll. for any lawless person; since 1926 it has taken a very secondary place to bolshevik.—2. In the 1870's, a frequent sol. for a supporter of the Paris Commune (1870). O.E.D. comp. A composer: printers: from ca. 1865. Thu-Bita, July 31, 1886, 'Applications for work from travelling comps are frequent.' Cf. uae, donkey, galley-slave, qu.v.

company, see. To live by harlotry; esp. and properly, in a good way of business: low: from the 1760's; ob. John Cleland, 1749; Grosz, 1st ed.

*company (with), keep, v.i. and v.t. To court; to pay court to, or be courted by: low coll. (—1861). compete; gen. I'll compete. I'm available; I'll do it if you like: schoolgirls: from ca. 1920; ob. competition wallah. A competitor, i.e. one who enters the Indian Civil Service by examination; the competition and the name began in 1866: Anglo-Indian coll. The wallah is ex Urdu wala — Arabic wala = L. arius, signifying a 'doer', 'maker', 'actor'.

compile. In cricket, to make abundantly, score freely to the extent of, as in 'England compiled 480 (runs)' S.O.D. records it for 1884.


*complais. Apt to be used as a jocularly archaic coll. by the pedantically, the affectedly, or the ever-so-facetically cultured, esp. in the book world: from ca. 1880. Ex Isaac Walton's The Compleat Angler; e.g., in Oliver Onions's The Compleat Bachelor, 1901. Complete, obviously, has not the same antique connotation.

compliment-ary. See compliment.

complet; gen. pronounced complete. Complete; finished: soldiers': 1915-18. Direct ex Fr. See finni.


*comprador. In India, but by 1900, a house-steward; in China, a butler: coll.: from C. 16. The Portuguese comprador, a purhaseurer.

*comprise? or ? (Do you) understand ? or !: military coll.: G.W. I.e., Fr. compris, understood. P. & Gibbons.

*compulsory. That irregular kind of football which is now called run-about: Charterhouse coll.: ca. 1850-90. A. H. Tod.


*coms. See comm. 3.

*comsah. A military variant (1916-19) of oojah (q.v.) on Fr. comme sa, like that, in that way. B. & P.

con. v. To rap with the knuckles: Winchester College, C. 19—20; ob. Ex the much older n., perhaps cognate with the Fr. cogner. Wykehamists, pre-1890, tradition it ex Gr. κόνχον, a knuckle. —2. In C. 20 c., to subject to a confidence trick.—3. In late C. 19—20 c., abbr. of convict.—4. To construe: Charterhouse; late C. 19—20.


*concaves and convexes. A pack of cards devised for sharpening: from ca. 1840; ob. Low and c.

concern. Any object or contrivance: somewhat pejorative; from ca. 1830; coll., in 1930's verging on c. —2. The male or female genitals: from ca. 1840; s., whereas thing is perhaps more euphemistic than unconventional.

*concerned. Often used in c. periphrasis or c.p.: late C. 18—19. See e.g. Alderman Lushington, Bolt-in-Yun, Mr. Palmer.—2. (Occ. with or in drink.) Intoxicated: from ca. 1860; B.S. till ca. 1860, then coll. Ob.

concert. See consort.

concert grand. A grand piano suitable for concerts: coll. (— 1893) >, by 1920, S.E. (O.E.D.)


concertize. ‘To assist musically in concerts’, Ware: musicians’ coll.: 1885.

conchers. Cattle, either tame or quiet—or both: Australians’: from ca. 1870. † by 1912 and ob. by 1896.

conch. See conchy.

conchology. To study conchology: collect shells: coll.: 1855. C. Kingsley. O.E.D.


concurrents. Incorrect for: concurrence: ca. 1600—40. O.E.D.

concus. (Gen. in passive.) To produce cerebral concussion in (a person): C. 20. Prob. without reminiscence of, or allusion to, the S.E. sense, to injure by concussion: it is almost certainly a semi-jocular abbr. of concussion.

condemn. To curse, swear at: C. 20. Ex the euphemistic condemns it /, damn it! (E.D.D.)

condiddle. To purloin, steal: coll.: ca. 1740—1860; extinct in dial., where it arose. Scott in St. Ronan’s Well. ‘Twig the old connoisseur ... conddilling the drawing.’ Ex diddle, a, and to, cheat.

condition. See delicate condition.

dcondog. To concur: coll.: ca. 1590—1700; almost S.E. by 1600. -dog pains —cur.

Condollence. See Bay of Condollence.

condom. A variant of cundam.

conduit. The two Winchester senses (a water-tap, a lewdness) — see Wrench — are, now, almost certainly j.; but orig. († ca. 1850) they may have been s.


coney and its compounds: see cony, etc.

confab. A talk together, or a discussion, esp. if familiar: coll.: 1701 (S.O.D.). ‘In close confab’, Wolcott, 1789. Ex confabulation. Also as v.: from ca. 1740: not much used. Richardson.

*confect. Counterfeited: late C. 17—18 c. B.E., Grose. O.E.D. considers it S.E.; perhaps it is c. only as confect (Coles, 1870).

confectionary. Incorrect for confectionery: mid-C. 18—20. O.E.D.

confect. Confusion, as in go to confest: Roman Catholic: from ca. 1890.

confess and be hanged! A proverbial c.p. equivalent of You lie!: late C. 16—17. Lit., be shielded and be hanged!

[confidence dodge, game, trick; confidence man. Orig. (ca. 1880), these terms were perhaps coll.—witness F. & H.—but they very soon > S.E. Cf. con man, q.v.]

confirmable, confirmation, were, in C. 16, often confused with conformable, confirmation. O.E.D.

confiscate. To seize as if with authority: from ca. 1820; coll. until C. 20, when, for all its looseness, the word is S.E.—2. Hence confiscation, ‘legal robbery by or with the sanction of the ruling power’, O.E.D.: from ca. 1865; coll. till C. 20, when S.E.—3. And confiscatory, adj. to 2: coll.: 1888 (O.E.D.): confisate the macaron. An elaboration (ca. 1918—24) of the cake. W.

conflat is a New Zealand (esp. military) corruption of confab, q.v.: C. 20.


confabulation. A confused wrangle: an ‘awful din’. Ca. 1860—1930. One of the half-wit jocularities so fashionable ca. 1840—1900, e.g. abequilulate, episficate, more popular in the U.S. than in the British Empire, which did but adopt them.


confumox is an intensive of flumox, v.: from ca. 1860; virtually †.

confound it! A coll. expatiate: C. 19—20. Cf. sense I of:

confound. Inopportunity; unpleasant, odious, excessive. This coll. like awful, beastly, is a mere verbal harlot serving all men’s ha’e, a counter of speech, a thought-substitute. From ca. 1700. Goldsmith, in The Vicar of Wakefield, ‘What are tythes and tricks but an imposition, all confounded imposture.’ From ca. 1550 its emotional connotation has been brutalised by association with confound it / = damn it 1—2. Hence confoundedly, very: coll.: C. 18—20.

congee-house. See conjece-house.

congenital. Abbr. congenital idiot: C. 20 coll. (Not among the masses’.)

congragraters. A variant of congrattlers, q.v.

congrat. An occ. variant of the next. Anthony Hope, The Dolly Dialogues, 1894, 'Dear old Dolly,—So you've brought it off. Ha'rtly congrats.'

congratulations, gen. as an explanation: C. 20. Ex the preceding by Oxford-er.

Congrument is one of those numerous ghost-words which are 'founded' on a misprint—esp. on a misprint in a dictionary. O.E.D. (As they are hardly eligible here, I record extremely few of them.)

conimbrum. Incorrect for conumdrum: C. 17. O.E.D.

conish. Gentool; fashionable: low († also, or orig., c.); ca. 1800–40. Perhaps = 'tony' and a corruption from the ton, q.v.


conjoe-or conjee-house. A look-up: military coll. (in India mostly): from ca. 1830. Ex Tamil kaasi; conjee—the water in which rice has been boiled—being a staple food of prisoners in India. Yule & Burnell.

conjible. To arrange, settle; discuss; v.i., to chat together: 1894; ob.: coll. (O.E.D.)

conjoin. Occ. confused with enjoin: mid-C. 16–early 17. O.E.D.

conjugal. Conjugal rights: C. 20 cultured s. >, by 1930, coll.

conjurér—er. A C. 17–18 sol. for all 'Astrologers, Physiognomists, Chiromancers, and the whole Tribe of Fortune-tellers'. B.E. Chiefly among the ignorant.—2. The evidence tends to show, however, that these terms were also employed in c. to = either a magistrate, a judge, or as for cunning man, q.v. See also fortune-teller.

conjurér—er (or). No. One lacking brains and/or physical skill: coll. > S.E.; from ca. 1860.


conk, v.: gen. conk out. To fall, break down, esp. of an engine, a machine; to die: aviation s. (1918) >, by 1921, gen. coll. Ex:

conked (be). Dead, to die; (of an engine) to stop, to be stopped: aviation s. (1917) >, by 1920, gen. coll. Ex. prob. ex conquered (be). For this and conk, see esp. B. & P. and O.E.D. (Sup.)

conker. A blow on the nose: from ca. 1820; ob. (But conkers, the game, is S.E.)

conk(ey). Having a large nose: from ca. 1815. 'Waterlo'o Wellington was, post-1815, often called 'Old Conky' from his large nose. Cf. dook, 3. q.v. —2. Hence, 'nosey', inquisitive: from ca. 1840. Cf. bowsworn, beak, normie; for synonymy, see F. & H. Chown. 

The 89th Foot Regiment in the British Army: military coll. (—1854) >, by 1890; J. H., 3rd ed.

connect, v.i. To understand: C. 20. Ex telephones.

connect with. In boxing, from ca. 1920, to hit: John o' London, Feb. 4, 1933.


conny wobble. Eggs and brandy beaten up together: Anglo-Irish, C. 18–19.

conqueror. (As in play the conqueror.) A deciding game: games coll. from ca. 1870. Cf. decider, q.v.

conscience. An association, gen. in a small company, for the sharing of profits: theatrical: ca. 1870–1990.

conscience, in (all). Equitably; in fairness or in reason; coll. from ca. 1890. Swift. A mid-C. 18–19 variant is of (all) conscience. (O.E.D.)

conscience-keeper. 'A superior, who by his influence makes his dependents act as he pleases', Grose, 2nd ed. coll. late C. 18–mid-19.

consonant. Incorrect for consoniary: C. 17. O.E.D.

consent. Incorrect for consent, a harmony in music: late C. 16–17. O.E.D.

conservatory roof. The transparent, streamlined roof fitted over the cockpit of a high-speed aeroplane: aviation from ca. 1894. The Daily Telegraph, Feb. 9, 1935.

consequence, of. As a result; by inference: low coll., C. 19–20; earlier, S.E. (O.E.D.)

conservativ.e. A conservative. Jocular, ex Gilbert & Sullivan's opera Iolanthe, 1882, but popularised (as a coll.) only in C. 20.

conshie, -y. Less correct than conchie, conchy, q.v.


considerable amount of concerted action. Conspiracy: Parliamentary: 1883. Mr. Herbert Gladstone, asked to withdraw 'malicious conspiracy', substituted this phrase; the younger Conservatives took it up for a few months. Warr.

considerable bend, go on the. To engage in a bout of dissipation: from ca. 1880; cf. bender, 3.

considering, adv. If one considers everything, takes everything into account: coll. from ca. 1740. Richardson, 'Pretty well, sir, considering' (O.E.D.).


consign. To send, wish, as in consign to the devil: coll. from ca. 1900.

consolidate, v.i. To make sure of a job, to make good one's advances to a girl: military coll.: 1916. Ex military j., 'to take measures for holding a captured position to meet a counter attack', F. & Gibbons.

consols. Abbr. consolidated annuities: (1770) in C. 18, Stock Exchange s., then gen. coll. finally (from ca. 1850) S.E. The consolidation of all Government securities into one fund took place in 1751.

consonant-choker. One who omits his g's and alurs his r's: ca. 1870–1910.


constable, outrun—occ. overrun—the. To go too fast or too far (lit. and fig.), as in an argument (Butler's Hudibras, I. 1663); coll. † by 1850.—2. Hence, mid-C. 18–20, to change the subject; fall into debt (Smollett, in Roderick Random; Dickens): coll. >, ca. 1890, S.E.; very ob.

**contestian**. A member of the orchestra: theatrical; from ca. 1875; †.

**constipated**. Slow to part with money: from ca. 1925.

**constitute**. The "Oxford -er" form of the next: Oxford undergraduates: from late 1890’s. Ware.

**constitutional**. A walk taken as exercise (for the good of one’s constitution or health): coll.: recorded by S.O.D. in 1829. Smedley, 1850, “Taking my usual constitutional after Hall”: ‘Cuthbert Bede’, 1853.

**constitutionalise**. To take a walk for health: coll.; from ca. 1850. Like its origin, constitutional (q.v.), it is a university term, app. arising at Cambridge.

**consumer**. A butler: Anglo-Indian; from ca. 1700. Semi-jocular onconsumah.

**contact**. sol.: late C. 19–20. Likewise for impact.

**contemporify**. An acquaintance(hip); a connexion: both with a view to business or self-interest: coll., from ca. 1930, ex commercial j. (— 1925?); prob. ex U.S., where the v. is frequent. Fast verging on S.E., at least the near-S.E. of trade.


**contemporary**. Old. The Regular Army and Reserves sent to France as an expeditionary force in 1914: late 1915: military coll. >, by 1918, S.E. Ex the Kaiser’s alleged ‘General French’s contemptible little army’.

**content**. Dead: C. 18–early 19; c. and low. A New Caxting Dic., 1725; Grose, 1st ed. i.e. content in death.

**contention** and **contention** are occ. confused: C. 17. O.E.D.

**content**. See jury, chummage, and content.

**context**. To discover, or approximate, the sense of a badly written word from the context: printers’ and typists’ coll. (1800) >, by 1925, S.E. Ware.

**continent**. adj. and adv. On the sick list: Winchester College, C. 19–20. See also the entry at Winchester College slang.

**continental**. not worth a; not care (or give) a.


**continental**, **continuous**. To confuse these is, in C. 20, to commit cacatahesia.

**continuo**. with a. For days on end; for a long time. Often proceeded by drunk. Coll.: ca. 1680–1750. B.E.

**continuance**, **continuus**. Trousers, for they continue the waistcoat: from ca. 1840. Whyte-Melville, 1833. (Cf. diutius, inseparables, unmentionables.) Ex continuus, continuus (as continuing knee-breeches: O.E.D.).

**continue** for **continuus** (adj.); **content** for **content** (heraldry). Errors noted by O.E.D.

**contour-chasing**, n. and adj. (Of an aeroplane) *flying very low, and as it were following the slopes and rises of the ground*; Air Forces: 1915. F. & Gibbons.

**contours**. The curves of a woman’s body: C. 20; jocular coll. Ex contour as in the S.O.D.’s quotation from Scott: ‘The whole contour of her form... resembled that of Minerva.’

**contra**. A novel “not passed” by Form-master: Bootham School: C. 20. Anon., Dict. of Bootham slang, 1925. i.e., L. contra, against.

**contra prep.**. Preparation at the end of term, when “contra” are allowed: id.: id. Ibid.

**contract**. An undertaking: esp. if it be a bit of a contract, a rather difficult job: coll.: U.S. (ca. 1880) >, ca. 1890, anglicised. O.E.D. (Sup.).

**contract, mess up the**. To spoil, ruin, bungle anything whatsoever: military coll.: 1914. F. & Gibbons.

**contraption**. A contrivance, device; small tool or article: dial. (1825: E.D.D.) >, ca. 1830, U.S. coll. (Thorn) and, ca. 1850, English coll. Perhaps ex ‘contrivance’ + ‘invention’.

**contrary**. Adverse, inimical, cross-grained, unpleasantly capricious: from ca. 1850: coll. Prob. influenced by the Scottish contrair(g).

**contraction**. Incorrect for **contraction**: mid-C. 16–mid-17. O.E.D.

**control fortune**. Not a euphemism but a c. term: to cheat at cards: C. 19–20; ob.


**convenience**. A water-closet; chamber-pot: C. 19–20; orig. euphemistic, after ca. 1918 a mildly humorous coll. (In C. 17–18 c., with variant -cy, a wife or a mistress.)

**convenience**. A mistress; primarily, however, a wife: c. and low: late C. 17–early 19. B.E. Cf.: 

**convenient**. A mistress; also, a harlot: c. and low: ca. 1670–1830. Etherege, 1676, ‘Dorimant’s convenient, Madam Loveit;’ Shadwell; B.E. Grose. Cf. comfortable importance.

**convenient**, adj. Handy, i.e. conveniently situated or placed: coll.: 1848. Thackeray.

**conversation, a little**. Cursing and/or swearing: C. 20; ob. Waro, 1909. Cf. language, q.v.

**Conversation Cooke**. Wm. Cooke (1760–1824), journalist and author of Conversation, a poem. Dawson.

**Conversation Sharp**. Richard Sharp (d. 1835), a critic and conversationalist. Ibid.

**convoy**. To steal: mid-C. 15–20. Shakespeare: ‘Convoy, the wise it call.’ Orig. euphemistic; but in mid-C. 19–20 decidedly coll. in its facetiousness.

**conversancy, a thief**, C. 16–20; **conversancy**, a thief, C. 18–19; **conversancy**, thieving, swindling, from ca. 1750; **conveyer**, a thief, esp. if nimble (see Shakespeare’s Richard II), late C. 16–20. In C. 19–20, all these are coll. and more or less jocular, though conversancy and conveyer were ob. by 1890, † by 1920.

**convincing**. Effective; notable; journalistic s. > j.: C. 20. In literary and art criticism, it was displaced, ca. 1929, by convincing.

**cony, coney.** A "silly fellow", a simperon: from ca. 1600; archaic after 1820; coll. Greene, B.E., Grose. Cf. the C. 20 s. use of rabbit. (Variant, Tom cony.) Whence:

*cony-catch*, to cheat, trick, deceive: c. and low: late C. 16-18. Greene; Shakespeare, in *The Taming of the Shrew*, "Take heed, signor Baptista, lest you be hoodwinked in this business." Ex:


*cony-dog*. One who assists in cheating or swindling: c. late C. 17-18. B.E.

**cool** indicates astonishment or disbelief: mostly lower classes' coll.: from ca. 1890. Prob. ex good gracious (or Lord?): cf. the frequent cool hummy!  

**coo**, coosey. (The ee sound long drawn out.) The Australian black's signal-cry, adopted by the colonists. Recorded in 1790—see esp. Morris—it has, since ca. 1840, been the gen. hailing or signalling cry. Coll. > S.E. As early as 1864, H. can say that it is "now not unfrequently [sic] heard in the streets of London". E. S. Rawson, *In Australian Wilds*, 1889, "the startling effects of Jim's cooee." — 2. The v.i. dates from 1827—or earlier.

**coose**, within. Within hail; hence, within easy reach. From ca. 1880; coll.

**cook**. To manipulate, tamper with; falsify; coll.; recorded in 1636 (S.O.D.). Smollett, 1761, "Some falsified printed accounts, artfully cooked up, . . . to mislead and deceive". H., 6th ed., "Artists say that a picture will not cook when it is excellent and unconvincing and beyond specific suspicion."—2. To kill, settle, ruin, badly worst: from ca. 1850. Mayhew. Cf. cook one's goose and cooker. — 3. (Of persons) to swell at the heat: coll.; from ca. 1860.

**cook-house official.** A military variant of latrine rumour, q.v.: G.W. (B. & P.)


**cook one's goose.** To ruin; defeat; kill; from ca. 1850. "Cuthbert Bede", "You're the boy to cook Peabrooke's goose"; Trollope, 1861, "Chalidotes . . . is a cooked goose." Cf. do brown and settle one's hash. (At this phrase, F. & H. gives an excellent synonymy of 'do for' in its various senses.)

**cook-ruffian(s).** A bad or bad-tempered cook: ca. 1890-1830; c., then low. B.E. Prob. ex the proverbial saying recorded by Ray in 1670, cook-ruffian, able to scold the devil in (or out of) his feathers (Apperson).

**cookery.** Exhausted, ruined, killed: late C. 19-20. Manchon. Ex cook one's goose.

**cooker.** A decisive or a fatal act, a 'settler' or 'finisher': low (— 1869), ob. O.E.D. Cf. cook, v., and cook one's goose. — 2. See Captain Cook —


**cookie, cooky.** A cook, but rarely of a man: coll.: from ca. 1770.—2. A harlot: Glasgow (— 1934).

**cookie-shine.** A tea-party: jocular coll.: ca. 1803-80. Reade. Ex cookie, a small cake. O.F.D.

**Cookies, the.** The 55th (or Coke's) Rifles: Regular Army in India: C. 20. F. & Gibbons.

**cooking-day.** 'Twenty. For hogs devoted to Bacchus': naval (— 1909); ob. Ware. Ex special allowance of grog to the cook (Bowen).


**Cook's guide; C. tour, tourists.** He who conducted those who took part in a tour of the trenches by officers and N.C.O.s of an incoming battalion or by visitors: military jocular coll.: 1915-18. F. & Gibbons.

**Cook's (or Cook's') Own, the.** The Police Force: ca. 1855-90. Mayhew, ca. 1860 (see Stang, p. 93). On names of regiments and ex police predilection for cooks.

**cook's warrant.** A surgical operation, esp. if amputation: naval (— 1887); ob. Banman.

**cool,** a cut-purse: late C. 16-early 17 c. Greene in 2nd Coney-Catching.

**cool.** (Esp. with fish or hand.) Impertinent, impudent, audacious, esp. if in a calm way: from ca. 1820; coll. till ca. 1880, then S.E. The same with the adj. coolly.—2. Stressing the amount in a large sum of money: from 1728 (S.O.D.): coll. Fielding, in *Tom Jones*, 'Mr. Watton . . . declared he had lost a cool hundred, and would play no longer.'—3. At Eton College, clear, effective, as in cool kick: mid-C. 19-20. Cf.

**cool,** v. To kick hard and clear: Eton College: mid-C. 19-20.—2. In back s. (— 1857), look. 'Ducange Anglicus'; H., 1st ed. Thus cool him is a coster's warning to 'look out' for the policeman.

**cool as a cucumber,** adj. and adv. Cool(ly) and calm(ly): from ca. 1700; coll. Gay, Scott, De Morgan. The C. 17 form was cool as cucumbers, as in Fletcher.

**cool crapes.** A shroud: C. 18—early 18; low. *A New Catching Dict.*, 1725. Ex c-c., a slight Chequer'd Stuff made in imitation of Scotch Plad [sic], B.E. Hence, be put into one's cool crapes, C. 18, is to die.

**cool lady.** A female camp-follower that sells brandy: late C. 17-early 18. B.E. Ex:

**cool Nant(e)s or Nantz.** Brandy: ca. 1690-1830; coll. B.E., Grose. Ex the city of Nantes.

**cool one's coppers.** To quench the morning thirst after over-night drinking: from ca. 1860; coll. T. Hughes in *Tom Brown at Oxford*.

**cool one's heels.** To be kept standing; esp. waiting: from ca. 1630; coll. > S.E. by 1700. A slightly earlier form was hoofs, applied lit. to soldiers.

**cool tankard.** (Like cool crapes—lady—Nantes, it may be, but barely is, spelt with a hyphen.) *' Wine and Water, with a Lemon, Sugar and Nutmeg*, B.E. Coll.: late C. 17-18; in C. 19-20 (ob.), S.E. Ex cooler. A woman: late C. 17—early 19: low (?) orig. c. B.E., Grose. Ex the cooling of passion and bodily temperature ensuing after sexual intercourse.—2. Ale, stout, or porter taken after spirits (even with water): from ca. 1820. Pierce Egan's *Tom and Jerry*. Cf. damper.—3. A heavy
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punch: 'boxes' (1823); † by 1900. 'Jon Bee.'—4. A prison: orig. (1884) U.S.; anglicised in c., ca. 1890; generalised, esp. as a detention cell, to s. in G.W.

coolie, cooly. 'A common follower of the lowest class': from ca. 1800, orig. nautical.—2. Hence, a private soldier (1869); † by 1900. H., 1st ed.


cooith. Coolness: S.E. > ca. 1890, jocular coll. (O.E.D. Sup.)

cool. See coolie.


coon's age, a. A very long time, the racoon being notably long-lived: ex U.S. (1845), anglicised ca. 1870 but now ob. (Thornton.)


cooper. Stout half- and half, i.e. stout with an equal portion of porter: coll. from ca. 1858. H., 2nd ed. Ex the cooperers of breweries. —2. A buyer or seller of illicit spirits; a ship engaged in such contraband: nautical coll.: from ca. 1880. Ex S.E. senses. —3. In C. 20 vagrants' c., a casual ward to be avoided. Ex sense 2 of:

coopered. Made presentable: coll. 1829 (Scott). O.E.D. Prob. ex horse-cooper. —2. Illicitly tampered with; forged; spoiled; betrayed, ruined: c. and low, esp. the turf: from ca. 1850. Mayhew. The other parts of the verb are rare. Cognate with scuppered, q.v. (In vagabondia, denoted by the sign ∇: H., 2nd ed.)


Cooper's ducks with, be. To be all over with: London butchers' (1902); slightly ob. Apperson from Notes and Querries. Presumably of ancestral origin.


coshy. A sleep: military: G.W. Ex Fr. couche.


coota. An occ. form of cootie.

cooter. See outer.

cooter goosht. Bad food: Regular Army's: late C. 19-20. F. & Gibbons. Ex the Hindustani for 'dog's meat'.

cootie. A body-louse: nautical (C. 20) >, by 1915, at latest, military. Ex Malayen for a dog-tick. Moreover, kuis is common throughout Polynesia for any kind of louse, e.g. Tregear's Manganerra Dict. See Words of revised ed.


cop. A policeman (1851); abbr. copper. H., 1st ed.—2. An arrest, as in It's a 'fair' cop (spoken by the victim): from ca. 1870: low (iß orig. c.). (In Cumberland dial. it = a prison. E.D.D.) Ex cop, v. 4.—3. A vocation or a job: Australian (1918). C. J. Dennis. Cf. —4. Whence or cognately, an easy master, gen. as be no cop: see cop, be no. In the Boer War, an English soldier wrote, 'We are going to a place called Spion Kop; and I don't think it will be much of a "kop" for our chaps;",—it wasn't. (J. Milne, The Epistles of Atkins, 1902.)

cop, v. Catch, capture: from ca. 1700, S.O.D. recording at 1704.—2. Hence, to steal: low: mid-C. 19-20. E.D.D.—3. In mid-C. 19-20, it also = take, receive, be forced to endure, as to be in a hot (hot), to be scolded, to get into trouble,—cop the bullet, get the sack,—cop the needle, become angry. The C. 20 cop out is a variant of cop it hot. In G.W., cop it = to die, while cop a packet = to be wounded, gen. severely.—4. As arrest, imprison, perhaps as = steal, it was orig. (C. 19) c.; in C. 20, low.—5. In racing c., C. 20, if a 'bookie' wins on a race, he has 'copped'; and his clerk accordingly marks the book with a C. John Morris.—6. See prop., v. 2. The word derives 1—prob. ex J. cooper. 2—via the Old Fr. cooper, to seize. 3—whence the C. 17 S.E. cap, to arrest: cap to cop is a normal argotic change. Whence copper, q.v.


cop, be no (or not much). Of a task: to be difficult; of an object: valueless. From ca. 1805. See cop, n., 4, and cf. it's no catch, which is earlier.

cop a dark un. See dark 'un, cop a.

cop a flower-pot. A Cockney synonym (by rhyming s.: C. 20) of cop it hot (see cop, v. 3). A news-vendor, in late Sept., 1935, said of Mussolini: 'He will cop a flower-pot if he goes on like this' (The New Statesman and Nation, Sept. 28, 1935).

cop a mouse. To get a black eye: artisans' (1900). Ware.

cop it (hot). See cop, v., 3.

*cop on the cross. Cunningly to discover guilt: late C. 19-20 c.

cop out. See cop, v., 3.—2. Also, to die: military in Boer War and, occ., later. J. Milne, Epistles of Atkins, 1902.

cop the brewery, the curtain. See brewery, cop the, and curtain, cop the. —cop the bullet, needle, sack. See cop, v., 3.

*copbusy. To hand the booty over to a confederate or a girl: c. (1839); ob. Brandon.

cope. 'An exchange, bargain; a successful deal': low: from ca. 1840; ob. Carew, Autobiography of a Gipsy, 1891. Prob. independent of the same word recorded, for C. 16-17, by the O.E.D. (1 *)copesmate. An accompanist; late C. 18-19, or low s.: T. Wilson, 1570; Greene. Cf. the S.E. cope dah! Catch this!: military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Ex cop there!.

copper. A policeman, i.e. one who 'cops' or captures, arrests: orig. theatrical: from 1860 s.—2. A penny or a halfpenny: from ca. 1840. In pl.
coll. for halfpennies and pennies mixed. *Still used of the bronze which has superseded the copper coinage*, O.E.D., 1893.—3. In C 20 c., an informer to the police. Cf. sense 1.

- *copper, v.* To inform against; cause to be arrested. C 20 c. Edgar Wallace, Room 13.

- copper, catch. To come to harm: C 16–17; s. > coll. Palsgrave. (O.E.D.)

- *copper, come or turn. To inform the police: C 20 c. Charles E. Leach; David Humo. Cf. copper, v.*

- copper, worth one's weight in burnt. Of little worth: coll. (– 1807); slightly ob. Baumann. (See copper instead of gold.)

- copper-captain. A pretended captain: from ca. 1800 (orig. U.S.); coll. > S.E.

- copper-clawing. A fight between women: London streets*: from ca. 1820; ob. Ware suggests cap-a-clawing.

- Copper-Face. Oliver Cromwell, whose sobriquet was the *copper-nosed saint*. Dawson. Cf. Old Noll.


- copper-nose. The red, pimply, swollen nose of habitual drunkards: coll.; from early C 17; B.E. records the adj. copper-nosed, which until ca. 1660 was S.E.

- copper-rattle. (Irish) stow: naval (–1900); ob. Ware. Ex the noise made by the bones in the pot.


- copper-slother. One apt to 'go for' the police: 1882. Ware.

- copper-stick. The *membrum virile*: low: C 19–20; ob. Analogous is C 18 coral branch.—2. From ca. 1890, a policeman's truncheon.

- copper-tail. A member of the lower classes: Australian: late 1880's.

- copper-tailed. See silver-tail.


- coppers, clear one's. To clear one's throat: 1831, Trellawney (O.E.D.). Cf.: coppers, cool one's. See cool one's coppers.

- coppers, hot. The hot, dry mouth and throat ensuing on excessive drinking: coll., from ca. 1840.


- copper, a tufted fowl; adj., crested: dial. (–1880) >, by 1885. coll. Ex dial. cop, the top of anything. O.E.D.

- copper. A drink of wine or beer imposed as a fine in hall: Cambridge University, C 18–19. Johnson derives ex epicurus (cf. bishop, q.v.); H. ex hippocus.

- copper(-cat. A child given to copying others' work: elementary schools.—2. Also a person annoyingly given to repeating or imitating others. Both, C 20 c.

- copy of (one's) countenance. A pretense, hypocrisy; sham, humbug: from ca. 1570; coll. passing in C 17 to S.E. In Westward Ho, a play of 1607: "I shall love a puritan's face the worse, whilst I live, for that copy of thy countenance."


- copybook, blot one's. To spoil one's record: coll.: C 20.

- cor. God, as a low expletive: C 19–20. Via *Gor*.


- corduroys. (A pair of) corduroy trousers: from ca. 1780; coll.; in C 20, S.E.

- *c. v.i. To pick up small articles in shops: ca. 1810–60. Vbl.n., cor(e)ning. Perhaps ex Romany cor, to steal (Sampson).

- corf. A sol. pronunciation of coffee: centuries old, esp. among Cockneys. A corf(e)-house cut is a cheesemongers' term (– 1909) for 'the back of bacon, without bones, and exceptionally used by coffee-house keepers', Ware.

- *coriander (seed). See colander.*


- Corinth. A brothel: C 17–19; coll. >, by 1800, S.E. The ancient Greek city was noted for its elegance and modernity, also for its licentiousness.

- Corinthian. A rake: late C 16–18; coll. soon S.E., as is the adj.—2. A dandy, hence a fashionable man about town: ca. 1800–50; coll. > S.E., precisely as swell, which was in vogue by 1854, > S.E. One of the characters in Pierce Egan's Life is London is Corinthian Tom.


- cork, draw a or the. In boxing, to draw blood: from ca. 1815; ob. Cf. tap one's claret.


- cork-and-water club. Old scholars at Oxford University: id.; id. Ibid.


- corker. Something that ends an argument or a course of action; anything astounding, esp. a great lie. Recorded for 1837; app. orig. U.S. (O.E.D.),
cork, play the. (Of persons) to be unusual, exaggerated, eccentric; in university and Public School, to make oneself objectionable. From ca. 1870. Anstey in *Vice Versa*.

corking. Unusually large, fine, good; from early 1890's: mostly U.S., s., >, by 1930, coll. App. ex *corker*, q.v., on the model of other pernickety adj. (shocking, whopping, etc.). O.E.D. (Sup.). Hence, semi-adv., as in 'A corking great thing' (Manchon, 1923).


corkscrew. A lower classes' coll. interjection: not recorded before 1920, but heard by the writer in late 1921. Either a corruption, prob. euphemistic, of cock's (God's) body (O.E.D. Sup.), or an abbr., as I think, of *cork-screw* q.v.


Corking. The uneven walk due to intoxica-
tion: from ca. 1840; coll., as is.

corkscrew, to move spirally (1837). Dickens. 'Mr. Bantam corkscrew his way through the crowd' (S.O.D.);—2. corkscrew out. To draw out as with a corkscrew: coll.: 1852, Dickens (O.E.D.).


corky. Frivolous; lively; resolute: from ca. 1860: coll.; ob. Contrast the S.E. senses.

corky-brained. A coll. variants (C. 17–19) of cork-
brai ned, q.v.

corn, a great harvest of a little. Much ado about nothing: coll.; C. 17–early 19.

corn, carry. See *carry corn*.


cornage. For its catastrophic in law, see the O.E.D.]

corned. Drunk (—1785). Groce. Cf. pickled and salted for semantics. Not, as often supposed, an Americanism, as, however, have corns in the head (to be drunk) may possibly be. In dial., corny.

Corned Beef Island. A Corporation housing-
estate: urban: from ca. 1926. 'Like bully-beef tins' (Allan M. Laing).


corned with oneself, be. (Very) well pleased with oneself: tailors' from ca. 1920. E.g. in *The Tailor and Cutter*, Nov. 29, 1928.

CorneH tub. A sweating-tub: late C. 18–

cornert. A money-market monopoly with ulterior motives. From the 1830's. Coll., >, by 1900, S.E. (Thorn.)—2. The corner: Tattersall's subscription row: ca. 1890, sporting. It is more than sixty years since 'Tatts' was near Hyde Park Corner.—3. Also, Tattenham Corner on the Derby course at Epsom: sporting, from ca. 1870.—4. In o. (—1891), a share; the chance of a share in the proceeds of a robbery.

cornet, v. Drive into a fig. corner: ex U.S. (1824), anglicised ca. 1840: coll.—2. Monopolise a stock or a commodity: from the mid-1830's in U.S. (whence too, the corresponding n.) and anglicised before 1860.

corner, be round the. To get ahead of one's fellows by unfair or dishonest methods: from ca. 1860.


cornet, hot. See *hot corner*.

cornet-cove. A street-corner lounger or loafer: coll.; from ca. 1850. Mayhew.

cornet-creeper. An underhand and furtive per-
son: coll.; ca. 1560–1720; S.E. after 1860.

corner-man. A loafer: coll., from ca. 1890 (re-
corded in 1885). Replacing *corner-cow*, q.v.—2. An end man, 'bones' or 'tambourine', in a negro-minstrel or an analogous show: from ca. 1890; ob. H., 3rd ed.


cornering. The practice of *corner, v., 2; q.v.*

corny. See *corny-faced*.

cornichon. A 'muff' (e.g. at shooting): Society 1890–ca. 1896. Ex Fr. *Ware*.


corns in the head, have. To be drunk: drinkers' (—1745); † by 1860. Apperson.

cornstalk (or C.). A New South Walesman of European descent: coll.: from ca. 1825. Later (ca. 1890), and loosely, any Australian of the Eastern states. Peter Cunningham, 1827, 'From the way in which they shoot up'; rather, ex tendency to tall slimmness. (Morris.)

cornuted. Cuckolded: late C. 17–18; coll. B.E. Ex a cuckold's horns. Cf.:


coroner. A heavy fall: from ca. 1870; ob. I.e. one likely to lead to an inquest.—2. The Coroner was the nickname applied, ca. 1870–1900, to Dr. E. M. Grace, 'W. G.'s' brother.


corporal and four, mount a. To masturbate: low; late C. 18–20, ob. Grose, 1st ed.

Corporal Forbes or the Corporal Forbes. Cholera Morbus: Regular Army (esp. in India): from 1820's. Shipps's *Memoirs*, 1829; Tyle & Burnell.

Corporal John Marlborough, perhaps the greatest of British generals: orig. (ca. 1700), military; in mid-C. 18–20, only historical. Dawson.

corporation. A prominent belly: from ca. 1750; coll. O. Bronte, in *Shirley*, 'The dignity of an ample corporation'. Influenced by *B.E. corporal*.
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corporation's work, freeman of a. 'Neither strong nor handsome': c.p. of ca. 1780-1820. Grose, 1st ed. (Not very complimentary to corporate towns.)


corps. A horse entered in a race for betting purposes only: the turf, from ca. 1870. 
corps, v. To blunder (whether unintentionally or not), confound, or spoil a scene: the blunderer is said to be 'corpsed': theatrical: from ca. 1855: ob. H., 1st ed.-2. To kill: low; recorded in 1884. Henley & Stevenson in Deacon Brodie. Ex dial.


corps-provider. A physician or a surgeon: from ca. 1840: ob.


corps-ticket. A contemporaneous variant of cold-meat ticket, q.v. (F. & Gibbons.)

corps-worship. A marked profusion of flowers at funerals: clubmen's: ca. 1880-1900. Ware says that 'this custom, set by the Queen at the mausoleum (Frogmore) immediately after the death of the Prince Consort [in 1861], grew rapidly ... Finally, in the '50's, many death notices in the press were followed by the legend, "No flowers!"'


correct. The correct number or quantity; esp. in (up) to correct, (up) to the correct or specified number, etc.: military coll.: 1916. B. & P.

correct, all present and. All correct: coll.: from ca. 1918. R. Knox, Still Dead, 1934, "'Is that all present and correct?" "Couldn't be better.'" Ex the military phrase (applied by a sergeant-major to a parole).

correct card, the. The right thing to have or do; the 'ticket': from ca. 1860, ex lit. racing sense. Often written 'kred' card.


corruption, occ. in pl. Natural sinfulness, 'the old Adam': 1799: coll. until C. 20, when archaic S.E. (S.O.D.)

corruscante, corruscation. Incorrect for coruscate, coruscation: C. 17-20. O.E.D.

corsey. Reckless (betting or gambling): sporting coll.: 1883: ob. Ware. Ex Fr. corse.

corsonic, the. Something unusual: sporting; ca. 1880-1913. Coined by F. C. Burnand (1836-1917), playwright and editor of Punch.

coryphæus. The posterior: boxing; ca. 1850-1900. Etymology?


hilarious public-house, where singing, dancing, drinking, etc., goes on at all hours'. Prob. influenced by S.E. cozy.

*coosh. A life-preserver, 'nuddy', i.e. a short thin but loaded bludgeon, in C. 20 occ. of solid rubber; also (rare before C. 20) a policeman's truncheon. From ca. 1870: orig. c. then low. H., 5th ed: Edgar Wallace passim. Prob. ex Romanly.—2. With the, one who uses a coosh: C. 20 c.

*coosh, v. To strike with a coosh; esp. thus to render unconscious: late C. 19-20 c. Ex the n.—2. Hence merely, to hit: Cockneys': C. 20.


cosher, n., see kasher.—In late C. 19-20 c., one who uses a coosh, q.v.—3. A policeman: Berkshire s. (— 1800). E.D.D., Sup.—4. V.l., to talk familiarly and free-and-easily: coll.: from ca. 1850. Cf. Scottish coosh, on intimate terms, ex coosh, snug comfortable.


cosma. Incorrect for chaos, a chasm: late C. 16-17. O.E.D.


cossack. A policeman: from late 1860's. H., 1st ed.: The Graphic, Jan. 30, 1886, 'A policeman is also called a "cossack", a "Philistine", and a "frog"'. All three terms are †.

cossid. A 'runner', i.e. a running messenger: Anglo-Indian coll.: late C. 17-20. Ex Arabic. (S.O.D.)

cossie. A swimming costume: Australian: from ca. 1919. Origin?

cost. To be expensive: coll.: from ca. 1910 Norah Hoult, Youth Can't Be Serv'd, 1933, 'Therm things cost these times.' Abbrev. cost a lot of money.

costard. The head: jocularly coll. (—1530). Palsgrave (O.E.D.); Udall in Ralph Roister Doister; Shakespeare; B.E.; Grose; Scott. Ex costard, a large apple. Cf.:

coster. Abbrev. (—1851) costermonger (C. 16), orig. costard-monger, at first a seller of apples, then of any fruit, finally of fruit, fish, vegetables, etc., from a barrow. Cf. costard, q.v., and barrow-man, q.v.

costering. Costermongering: from ca. 1850; ob. Mayhew, 1851 (O.E.D.); H., 1st ed.

costermonger Joe. 'Common title for a favourite coster': commercial London (—1909). Ware.


coth, on the. 'A man of a bad character, trying to amend his ways—i.e. in a moral hospital, so to speak': military: late C. 19-early 20. F. & Gibbons.


In facetious usage, however, it is to be ranked as a coll.

cows. The shoe-strings of monitors: Christ's Hospital, ca. 1780-1890. Charles Lamb. Ex
cotton.—2. God’s, in coll. oaths: C. 16–mid-18 (O.E.D.)
cotso. A variant of *cotsar*, q.v.
Cottagers, the. Fulham Football Club (‘soccer’): sporting: 1910, F. G. Wodehouse, *Fsmith in the City*. They often play at Graven Cottage, London.
Cotterel’s salad; Sir James (Cotter’s or) Cotterel’s salad. Hemp: Anglo-Irish, C. 18–early 19. Grose, 1st ed. A baronet of that name was hanged for rape.
cotton, v.t. Prosper; hence, agree together: coll.: the former (†), from ca. 1660; the latter, from ca. 1690. In an old play (1695), “John a Nokes and John a Style and I cannot cotton.” The primary sense (“prosper”) may arise ex ‘a fig. sense of raising a nap on cloth’, W. —2. Hence, with to, ‘get on’ well with (a person), take kindly to (an idea, a thing): from ca. 1800; coll. Barham, ‘It’s amazing to think, by how many cottons to drink!’
“Cotton, leave the world with one’s ears stuffed full of. To be hanged: Newgate c. of ca. 1820–40. ‘Jon Bee,’ 1823. Ex the name of the Newgate chaplain, by a pun.
cotton-box. An American ship, bluff-bowed, for carrying cotton: nautical: C. 19. Bowen, ‘The old clipper men used to speak of them as being built by the mile and sawn off in lengths when wanted.’
cotton in their ears, die with. A variant of Cotton, leave the world with one’s ears stuffed full of.
cotton on, v.i.; v.t. with to. To form, or have, a liking or fancy (for a thing, plan, person): coll.: coll.: C. 20. Ex cotton, 2. (O.E.D. Sup.) —2. To understand: from ca. 1910. C.O.D., 1934 Sup.
cotton-top. A loose woman preserving most of the appearances: ca. 1830–80. Ex stockings cotton-topped, silk to just above the ankles.
cotton up. To make friendly overtures; v.t. with to. Both coll.; from ca. 1850. See cotton.
cotton-wool, wrap in. To cosset, coddle: coll.; from ca. 1870; now almost S.E.
cottonocracy. Cotton magnates as a class: coll.: 1845. (S.O.D.) Cf.:
cottons. Confederate bonds: from ca. 1870; Stock Exchange. Ex the staple of the Southern States, U.S.A.
Cotzocks! A coll. corruption of God’s hooks (nails on the Cross): early C. 18. O.E.D.
“cough a hog’s head.” Lit., to lay down one’s head, i.e. to lie down and sleep: C. 16–17 a.; in C. 18, low. Recorded in Harman, B.E., Scott (as an archaism). Oec. cod’s head.
“cough a porker.” A variant of the preceding: o. t. (t) C. 18.
cough-drop. A ‘character’; a quick courier or ‘love’-maker; low col.: 1805, *The Referee,* ‘“Honest John Burne”... objects to being called “a cough drop”’: Ware postulates 1860 on.
cough-lozenge, A mishap; something unpleasant; esp. in that’s a cough-lozenge for (somebody): a virtual c.p. of 1560–60. Cf. preceding.
cough-slam. See slam, cough.

cough up. To disclose: from C. 14, now ob. (not, as the S.O.D. says, †); S.E. in C. 14–17; coll. in C. 19–20. —2. To pay, v.i. and t.: from ca. 1895. —3. (Likewise ex sense 1.) To produce, hand over: C. 20; perhaps orig. U.S.
“couldn’t speak a threepenny bit, I (etc.). I was unable to speak: London streets”’ (— 1909). Ware.
Coulson. A court jester: a coll. nickname (— 1553) soon > allusive S.E. Ex a famous fool so named. (O.E.D.: at patch.)
council and counsel are often misused one for the other: C. 18–20.
council of ten. The toes of a man with in-turned feet: ca. 1850–90. H., 2nd ed.
councillor of the pipeword court. A pettyfogging lawyer: coll.: ca. 1750–1850. Ex Court of Pipers, dealing summary justice at fairs; *prisse pousseurs*.
count. A man of fashion: ca. 1840–60; coll.
* Cf. dandy, swell, toff.
count, out for the. (Often preceded by put.) Ruined; dead: from ca. 1880. Ex boxing.
count, take the. To die: from ca. 1880. Also ex boxing:
Count Eclipse. Dennis O’Kelly (d. 1787), owner of that now almost mythical racehorse Eclipse (b. 1794), Dawson.
count noses. To count the Ayes and Noses: Parliamentary: from ca. 1885; ob.
counter. An inferior officer of a counter or prison: C. 17. O.E.D.
counter-hopper. A Londoners’ coll. variant (ca. 1880–1910; Mayhew 1851) of the next. E.D.1.
counter-jumper. A shopman: coll.: 1831, an American example (O.E.D. Sup.); S. Warren, 1841 (O.E.D.); H., 2nd ed.; G. A. Sala, 1864, ’He is as dextrous as a Regent Street counter-jumper in the questionable art of “shaving the ladies”’; Baumann, 1887, and Manchon, 1923, have counter-skippers: † by 1930.
countermine. Incorrectly for countermure: ca. 1560–1740. O.E.D.
counterstrafe. To ‘strafe’ (q.v.) In retaliation: artillerymen’s and infantry officers’; 1916. B. & P.
country-housing. Countenance (n.): non-aristocratic, non-cultural: ca. 1870–1910. Ware.
country, go to the; in the country. See go to the country.
country, the. The outfield: from early 1880’s: cricket s. >, by 1910, coll., now verging on S.E. Lillywhite’s *Cricket Companion*, 1884 (O.E.D.). But country stroke appears as early as 1872. Also country catching (1888), c. fielder (man) in 1890’s. (W. J. Lewis.)
country, up the. See up, adj.
COUtry-CAPTAIN. A very dry curry, often with a
spatch-cooked fowl; Anglo-Indian: "coll. from
c. 1790-2. Also (ca. 1792?), the captain of a
country-ship, q.v.

COUNTRY COUSIN. A dozen; rhyming s. (ca. 1900).
Ware.—In, monthly courses; euphemistic
(1823). Manchon. See relations.

COUNTRY-CROP, in Manchon, is an error for country-
crop, q.v.

*country harry. A waggoner: mid-C. 18-
coll. late C. 17-early 19. See put, n.

COUNTRY-SHIP. A vessel owned in an Indian port:
Anglo-Indian coll. (ca. 1775); country-boat occurs as
early as 1619. (Yule & Burnell.)

country with (one), be all up the. To be ruin, or
dead for: coll. (ca. 1887); virtually t. Bau-
mann.

COUNTRY WORK. Work slow to advance: coll.
(1811); ob. Lex. Bal.

COUNTRY, adj. Wrapped up in the affairs of county
Society; apt to consider such society to be the
cream of the social milk; very much upper-middle
class. Coll.: from ca. 1880.

COUNTRY-COURT. To sue a person in a county
court: coll. from ca. 1850.

COUNTRY-CROP. Abbr. country-prison crop. Hair
Cut close and as though with the help of a basin; a
'fashion' once visited on all prisoners: ca. 1850-
1910. H., 2nd ed.—2. Hence, country-cropped:
1887, J. Greenwood (O.E.D.).

COUPED UP. B.E.'s spelling of coop'd-up, q.v.

COUP. Couple of: U.S., anglicised ca. 1905;
(low) coll. D. Sayers, 1934, 'He'd had nothing to eat
... for a couple days.'

COUPLE, a. A couple of drinks: coll.: late C. 19-
20. Richard Revere, Mencce, 1835, 'Stopped at the
'Swan' for a couple'.

Swift, in Proposal for Badges to the Beggars; prob.
the earliest record; Lever, in Handy Andy. Cf.
buckler-beggar.

F. & Gibbons. Ex doorstep, q.v.

COUPLE OF FLATS. Two bad actors: theatrical:
ca. 1830-80. Ware. A pun on the two scenes-
covered.

COUPLED. Incorrect for cupulaed: C. 17. O.E.D.

COUPING-HOUSE. A brothel: C. 18-19; low coll.

COUPON. (Political) a party leader's recommenda-
tion to an electoral candidate: 1918. Collinson.
The term soon passed from s. to j.; thence, ca. 1930, to S.E. The coupon election was
that of 1918 (Great Britain).

COURAGE, DUTCH. See Dutch courage.—'courbar.

See curbar.

COURAGE. A C. 17-20 incorrect spelling of course.
E.g. in B.E.—2. Abbr. of course, as in Course I
Did it or Course I (What do you suppose?): late

COURSE WITH (a person), take a. To hamper him,
follow him closely: coll.: mid-C. 17-early 19.
B.E. Ex courasing.

COURT. To sue in a court of law; from ca. 1840;
coll.: mid-C. 17-early 19. B.E. Ex courasing.

COURT CARD. 'A gay fluttering Fellow, B.E.; a
dandy: coll. ca. 1650-1800, then dial.

COURT CREAM; COURT ELEMENT; COURT HOLY BREAD;
COURT HOLY WATER; COURT WATER. Fair but insincere
speeches, promises: C. 17-18 the first; the others
being C. 18-18. All are coll., as, orig., was the
C. 17-18 court promises. (O.E.D.)

COURT MARTIAL. (Gen. hyphenated.) To try by
court martial: from ca. 1855; coll.

COURT NOLL, COURTNOLL. A courtier: coll., pejor-
tive; ca. 1560-1880. In C. 17, S.E.

COURT PHOES. Young men to whom young
wives, married to old men, are apt to turn: a late
C. 18-early 19 facetious coll. punning the S.E.
sense. Grose, 2nd ed.

COURT OF GUARD. Sol. for corps de garde: late
C. 16-early 19. O.E.D.

COURT TRICKS. 'State-Policy', B.E.; coll.: mid-
C. 17-18.

COURT WATER. See court cream.

*C o u s i n. A t r u l l; c.; — 1863. S.O.D.—2. In
late C. 16 c., (a rustie) 'pigeon'. Greene.

Cousin Betty. A half-witted woman: mid-C. 19-
20; ob.; coll. Mrs. Gaskell, in Sylvia's Lovers,
'... gave short measure to a child or a cousin
Betty'—2. Also, a street name: C. 18-19: c.
and, latterly, low s. 'Jon Bee.'

Cousin Jan or Jacky. A Cornishman: coll. and
dial.: from ca. 1850.

Cousin the weaver or, as in Swift and Fielding,
dirty cousin. Prefaced by my, these two terms—
the latter much the more gen.—were, in late C. 17-
18, pejorative forms of address: coll.

Cousin Tom. A half-witted man: in C. 18 if a
beggar, in C. 19 of any such unfortunate, though not
applied to a person of standing.

Cousin TUNDRUS. One of the same occupation or,
oc., character: mainly, like brother emut, as a

COUTA. A rare form of couther.—2. A barracouta
(fish); Australian coll.: late C. 19-20—3. Hence,
a Southern Tasmanian (gen. the word is used in the
pl.); Northern Tasmanians' nickname: C. 20.
These fish being plentiful in Southern Tasmania.

couler, ooc, couler. A sovereign: perhaps orig.
c., certainly always low and mainly vagrants' and
Cockney: from ca. 1835. Brandon, 1839; Snow-
den's Magistrate's Assistant, 1846 (O.E.D.); H.,
1st ed.; James Payn in A Confidential Agent, 1880.
Ex Romany kodor, a guinea.

COVE. A man, a companion, chap, fellow; a
rogue: from ca. 1560. In C. 16 often cove. In
C. 16-18, c.; still low. Harman, B.E., Grose,
Dickens, in Oliver Twist. 'Do you see that old cove
at the book-stall?' Prob. cognate with Romany
cow, cove, that man, and, as W. suggests, identical
with Scottish cove, a hawkier (cf. chap ex chapman).
—2. Hence, in Australia, the owner, the 'boss', of a
sheep-station: ca. 1870-1910. This sense owes
something to: —3. the cove (or Cove), 'the master of
a house or shop', Vaux: c. of ca. 1800-70. Cf.
next entry but one.

*COVE OF THE (DOING) CLOTH KEN. The landlord of a low
lodging-house: C. 19 c. Cf.: 'Cove of the ken, the.
The master of the house', Egan's Grose: c. of ca. 1820-70. Ex cove, 3.

COVENT GARDEN. A farthing; rhyming s. on
farden (ca. 1867). 'Duongale Anglicus.'

COVENT GARDEN ABBEY. A procurees: C. 18-
early 19. The Covent Garden district, in C. 18,
toned with brothels. See esp. Berosford Chancel-
lor's Annals of Covent Garden, Fielding's Covent
Garden Tragedy; and Grose, P. Cf. Bankside
ladies and Drury Lane veal.

COVENT GARDEN AGUE. A venereal disease: late
Drury Lane auge, and see Covent Garden abbes and Covent Garden rails.

Covent Garden Lady. A variant (ca. 1800–30), noted in 1823 by Bee, of:


Cow. He doesn't speak (to me, or us, etc.) nowadays: tailors: late C. 19–20. Ex:

Coventry, send one to. To ignore socially: mid-C. 18-20; orig. military. Coll., > S.E. ca. 1830.

Origin uncertain: perhaps ex Coventry Gaol, where many Royalists were imprisoned during the Civil War (see e.g. Clarendon's History of the Rebellion, VI, § 83). Lyttton, in Alice, 'If any one dares to buy, we'll send him to Coventry.' Cf. the County Antrim go to Dinner couch, the Upland send to Dinnerly-cooch, and see esp. the O.E.D. and Grose, P.

*cover. A pickpocket's assistant: c. from ca. 1810. Vaux. Cf. stall, q.v. Ex:


*cover, at the. Adj. and adv., applied to a pickpocket cloaking the movements of the actual thief: c.: from ca. 1810. Charles E. Leach. See cover, n.

cover-arse gown. A sleeveless gown: Cambridge University, ca. 1760–1860.

*cover-down. A false tossing-coin: c. C. 19;† by 1891. See cap, n., last sense.


*coverer. An occ. † variant (Egan's Grose, 1823) of cover, n.


covetie (†) and covetous were, in C. 14–16, often written the one for the other. O.E.D.

covey. A man: low: from ca. 1820; ob. Pierce Egan, 1821; Dickens in Oliver Twist, 'Hullo! a covey! what's the row?' Diminutive of cuve, q.v.


cow, sleep like a. (Of a married man) 'i.e. with a **** at one's a-se', Grose, 1st ed., who quotes the quatrain, "All you that in your beds do lie, / Turn to your wives and occupy; / And when that you have done your best, / Turn a-se to a-se, and take your rest'; for a variant here unquestionable, see Grose, P. A mid-C. 18–mid-19 low coll.

cow and calf. To laugh: rhyming c. († 1859); ob. H., 1st ed.


cow-briggis. 'The foro and ast gangways in the waists of old men-of-war, before the days of completely planked main decks', Bowen: naval: C. 19.

cow climbed up a hill, there was a. You're a liar! c.: C. 1890. F. & Gibbons.


cow come home, till the. C. 17–18 coll. See cows come home.


cow-(occ. buskel-, alusce-)nestled. Low coll. pejorative applied to a woman deformed by childbearing or by harlotry: C. 19–20.

cow died of, the tune the old. See tune the old cow . . .


cow-gurh. A heavy naval gun: naval s. (from ca. 1900) >, by 1915, coll. O.E.D. (Sup.)


cow-hitch. A clumsily tied knot: nautical († 1867). Smyth. As in cow-gurh and cow-handed, the idea is of unwieldiness.


cow in a cage, as comely (or nimble) as a. Very ungainly or clumsy: coll.: 1399, Langland; 1546, Heywood; 1678, Ray; 1732, Fuller. Apperson. Cf. bull in a china shop.


cow-luck. 'A peculiar lack of hair, greaseed, curled, brought forward from the ear, and plastered on the cheek. Once common amongst coster-mongers and tramps.' F. & H.; H., 2nd ed., has it. Coll. >, by 1900, S.E. (First used in late C. 19,
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prob. of a fashion different from that of the costers.) Cf. opperuese.

cow-oil. See cow-grease.


cow-shot. A flat, scooping leg-stroke made by a ball, coming down on one knee and hitting against the flight of the ball: cricketers'. (1904) >, by 1930. coll. Lewis. A more clumsy shot, made by a standing batsman, is termed an agricultural one: coll.: from ca. 1930.

cow-turd. A piece of cow-dung: late C. 16–20: S.E. until C. 19, then a vulgarism. (O.E.D.)

cow-with-the-iron-tail. (Gen. without hyphens.) A pump, i.e. water mixed with milk: jocular coll.: from ca. 1700.

cowan A sneak, eavesdropper, Paul Pry; an uninitiated person; from ca. 1850. Ex free-masonry, certainly the last nuance and perhaps the others. Ex Scottish cowan or kirman, a rough stone-mason; or, less prob. Gr. κώφω, a dog.

cowardise. Incorrect for cowardous: late C. 16. O.E.D.

coward's castle or corner. A pulpit, 'six feet above argument': coll.: C. 19–20, ob.

cowle. Almost any document of a promissory or warranty nature, e.g. lease, safe-conduct: Anglo-Indian, from late C. 17.

cows-and-kisses. (But occ. unhyphenated.) The 'missus': wife or mistresses (of house); any woman. Rhyming s. (—1857). 'Ducangue Anglicus'.


*cow's calf. In racing c., C. 20: ten shillings, in coin, currency note or value. Rhyming on half (a cow).


cow's grease (H., 1st ed.). See cow-grease.


cow's thumb, to a. Mid-C. 17–20, ob.; coll. 'With a thing is done exactly, nicely [i.e. fastidiously], or to a Hair', B.E.: is this ironical?

owah. An Australian and New Zealand variant (—1914) of bullah (see bull-shit).


cox. Abr. coxswain: from ca. 1880; coll.—2. The same applies to the v. (t. or l.).


coxy. See cooky.


coy or Coy. See co. 2.

coyduck. To decoy, v.t., rarely v.i.: C. 19–20, coll. and dial. Prob. ex coy-duck = decoy-duck, and not, as Farmer ingeniously suggests, a blend of conduct and decoy.

coyote. The piundendum muliere: C. 19. (Cf. cat, pussy.) Lit., the barking-wolf of the U.S. 


cozier. See cozier.

cozza. Pork: cheapjack's and costers'; from ca. 1850. Charles Hindley, 1876. Origin?

crab. A decoy at auctions: low, C. 19–20, ob.—2. Abrb. crab-house, a human-body house, esp. and properly one of those unpleasant vermin which affect the public and anal hair: low coll., from ca. 1800. In B.E.'s day, crab-house itself was collog.


crab, catch a. See catch a crab.—crab, land. See land crab.

crab, throw a. A v.i. form (c. of ca. 1810–40) of crab, v. Vaux.


crab grenade. A flat, oblong German hand-grenade: military: 1915; ob. B. & P.


crab-house. See crab, n. 2.

*crab-shells. Boots, shoes; from ca. 1780, perhaps orig. c., for in c. crabs = feet. Grove, 1st ed.; Mayhew, 'With a little meddling, they'll make a tidy pair of crab-shells again.' Cf. trotter- or trotting-cases.

*Crab Street, in. 'Affronted; out of humour', Vaux: c. (—1812); † by 1890. A pun on crabb'd. Cf. Queen Street.


*crabs. In c., shoes: ca. 1810–50. Also feet: from ca. 1840. Abrb. crab-shells.—2. In gaming, esp. at hazard, a throw of two aces, 'deuce-aces' (of deuce, the): from ca. 1765: Lord Carlisle, 1768; Barham. Whence:

crabs, come off or turn out or up (a case of). Of things: to be a failure, unfortunate. C. 19–20.

crabs, draw. See draw crabs.


crack. Abbr. crack-brain, a crazy or soft-headed person: coll.: C. 17-18. Dekker, Addison.—2. A harlot: ca. 1670-1820: orig. c., then low. D’Urfey, 1767 (O.E.D.); B.E.; Farquhar, “You imagine I have got your whore, cousin, your crack’; Vanbrugh; Dyche, Grose. † ex crack, the female genitals: low, C. 16-20.—3. A lie (the mod. form is cracker): ca. 1600-1820; coll. Goldsmith, “That’s a damned confounded crack.” Whence, prob., the coll. sense, a liar: C. 17.—4. In mid-C. 18-19 c., a burglar or a burglarly: whence—both in Vaux—crack-sman; and the crack, a (—1812) variant of the (crack) lay.—5. Any person or thing—though very rarely in the latter in 20.—that approaches perfection: coll.; from ca. 1700 for persons, from ca. 1630 for things (cf. the adj.).—6. Hence esp. a raccoon of great excellence: from ca. 1850. E.g., Diogenes, 1853, Derby Day, 1864, and From Post to Finish (1884), the third by Hawley Smart, the less popular Nat Gould of the ’80’s and ’90’s.—7. Cf. the crack, the fashion or vogue: ca. 1780-1840: fashionable world, as rendered by Pierce Egan, his cronies and his rivals. Grose, 2nd ed. Cf. crack, adj.—8. A crisp and resonant blow: coll.; S.O.D. records for 1838. Ex the crack of a whip or a shot-gun.—9. Dry firewood: c., ‘gypsy,’ and low: from ca. 1840 (recorded in Mayhew in 1851). Ex the cracking sound it emits when burning.—10. A narrow passage [or alley] of houses: London proletarian (—1909). Ware.—11. See half crack. Like caroon, crack is prob. a mere corruption or perversion of crown.—12. See ‘Fops’ in Addenda. Ex sense 5.

crack, v. To boast, brag: C. 15-20, ob. S.E. till ca. 1700, then coll. and dial. Burton in his Anatomy: ‘Your very tradesmen . . . will crack and brag.’—2. To fall into disarray; into ruin: C. 17-19 coll. Dryden.—3. To collapse; break down (v.i.): sporting, from ca. 1870.—4. To break open, burglary: c. and low: from ca. 1720. Dickens in Oliver Twist, ‘There’s one part we can crack, safe and softly.’ Esp. in crack a crib, to break into a house, likewise c. and low.—5. Wholet. c. to inform: v.t., with own: ca. 1850-1910.—6. To drink (of crack): late C. 16-20: coll. Gen. with a quart or a bottle. Shakespeare in the 2nd Henry IV, ‘By the mass, you’ll crack a quart together; Fielding and Thackeray (a bottle).—7. V.i. a variant of crack along, q.v.: coll.: mid-C. 19-20. (O.E.D.)—8. V.i., to fire (a rifle, shotgun, etc.); v.t., with as. Coll.; from ca. 1870.—9. In cricket, from ca. 1890, to hit (the ball) hard.—10. To quit (a person): Australian: late C. 19-20. E.g. ‘He’ll crack you ones’; C. J. Dennis.

crack, adj. First-class; excellent: from ca. 1790; coll. Esp. of regiments, riflemen, and athletes. Thackeray, 1839, ‘Such a crack-shot myself, that fellows were shy of insulting me.’ Cf. crack, n., 5, 6.

crack, fetch a. See fetch a crack.

crack-in.瞬an Instantaneously: coll.: from ca. 1720. Byron, 1819, ‘They’re on the stair just now, and in a crack will all be here.’

crack, must have been sleeping near a. See sleeping near a crack.

crack a boat. To divulge a secret; to betray emotion; C. J. Dennis: low Australian (—1910).


crack a crib. See crack, v., 4.

crack a cruet. To make a living; rub along. Superlatively, crack a tidy crust: coll. from ca. 1850. Mayhew, ‘Crack an honest crust’; H., 1874, ‘A very common expression among the lower orders’.

crack a Judy, a Judy’s tea-cup. (Cf. the U.S. use of Jane, any girl.) To deprive a maid of her virginity. C. 19-20, low, ob.

crack a ken or a sware. To commit a burglary: c.; the former, C. 18; the latter C. 19-20, ob.


crack along or on. V.i., to make great speed. V.t., crack on or out, to cause to move quickly, often with connotation of jerkily. Both coll., recorded in 1854. In C. 19, the adv. is often omitted. (S.O.D.)


crack-fencer. A seller of nuts: low or c.; from ca. 1850; † by 1900. II., 1st ed.

crack-halter, -hemp, -rope, mn. and adj. A goblin; a good-for-nothing born to be hanged. All coll. passing rapidly to S.E.: the first and second, C. 16-17; the third, C. 15-early 19. Gascoigne and Dekker, c. halter; Shakespeare, c. hemp; Massinger and Scott, c. rope.

crack-handy. To endure patiently, suppress pain or emotion; in low Australian, to keep a secret; C. 20. C. J. Dennis.


crack-hemp. See crack-halter.

crack into (reputation, repuute, fame, etc.). To render (famous, etc.) by eulogy: coll. (—1892); ob.

crack-jaw. Difficult to pronounce: coll.: from ca. 1870. Miss Braddon.

*crack-lay, the. House-breaking: from ca. 1785; ob.; c. Grose, 2nd ed.

crack on, v.i. See crack along.—2. To pretend; esp. pretend to be ill or hurt: ? orig. military: from the 1860’s, if not earlier. See the Kipling quotation at blind, v.

crack (or break) one’s egg or duck. To begin to score: cricket; from ca. 1868.

crack-pot. A pretentiously useless, worthless person: coll.: from ca. 1800.

crack-ropes. See crack-halter.

crack the bell. To fail; muddle things, make a mistake; ruin it: Cookney’s (—1909); slightly ob. Ware.

crack the monica. To ring the bell (to summon a performer to reappear): music-halls: ca. 1860-80. Ware.

crack-up. To praise highly: coll.: from ca. 1840. James Payn, ‘We find them cracking up the country they belong to.’ Orig. (1835; Thornton, U.S.)—2. V.i., to be exhausted; break down, whether physically or mentally: from ca. 1850; coll. Cf. cracked.

cracked. Ruined: bankrupt: from early C. 16; S.E. in C. 16-17, rare in C. 18, coll. in C. 19, ob. then † in C. 20. Mayhew, who has the more gen. cracked up.—2. Crazy: C. 17-20; S.E. until ca. 1830.—3. (With variant cracked in the ring) flowered: C. 19-20, low, perhaps coll. rather than
Penniless; ruined: low — 1860; ob. H., 2nd ed.

‘cracked in the right place’, as the girl said (occ. preceded by yes / but). A C. 20 low c.p. in reply to an insinuation or an implication of madness, eccentricity, or rashness. Heard in 1922; but older.

cracked-up. See sense 1 of cracked.


crackers. See cracker, 9 and 10.


cracky. See cricycle.

crackiness. Extreme eccentricity; craziness: coll.: from ca. 1860; ob.


-cracking, get. See get cracking.

-cracking s (tiddy) crust. See crack a crust.


-crackie, cracking. The velvet bars on the hoods of the Hogs, or students of St. John’s, Cambridge: from ca. 1840. Cf. Ishmus of Suez, a covered bridge at the same college: ex L. sus, a pig.


-crackman. A house-breaker (see crack, v. 4): from ca. 1810; orig. c. Vaux, Lytton, Barham, Dikens. The most famous of fictional cracksmen is Hornung’s Raffles.—2. Hence, the membrum strife: from ca. 1850.

-cracky. See cricycle.

-cracy. -rule, -power, -government. Often, in C. 19–20, used in humorous or sarcastic coll.: as, e.g. in becracy, carteocracy, dollarcocracy, mobocracy.


craft. A bicycle: youths’: ca. 1870–80. Ware. (Bicycles were still a novelty.)—2. sweet craft, a woman: nautical: C. 20. Manchon.

-crag. See scrag. -cragmans. See crakmans.

CRAMP-WORD

cramp-word. ‘Crack-jaw’ word; a word either very hard for the literate to pronounce or for most to understand: from ca. 1690: coll. B.E.; Dyche; Mrs. Cowley. ‘Cramp words enough to puzzle and delight the old gentleman the remainder of his life’; Combe.—2. A sentence of death: C. 18–early 19 c. Dyche.

*cramped. Hanged; derivatively, killed: c. and low: C. 18–19. A development from † S.E. cramp, to compose a person’s limbs as a punishment.


cramps. See Venetian cramps.—cranch. See craunch.

cratch. To hesitate at an obstacle; a danger: from ca. 1860: coll. >, by 1890. S.E. Ex hunting j.

craner. One who hesitates at a difficult jump: hunting coll. ; from ca. 1860.

cranium. Occur coll. from ca. 1640: the head. In S.E. it is an anatomical term.


[crank. (Nautical) easily capsized: from late C. 17: despite F. & H., rather j. than unconventional.]

*crank-cuffin. A vagrant feigning sickness. C. 18 c. Ex crank(e).

crank of, be a. See cranky, 2.—*cranks. See crank.

crank, n., 3.

crankly. Crotchetty; eccentric; slightly mad (rare); from ca. 1850; coll. >, by 1900. S.E. H., 1st ed. Cf. the S.E. and c. senses of crank, n. and adj.—2. Hence, cranky on, like a crank of, is C. 20 coll.: enthusiastic about, ‘mad on’. Manchon.


cransier. Incorrect for cransier: long †. O.E.D.

*crap or crop. Money: from ca. 1690. B.E. Orig. either c. or dial.; in C. 19 either s. or dial. Cf. dust for origin.—2. In c. C. 19, gallows; cf. to crop, to harvest. Vaux. Ex crop v., 2.—3. (Printers’) type that has got mixed; ‘pie’: from ca. 1850 (crop only).—4. A defacement: low coll.: mid-C 18–20. Es. do a crop. Ex:


crape it. ‘To wear cr ape in mourning’: coll.: late C. 19–20. O.E.D.

crapping-case, -case, -castle, or -ken. A w.-c.: low: C. 18–20; all except -castle, which is C. 19–20; 4. As opp. -ken, however, it occurs in Coles, 1676. Ob.—2. The third, in hospital, = a nightstool: C. 19.

crapple-mapple. Ale (?) : Perthshire s. : from ca. 1880. Charles Spence, Poemes, 1898 (E.D.D., Sup.).


crush, v.i., occ. t., of an aeroplane: to come (bring) down, gen. violently, out of control: G.W. + (not heard, I believe, in 1914); at first coll., but almost imm. S.E. its fig. use is coll. (—1931). Lyell. ‘He ... slipped up on a piece of orange peel and crushed.’—2. Cf. the late C. 17–early 19 c. crush, to kill. B.E. Prob. ex North Country dial. crush, to smash.

crash-dive. ‘The sudden submersion of a submarine on being surprised, or in imminent danger of being rammed’ : naval coll.: 1915. F. & Gibbons.

*crash one’s fences. To make mistakes: sporting, esp. hunting, coll.: late C. 19–20.

crasher. A person odd, eccentric, and except in size, merit or, esp. beauty: coll.: from ca. 1908. A. E. W. Mason, The Dean’s Elbow, 1930, ‘Miss Lois ... is considered ... rather a crasher. ... Not what I should call homey, but a crasher.’—2. A lie: Cheshire s. (—1898). E.D.D.

crashing bore. A very tedious or tiresome person or, occ., thing: coll.: from ca. 1915. Anthony Berkeley, Posie Party, 1934, ‘It’s a crashing bore ... to think of those dim cads knocking us for six like this, but ... it’s no use getting strenuous about it.’ Ex aviation. Cf. crushing, q.v.


-crat, -crat. The same remark as at -cracy.


crater, crasher. See crate.

crathes. Incorrect for crach, i.e. cratch: long †. O.E.D.

craunch; occ. craunch. What can be crunched: from ca. 1870. A variant of craunch (v.). O.E.D.


crawfish. To withdraw unreservedly from an untenable position: New Zealand soldiers’ in G.W. The crayfish swims backwards.

craw. A workman given to currywong favour with foreman or employer: tailors; mid-C 19–20.

craw, do a. See do a crawl.


craw with. To be alive, or filled, with: military coll. (1915) >, by 1920, gen. coll. F. & Gibbons; Lyell. On be louzy with.

crawler. A cab that leaves the rank to search for fares; this the driver does by coating the pavement at a very slow pace: coll.; from ca. 1860. Rarely applied to taxis.—2. A contemptible sycophant: coll.: from ca. 1850. The Evening News, Sept. 21, 1885, ‘The complainant call her father a liar, a baster [q.v.], and a crawler.’—3. A louse, a maggot, a nit: coll.: ca. 1790–1830 (O.E.D.). Cf. creeper, 4.

*crawling on one’s eye-brows. Exhausted, tired out: military: late 1914. F. & Gibbons.
CRAWLING ON YOU?, WHAT'S

crawling on you?, what's. See what's hit you? 
crawly. Having, or like, the feeling of insects 
a-crawl on one's skin: coll. (1890). Cf. S.E. 
creepy.
crawly-mawlly. Weakly; ailing: mid-C. 19-20 
(ob.) coll. H., 3rd ed. Rhyming reduplication ex 
crawl. Adopted from Norfolk dial. of mid-C. 17-20. 
C. J. Dennis.
crayfish. A 'crawler': a contempitible schemer: 
New Zealanders: in (1.W. 
crayfish or crayfish. See creature. 
crayfish. Very eager (for or about, or to do, some 
thing): coll. from the 1770's. (O.E.D. Sup.) 
crazy-back; crazy Jack. Baumann (whom the 
O.E.D. has unfortunately overlooked) defines, resp., 
as nährischer Fant, a silly coxcomb, affected 
'puppy', and verrückten Weibsschild, a crazy or a 
droll hussy: I know neither of these terms (London 
s. of ca. 1880-1910), but I suspect that, by a 
printer's error, the definitions have been transposed. 
creak in his shoes, make one. To make him 
smart for it, give him a devilish bad time: London 
coll. (—1887); ob. Baumann. (Creaking shoes 
are often painful.) 
cream. 'Father-stuff', as Whitman has it: low 
coll., C. 19-20. Hence, cream-stick, the membrum 
virile: C. 18-20, low coll. 
cream (or green) cheese, make one believe the 
moon is made of. To humbug; impose upon 
cream fancy (billy). A handkerchief, white or 
cream of ground but with any pattern. From ca. 
cream-ice jack. (Gen. pl. and c.-.J.) A street 
seller of ice-creams: London streets (-1909). 
Ware, 'Probably from Giacomo and Giacopo', 
common It. names, most such vendors being 
Italians. 
cream mugs. Charkof-Krementschug Railway 
branches: Stock Exchange, from ca. 1885; t-2. 
The paps: low (—1891). 
cream of the valley. (Cf. cold cream.) Gin: coll. 
(—1858); ob. Mayhew in Paved with Gold. 
Prob. suggested in opp. to mountain dew, whiskey. 
Oec. cream of the wilderness (1873; O.E.D.), ob. 
creemper (old). Love pretended to dairymaids 
for the sake of cream: c. 17-19; low coll. 
Ray, 1678; Grose, 1st ed. I.e. cupboard-love. 
Dreams. Abbr. Cold Creams, q.v. Ware. 
cream-stick. See cream. 
creamy. First-class, excellent: coll.; from ca. 
1880; slightly ob. Baumann. 
crease. To kill (a person): o.; C. 20. James 
Curtis, The Gilt Kid, 1938. The word is proleptic 
creased. Painted; knocked unconscious; milita- 
ry: C. 20. Fl. & Gibbons. Perhaps on curl up, 2. 
cresses. Watercress: sol. when not a London 
street-cry, which latter is coll.; (t mid-C.) 19-20. 
Baumann, 1887. 
crease, v.i. To make a fuss, a 'row': from ca. 
1910 (frequent among soldiers in G.W.). Ex create 
a disturbance or fuss. 
crescent, the; crescent, the. That's splendid, 
incomparable: ex U.S. (1834); anglicised ca. 
1890; the licks form has never quite lost its 
American tang. 
creature, often craker, orat(h)ur, all with the. In 
late C. 16-18, any liquor; in C. 19-20, whiskey, 
esp. Irish whiskey, though Bee, I think wrongly, 
apply it specifically to gin. Coll. Shakespeare, 
'I do now remember the poor creature, small beer.' 
Cf. S.E. creature-comfort.—2. See brown creatures. 
credentials. The male genitals: jocular coll. ex 
commerce: from ca. 1895. 
creek. 'Division between blocks of changing- 
room lockers; division between beds': Bootham 
School: late C. 19-20. Anon., Dict. of Bootham 
Slang, 1925. 
creek mat. A bedside mat: id.; id. Ibid, 
creme. To slip or palm something into another's 
hand(s): coll. in late C. 17-18, dial in C. 19-20 
(ob.); t orig. dial. B.E. t ex the smoothness of 
cream. 
E.D.D. Cf. bread-basket. 
creep, v.i. To escape: o.; from ca. 1930. 
creep, at the, adj. and adv. Applied to robbing 
a place while people are there: C. 20 c. Charles E. 
Leach. 
creep away and die! Go away I, 'get out!' 
creepier. A cringer: a cringing lick-spitile: 
C. 17-20; coll. Cf. crawl, crawler.—2. A hack 
journalist; 'penny-a-liner' : from ca. 1820; t by 
1890.—3. A paying pupil to a Ceylon tea-planter: 
Ceylon: from ca. 1890; ob. Yule & Burnell (at 
O.E.D. Cf. crawler, 3.—5. See 
kickers, tramplers. 
creeping, vbl.n. Men and women robbing 
creeping Jesus. A person given to sneaking and 
whining: ca. 1818 (O.E.D. Sup.); in C. 20, esp. 
Australian. 
creeping law. Robbery by petty thieves in 
creepers, the. The odd thrill resulting from an un- 
defined dread: coll.; ca. 1890. Dickens (E.D.D.) 
Oec. (now ob.) cold creeps. Cf. cold shivers. Ed- 
mund Yates, in Broken to Harness, '... In the old 
country mansions ... where the servants ... com- 
 mencence ... to have shivers and creeps.' (The 
singular is rare.) 
creepy. Given to creeping into the favour of 
superiors or elders: schoolboys': late C. 19-20. 
creemos. A krum(m)horn or cornome: sol.: mid-
C. 19-20. O.E.D. 
cresotic, incorrect for cresotic; crepan for trepan. 
O.E.D. 
cress(ies). The shield or arms of a college or a city: 
sol.: C. 19-20. 
creviose. The pudendum mutilare: coll.; C. 19- 
crewhorse in C. 16-20—used derogatively of a 
set or a gang, is almost, not—despite B.E. and 
Grose—quite coll. after ca. 1680; before 1600 it is 
almost c., as in Greene's Cony-Catching pamphlets. 
Cf. Cra, the. The Criticron (theatre, restaurant) at 
Piccadilly Circus: from ca. 1880.—2. Abbr. crikey, 
q.v. 
crib, do a. See do a crib. 
crib. In C. 17—early 18 c., food; provender. 
This sense is extinct in dial.: E.D.D. Brome.—2. Abbr. cribbage: coll.; from ca. 1890. 
—3. (For origin, cf. sense 4.) An abode, shop, 
lodgings, public-house: from ca. 1810; orig. c., 
then low. Vaux; Dickens, in Oliver Twist, 'The 
crib's barred up at night like a jail.'—4. A bed: 
from ca. 1820; c., then low. Maginn's Vidoog;
crin con. Abbr. criminal conversation, adultery.

From ca. 1770, orig. legal; then, by 1765, coll.; then— from ca. 1850—S.E. Grose, 1st ed.

 crim-. A prevalent word for criminals; used of any person. Thus: K. 1700; see crimino.

From—cri-mi-nal—6. a. Criminal, as an adj.; as applied to human beings, a malefactor; as applied to things, a thing that is legally subject to punishment; as applied to a crime, the act or fact of doing this.

From the Latin crimina, a crime. A crime is an act forbidden by the law; a criminal is the person who is guilty of a crime. A criminal is one who commits a crime. A crime is an evil act; a criminal is one who commits an evil act.

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Cri-ple. From crim. a. Criminal, as an adj.; as applied to human beings, a malefactor; as applied to things, a thing that is legally subject to punishment; as applied to a crime, the act or fact of doing this.

From the Latin crimina, a crime. A crime is an act forbidden by the law; a criminal is the person who is guilty of a crime. A criminal is one who commits a crime. A crime is an evil act; a criminal is one who commits an evil act.

Crip-cake. From crip. a. Crip, as an adj.; as applied to things, a thing that is legally subject to punishment; as applied to a crime, the act or fact of doing this.

From the Latin crimina, a crime. A crime is an act forbidden by the law; a criminal is the person who is guilty of a crime. A criminal is one who commits a crime. A crime is an evil act; a criminal is one who commits an evil act.

Crip-cra. From crip. a. Crip, as an adj.; as applied to things, a thing that is legally subject to punishment; as applied to a crime, the act or fact of doing this.

From the Latin crimina, a crime. A crime is an act forbidden by the law; a criminal is the person who is guilty of a crime. A criminal is one who commits a crime. A crime is an evil act; a criminal is one who commits an evil act.

Crip-da. From crip. a. Crip, as an adj.; as applied to things, a thing that is legally subject to punishment; as applied to a crime, the act or fact of doing this.

From the Latin crimina, a crime. A crime is an act forbidden by the law; a criminal is the person who is guilty of a crime. A criminal is one who commits a crime. A crime is an evil act; a criminal is one who commits an evil act.

Crip-dle. From crip. a. Crip, as an adj.; as applied to things, a thing that is legally subject to punishment; as applied to a crime, the act or fact of doing this.

From the Latin crimina, a crime. A crime is an act forbidden by the law; a criminal is the person who is guilty of a crime. A criminal is one who commits a crime. A crime is an evil act; a criminal is one who commits an evil act.


Crip-tor. From crip. a. Crip, as an adj.; as applied to things, a thing that is legally subject to punishment; as applied to a crime, the act or fact of doing this.

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Crip-tor-ship. From crip. a. Crip, as an adj.; as applied to things, a thing that is legally subject to punishment; as applied to a crime, the act or fact of doing this.

From the Latin crimina, a crime. A crime is an act forbidden by the law; a criminal is the person who is guilty of a crime. A criminal is one who commits a crime. A crime is an evil act; a criminal is one who commits an evil act.

Crip-ton. From crip. a. Crip, as an adj.; as applied to things, a thing that is legally subject to punishment; as applied to a crime, the act or fact of doing this.

From the Latin crimina, a crime. A crime is an act forbidden by the law; a criminal is the person who is guilty of a crime. A criminal is one who commits a crime. A crime is an evil act; a criminal is one who commits an evil act.

Crip-ture. From crip. a. Crip, as an adj.; as applied to things, a thing that is legally subject to punishment; as applied to a crime, the act or fact of doing this.

From the Latin crimina, a crime. A crime is an act forbidden by the law; a criminal is the person who is guilty of a crime. A criminal is one who commits a crime. A crime is an evil act; a criminal is one who commits an evil act.

Crip-ver-lay. From crip. a. Crip, as an adj.; as applied to things, a thing that is legally subject to punishment; as applied to a crime, the act or fact of doing this.

From the Latin crimina, a crime. A crime is an act forbidden by the law; a criminal is the person who is guilty of a crime. A criminal is one who commits a crime. A crime is an evil act; a criminal is one who commits an evil act.

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Crip-ver-tion. From crip. a. Crip, as an adj.; as applied to things, a thing that is legally subject to punishment; as applied to a crime, the act or fact of doing this.

From the Latin crimina, a crime. A crime is an act forbidden by the law; a criminal is the person who is guilty of a crime. A criminal is one who commits a crime. A crime is an evil act; a criminal is one who commits an evil act.

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Grose, 1st ed. Ex that county's defective r.

croakus. See crocus.

croby. 'Orig. a crust; later, a piece of bread and butter; † and superseded by "bar", q.v., says the anon. Dict. of Bootham Slang, 1925. Cf. cry and cruggy, q.v.

croc. A file of school-boys or, much more gen., girls walking in pairs: from ca. 1900; mostly school s. Abbr. crooked, orig. university s. (—1891), now coll.—2. Also, of course, the crocodile itself: coll.: rare before C. 20.

crook. A worthless animal; a disabled person or (in C. 20 rarely) a "duffer": from ca. 1870; coll. Either ex broken earthenware (1850) or the Scottish crook, an old ewe or (1797) a broken-down horse (S.O.D.).—2. Hence, a boy or a man that plays no outdoor games: Public Schools' coll.: from ca. 1880. P. G. Wodehouse, St. Austin's, 1903.—3. A bicycle: youth's: ca. 1870—80. Ware. Because a 'bone-shaker'?—4. A chamber-pot: Bootham School: C. 20. Anon., Dict. of Bootham Slang, 1925, adds 'crook rolling ... A common practice in bed-room.' Abbr. crockery.

crook up. To get disabled; break down; fall ill: from ca. 1890. Common in G.W. Ex preceding.

crookets. A kind of makeshift cricket: Winchester College, C. 19—20. (R. G. K. Wrench.) Hence:

crookets, get. (At cricket) fail to score: from ca. 1840; Winchester. See Winchester College Slang, § 2.


*crocus. See crocus metalleurum.


crocus (metalleurum); in C. 19—20 occ. crokisus, A surgeon or a doctor (esp. a quack): low (—1785); ob. Grose, 1st ed.: Mayhew. Prob. ex crook after locus-pocus, though the O.E.D. mentions a Dr. Helkiah Crooks and Coles has crocus Martius, a chemical preparation of iron, and crocus tenuis, one of copper. Cf. crooker, by which also the old scientific term crocus was prob. suggested in this sense. At first, naval and military.—2. Always crooker, after crocker-ization. For the above mentioned sense: also, a herbalist, a miracle-worker. Philip Allingham, Okeachop, 1894. For gen. information, see, in addition, Neil Bell, Crocus, a novel of the fairs, 1936.

*crocus—pitcher. An itinerant quack: mid-C. 19—20 c.


*crocoosing rig. The practising of itinerant quackery: mid-C. 19—20 c.; ob.

crooker. See crooker, crokisus. See crocus (metalleurum).

*croome. The hook used by an 'angler' (q.v.): late C. 16 c. Green, in The Black Book's Messenger. 

Crocus. Incorrect for crochem, mid-C. 19—20. O.E.D.


crook. A sixpence (—1789): low; ob. by 1880, † by 1914. Ex crook-back, q.v.—2. A swindler, a thief; a professional criminal: orig. (1880) U. S., anglicised ca. 1896 as a coll.; by 1920, S.E. Perhaps ex crook, on the; cf., as W. suggests, Fr. escroc.

Crook, v.t. To steal: either o. or low s. (—1923). Manchon. Ex get on the crook: see crook on the.

crook, adj. Ill: Australian: C. 20. Prob. ex crokisus, q.v., via crooked.—2. See crook, go. To give way to anger; to express annoyance: Australian: ca. 1905. Prob. ex crook, adj.—2. Hence the o. p., have you read the (or, more gen., that) little red book; if the man thus addressed looked interrogatively, one added that little red book, 'Why Go Crook'? Ca. 1910—20.

crook on the. Dishonestly, illegally, illicitly: leading a life of crime: in England before 1874 († first used in U.S.) and, there, perhaps orig. o. H., 5th ed. Prob. suggested by on the, straight: cf., however, on the cross.


crook (occ. cock) one's or the elbow (occ. little finger). To drink (not of water): ex U.S. (1830; Thornton), anglicised ca. 1875; coll. Besant & Rice, 1877.

crook one's elbow and wish it may never come straight. With the required pronoun adjustment, this phrase lent efficacy to an oath: late C. 18—early 19 low coll. Grose, 2nd ed.

crooked. Dishonestly acting (of persons), handled or obtained (things): mostly Australian; from before 1894. H., 3rd ed. 'A tempered among dog-stalkers, and the "fancy" generally, to denote anything stolen'; Rolf Boldrewood, speaks of 'a crooked horse'.

crooked as a dog's hind leg. See dog's hind leg.—

Crooked Lane. See buy.

crookshanks. A coll. nickname for a man with bandy legs: 1788, Grose, 2nd ed. Cf. the surname Crookshank.

crooky. To walk arm in arm; v.t., to court (a girl): coll. : mid-C. 10–20; ob. H., 2nd ed. Cf.:

crook *be knocked down for a.* To be condemned to be hanged, Lex. Bal.: c. of ca. 1810–60.

Crop. 'A nick name for a Presbyterian', Grose; 'one with very short Hair', B.E. Resp. mid-C. 18–early 19 and late C. 17–early 18 coll.—2. crop, money, see crop, n., 1.—3. crop, to hang, to deface: is a variant of c. *crop,* v. 1 and 2. Cf.:

*crop,* be knocked down for a. 'To be condemned to be hanged', Lex. Bal.: c. of ca. 1810–60.


*cropper, croppin; see cropping casa.—2. The tail of beast or vehicle: C. 18–early 19; c. A New Canting Dict., 1725; Grose, 1st ed.

cropper; esp. come, or go, a cropper. A heavy fall, fig. and lit.: from the late 1850's; coll. H., 3rd ed.; Trollope, 1880, 'He could not ... ask what might happen if he were to come a cropper.' Ex hunting.

croppin. A variant of croppy, 2, q.v.—croppin.

*cropped to, be. Fail in an examination, be sent down at a lesson: Winchester College: mid-C. 19–20. Ex (to) crop + cripple.

croppy or Cruppy. An Irish rebel of 1798, when sympathy with the French revolutionaries was shown by close-cut hair: orig. coll., soon historical—therefore S.E.—2. Also, an ex-gaoler bird: low (—1577). Dunciad Aulicus.

croppy, go and look at the. To visit the w.c. : mid-C. 19–20; ob. Ex agriculture. Cf. pluck a rose.

*cross, gen. with the. Anything dishonest: from early C. 19; c. >, by 1870, low s. Opp. to the square as crooked is opp. to straight. Vaux; Trollope in The Claverings.—2. Esp. a pre-arranged swindle: c. (—1829).—3. Also, a thief: c. from ca. 1830. The term occurs mostly in compounds and phrases; these follow the v.)

cross, v. To bestride a horse; jocular coll.: from ca. 1760; ob. (S.O.D.).—2. Hence, to have intercourse with a woman: from ca. 1790.—3. To play false, v.t. and (rarely), i.; to cheat: low: C. 19–20. Egan's Grose.—4. In the passive, be crossed, mid-C. 19 university a. meant to be punished, e.g. by loss of freedom; 'Cuthbert Bede' in Verdant Green, 1853; H., 3rd–5th edd. Ex the cross against one's name.


cross. Adv., unfavourably, adversely; swarz, amias: from ca. 1800; S.E. till ca. 1840, then coll. (S.O.D.)

cross, come home by weaving. Finally to repent: C. 18–early 19 coll.

D.U.M. —

*cross, on the. Dishonest(ly), illeg(ally), fraud(ulent(ly)): from ca. 1810; orig. c. Vaux; H., 1st ed.; Henry Kingsley; Ouida, 1868, in Under Two Flags, 'Rake was ... "up to every dodge on the cross".' See cross, n., 1.

cross, play a. Act dishonestly; esp. in boxing, to lose dishonestly: ca. 1820–1920.

cross as the devil. A late C. 19–20 coll. variant, or perhaps rather intensive, of:

cross as two sticks, as. Very peevish or annoyed: coll.: from ca. 1830. Scott, 1831; Pinero, 1909. (Apperson.) Perhaps ex their rasping together, but prob. ex two sticks set athwart (W.).


'The regiment wears the sword belt over the right shoulder in memory of the Battle of Saragossa [1700] where it took the belts of the Spanish cavalry,' F. & H.

*cross-bit, cross-biting. A deception, trick(ery), cheating: from ca. 1570; c. > a. > coll. > S.E. > ↑, the same applying to the slightly earlier v. Marlowe, G. Harvey, Prior, Scott, Ainsworth.—2. In late C. 16–18 c., 'one who combines with a sharper to draw in a friend', Grose; also v.

*cross-biter. A swindler, cheat, hoaxer: late C. 18–early 18; c. > a. > coll. > S.E.


*cross-boy. A crook, a dishonest fellow: Australian c. (—1890). Ex cross-chap. (O.E.D. Sup.)

cross-built. (Of persons) awkwardly built or moving: coll.: ca. 1829–70. Bow.


*cross-chap, -cove, lad, -man, -squire. A thief. C. 19–20 c.; -squire is ↑. Varied by lad, etc., of the cross. (See also the separate entries at cross-cove and cross-man.)

cross-country. Abbr. cross-country runner: athletes, C. 20; not gen.

*cross-cove. A swindler; a confidence trickster: c. (—1812); ob. Vaux.

*cross-cove and mollaher. A man and woman intimately associated in robbery: (—1859); c. ; ob. H., 1st ed. See cross, n.; mollaher: ex moll, q.v., ↑ after demolisher.

*cross-crib. A thieves' and/or swindlers' lodging-house or hotel: c.; from ca. 1810. Vaux; H., 1st ed.; Baumann (misprinted -crip). Ex crib, n., 3.

*cross-drum. A thieves' tavern: o.: from ca. 1840. See drum.

cross-eye(s). A person with a squint: coll.; from ca. 1870.

cross-fam or -fan. (Also n.) To rob from the person, with one hand 'masking' the other: c.; from ca. 1810. Vaux. See fam and fan.

*cross-girl. A harlot that, specialising in sailors, gets all the money she can from the amorous and then bilks them by running away: c. (—1861); ob. Mayhew.

cross I win, pile you lose. A C. 17 form of heads I win, tails you lose.

cross-in-the-air (or without hyphens). A rifle carried at the reverse: amateur soldiers': ca. 1890–1914.

cross-jarvey (-jarvies, Baumann) with a cross-rattler. 'A co-thief driving his hackney-coach', Bee: o.: ca. 1820–90. See cross, adj., 2.
**CROSS-KID**


- cross-kiddle. To cross-examine: c. (— 1870); ob. Horsley (sited by F. & H. at reder).

- cross-lad. See cross-chan.


- cross-life man. A professional criminal, esp. thief: c. (— 1878); ob.


- cross-molisher. A female cross-cove, q.v.: c. (— 1812); ob. Vaux.

- cross-patch. A peevish person: late C. 17-20; coll. B.E. Cf. the old nursery rhyme: 'Cross-patch, | Draw the latch, | Sit by the fire and spin.' Here, patch is a foot (a child (W.); in late C. 19-20, occ. cross-piece: Manchon.

- cross-squire. See cross-chap.

- cross-stiff. A letter: c.: from ca. 1800; ob.

- cross, or go over, the Alps. To go to Dartmoor Prison: C. 20 o.

- cross the damp-pot. To cross the Atlantic: tollers; from ca. 1860; ob.

- cross the Ruby. To cross the Rubicon: 'Fast World, early 19 cent.' (Ware). Punning ruby, portnoo.

- crosser. An arranger of or participant in a dishonest act: sporting: from ca. 1870.

- crossish. Rather bad-tempered or peevish: coll.: from ca. 1740; rare and ob. O.E.D.


- Croucher. the. Jessop, the mighty hitter: cricketers' nickname: from ca. 1805.


- crow no carrion will kill a. A coll., semi-proverbal saying applied to gross eaters, tough persons: C. 17-18.

- crow a pudding, give or make the. See pudding, give the crow a.


- crow-eater. A lazy person (ex the eating habits of crows): Australia, South Africa; from ca. 1876.—2. (Gen. in pl.) A South Australian; from the 1890's. Crows are very numerous in that State.


- crow in a gutter, strut like a. To be over-proud; late C. 18-19; coll. Fulke; Spurgeon. (Apperson).

- crow to pluck (in C. 16, pull; rarely pick) with anyone, have a. To have an unpleasant or embarrassing affair to settle: from C. 18; coll. till C. 18, when it > S.E. Shakespeare, 'Rudibras, Butler, Scott. The phrase 'suggests animals struggling over prey,' W.

- Crowbar Brigade, the. The Irish Constabulary: Anglo-Irish: 1848; ob. Ex 'crowbar used in throwing down cottages to complete eviction of tenants', Ware. Whence :

- crowbar landlord. One who resorts to such methods: Anglo-Irish: ca. 1850-60, Ware.

- crowd. A company of people; act, 'lot': Colonial (ex U.S.), from ca. 1870.—2. In G.W., a military unit: cf. mob and pueb.


- crowder.' A full theatre or 'house': theatrical: from ca. 1870; ob.

- crowdy-headed Jock. See Jock, 1.


- crownier. Coroner: in M.E. and early Mod.E. (e.g. in Shakespeare's Hamlet), it is S.E.; then dial. and either coll. or sol., in C. 20 gen. the latter: esp. crownier's quest, a coroner's inquest (Manchon).—2. A fall on the crown of one's head: sporting: from ca. 1890. Whyte-Melville.

- *crou'foot. In o., the Government broad arrow: from ca. 1870; ob.

- crow's-nest 'Small bedroom for bachelors high up in country houses, and on a level with the treetops', Ware: Society: mid-C. 19-20; ob. Ex nautical S.E.

- cruel, cruelly, adj. adv. Hard, exceeding(ly): resp. since M.E. and C. 16; S.E. until C. 19, then coll. Pepys, July 31, 1669, 'Met Captain Brown... at which he was cruel angry'. The early history of the coll. cruel(ly) significantly parallels that of the adv. bloody.

- cruel the pitch. To frustrate (a plan, etc.) to interfere greatly with one's schemes or welfare: C. 20. Ex cricket.

- cruelty-van (or hooby-butch). A four-wheeled chaise: from ca. 1830; 7 by 1910.

- crug. Food: from ca. 1829. Prob. ex crug (Christ's Hospital) bread; late C. 18-19; Lamb, 'a penny loaf—our crug'.—2. (Ibid.) a Christ's Hospital boy, esp. old boy: from ca. 1830.

- cruganaler, crugname. (Christ's Hospital) a biscuit given on St. Matthew's Day: C. 19-20.
Either ex crug and ale (see crug) or punning hard as nails.

**CRUGGY**

Hungry: C. 19-20; Christ's Hospital.

Ex crug, q.v.


**cramb.** A pretty woman: military; from ca. 1830; † by 1814.—2. Plumpness: from ca. 1840. Dickens. Cf. crummy.—3. See crums.

**cramb and crust man.** A baker: coll.; from ca. 1840.

**crumbles.** A set of mishaps causing one person to be blamed: nautical; late C. 19-20. Bowen.

See crums.

**crumps, pick (in C. 16, gather) up one’s.** See pick up one’s crumps.

**crummy.** Plump; esp. (cf. bit of crumb, q.v.) of a pretty woman that is full-figured, large-bosomed: from early C. 18, as is, 2, the o, sense, rich: both ex crumpy (broad) 1. Crump; from ca. 1840; perhaps orig. c. then Cockney (see H.), then low and military (certainly very common in G.W.); then, ex the Army, among tramps—see Jennings, Tramping with Tramps, 1932. Hence, the c. crummy dose, a lice-infested bed. † ex a loose’s vague resemblance to a small crumb.—4. Hence, dirty, untidy: nautical: mid-C. 19-20. Bowen.

**crummy!** A C. 20 low variant of criminny (crikey)! Cfr. crum 2.

*crump. In late C. 17–early 19 c., one who helps litigants to false witnesses. B.E. Cf. crimp and crimping fellow, q.v.—2. A hard hit or fall: Wincheste College, from ca. 1850. S.E. crump, to hit briskly, the S.O.D. quoting ‘We could sgd to square-leg, or crump to the off’, 1892.—3. Hence, a ‘coal-box’, i.e. a 5-9 German shell or shell-burst; occ. of heavier guns: military: 1914; ob. B & P. Hence:

**crump, v.t.** To shell with heavy guns: military: 1915; ob. ibid.—2. The v. quoted at crump, n., 2, is considered by F. & H. and the E.D.D. to be s.

**crumper.** A hard hit or blow: from ca. 1850: coll. Cf. crump, 1, q.v.—2. Whence, a great lie (cf. thumper): from ca. 1880: schoolboys’. Miss Bradston. (O.E.D.)

**crumpet.** The head: late C. 19-20; ob. Cf. oxon, turnip, and F. & H., s.v., for synonymy. Esp. barmy (or dotty) in the crumpet, crazy, mad: Manchon.—2. A term of endearment: lower classes; from late 1890’s. (O.E.D. Sup.)


**crumpler.** A cravat: from ca. 1830; coll.—2. A heavy fall: circus and music-halls’ and, in C. 20, hunting: from ca. 1850, as in ‘Guy Livingstone’ Lawrence’s Hagarene, 1874, and H. A. Vachell’s Moonhills, 1934. Cf. crusher, 3, for semantics.

**crums.** (Extremely rare in singular.) Lice: low (—1923). Manchon. App. a back-formation ex crummy, 3.—2. As an exclama-

**crumple.** A lice. 2. A mary: C. 20. Will Scott, in The Humorist, April 7, 1834. ‘Crums, matey, throw a sock in it! What a trip!’

**crumliness; crumchey.** Fit(ness) for crunching or being crushed: col.: from ca. 1890. O.E.D. (Sup.)

**crupper.** The human buttocks: jocularly coll., from late C. 16. Ex a horse’s rump.

**crush.** A large social gathering, esp. if crowded: from ca. 1830; col. Whyvile-Melville, 1864; H. D. Traill, in Tea Without Toast, 1890. And we settled that to give a crush at nine [Would be greatly more effectual, and far more intellectual,] Than at six o’clock to, greatly daring, dine.’—2. Hence (in the Army) a military unit: late C. 19–20. Cf. crowd, mob, push.—3. Hence, a set, a group: coll.: from ca. 1910. E.g. Shakespeare—and Thai Crush, by Richard Dark and Thomas Derrick, 1881.—4. An infatuation: a strong liking or ‘fancy’ for a person: U.S. (1914), amplif. 1927. Esp. have a crush on. Ex crushed on, q.v.—5. Hence, the person for whom one has a ‘crush’; from ca. 1927. (O.E.D. Sup.)

**crush.** v.t. with bottle, cup, pot, quart. Drink: late C. 16–19; coll. Greene, 1892 (a potte of ale); Shakespeare (a cup of wine); Scott (a quart). Cf. brest, crack.—2. To decamp, run away: c. (1> low s.): from ca. 1860. H., 3rd ed. Cf. amputate and esp. crush down sides.—3. See crush the stir.

**crush down sides.** To run away, esp. to a place of safety; also, to keep a rendezvous: Northern c.; from ca. 1850. H., 3rd ed.

**crush the stir.** To break out of prison: late C. 19–20 c. See (to) crush, 2, and stir.

**crushed on.** Infatuated with: Society: 1895; almost f. Suggested by masked. Ware.

**crusher.** A policeman: from ca. 1840. Thackeray; Punch, 1842; Sala. † ex the size of his feet. (‘He needs ’em big; he has to stand about for hours,’ a friend, 1913.) Cf. flattie, flatty, q.v.—2. Any thing or person overwhelming or very large or handsome: coll. from ca. 1840. Thackeray of a woman, 1849. Cf. whopper and crushing, q.v.—3. A heavy fall: sporting coll. (—1857); ob. Baumann. Cf. crumpler. A ship’s corporal: naval (—1909). Ware. Ex sense 1.

**crush.** First-rate; excellent; very attractive; coll.: from ca. 1855; ob. H., 1st ed. Cf. crusher, 2, q.v., and crushing bore.

**Crusoe.** ‘The great French ironworks at Creuzot’: workers in iron (—1900). Ware. Punning Robinson Crusoe.

**crust.** Occ. upper crust. The head: from ca. 1870. Cf. crumpet, q.v.—2. Impudence, ‘cheek’: from early 1920’s. F. G. Wodehouse, 1924 (O.E.D. Sup.) † ex face as hard as a crumb.


**crusty.** Early C. 17–early 19; coll. ‘That one that lies with a Cover over his Face all Night, and uses Washes, Paint, etc.’ B.E.; Grose.

**crusty-cruples.** A grumbler; low coll., mostly London (—1887); slightly ob. Baumann. Cf. belly-acher.

**crutch, under the.** See arm, under the, 2.

**crutches are cheap!** (Cf. wooden legs are cheap and see cripples.) An ironic comment on strenuous physical effort, esp. in athletics: mid-C. 19-20; ob.
cry, v.i. To weep: C. 16–20; coll. >, by 1700. S.E.E.; except in dignified contexts, where it still is indubitably coll. and where weep is requisite.
cry, or call, a go. To desist; give in. (With connotation: wisely and humorously.) Coll. (-1800); the post-War call if a day is displacing it. Ex Crithia, where they go—pass in bridge.
cry and little wool, great (ex. mcnch). A proverbial c.p. abbr. ‘Great cry and little wool’, as the Devil said when he sherred the hogs. Much ado about nothing. From ca. 1670.
* cry carrots and turnips. To be whipped at the cart’s tail: C. 18 c.
cry cupboard. To be hungry: coll.; from ca. 1800. Swift in Polite Conversation, ‘Footman, Madam, dinner’s upon the table. Coloned’. Faith, I’m glad of it; my belly began to cry cupboard. See also cupboard, one’s guts cry.
cry off. To back out of an engagement or project: from ca. 1700; coll. > S.E. by 1800.
cry, the less you’ll p’ss I, the more you. See piss, the less ...
cryptogamia. Incorrectly as a pl.: C. 19–20. O.E.D.
Crystal Palace, H.M.S. The Royal Naval Division depot at the Crystal Palace: naval: G.W.—
cube. A cubicle: at certain Public Schools, e.g. Charterhouse: C. 20.
cubis. A Cubist painting: art coll.: from ca. 1921. See quotation at Prine, the.
cubit, the; punishment by the cubit. The treadmill: low (<1823); > by 1890. Bee, ‘Cubit being the inventor’s name.’ Cf. Cubitopolis.
cuckold the parenter. To ‘sleep’ with one’s wife before she is: coll. (<1791); > by 1800. Grose, 3rd ed.

Cuckold’s Haven or Point, a point on the Thames below Greenwich, was humorously used, with various verbs, to indicate onkolding or being cuckolded. (O.E.D.)
cuckoo, v. See cuckoo’d.
cuckoo, lousy as a. Extremely lousy (lit. sense): military coll.: 1915. B. & F. Cf. the Yorkshire saying, as scabbed as a cuckoo: E.D.D.
cuckoo’d, be or, gen., get (all). To be or become very lousy: military: 1918. Ibid. Ex preceding.
cuckoo. Money: C. 17. t. Perhaps because the cuckoo sings and money talks.
cucumber-time. The dull season: mid-July to mid-Sept. Tailors: late C. 17–20; ob. B.E.: ‘Taylers Holiday, when they bave leave to Play, and Cucumbers are in season.’ Cf. The Gor. die saure Gurken Zeit, pickled-gherkin time, and the saying tailors are veratiriaums, which arises from their living now on cucumber and now on ‘cabbage’, q.v.
cud. A chew of tobacco: until ca. 1870, S.E., now dial. and coll., quid being much more usual.
cudde. A variant of cuddly, q.v. (Egan’s Grose.)
cuddle-cook. A policeman: C. 20; mostly, lower classes.’ Cf. Cook’s Own, q.v.
cuddleable. Cuddlesome: coll.: from mid-1920’s. O.E.D. (Sup.);
cuddy, adj. (Of a lesson) difficult: Christ’s Hospital, mid-C. 19–20, ob. Perhaps ex cuddy, a stupid chap; cf. preceding.—2. Hence cuddy-biscuit, a small hard biscuit.
cuddy-leg. A large herring: (mostly Scot) nautical: late C. 19–20. Ibid.
cuds, cud(h)er. In expletives, a corruption of God’s: ca. 1590–1750: coll. (O.E.D.)
cue. A small quantity of bread; ooc. of beer. As cue (q.v.) from (C. 16. e.g. quadruman = a farthing). A university a. term that > S.E.: late C. 16–18. The S.O.D. quotes a 1605 text: ‘Hast thou worn Gowns in the university ... ate cee, drunk cees?’ Cf. cee.—2. See cu.
a fellow actor: from ca. 1860: theatrical; † by 1930. H., 3rd ed. Ex cully (see cully, cally) + corer, a ‘swell’.

cully-shangy. Sexual intercourse: low; C. 19. Cully ex cully, shangy, ex?

culminate. To climb a coach-box: ca. 1780-1870; Cambridge University.

culp. ‘A kick, or blow; also a bit of any thing,’ B.E.: late C. 17-early 19 low coll. (later dial.). Prob. as Grose (2nd ed.) suggests, influenced by men culps.


cum used facetiously for with or plus is coll. from ca. 1860.

cum-annexis. One’s belongings, esp. one’s wife and children: West Indies, from ca. 1850; ob. Ex an official land-transfer book kept at Demerara.

cum-div. Abbr. cum dividend: Stock Exchange s. > j.; from ca. 1875. (Of a purchaser of stocks or shares getting the benefit of the dividend.)

cum grano. A coll. abbr. of cum grano salutis (with a grain of salt): from ca. 1860.

cummer, kimmer. A female intimate, acquaintance, or ‘fellow’ or ‘chap’. Orig. and still good Scots, these words have, in late C. 18-20, occ. been familiarly used by Sassenachs in those senses and thus > coll. H., 5th ed. Ex Fr. commère.

cummifo. ‘Comme il faut’: lower class coll.: 1889, The Referee, April 28. (Ware.)

cund. To say or determine which way (a shoal of fish) is going; nautical coll. verging on j.; mid-C. 19-20. Snyth; Bowen. Ex cund (gen. cond), to direct (a ship).


cunning as a dead pig. Stupid: coll.: ca. 1705-50. Swift. (Apperson.)

cunning man. ‘A cheat, who pretends by his skill in astrology, to assist persons in recovering stolen goods,’ Grose, 1788; c.; † by 1850.

cunning shaver. A sharp fellow, orig. illicitly: mid-C. 17-20; ob. ; coll. B.E. See shaver.

Cunningberry (or -bury). A variant (ca. 1820-60), recorded by ‘Jon Bee’, of:


cunny-hunter. A whoremonger: C. 17-early 19; low. Punning cunny = con(e)y.

cunny-thumbed. Given to closing his fist, as a woman does, with the thumb turned inwards under the first three fingers: low coll.; late C. 18-20. Grose, 1st ed. Ex cunny, q.v.—2. C. 19-20 school-boys': given to shooting a marble as a girl does. Other sex tests are these: an object thrown at a woman's shins or knees causes her to close her knees; at her genitals, to open her legs, whereas a man closes his; at her chest, to protect her breasts. A man walks from the hip; a woman (unless an impertinent hiker or an athletic champion) usually from the knees. In threading a needle, a man holds the needle stationary and advances the thread towards the eyelet, whereas a woman directs the needle on to the stationary thread—a difference that has originated a psychologico-physiological riddle. Apart from her voice, hair and breasts, a woman masquerading as a man is apt to forget that the proportionate breadth of the shoulders and size of the hips, as well as the contour of the legs from hip to knee, are different in a man. In short, she would do well to wear long full trousers, for, in addition, her knees are much less bony, much more rounded, than a man's.

cunny-warren. A brothel: low (—1785); † by 1930. Grose, 1st ed.

c*nt. (In back s., tenue, the e being intruded for euphony.) The female pudendus. In one form or another, it dates from M.E.; ex a Teutonic radical corresponding to the L. cunnus (1. cunnou, conno), itself related to cuneus, a wedge. Owing to its powerful sexuality, the term has, since C. 16, been avoided in written and in polite spoken English: though a language word, neither coll., dial., c., nor s., its associations make it perhaps the most notable of all vulgarisms (technical sense, bien entendu), and since ca. 1700 it has, except in the reprinting of old classics, been held to be obscene, i.e. a legal offence, to print it in full; Rochester spelt it en toutes lettres, but Cotgrave, defining Fr. con, went no further than 'A woman's, &c.,' and the dramatist Fletcher, who was no prude, went no further than 'They write cunt with a C, which is abominable', in The Spanish Curate. Had the late Sir James Murray courageously included the word, and spelt it in full, in the great O.E.D., the situation would be different; as it is, neither the Universal Dict. of English (1832) nor the S.O.D. (1933) had the courage to include it. (Yet the O.E.D. gave prick: why this further injustice to women?)—2. (Cf. Romany mindy or minsh, the pudend; a woman.) In C. 19-20 it also means woman as sex, intercourse with a woman, hence sexual intercourse. (It is somewhat less international than f* & *q, q.v.) See esp. Minshew; the Introduction to B. & P.; Grose, †; Lady Chatterley's Lover; A. W. Read, Lexical Evidence, 1933.

c*nt, silly. A low pejorative address or reference to a person: late C. 19-20. + 1914-18, the soldiers applied the term, with or without this or some other epithet, to material objects.

c*nt-hat. A felt hat: low (—1923). Manchon. There is a double pun: see hat and note 'felt.'


c*nt-perlux. A man-keep; also, the man living on a woman's harlotry or concubinage: low coll. or perhaps rather a vulg.: C. 19-20; slightly ob. Often, in C. 20, euphemistically abbr. to c.p. c*nt-stand. See c*nt-ich.

c*nt-struck. Enamoured of women: C. 18-20; either a vulg. (more correctly, I think) or a low coll. Cf. cock-smitten, q.v.


cup such cover, such; or such a cup, such a cruise. 'Implying similarity between two persons related in some way,' O.E.D. Coll.; both ca. 1540-1700.

cup and can. Constant associates: ca. 1540-1830; coll. >, by 1600, S.E. Gen. as merry as cup and can, or be cup and can. Ex the cup's being filled and replenished from a can. (Apperson.)

cup and-saucer player. A player in a comedy by T. W. Robertson (d. 1871), a pioneer of 'slitch' yet natural and workmanlike society-drama: theatrical, ca. 1860-90.

cup and wad. Tea and a bun in canteen or Y.M.C.A. or Church Army hut: military: G.W. (F. & Gibbons.)

cup even between two parties, carry one's. To favour neither of them: coll., C. 17-early 19. B.E.


cup of comfort or of the creature. Strong liquor: late C. 17-20; slightly ob. B.E. See also creature.

cup off tea. A consolation: proletarian, gen. ironic: C. 20; slightly ob. Ware, 'Probably suggested by a cup of tea being "so very refreshing":'

—2. one's cup of tea was = what truly suits one; even one's ideal, one's mate: coll.: from ca. 1920. (Michael Harrison, Wep for Lycidas, 1934.) Cf. ticket, be a person's: q.v.

cup-shot. Tipsey: late C. 16-early 19; coll. >, by 1600, S.E. Fuller in The Holy War, 'Quickly they were stabled with the sword that were cup-shot before.' Cf. shot, adj.

cup too low, a. Applied to one who, in company, is silent or pensive: late C. 17-18; coll. B. E. The phrase is extant in dial.

cup too much, have got or had a. To be drunk: mid-C. 17-19; coll. Ray, 1678 (Apperson). Cf. the preceding phrase.

cup-tosser. A juggler: C. 19; coll. Brewer suggests ex Fr. joueur de goêletes.—2. Whence, 'a person who professes to toll fortunes by examining the grounds in tea or coffee cups', H., 3rd ed.: from ca. 1860; very ob.


cupboard love. Interested affection: C. 18-20: coll.: S.E. after ca. 1820. 'A cupboard love is seldom true.' Hence cupboard lover, C. 19-20, rare. cupboardy. 'Close and stuffy': Cockneys' coll.: late C. 19-20. Ware.


Cupid's Arms or Hotel. See hotel.
CUPID'S WHISKERS


Cupid, blind. See Cupid, 2.


Cups, in one's. While drinking (rare in C. 20); intoxicating. From ca. 1580: coll. (as in Nashe and Shadwell) until ca. 1720, then S.E.

*cur, turn. To turn informer or King's evidence: e. mid-C. 19–20; ob. Baumann.


curate. Late C. 19–20 coll.: *A small poker, or tickler (q.v.), used to save a better one; also a handkerchief in actual use as against one worn for show. The better article is called a rector. Similarly when a tea-cake is split and buttered, the bottom half, which gets the more butter, is called the rector, and the other, the curate,* F. & H.

curate's delight. A tiered cake-stand: from ca. 1860. (Michael Harrison, Werp for Lucida, 1934.)

*curb. A thief's hook: e. late C. 16–18. Greene, Grose.


*curbing. An abbr. of the following term. Grose.

curbing law. The practice of illegally hooking goods out of windows: late C. 16–18 c.

curbstone-broker. A guttersnipe: from ca. 1865; ob. in U.S., an illicit street-broker. (Kerb. — is the more gen. spelling in C. 20.)


curby hocks. Clumy feet: rather low: ca. 1820–1910. (See hocks.)

curdler. A blood-curdling story or play; a writer thereof: coll. (—1887); ob. Baumann. Cf. thriller.

cure. An eccentric, an odd person (1856); hence, a very amusing one (—1874). First printed in Punch, though 'he has' no mission to repeat | The Slang he bears along the stream. Perhaps able, curiosity or, more prob., curious feline; popularised by an 1862 music-hall song. (O.E.D.)

cure-arse. A late C. 18–19 low coll.: *a dyachylon plaster, applied to the parts galled by riding*, Grose, 3rd ed. Cf. curass, q.v.

curio. Abbr. curiosity: from ca. 1850 (at first among travellers); coll. till ca. 1880, then S.E.


curious, do. To act strangely: low coll.: mid-C. 19–20; ob.


*curt. See curle.—2. (Gen. pl.) A human tooth 'obtained by the body-snatchers': e. (—1823); † by 1860. *Jon Bee.*

curl. To collapse, as in Galworthy's The White Monkey, 1924.

curl one's hair. To chaste; scold, vituperate: C. 19–20 coll.; ob.

curl paper. Toilet paper: either coll. or euphemistic: C. 19–20; ob.

curl up. To fall silent, 'shut up': from ca. 1860; ob.—3. (Sporting.) To collapse: coll.: from ca. 1890.


curled darlings. Military officers: Society: 1856–ca. 60. Ware, who, noting that 'the Crimean War . . . once more brought soldiers into fashion', refers to 'the waving of the long beard and sweeping moustache'.

*curls. See curl, 2.


currency. N. and, occ. adj. of a person born in Australia, one of English birth being 'sterling: Australians': from ca. 1825; † by 1914. *C. Cunningham, 1827; *Charles Reade In It is Never Too Late to Mend* Morris.


curry one's hide. To beat a person: coll.: C. 18–early 19. Ex S.E. curry in this sense.

curse, not to care or be worth a. I.e. extremely little: from M.E. onwards; coll. S.O.D. supports curses = cress (A.-S. cers) but notes that dann is in this sense very early. Prob. cress > curse under the influence of dann; nevertheless, see dam. Landl. has *Wisdom and witt now is worth not a kerse*; Whereas not worth a rush or a strue have > S.E., not worth a curse has remained coll. because of its apparent meaning. Also tinker's curse.


Cf.:


curse of Scotland. The nine of diamonds: from 1710. Coll. > S.E. in C. 19. Orig. problematic. Grose, 1st ed. The various theories are as interesting as they are unconvincing: see H., 6th ed., and W.

curser, cursitor. A vagabond: from ca. 1650; coll.—2. In mid-C. 18–early 19 c., *broken petty-fogging attorneys, or Newgate solicitors*, Grose, 1st ed. Ex L. currere, to run. Cf. the S.E. [Cursing and swearing is, in its cause and its processes, akin to s. and coll.: see my Slang; for the gen. subject of cursing and swearing, see Ernest Crawley's thoughtful and suggestive book, Oath, Curse, and Blessing, 1934, and Robert Graves's Lars Porsena, revised in 1935. Curses, oaths, assurances and other expletives that are s. or coll.—and perhaps a few that are neither s. nor coll.—appear in the present work.]
*curtail, curtal. A thief that cuts off pieces from unguarded cloth, etc., or from women's dresses; C. 18 a. Also, a thief wearing a short jacket; C. 16-17 c.

curtain, cop the. 'To gain so much applause that the curtain is raised for the performer to appear and bow'; music-halls' (ca. 1880), > by 1890, theatres'. Ware. Cf. curtain-taker.

curtain-lecture. A reproof, or lengthy advice, given in bed by a wife to her husband: from ca. 1630; orig. coll.: by 1730, S.E. The ooc. curtain-lecture was by 1800. (Apperson.)

curtain-raiser. A one-act play to 'play in the house'; orig. (ca. 1886) theatrical a.; by 1900, coll.; by 1920, S.E. Ex Fr. lever de rideau.

curtain, take a. So take a curtain.

curtain-taker. 'An actor even more eager than his brethren to appear before the curtain after its fall'; theatrical: 1882. Ware. Cf. curtain, cop the. curtains. [a soldiers', eap. officers'] name given to one of the first modes of wearing the hair low on the military forehead (1870). The locks were divided in the centre, and the front hair was brought down in two loops, each rounding away towards the temple. The hair was glossed and flattened', Ware. Ca. 1870-85.

*curtail. A species of vagabond and thief; mid-C. 16-18 c. Ex his short coat. See curtail.

cuss, like -bus and -orum, is a favourite suffix in mock-Latin words, which (e.g. circumdibulous) tend to have a (frequently jocular) colloq. flavour. For this by-way, see esp. H. W. Fowler's stimulating, masterly, and remarkable *Dict. of Modern English Usage, s.v. Spurious Latin.

cuse. Weekly order; (a book containing) the record of marks in each division. Winchester College: C. 19-20, ob. Ex *classicus paper, the master's term.


cush, v.; *cusher. C. 20 variants of cusk and cosher, q.v.

cushing. A cushion: C. 16-20; S.E. till C. 18, then incorrect; in C. 19-20 sol.

*cushion. To hide, conceal; c.: mid-C. 19-20, ob. III., 3rd ed. Ex S.E. sense, to suppress.


cushion, deserve a or the. To have done his duty and therefore deserving of rest (of a man to whom a child has been born): coll.: mid-C. 17-early 19. Ray, 1678.

cushion, miss the. To miss the mark; to fail; coll. (ca. 1629); app. f. by 1700. Skelton; Clarke, 1639. (Apperson.)

cushion-clutter, -duster, -smiler, and -thumper. A clergyman, esp. a violent preacher: coll.: the first, ca. 1680-1750; the second, ca. 1720-1820; the third, from ca. 1840 but ob.; the fourth, ca. 1640-1900. Thackeray, 1843. 'For what a number of such loud nothing's will a man a cushion-thumper have to answer.'

cushionmong. Accouchement: Cockney sol. (ca. 1897); slightly so. Bearman.


Cushy. La Cauchie, a town near Arna: military G.W. (F. & Gibbons.)

cushy. Easy, safe: of a job, task, or post. Not dangerous: of a wound (cf. *Blithy, q.v.). S.O.D. records this military a. at 1915, but, to judge both from its possibly Hindustani origin (khusí, pleasure) or its, to me, more prob. Romany one (khusí, good), and from report, it was used in the Indian Army some years before the G.W. (It is not imposibly a slurring of cushiony or an extension of dial. cushion, soft, flabby.)

cuss. As a coll. exclamation orig. (ca. 1872) U.S. and partly anglicised ca. 1900, it euphemises curse / —. 2. A person; gen. a man: coll.; both senses ex U.S. (ca. 1848), anglicised ca. 1880. Ex customer, perhaps influenced by curses.

cussed. A low coll. form of cursed, anglicised ca. 1882.

cussedness. Cantankerousness (persons); contrariness (things). Coll.: ex U.S. (from ca. 1860), anglicised ca. 1895. Baumann. The fourth general 'law' is, 'The cussedness of the universe tends to a man low on the military forehead (1870). The locks were divided in the centre, and the front hair was brought down in two loops, each rounding away towards the temple. The hair was glossed and flattened', Ware. Ca. 1870-85.


custom, it's an old (orig. Southern). In 1935 this, in the Southern form, > a c.p.; it is a line from a popular song. By the end of the year, and in fact by October, other words had begun to be substituted for Southern. In *The Evening News of Jan. 4, 1936, we read of the man who, on being undermined by his wife for kissing a girl in a square in London, W.3, explained that 'It's an old Bayswater custom'.

custom of the country. 'A bribe given to port officials to avoid delays': nautical coll.: mid-C. 19-20. Bowen.

customer. A man; chap, fellow: coll.; from late C. 16 but not common before 1800; gen. with queer or ugly. Cf. chap, merchant, artist, and Scottish callant, q.v.

custom-(-)house goods. 'The stock in trade of a prostitute, because fairly entered', Grove, 2nd ed.: mid-C. 18-early 19 low coll.

custom(-)house officer. A cathartic pill: mid-C. 19-20; ob. II., 2nd ed. Also customs.


cut. A stage, a degree: coll. from ca. 1815; S.O.D. records in 1813; Dickens uses in 1855, (of a house) 'I really thought it was a cut above my.' 2. A refusal to recognise, or to associate with, a person: from ca. 1790. The cut(-)direct (later dead cut) occurs ca. 1820.—3. A snub or an unpleasant surprise: coll.: ca. 1850-1910.—4. (Theatrical) an excision, a mutilation of the 'book' of a play: C. 18-20. Sheridan in the Critic, 'Hey ... !—what a cut is here!'; *The Saturday Review, April 21, 1893, 'Some judicious cuts.'—5. the cut: Ex cut, adj. C. 18.—6. See cuts.—7. A share: Australian and New Zealand coll.: late C. 19-20.

cut, v. To talk; speak; make (of words): in mid-C. 16-early C. 19, c.—cut bene, e.g. is to speak gently; from ca. 1840 (?low) a. as in Thackeray's *Pendennis, [He] went on cutting jokes at the Admiral's expense.'—2. Ignore or avoid (a person); abandon (a thing, a habit): from ca. 1630; coll. Samuel Rowley, in *The Noble Soldier, 'Why shud a Souldier, being the world's right armes, [be cut thus by the left, a Courtier?'] Vol.m., cutting. With this usage, cf. 3, the university (orig. a., then coll., now almost S.E.) cut lecture or hall or chapel, to absent oneself from these duties (ca. 1794).—4.
Move quickly; run: col.; from ca. 1840. Earlier forms— all S.E.—are cut away (Cotton, 1678), cut off, and cut over (Lambard’s Perambulation of Kent; Nashe). Dickens, in Little Dorrit, ‘The best thing I can do is to cut.’ A C. 19 variant is cut it, q.v.

After ca. 1800, the gen. form is the orig. nautical cut and run (lit., cut the cable and sail away); cut one’s lucky (— 1840) being lower down the social scale, as also is (— 1823) cut one’s stick (Egan’s Grose); with the last, cf. amputate one’s mahogany, the idea being that of cutting a staff for one’s journey (W.V.); in gen., however, cf. U.S. cut dirt (1833): ‘the horse hoofs make the dirt fly’, Thornton.—5. (Theatrical) to excise: C. 18-20.

See n. 4-6. Excel (cf. cut out, q.v.): coll.; from ca. 1840. Whyte-Melville, in 1855, has cut down.

cut, adj. Tipisy: from ca. 1670. Head; B.E. Cf. PUNCH, 1860, ‘He goes on the Loose, or the Cut, or the Speare. Whence a deep cut or cut in the back (or leg), very drunk; late C. 17-early 19 (B.E.), and a little cut about the head, slightly drunk, C. 18-mid-19 (Grose, 1st ed.); cf. cut one’s legs, q.v.

cut! See cut it, 2.

*cut a bosh or a flash. To cut a figure: mid-C. 18-early 19: c. See bosh.

cut a caper. To play a trick or prank; behave extravagantly or noisily: from late C. 16; coll. till ca. 1700, when it > S.E.

cut a dash or shine or splash. To make a display, a notable figure; be very successful, prominent: resp. early C. 18-20, C. 19-20 (orig. U.S.), C. 19-20: coll., the first being now S.E. Here, cut = make, do, perform. Cf. cut a bosh, q.v.

cut a dido. To ‘cut a dash’: naval: ca. 1835-60. Ex cut up didoes, with a pun on H.M. corvette Dido, very smart, of the 1930s. Bowen adds: ‘The term was also applied to a sailing vessel tumbling about in a confused sea.’

cut a (e.g. fine, poor) figure. To make a . . . appearance: from ca. 1760; coll. until ca. 1800, then S.E. Lover in Harry Lorrequer, ‘He certainly cut a droll figure.’ The earlier, more dignified phrase is make a figure.

cut a finger. To break wind: low (— 1609). Waro. Cf. the Somersetshire cut the leg, to give off a foul smell (E.D.I.),

cut a shine or splash. See cut a dash.


cut a tooth or one’s (eye-) teeth. To become ‘knowing’, wide-awake: from ca. 1820; coll.; in C. 20, S.E. though hardly dignified. After ca. 1870, occ. cut one’s wisdom teeth. See also cut one’s teeth, have.

cut above, a. See cut, n. 1.

cut and come again. Abundance, orig. of ‘Meat that cries come Eat me’, B.E.; late C. 17-20; coll.

Swift, Wm. Combe,—2. Whence, the female pudend: C. 19-20; low.

cut and run. Deport promptly; decamp hurriedly: coll (— 1861). Ex nautical j.

cut-off. A morning coat: from ca. 1845; coll.; in C. 20, S.E. (As adj., recorded in 1841, says the S.O.D., but anticipated in Jon Bees’s description, 1823, of a dandy.)


cut capers on a trenches. To dance within a very small compass: ca. 1850-1910; coll., mostly Cockney; cf. cellar-flap.

cut dead (— 1826) is a variant of to cut, v. 2, q.v.

cut fine. To reduce to a minimum, esp. in cut it fine, to leave a very small margin of money, space, or time: mid-C. 19-20: coll. >, by 1900, S.E.

cut for the simplyes. See simples, be cut for the.

cut in, v.t. To intrude; interpose briskly into a game or a conversation: from ca. 1820; coll. till ca. 1870, then S.E. Thackeray, ‘Most injudicious’, ‘cut in the Major.’—2. Whence the n.: same period and promotion. Often written cut-in.

cut in the back or leg. See cut, adj. cut into. (Winchester College) orig. to hit with a ‘ground ash’; hence, to correct in a manner less formal than thrashing, q.v.: C. 19-20, obl.

cut it. To run, move quit.—C. 19-20; coll. See v. 4—2. Interjection: cease! or be quiet! Also as cut it, cut that in, C. 20 cut it out! From ca. 1850; coll. H., 1st ed.

cut it fat. To make a display; cut a dash; show off; from ca. 1830. Dickens, 1835, ‘Gentlemen . . . cutting it uncommon fat’; Banham, 1857. In the Dickens quotation, the sense of the whole phrase is perhaps rather, i.e. cut it (too) strong’. Cut it too, or uncommon, fat, is indeed a separate phrase = overdo a thing; now ob.

cut it out! See cut it, 2.


cut mutton with. To partake of someone’s hospitality: coll.; from ca. 1830.

cut no ice; gen. that cuts no ice! That makes no difference; has no effect, is of no importance: orig. (1896), U.S.; anglicised ca. 1913. Thornton; O.E.D. (Sup.).

cut of one’s jib. General appearance: orig. and still mainly nautical: from ca. 1820. Robert Buchanan, 1881, ‘By the voice of you. . . and by the cut of your precious jib.’

cut of the simples. See simples, be cut for the.

cut off without a shilling. A late C. 19-20 noetar.

coll. variant of the S.E. phrase.

cut one’s cable. An occ. variant (— 1931) of cut the painter, 2. Lyell.

cut one’s cart. To expose his tricks: (— 1851).

cut one’s comb according . . . See cloth.—cut one’s comb. See comb cut.—cut one’s lucky or (perhaps orig. c., as Egan states) stick. See cut, v. 4, the latter ex the cutting of a staff before one begins a journey.


cut one’s eye. To become suspicious: c. from ca. 1840. Cf. cutly-eye.

cut one’s eye-teeth, have. To be alert or ‘knowing’: low (— 1864). H., 3rd ed. See also cut a tooth.

cut one’s own grass. To earn one’s own living: c.; from ca. 1860; ob. Cf. get one’s own chump, s.v. chump.

cut one’s painter. See cut the painter.—cut one’s stick. See cut, v. 4.

cut out of. To deprive of; destroy one's participation in the chances of getting: C. 17-20; ob.; coll. in B. E.'s. Cut another out of any business, to out-do him far away, or excell, or circumvent. — 2. To cheat out of: C. 18-20; coll.
cut over the head. See cut, adj.
*cut queer whids. To speak offensively; use foul language: mid-C. 16-early 19: c.
cut that! See cut it.—cut the cackle. See cackle, cut the.
*cut the line or rope or string. To cut a long story short; to cease from keeping a person in suspense: c.: from ca. 1810, 1860, 1810, resp. Vaux.—2. (Only cut the line.) To cease work for the time being: printers (—1900). Ware. Referring to a line of type.
cut the, occ. one's, painter. To depart; decamp; depart in secret haste; to desert: orig., mainly naut.; From ca. 1490. Hence, 2. To die; nautical: from ca. 1850. Bowen. Cf. aloft.—3. Cut a person's, painter to send away, get rid of, render harmless: ca. 1690-1840. B. E.
*cut the rope or the string. See cut the line.
cut the rough (stuff). To cease doing or saying something obnoxious to another: Australian and New Zealand (lower classes), then military) coll.: C. 20. I.e. cut out, desert from.
cut under, v.t. To undersell, the gen. C. 20 form being undercut. From ca. 1870; coll. at first, S.E. since ca. 1895. L. Oliphant in Altiora Peto: ' Ned was all the time cutting under us by bringing out some new contrivance.
cut up. To depreciate, slander; criticize very adversely: from ca. 1750; coll. till ca. 1800, then S.E. Goldsmith, 1750, 'The pack of critics...cutting up everything new.' Cf. the sense, to mortify, which is gen. in the passive, to be vexed, hurt, dejected: from ca. 1790; coll. in C. 20 almost S.E.—2. In the passive, to be in embarrassed circumstances: coll.: ca. 1800-70.—3. To turn up, become, show (up); coll.: ↑ late C. 18, certainly C. 19-20; ob.—4. To plunder, rob; to divide plunder: from ca. 1770; c. till ca. 1800, then (as in G. R. Sims's How the Poor Live) low.—5. To leave a fortune by will, v.i. (v.t. with for): from ca. 1780. Gen. with big, large, fat, rich or well. Grose, 1st ed.: Disraeli, in The Young Duke, 'You think him very rich? ' "Oh, he will cut up very large", said the Baron. 'This likens the defunct to a joint (of meat)." W.—6. To behave; coll.: from ca. 1850. Hughes, in Tom Brown's School Days, 'A great deal depends on how a fellow cuts up, at first.' Cf. cut up nasty, q.v.—7. To conduct (a contest) dishonestly: sport:ing: from ca. 1920. Prob. ex sense 4 (O. E. D. Sup.).
cut up didoes. See didoes, cut up.
cut up nasty, rough, rusty, savage, stiff, ugly, etc. To be quarrelsome, dangerous: coll.; the gen. phrase dates from ca. 1825. Dickens has rough in 1837, Thackeray savage in 1849, and stiff in 1850; nasty the v. a. of those mentioned: hardly before 1900. Semantically similar to cut, v., 5, q.v.—2. In a race, cut up rough, badly, etc., signifies to behave badly, unfairly: from ca. 1880; orig. and gen. of horses.
cut up well. To look well when naked; be an attractive lisp-fellow: in the language of (?) love: from ca. 1860; ob.—2. See also cut out, 5.
cutch, kutcha. Makeshift; inferior; spurious; bad: Anglo-Indian; and hence military, coll.; recorded in 1834, but in use in C. 18. (See French quotation in Yule & Burnell). Ex Hindi kachcha, raw, uncooked, hence rural, hence inferior, etc. Opp. pukka. (S. O. D.)
cut, says Manchon, is a n. = 'acuteness'. I doubt its existence. Perhaps confused with cutie, q.v.
cute, 'cutie, adj. 'Sharp, witty, ingenious, ready," Dyche, 1748: coll.: from ca. 1730. Foote has the adv. cutely in 1762, Goldsmith 'cuteness (rare) in 1768.—2. Cf. the U.S. cute, used of things (—1812), anglicised ca. 1850, esp. by schoolboys. Cf. the U.S. cuteness.
cutie. See cutie.
cuthbert. From 1917 (ob.), a government employee or officer shirking military service. Perhaps, says W., 'suggested by music-hall song on "Cuthbert, Clarence and Claudio" '. Coined by 'Poy'. See my Name This Child.
cutie; occ. cutey. A small girl; loosely, any (young) girl: U.S. (—1921) partly anglicised ca. 1930 owing to the 'talkies'. Ex cute, q.v. (O. E. D. Sup.)
cutée. See cutty, 2. Baumann, 1887. (A rare form.)
cutie. See cutty, 2.
cutting. Undercutting; keen competition: (—1861); coll. > S. E.; in C. 20, undercutting. Cf. sense 2 of the adj.—2. Disowning or avoiding a person: see cut, v., 2.
cutting, adj. Blood-curdling (story, play, etc.): low coll., mostly London (—1887). Baumann. Perhaps ex cut to the heart or the quick.—2. Cutting prices; undercutting: coll.: 1851, Mayhew. (O. E. D.)
cutting-gloak. A rough apt to use the knife in a quarrel: c.: ca. 1810–50. Vaux, 1812; Egan's Grose, 1823.
CUTTING-OUT PARTY

cutting-out party. A predatory gang of cadets, esp. in the officers' pantry: Conway Training Ship (—1891); ob. Maesfield, The Conway, p. 113. Also, elsewhere, as Bowen shows.


cutty, a knife, in C. 16–18 low or coll.; cf. the c. cuttle-(o)jung, C. 16–18, a knife for cutting purses.


DAB, DAB IN, HAVE A

cutsookl An early C. 18 variant of gadsooke

O.E.D. Cf. cuds, 3.


cycle. Abbr. bicycle or tricycle: from ca. 1880; coll. till C. 20, then S.E.; the same applies to the corresponding v.i.

cycling fringes. 'Especially prepared forehead-hair to be worn by such women bickers as had not abjured all feminine vanities': cyclists' coll.: 1897–ca. 1907. Ware.


Cyprian. A prostitute: adumbrated long before, this term as used temp. Regency and George IV was fashionable s.; now rare, archaic S.E. Ex the Cyprian (goddess), Venus.

DAB IN, HAVE A

Another pun on the abbr. of Deo volente (if God so wishes). Ware.


dab. An adept or expert; 'dabster,' q.v.: late C. 17–20; orig. c.; by 1740, low; by 1830, coll. Chesterfield, in letter of Aug. 17, 1733, 'Known dabs at finding out mysteries.' In C. 18, it has, in c., the sense, expert gamer (Dyche), while in C. 17–early 18 c. it means an 'expert exquisit in Roguery', esp. in form rum dab, q.v. In C. 19–20, esp. among schoolboys. EX dab, to strike crisply, as the S.O.D. suggests, or ex L. adpeius, as H. proposes and I believe.—2. A bod: from ca. 1810; c. or low. Vaux; Monnivre in Tom and Jerry. Cf. origin and etymology. If any other example of back slang were recorded before 1850, I would postulate bod > deb > dab: prob., however, the term is a semantic development ex C. 18–20 S.E. dab, a flattish mass (e.g. of butter dabbed on something else). Certainly, however, dab is a variant for deb as back s. for a bod, in H., 1899.—3. Cf. the rare C. 18–early 19 coll. sense, a trifle.—4. In C. 19–20 c., the corpse of a drowned outcast woman: from ca. 1850. EX dab, a small, flat fish.—5. A pimp; esp. a bawd: c. late C. 19–20. Manchon. EX prob. ex sense 1. —6. A flat fish of any kind: London street coll.: C. 19–20. H., 1st ed. Cf. sense 4.—7. See dabas, 2.

dab, adj. Clever; skilful or skilled; expert; very conversant. (Gen. with at or in.) C. 18–20, but never very common: in C. 19–20, coll. EX dab, n., 1.—2. Bad: in back slang: from the 1850's. Duprose, London Life, 1877. ESP. dab tros, a bad sort; occ. used as an adj.

dab down. To hand over; pay; 'shell out': coll., C. 19–20. Cf. Yorkshire dab doon, immediate payment (E.D.D.)

dab in, have a, v.i. To have a 'go': late C. 19–20. (J. Milne, The Epistles of Atkins, 1902.)
dab in the dock. A tip (lit., a pat on the hand); low and military; C. 20. B. & P. *(knitted). To pair off (with a woman); arrange or agree to live with; c. —, by 1820, low; from ca. 1810. Vaux.—2. 'To run a score at a public-house,** Egan's Grose: public-house coll.: ca. 1820-60.
dab l, quoit Dawkins when he hit his wife on the arm with a pound of butter. A mid-C. 18-mid-19 c.p. applied to impacts. Grose, 1st ed.
dabs. A rare abbr. of dabster: coll., mostly Lon-
don (— 1887); slightly ob. Baumann.—2. (Ex-
dace. Two-pence. Late C. 17-19; c. and low.
B.E. A corruption of.deuce.
dachasalee. Tenpence: a franc: from ca. 1860; Parlyearce and o. H., 1st ed.; Reade, The
Cleaster and the Hearth. Ex It. dacic soldi via
Linguas Francia. Cf. dacha-one, eleven(pence).
dad, dadd, dada. The first from before 1500, the others from before 1580: coll. for father. Prob. ex
child's pronunciation of father: cf., however,
Samson at dad. James I styled himself Charles I's
'Dear Old Dad'.—2. In Australia, at first coll. but
soon official, dad is the name given, esp. in Anzac
Day celebrations, to the fathers of those men who
served with the Australian Force during the War.
Cf. digger, 2. —. In oats and asservations, God:
coll.: 1878, Otway. In mid-C. 19-20, dial. and
U.S. O.E.D.
dad-dad, mum-mum; or daddy-mammy. A
tyro's practice on a drum: military; from ca. 1760.
Grose.
daddle. The hand; fist. From ca. 1780: low.
The S.O.D. says dial.: this it may orig. have been,
but its use by and temp. Grose (1st ed.), George
Parker, and Tom Moore indicates that it was
common in London. etymology: cf. paddle. F. & H.
gives synonymy. Cf. also zipper.
Perhaps a corruption of didder.
daddy. Diminutive of dad, q.v.; father: coll.
from ca. 1600. —. A stage-manager: theatrical;
from ca. 1850. H., 1st ed. —. The superintendent
of a casual ward: from ca. 1860: coll. —. The
man who, at a wedding, gives away the bride: ca.
1860-85. H., 2nd ed. —. The person 'winning'
the prize at a mock raffle, faked lottery: from ca.
1860; c. then low. H., 3rd ed.
dadler. See dailer.
dado. (round the dining-room). A (knitted)
abdominal belt: military, 1914+. Ex the die-
 shaped part of a pedestal (W.).
dads. An old man: c. C. 18. Anon., Street-
Robbers Consider'd, 1728. A perversion of dad.
The = ad in was at other familiar or affection, or
both: cf. dacks for duck (the endearment).
dad's will. Parental authority: Oxford Univer-
daffy loosely daffy; Daffy's Elixir. Gin: from
c. S. 1820; ob. 'Corcoran' Reynolds, 1821; Leman
Rode, 1841. Ex a very popular medicine
advertised as early as 1700, ca. 1860 called sooth-
ing syrup (applied also to gin) and in 1891 known as
tincture of senna.—2. A large number of telegrams
for delivery: Post Office telegraph-messengers' (—
1835).—3. See daff.
daffy, adj. Slightly mad; soft in the head:
dial. (— 1854) >, by ca. 1865, s. Ex Northern dial.
aff, a simpleton. O.E.D. Sup.
Leman Rode in Sixteen-String Jack.
daff at man. To refuse (a person) perem ptorly or
vigorously or to take no notice of him: tailors'
1828, The Tailor and Cutter, Nov. 29. Lit., to
render daff.
daffie. A daft person: coll.: from ca. 1870.
(O.E.D.) Ex daff. (Slightly earlier in dial.)
dag. A 'hard case'; a wag: a 'character':
Australia, thence New Zealand; from ca. 1890.
Prob. ex dagen, q.v.—2. See dags, 2.
dag at, be a. To be extremely good at: from
the middle 1800's: Australians; hence, by 1920, New
Zealander's. Ex preceding.
dag up, v.i. To smarten oneself for guard or
ex daggiong sheep.
dagen, e. for an artful criminal or non-criminal,
itselcf exc. dags or degen (q.v.), a sword.—2. See
dags.
Daggaramnees. The Diego Ramirez Islands
Bowen. By 'Hobson-Jobson'.
dagged. Tipsy: (— 1745) this term, perhaps
orig., > solely, dial. ca. 1800, Ex dial. dag, to
sprinkle. (O.E.D.)
dagger ale. Inferior ale: late C. 16-17. Ex
The Dagger, a low tavern fl. 1800 in Holborn.
Cf.: dagger-cheap. Very cheap: C. 17-18; coll.
and archaic after ca. 1660. Bishop Andrews, 1831,
'[Tho devill] may buy us even dagger-cheap, as we
say.' Lancelot Andrews, d. in 1626. See pre-
ceding.
daggle-tail. A slattern: 'a nasty dirty Slut':
from ca. 1600; coll. till ca. 1700, when it > S.E.;
ca. 1830 it > dial. and low coll. Cf. draggle-tail.
Dago. Uno of Latin race, but rarely of a French-
man: ex U.S. (— 1868)—though anticipated in
1832; anglicised ca. 1800: coll. In C. 17, Diego
(James) was a nickname for a Spaniard. See Words
and O.E.D. (Sup.)
dags. A feat, piece of work. 'I'll do your(r)
dags', i.e. something you can't'; (among school-
boys) 'do dags'; play foolhardy tricks. Coll.;
from ca. 1860. H., 1st ed. F. & H. proposes the
A.S. dag, the O.E.D. darg, one's task, as the origin;
? a perversion of dare or duriae (W.).
Dags, on the. On furlough (as opp. a few days'
the preceding.—2. Cigarettes: military: C. 20.
F. & Gibbons. Perhaps ex dial. dag, the stem-end
of a branch, the big end of a faggot (E.D.D.): cf.
dag ex fag-end.
daily. A daily maid-servant: from ca. 1920:
coll., now varies on S.E. (O.E.D. Sup.)—2. See
Moving-Picture Star.
daily-bread. A wage-earner; the working head
of the house: from ca. 1890.
daily dozen, one's or the. Physical exercise,
on rising in the morning: coll.: from ca. 1924.
DAMN A HORSE IF I DO!

Recorded in C. 14, the word, though unnecessary, has become Anglo-Indian; i. rather than coll. Hence, dak bungalow, a guest-house or a road-rotte (— 1833). See dawk.


Daily the Tall. Mrs. Grace Dalrymple Elliot (d. 1823), friend of George IV when Regent. Dawson.

dam. 'Damage' (q.v.): universality: ca. 1900–19. Ware.

dam, not be worth or care a. (See care a pin.) Mid-C. 18–20; coll. Prob. ex small Indian coin; cf. curse, q.v. See esp. Yule & Burnell, W., and Grose, P. The twopenny dam is said to have been rendered fashionable by Wellington. Manchon.

dam of that was whisker, the. A c.—coll. and dial. —applied ca. 1675–1810 to a great lie. Ray, 1678 (Apperson). Is it possible that whisker may or has been whisper? See also whisker, the mother.

damage. Expense; cost: from ca. 1750; S.O.D. records it at 1755. Byron, 'Many thanks, but I must pay the damage.' Prob. ex damage(s) at law. In late C. 19–20, gen. as what's the damage?, jocularly varying the much earlier what's the shot? W.

damaged. Tipsy: from ca. 1805. Cf. screwed.


damask. To warm (wine): late C. 17–early 19. B.E. has 'Damask the 'Claret, Put a roasted Orange flesh smoking hot in it?' The 'warmth' of damask, 'a rich silk fabric woven with elaborate designs and figures' (S.O.D.).

*dambler. A man belonging to a criminal gang: c.: mid-C. 17–18. Coles, 1760; B.E. Cf. dimber; perhaps suggested by:

damme, or damny, or damme (or -y)-boy. A profane swearer (gen. the single word): coll.; ca. 1010–1820. From mid-C. 17–early 18 (the hypothecated term), 'a roaring mad, blustering fellow, a Scourer of the Streets,' B.E.; this latter is possibly c. (Perhaps damme in itself coll.)

dame. A house-master not teaching the Classics: Eton College: mid-C. 19–20. —2. A girl; a sweet-heart: Glasgow: from ca. 1532. Ex U.S., via the 'talkies'; nevertheless, the U.S. prob. derived this usage from Scots, where dame, a girl, appears as early as 1790 (Shirreffs, Poems): E.D.J.


dammit, as (e.g. quick or soon) as. Exceedingly (quick, soon): coll.: c. 20. I.e. as saying damnit! / GF.: dammit, (as) near as. Very nearly indeed: coll.: C. 20. (F. Gricerson, Mystery in Red, 1931.)

damn'. Damned: coll.: late C. 18–20. Cf. damn the . . . , q.v., and see damned.

Hence, damn, not be worth or care a. The form and etymology preferred by the O.E.D.: see damn.

damn a horse if I do! A strong refusal or rejection: coll.: ca. 1820–60. 'Jon Bee,' 1823, shrewdly postulates origin in damn me for a horse if I do.
damn all. Nothing:.coll.:from ca. 1915. A broad pronunciation of *all* in B. & P. 
damn the (e.g. thing) can (or could) one (e.g. find). Not a (thing) can one (find): a coll. form of not a 
dammed thing can one (find): somewhat rare (—1887). Beumann. 
damn well. Certainly; assuredly: coll.: late C. 19-20. E.g. Winifred Holty, 1934; 'These 
thing are not in our hands', said the doctor ... Then they damn well ought to be!' swore the 
merchant, appalled by the thought of all the money he had spent unavailingly. 
damnable. Confounded; objectionable: late C. 16-18; S.E. till ca. 1800, then coll. or a vulgarism. 
damnation, adj. and adv. From ca. 1700: damned; excessively, very. Coll. (S.O.D.) 
dammed. An adj. expressive of reprobation or of mere emotional crudity or as an ever-weakening 
interjection (cf. bloody): late C. 16-20; S.E. till ca. 1800, then coll.—2. Adv., damningly; hence, very; 
mid-C. 18-20; S.E. till ca. 1850, then coll. In both 
senses, one tends to use damned before a vowel, 
dann: before a consonant. 
dammed, be. Used in intensive phrases: see 
smart as be damned and the like paragraph. 
damned soul. A Customs House clearing clerk: 
from late 1780's. Grose, 2nd ed. Ex a belief that 
he has sworn never to make true declarations on oath. 
damp. A drink: Dickens in Pickwick; not very 
gen. elsewhere. Gen. give oneself a damp, or something 
damp.—2. Also, rather rare v. reflexive (—1862), whence prob.: 
damp one's mug. To drink: low: from ca. 
1860; slightly ob. 
damp(-)pot. The sea; esp. the Atlantic: 
tailors: from ca. 1856.—2. A water-pot: tailors' 
coll.: late C. 19-20. 
damp the sawdust. To drink with friends at the 
opening of a new tavern: licensed victuallers': 
from ca. 1860. 
*dampener. In c, damper, after ca. 1860 gen. dis- 
placed by lob, is a till: C. 19. H., 2nd ed.—2. A 
spoil-sport, 'wet blanket': coll. : from ca. 1815; 
in C. 20, rare.—3. A sweating employer, a 'last- 
ouner': tailors: from ca. 1860.—4. Ale or stout 
taken after spirits (and water): from ca. 1820, † by 
1930.—5. A snack between meals: coll. and dial.: 
from ca. 1780; slightly ob. Grose, 1st ed.; Maria 
Edgeworth. See 'The Art of Lightening Work' in 
Words /, p. 47, and cf. snack, snap, tiffin, and esp. 
bever.—6. A suet pudding preceding meat: 
schoolboys: C. 19-20, ob.—7. (Australia and New 
Zealand) a kind of bread, unleavened and baked in 
ashe: orig. (ca. 1826) coll. but by 1910 accepted as 
S.E. Peter Cunningham, 1827.—8. A lunch, or, 
more gen., dinner-bill: Society: 1886—ca. 1915. 
Ward notes the Fr. s. dou louvre and quotes 
Theodore Hook, 'Men laugh and talk until the feast 
is o'er; Then comes the reckoning, and they laugh 
no more!' 
damp hole. phrased. See damp hole. 
damps. Denver & Rio Grande Railroad preference 
shares: Stock Exchange (—1895). A. J. Wilson, 
Stock Exchange Glossary. A pun on the 
river mentioned. 
Dams (or d.). Defensively armed merchant-ships 
and those connected with them: naval: 1915; ob. 
Bowan. 
damself. A hot iron used to warm a bed: con- 
trast a Scotch warming-pan, q.v. The S.O.D. 
records it at 1727. Orig. it was undoubtedly either 
coll. or s., but by 1800 it had > S.E.; cf. the Fr. 
moine.—2. A girl, any girl: as employed in society 
and in the universities, post-G.W., the term has a 
facetious and coll. flavour.—3. A skate (fish): 
North Sea fishermen’s: C. 19-20; ob. Bowen. 
damson-pie. Abuse; a slanging match. Either 
coll. or dial.: Birmingham and 'the black country' 
from ca. 1860; ob. William Black, in Strange 
Adventures of a House Boat, 1888. The variant 
damson tart occurs a year earlier (O.E.D.), but 
rather in the sense: profane language. Punning 
damn! 
Dan. The inevitable nickname of anyone sur- 
dan Tucker. Butter: rhyming s. (—1860), the 
rhyme being, as often, merely approximate. H., 
1st ed. 
dance. A staircase; a flight of steps: c. 
(—1857); † ‘Ducange Anglicus’. Abbr. dancers, 
q.v. 
dance, dance upon nothing (in a hampen cravat), 
dance the paddington frik or the tyburn jig. To be 
hanged: low. The first, C. 19-20, the second 
C. 18-20, but both ob.; the third, late C. 17-19. 
Paddington refers to Tyburn. Hence, the dance 
(up)on nothing, like the dance of death, = hanging, 
C. 19-20. Hood, in The Philosophy of the Fools 
... slope | To a coper on sunny greens and 
slopes | Instead of the dance upon nothing.'—2. 
Among printers, from ca. 1850, type is said to 
dance when, the forme being lifted, letters fall out. 
3. dance Barnaby, see Barnaby. 
dance, lead (rarely give) a person a. To cause 
needless or excessive worry or exertion: from ca. 
1520; coll. >, by 1900, S.E. 
dance barefoot. Applied to a girl whose younger 
sister marries before her: coll.: ca. 1560-1800. 
(O.E.D.) Cf. the Yorkshire dance in the half-jack, 
'to be left behind as a bachelor, on a brother's 
mariage', E.D.D. 
dance, take a. See fake a dance. 
dance the stairs. To break into a flat or an 
office; do quick a 'job': C. 20c. Charles E. 
Leach. 
dance to a person's whistle, pipe, etc. To follow 
his lead; unquestioningly obey. Coll. >, by 1700, 
S.E.: from ca. 1560. 
danceable. Fit to dance with: coll.: 1869, 
Wilkie Collins (O.E.D.).—2. (Of a tune) suitable for 
a dance: coll.: from ca. 1800 (ibid.). 
garrett and dancing-master. 
dancers. Stairs; a flight of steps: from ca. 
1670; until ca. 1840, c.; then low s., or archaic e. 
Head. B.E.; Grose; Lyttion. The term, occ. 
heard in G.W. and since, is ob. Because one 
dances' down them.—2. (Also Merry Dancers) the 
Aurora Borealis: coll. > S.E., though in C. 20 
mainly dial.: 1717. (S.O.D.) 
dancing-dog. (Gen. pl.) A dancing man: from 
ca. 1880; ob. Ware, 'a satirical title applied ... 
when dancing began to go out.' It again became 
popular ca. 1900 and ca. 1919. 
dancing-master. A species of Mohock temp. 
Queen Anne: coll. See esp. The Spectator, No. 354 
(1715). This dandy-rough made his victims capec 
by thrusting his sword between their legs.—2. The 
hangman: late C. 17-early 18; perhaps orig. a—

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DAND


dand. Abbr. dandy, a top: ca. 1870–1900: perhaps more dial. than s. Hardy. (O.E.D.)
dander. Anger; a ruffled temper: coll.: orig. (1832) U.S., though perhaps en English as H. implies; (†) ruffled-anglicised ca. 1860. Thackery in Pendennis: 'Don't talk to me...when my dander is up.' The S.O.D. proposes derivation either ex dander = dandruff or ex dander = ferment; the latter is preferable. But I suggest that the Roman dander, to bite,—dando, bitten,—may solve the problem. Whence dandered, angry, problem. Ruffled, the anglised ca. 1880 but never gen.

Dandies, the. The London Rifle Brigade: military from ca. 1862. F. & Gibbons. Ex their smart appearance at the Hyde Park reviews.

dandification. The act or state of making look or looking like a dandy: coll., 1825-†. Ex:

dandity. To make resemble, give the style of, a dandy: coll.; from ca. 1820. Whence the pl. adj. dandyified.

dandi. See dandy, 5.

dandiprat. occ. dandiprat(t), A person physically, socially, or morally very insignificant: from ca. 1850; coll. till C. 18. The anon. play Lingua, 1850; Scott, 1821. Ex the C. 18–18 sense, a small coin worth 1d.

dando. A heavy eater; esp. one who cheats restaurants, cafés, hotels, etc.: from ca. 1840; † by 1920. Coll. Ex a 'scudy swell' so named and given to bilking. Thackery in Macaulay, 1850, in Journal: 'I was dandao at a pastry cook's.'

dandy; gen. the d. The ticket; precisely the thing needed; esp. if fashionable. S.O.D. records it at 1784; dandy, top, occurring only four years earlier († ex dandiprat), was perhaps s. or at the least, until ca. 1830.—2. Anglo-Irish, a small drink or 'go' of whiskey (—1838); ob.—3. Anything first-rate; also adj.: orig. (1794; Thornton), U.S., anglicised ca. 1806.—4. In the West Indies, with variant dandy fever, the coll. name for dengue fever: 1828. (O.E.D.)—5. dandy, dandi. Anglo-Irish (coll. rather than s.) for a boatman on the Ganges: from ca. 1830. And for: a small hammock-like conveyance carried by two men; from ca. 1870.—6. In e., a bud gold coin (—1835). Ex the modicum of pure gold.


dandy horse. A velocipede: Society: ca. 1820–40. 'Jon Bos.'

*dandy-master. The head of a counterfeiting gang (1893): e.

Dandy Ninth, the. The 9th (Service) Battalion of the Royal Scots: military: 1915. F. & Gibbons. 'Pride of the proud city are the 9th Royal Scots, or Edinbro Highlanders, a territorial battalion, and the only kilted one in the regiment', R. J. T. Hills, Something About a Soldier, 1934.


dandipratt. See dandiprat.

dangle in the Sheriff's picture-frame. To be hanged: (c. or) low: late C. 18–early 19 coll. Grose, 1st ed.

Dang. A curse, a damm: late C. 19–20. Ex:

dang. v. To damn (e.g. dang me!): euphemistic dial. (ca. 1790) '; ca. 1840, coll. O.E.D.


dangling. A emotional friendship between two boys: schoolboy's: C. 19.


dangling. See dangler.

danna. Human ordure: C. 18–19 c. Hence danna-drag, the night-man's cart, C. 19 c. (Vaux), and danna-ken, the C. 18 c. form of the C. 19–20 dannetkin, which, orig. c., > s. and then, ca. 1900, low coll. and when, and in C. 19, pervaded dial.


dant. A profligate woman; a harlot: C. 16–17. Ex the Dutch, it is almost certainly c. or, at the least, low s. (Halliwell)

danitpret. A variant (C. 17) of dandipratt, q.v.

dap. To pick up; to steal, esp. luggage: C. 20 o. Perhaps ex S.E. dah, v., or do up.


darbies. As hand cuffs (from ca. 1660), prob. orig. s., certainly soon coll.; but as fetters (from ca. 1670) always, though rare, s., ob. by 1860. Marryat, in Japhet, 'We may as well put on the darbies, continued he, producing a pair of hand cuffs.' Ex a rigid form of usher's coat; called Father Derby's, or Derby's, bands.—2. Sausages: C. 19–20, ob. Ex?

darbies and joans. Futters coupling two persons: from ca. 1735, ex Darby and Joan.

darble. The devil: a coll. corruption, i.e. orig. a sol., of Fr. diable. From ca. 1850. H., 1st ed.

darby. See darbies.—2. Ready money: from ca. 1870; orig. c., it > low ca. 1780; † by ca. 1850; B.E.: Estcourt in Prunella, a play († 1712), 'Come, nibly lay down darby; come, pray sir: don't be tardy.' For etymology, cf. darbies.—3. A wholly c. sense is the mid-C. 19 20 one, a thief's 'haul'.

darby roll. A gait that results from the long wearing of shackles: from ca. 1820. 'Jon Bos.', 1839. Orig. a c. or a police term, it > low gen. s., never very common and now ob. Cf.

darby's dyke. The grave; death: C. 19 low, prob. orig. c. of: cf.

darby's fair. The day on which a prisoner is removed from one prison to another for trial: C. 19 low. Cf. darbies and darby roll.

dard. The membrum virile: C. 17–18; low, perhaps c. Ex Fr. dard, a dart.

dare. A challenge: act of defiance: from late C. 16; S.E. till late C. 19, when it > coll.


dark, get the. To be confined in a punishment cell: c. from ca. 1880.

dark, keep it. Say nothing about it; gen. imperative. From ca. 1856; coll. 'Duceang Anglicus', 1857; Dickens, 1861 (O.E.D.).<ref>Pro. ex the long †, keep a person dark, i.e. confined in a dark room, as madmen formerly were; of the treatment of Malvolio in Twelfth Night.</ref>

dark (oo. black) as Newgate knocker. See Newgate knocker, black as.
dark as the inside of a cow. (Of a night) pitch-black: nautical: from ca. 1800. Cf. dark as a pocket.
*dark Cully). A married man with a mistress that he visits only at night: C. 18-early 19 e. A New Canting Dic., 1725; Grose, 1st ed.
dark horse. A horse whose form is unknown to the backers but which is supposed to have a good chance; the turf; from ca. 1830. Dunsire, 'A dark horse ... rushed past the grand stand in sweeping triumph,' 1831. Variant, from ca. 1840, dark un.—2. Hence, a candidate or competitor of whom little is known: from ca. 1860; in C. 20, coll.
dark house. The coll. form of dark-room, one in which madmen were kept: ca. 1860-1850.
dark it. (Es. imp. imperative.) To say nothing, to 'cut it out': tailors: 1929, The Tailor and Cutter, Nov. 29.
dark-lantern. 'The Servant or Agent that Receives the Bribe (at Court), B.E.: ca. 1860-1770.
dark-lantern man, the. St. John of the Long Parliament. Ex his gloomy looks. (Dawson.)
dark 'un, cop a. To be put on over-time in the winter: dockers: from ca. 1920. (The Daily Herald, late July or early Aug., 1936.)
darkened. Closed (eye): pugnacious (- 1857) ; ob. 'Ducange Anglicus.'
Darks. Genoric for the Coal-Hole, the Cider Cellar, the Shades: ca. 1850-80. (Those were places of midnight entertainment in or near the Strand.) Ware.—2. See darky, 3.
*darkman. A watchman: c.: C. 18. Anon., Street-Robberies Consider'd, 1728. Independent of darkman, for lit. it is a man working in the dark, i.e. at night.
*darkmans. Night; twilight; mid-C. 10-19 e. Harman, B.E., Scott. Occ. darkman. 1 e. dark + man(s), q.v.
*darkman's budge. A nocturnal housebreaker's day-plus-night assistant: c.: late C. 17-18. B.E.
darks, the; darkly. The night; occ. twilight: late mid-C. 18-20; ob. G. Parker, 1780 (darkey).
daring in post-G.W. society use as a term of address for even a comparative stranger is rightly considered a., though by 1933 it had > j.
dart. In boxing, a dart-like, i.e. straight-armed
DATE, UP TO

a posteriori; low: C. 20. 'Etymology' legally unexplainable, but fairly obvious.

date, up to. Coll. as (brought) up to the relevant standard of the time (~1800); almost S.B.

date, I. you. Well, you are a queer fish: non-cultural (~1923). Manx. Origin?

date up. (Gen. in passive.) To fill the time of (a loss) with appointments: from ca. 1850; orig. U.S. Ex date, n.

dathole. Incorrect for dathole ("a borosilicate of calcium"): C. 19-20. O.E.D.

datoo. 'A westerly wind in the Straits of Gibraltar and Western Mediterranean': nautical coll.: mid-C. 19-20. Bowen. ↑ ex Arabic.


David, david. An affidavit: the former, C. 19-20; the latter from ca. 1700. In O'Hara's play, Mids., 1764, 'I with my davy will back it, I'll swear.' A facetious variant is Alfred David or Davy, q.v. Also as oath in 'so help me Davy, gen. rendered 'swear my Davy': H., 6th ed., the purer form occurring in H., 2nd ed. (1800).—2. David Jones, see Davy.

Davy (or Davy) I, send it down; often send it down, David, send it down! A military c.p. apropos of a shower, esp. if likely to cause a parade to be postponed: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. B. & P. (Wales has a notoriously wet climate; David, the Welsh patron saint.) New Zealanders and Australians say send her down, Hughie! — David Jones; David Jones's locker. See Davy Jones's locker.

David's (later Davy's) sow, (as) drunk as. Beasty, or very, drunk: coll.; from ca. 1670. Shadwell, 1711. In Bailey's Eranus, 1733, 'When he comes home ... as drunk as David's sow, he does nothing but lie snorting all night long by my side.' Origin obscure, but presumably ancietal. (Apperson.) Also drunk as a dork. —2. See Davy.

Davy, Davy Jones, Old Davy; David Jones. The spirit of the sea: nautical; from ca. 1700. Smollett being the first to mention it in print. Davy Jones is the orig. form, David Jones is recorded by Grose in 1785, Old Davy occurs in Dibdin in 1790, Davy arises ca. 1800. ↑ Jonathan > Jones > Jones, the Davy being added by Welsh sailors: such is W.'s ingenious and prob. etymology, perhaps suggested by Davy Jones's locker, q.v.—2. See David.


Davy Jones's, later Davy's, locker. The sea, esp. as an ocean grave: nautical. Apparently not recorded before Grose, 1785, and then as David Jones's locker.

Davy Jones's natural children. Pirates; smugglers; nautical. C. 19. (Mostly officers.)

davy-man. That member of the crew of a ship captured by a privateer who was left aboard in order to swear an affidavit as to her nationality: naval coll.: C. 19. Bowen.

Davy putting on the coppers for the person(s). A nautical comment on an approaching storm: from ca. 1830; ob. This implies the sailors' belief in an arch-devil of the sea; cf.: Davy's dust. Gunpowder: from ca. 1850; t orig. nautical. Ex Davy = devil.

Davy's locker. See David Jones's locker. — Davy's sow. See David Jones's —dawh. See dawh. dawg. A s. > coll. variation of dog, q.v.: late C. 19-20. Whence, perhaps orig. and certainly for the most part American, put on dawg, to put on 'side', to behave arrogantly: C. 20. C. J. Dennis, dawg, or dak, travel. To travel by relays, esp. in palanquins: Anglo-Indian (cf. dak bungalow, an inn, oc. a shelter-house, on a dak route); from ca. 1720; coll. >, by 1850, S.E. Ex Hindi.

daxies, daxie. A dachshund: coll.: 1809 (O.E.D. Supp.):

day! Good day! coll.: mid-C. 19-20. Cf. afternoon, morning, evening, and night! used in precisely the same voice- and manner-sparing way.

day, call it a. — See call it a day.—Day, the. A variant of der Tag, q.v.

day, day! Good day! good-bye! C. 17-18 coll.; somewhat childish.

Day and Martin. A negro: ca. 1810-1810. Ware, 'Because D. & M.'s blacking was so black.' — Cf. brown polish, q.v.

day-bog. A day-boy: schoolboys': late C. 19-20. Ware. Cf. night-fee.


daylight. A glass not full; university, ca. 1825-80. Ex the S.E. sense for the space between rim and liquor; the toast-tag, No daylight or heel-taps is still occasionally heard.—2. For burn daylight, see burn.—3. A space between a rider and his saddle: from ca. 1870.—4. See daylights.

daylight in the swamp! Time to get out of bed! — Canadian c.p.: C. 20.

daylight into one (coll.) or, both as, the victualling department or the luncheon reservoir, let or knock. To make a hole in, esp. to stab or shoot, hence to kill: in gen., from ca. 1840; but let daylight into one is low coll. recorded by the O.E.D. for 1793. In U.S., make daylight shine through (a person) occurs as early as 1774 (Thorton). Cf. cook one's goose, settle one's hash.

daylightings. The eyes: from ca. 1750. Esp. in the figurative phrase, darken one's daylights. Fielding, 'D-n me, I will darken her daylights' — Gros, 1st ed.


dazzle with science. To out-box; fig., to defeat by sheer brains: coll.: C. 20.


de, as is often used in a s. or coll. sense or connotation, as in de-bag, q.v.


dee-on. v. This U.S. word, implying illicit or fraudulent treatment, or behaviour, has not 'caught on' in the British Empire, except slightly in
DEAD

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DEAD MAN

deacon off, to give (a person) the one: late C. 19-20. Cf. to doctor (O.E.D.).
dead. Abr. dead certainty: racing, from ca. 1870; ob.
dead, adj. (rarely) and adv. (often), has a coll. tinge that is hard to define: this unconventionality may spring from one’s sense of surprise at finding so grave a word used to mean nothing more serious than incomplete, inferior, or than very, directly, straight, etc. See the ensuing phrases. It is, however, doubtful if dead drunk and analogous terms were ever subjective impression, coll.: their antiquity is a hindrance to accurate assessment. The dead phrases may be spelt with or without a hyphen.—2. Dead easy: c.: from ca. 1920. James Curtis, The Girl Kid, 1936.
dead, I, you’ll be a long time. Enjoy yourself while you can and may! : a late C. 19-20 c.p. Cf. the C. 18 proverbial there will be sleeping enough in the grave (Apperson).
dead against. Strongly opposed to: from ca. 1850. Coll.: 3rd ed.
dead and done-for look, have a. To look most woe-begone, wretched: coll. (— 1887). Baumann.
dead and (s)he never called me ‘mother’! A C. 20 c.p. satiric of melodrama, whence, in point of fact, the phrase is drawn. E.g. Christopher Bush, The Case of the April Fools, 1933.
dead as a door-nail, a herring, Julius Caesar, mutton, a tent-peg. Quite dead. All coll. orig.: all except the first still coll. The door-nail phrase occurs as early as 1350 and is found in Fiers Plouman,—it was S.E. by 1600; the herring, C.17-20, e.g. in Rhode’s Bombastes Furioso, 1700; the mutton, from (—)1770; the other two are C. 19-20, though tent-peg has since ca. 1910 been rare. Origins: door-nail is perhaps the striking plate of a door-knocker; a herring dies very soon after capture; Julius Caesar is dawder than Queen Anne; mutton is by definition the flesh of a dead sheep; a tent-peg, like a door-nail, is constantly being hit on the head. Dial. has the synonyms: dead as a hammer, maggot, nit, rag, smell (E.D.D.).
dead beat. A worthless idler, esp. if a sponger as well: orig. (— 1875) U.S., anglicised ca. 1890 and now varying on coll.—2. In Australian a. (— 1898), a man down on his luck or stony-broke. Morris.—3. Most: rhyming s. (— 1914). B. & P.—4. Adj., completely exhausted: from ca. 1820; coll. Pierce Egan in Tom and Jerry, ‘Logie was ... so dead-beat, as to be compelled to cry for quarter.’
dead bird. A certainty: Australian: from ca. 1895; slightly ob. Morris, ‘The metaphor is from pigeon-shooting, where the bird being let loose in front of a good shot is as good as dead.’
dead born. Promissory ooc., bankrupt or ruined: coll.: from ca. 1850.
*dead cargo. Booty less valuable than had been expected: C. 18-20, ob.; o. A New Casing Dict., 1725; Grose, 1st ed.
dead cert. certainty. See cert and certainty.
dead cinch. An intensive of cinch (q.v.) in sense of ‘dead cert.’ Collinson.
dead earnest, in. In S.E., most earnestly; as coll., undoubtedly, in very truth: from ca. 1870.
dead eyes for square? Shall I pass at divisions (examinations)?: Conway Training Ship: from ca. 1890; ob. Masefield.
dead finish, the. The extreme point or instance of courage, cruelty, excellence, endurance, etc.: Australian coll. (— 1881). O.E.D. (Sup.). Prob. ex finish, n., 1.
dead frost. A fiasco, complete failure: theatrical; from ca. 1875. Rare in C. 20, when a complete frost is preferred and used over a much wider range.
dead give-away. A notable indication, or revelation, of guilt or defect: from ca. 1860.
dead gone. Utterly exhausted or collapsed: coll.: from ca. 1870.
dead head. One who travels free, hence eats free, or, esp., goes free to a place of entertainment (of paper): coll.: orig. U.S. (1840): Thornton, anglicised ca. 1864. The Daily Telegraph, May 21, 1883, “Lucia di Lammermoor” is stale enough to warrant the most confirmed deadhead in declining to help make a house.” Wherein v., and deadheadism. Orig. of ‘passengers not paying fare, likened to dead head (of cattle), as opposed to live stock’, W.
dead heat. A race in which two (or more) competitors—animals or men—reach the goal simultaneously: from ca. 1840 (Tom Hood); coll. > S.E. by 1880.
dead horse. Work to be done but already paid for, work in redemption of a debt; hence, distasteful work. Often as work for a or the dead horse, C. 17-20, or draw or pull a ... the former C. 19-20, the latter C. 17-18. Cartwright, 1851; B.E., who implies the use of a dead horse as also = a trifle. Coll. In Australia, work off the dead horse.—2. (West Indies) a shooting star: from ca. 1850. Ex a native Jamaican belief.
dead horse, flog a or the. To work to no, or very little, purpose; make much ado about nothing; cry after split milk. Coll.; from ca. 1840.
dead letter and dead-lock, the former in F. & H., the latter in H., have, prob., always been S.E.]
dead lights. The eyes: nautical; from ca. 1860.
dead-lock. A lock hospital: Cockneys: 1887; slightly ob. Ware.

Dead Louse. The Daedalus ship of war: late C. 18-19th nautical. Grose, 2nd ed. Also Dead Loss (Ware at Fiddler).
*dead lurk. Robbing a house during divine service: c. and low (— 1851); ob. Mayhew.
dead man. (Very rare in singular,) An empty bottle or pot at a drinking-bout or the like: late C. 17-20; orig. military. B.E. Cf. the later dead marine.—2. A loaf charged for but not delivered, or smuggled away by a baker’s man to his master’s prejudice: bakers, from ca. 1790. Grose, 2nd ed.—3. Hence the † sense, a baker (— 1860).
dead man, get a fart of a. Applied to anything extremely improbable: low coll.: ca. 1640-1720. Heywood, 1646; Robertson, 1861. (Apperson.)
DEAD MAN'S LURK

*dead man's lurk. The exorting of money from a dead man's relatives: o.: from ca. 1850. See lurk.

dead marine. An empty bottle at or after a carouse: orig. nautical; from ca. 1820.


dead men's shoes, waiting for. Expecting inheritances: C. 16-20; coll.; S.E. after ca. 1700. Phineas Fletcher, 'Tis tedious waiting dead men's shoes.'


dead nip. An insignificant project turning out a failure: provincial s., C. 19-20, ob. 

dead number. 'The last number in a row or street: perhaps the end of the street': Cockneys': late C. 19-20; ob. Waro.

dead oh! deado. Adv., in the last stage of drunkenness: naval; from ca. 1850. Cf. the earlier nuns on, q.v.

dead one. See dead un.


*dead set. A persistent and pointed effort, attempt; esp. such an attack. From ca. 1720. C. >, in the 1770's, s. or coll. (low). A New Cautious Diet, 1725, 'Dead Set', a term used by Thieves-thieves when they have a Certainty of seizing some of their Clients, in order to bring them to Justice.' The Globe, Nov. 2, 1889, 'Certain persons ... are making a dead set against the field sports of Britain.'

dead soldier. A C. 20 military variant of dead marine, q.v. B. & P.

dead sowl's eye. A button-hole badly made: tailors': from ca. 1840; ob.

dead struck. (Of actors) breaking down very badly in a performance: theatrical; from ca. 1860; ob.


dead to rights. Adv., certainly, undoubtedly; absolutely. Orig. U.S.; in England from ca. 1896, but never gen. and now ob. Cf. to rights, q.v.—2. In the (criminal) act. e. and low: late C. 19-20. James Spencer, Limney Brook's, 1834, 'I had been caught 'dead to rights', 'as the crooks say.' Cf. banged to rights.

dead to the wide. See wide, to: the.—2. dead to the world. See world, dead to the.

*dead un (or 'un). In C. 19-20 c., an uninhabited house.—2. A half-quartern loaf: from ca. 1870.—3. A horse that will be either scratched, dozed, or pulled (cf. safe un, q.v.): the turf, from ca. 1867; H. & G. ed.; Hawley Smart in Social Sinners, 1888.—4. A bankrupt company: commercial: late C. 19-20. Ware. Cf. cadaver.

dead with. See seen dead with.

dead yet, not. Very old: a theatrical c.p. (1883; ob.) applied to 'an antique fairy' (Waro).


deadly-lively, adv. and adj. Alternately—or combining—the—dull (or depressing) and the lively; with forced joviality, esp. to no purpose: coll.: 1823, 'Jon Boo'. Cf. dead alive.


deadomer. See dead-oner.


dead one (or 'un). A cocked fig.: military: from ca. 1912. S. Rogerson, Twelve Days, 1933. Figs gen. cause a soft stool.

*dead un, turn a. Not to listen: late C. 10-20 c. Charles E. Leach. (i.e., ear.)

deal, a. A lot of ( ... ) ; coll.: from ca. 16. 'Frequently for a good or great deal, etc.' O.E.D.—2. Hence, adv., much; coll.; mid-C. 18-20.

deal, do a. To conclude a bargain; coll.: late C. 19-20.

deal, wet the. To drink to the conclusion of a bargaining; coll.: from ca. 1860, Hindley, in A Cheap Jack, 'We will wet the deal'.

deal it out (to). To deal out punishment (to a person): Australian coll. (—1916). C. J. Dennis.

deal of glass about, there's a. A person or a thing is showy; first-rate; 'the ticket'; 'ex large show-windows. From ca. 1860; ob.

deal of weather about, there's a. We're in for a storm: nautical coll.: mid-C. 19-20. Waro.

dealsuit. A coffin, esp. if parish-provided; coll.: from ca. 1850. Cf. eternity box and the Fr. paletot sans manches.

dean. A small piece of wood tied round a small faggot: Winchester College; from ca. 1850. Cf. bishop, b., 3.


deal? o(oh) dear! Mild coll. exclamations (cf. dear me, q.v.); resp. C. 19-20, late C. 17-20. O.E.D. Perhaps oh dear = oh, dear God or Lord; dear is an abbr. of oh dear!}


dear me! A mild exclamation: coll.: from ca. 1770. Perhaps ex It. Dio mi (salve),! God save me! (W.) In dial. there are at least thirteen synonyms: E.D.D.
DEAR MOTHER,

I am sending you ten shillings—but not this week. A lower classes' and military c.p. of C. 20. B. & P.

dearce. A C. 18 variant of dearie. (O.E.D.)
dearcest. The membrum virile. From ca. 1740; orig. literary and euphemistic; from ca. 1870, jocular and coll.
dearie, deary. A low coll. form of address used by women: late C. 18–20.
dear me! Slightly more sorrowful or lugubrious than ‘dear me!’ (q.v.): coll. († orig. dial.): from ca. 1780. O.E.D.
death, done to. Too fashionable; trite; coll. (—1887) > by 1910, S.E. Baumann.
death, dress to. To dress oneself in the extreme of fashion; coll. from ca. 1850. Cf. dress to kill and (q.v.) killing.
death, like. (Or, much later, like grim death.) Very firmly or resolutely; coll.; from ca. 1780.
death, regarding one as. Absolutely certain; from ca. 1790: S.E. >, ca. 1890, coll.
dead. Slightly from, from, from Us. fairly late C. late Oxford Royal c. orig. from.
dead, sprung. A ft, absolute certain; from ca. 1790; S.E. >, ca. 1890, coll.
dead, work. Butyl chloride, a very powerful drug; C. 20 c.
dead on. (With to be.) Very fond of; clever or capable at dealing with: orig. (—1847) U.S.; anglicised ca. 1875. (Cf. dead (nuts) on, nuts on.) In U.S. (1842: Thornton) it also was fatal to—a sense anglicised ca. 1890.

death or Glory Boys. The 17th Lancers: military cull; late C. 18–20. F. & Gibbons, ‘From their badge, a death’s head with the words “Or Glory,”’ Cf. Bingham’s Dandies and Horse Marines, q.v.

death’s head upon a mop-stick. ‘A poor, miserable, unaccustomed fellow,’ Grose, 1st ed.: late C. 18–
early 19.
deb, v. A G.W. term belonging to a certain English division, spreading to the other divisions of the same corps, and derived from the name of its commander, reputed to do this: (Of a general) to delay the zero hour of his attack until after the zero hours of the troops on his flanks and thus to ensure the safety of his flanks.
de-bag. An Oxford and (less) Cambridge term, from ca. 1890: to remove the ‘bags’ or trousers of (an objectionable fellow student).
debash. A penny: South Africa: from ca. 1870.
déboc. A début: sol, spelling: from ca. 1885.
débus, (loosely debus), v.t. To get out of a bus or any motor transport: military s. (1915) >, by 1918, coll. Opp. embus(s). Hence, a débusing point was the place at which the men left the vehicles. F. & Gibbons.
décamp. To camp (v.i.): catachresis: late C. 17–mid-18. O.E.D.
décesses. ‘Pads used by actors, as distinct from actresses, to ameliorate outline,’ Ware: theatrical cull; ca. 1890–19–20.
décent, décentish. Passable; fairly good or agreeable; tolerable; likable. Senses 1–3 arise ca. 1700 (the form in -š is ca. 1814) and, in C. 19–20, are S.E. The fourth sense is orig. and still Public Schoolboyish (esp. in décent fellows).
décider. (Gen. the d.) The winning set from even, i.e., the 3rd or 5th: lawn tennis coll.: from ca. 1825. Occ. in other games, e.g. cards. Cf. conqueror, q.v. Ex racing, when a décider is a heat run off after a dead heat (O.E.D.).
déclassé. Catachrestically as almost—annulliate; orig. and mostly journalistic: late C. 19–
20. Esp. in literally decimated. Ex ‘L. déclassé, to put to death every tenth man of units, as punishment for mutiny, etc.’ W. The same applies to decimation.
deck. A pack of cards: late C. 16–20; until ca. 1720, S.E. (Shakespeare has it in the third King Henry VI); then dial. and, until ca. 1800, coll.; very gen. in U.S. In C. 20 England, it is confined, more or less, to the underworld.—2. In Anglo-
deck, go off the. To leave the ground: Air Force: 1915. F. & Gibbons. Perhaps at first of naval planes.
déckel is, in C. 20, gen. considered a misspelling of deckle in d. edge (unept edge of a sheet of paper).
déckie. Same as decker, s.: coll. from ca. 1819. O.E.D. (Sup. V.)
déclare off, v.t. To cancel (an arrangement, a match, etc.): v.i., to withdraw, arbitrarily or un-
spontingly. Both coll; from the late 1740’s. Fielding; George Eliot, ‘When it came to the point, Mr. Haynes declared off.’ (O.E.D.)
découct. Bankrupt: C. 16; either pedantic or affectedly facetious coll. Lit., thoroughly cooked, i.e. done to a turn. Cf. the C. 17 decocor.

décoy-bird or -duck. A swindling-decoy: C. 17–
20; low coll.; S.E. after ca. 1790.
décus. A crown piece: late C. 17–19. Ex the L. motto, décus et tuamens on the rim. Shadwell; Scott, ‘Master Grahame ... has got the déceus and the smells.’ B.E. cites as c., as it prob. was for some years.
Dee-Donk. A Frenchman: Crimean War, when, by the way, the French soldiers called the English \(\text{I say}'s\), precisely as the Chinese mob once did (see Yule & Burnell). Cf. *Wes-Wes*, q.v.

*deed*. Abbr. indeed: coll.: mid-C. 16-20.

Since ca. 1870, mostly Scottish.

*deeker*. 'A thief kept in pay by a constable,' Haggart in his *Life*, 1821: Scottish c.: †. See *deener*.

deep. SLY; artful: from ca. 1780. Pun, 1841: I can scarcely believe my eyes. Oh, he's a deep one; a deep one is defined by Grose (2nd ed.) as 'a thorough-paced rogue.' Ex the C. 16-20 S.E. sense, profoundly crafty.

deep end. See end, go off the deep.

deep grief. Two black eyes: ca. 1875-1900.

Jocular on full mourning.


deer-stalker. A low-crowned hat, close-fitting and gen. of felt: ca. 1870; coll. soon > S.E.


deevee. -vy; dev(e)y. Delightful, charming: 1800—ca. 1897, H. A. Vachel speaking of it in 1899 as †. A perversion of dwee, q.v. O.E.D. (Sup.) records also the adv. in—ly.

deeyer, the. The Deceased Wife's Sister Bill: political: 1907; ob. Collinson. A portmanteau word.


deferrèd stock. Inferior soup: ca. 1800-1900; in the City (see City). The body or solid part of soup is stock.


deficient. A person mentally deficient; also adj. C. 20; much less common than mental as adj.


deformality. Difformity († S.E., want of uniformity or of conformity): C. 16-19: cachectic. O.E.D.


degummy. (Of officers) removed from command because of failure or incompetence: military: late 1914; ob. F. & Gibbons. Ex Fr. dégommé, lit. of gum removed from silk fabrics. Cf. unstuck, q.v.

degree, to a. To a serious, though undefined, extent: coll.: from ca. 1730.

*degrees*, have taken one's. To have been imprisoned in an 'academy' or gaol: c.: ca. 1820-50. Jon Bee.

*degurger*. A degree: Oxford undergraduates: from ca. 1895. For the form, cf. mensuuger and testugger. (Ware.)

dak. See deck, 2, and cf.

dakho; gen. dakho, n. (esp. take a dakho) and v. To see; to, or a glance. Vagrants' (—1865), ex Romany dk, to look, to see (Sampson). In Army, esp. in G.W., common since ca. 1890, via Hindu- stan.

del. See D.T., 2.


delicate condition (late C. 19-20) or state of health (1850, Dickens, in a) Fruget: euphemistic coll. (O.E.D. Sup.)

delighted! Certainly!; with pleasure! C. 19-20; S.E. worn, in C. 20, to coll.

deliver the goods. See goods, the.

dell. In mid-C. 16—early 19 c., a young girl; but in C. 17—early 19 low s., a young wanton, a mistress (cf. doxy). Harman, Jonson, B.E., Grose, Ainsworth. Eymology ?

delo disam. See delo nummow.

delo num o the barrack. In late C. 19-20 c., the master of the house. Barrack = house, while delo num, in back s., = old man.

delo nummow. An old woman: back s.—1874.) H., 5th ed. Earlier, *dilo numo*, q.v. There is also delo daim, an old maid (Ware).


Delphi. The Adelphi Theatre: theatrical coll.: 1861. Mayhew; Ware.

delude. See elude.

delve it. To work head down (as in digging) and sawing fast: tailors': from ca. 1865.

dem. See demn.

demand the box. To call for a bottle: nautical: from ca. 1820; ob. Egan's Grose.

*demander* (or *demandor*) for *glimmer* (or *glimmar*). A pretended victim of fire: C. 18-19 c.

demir. In facetious etymology and practice, often either coll. or near-coll., though rarely so used before C. 19.—2. As n., gen. pl., a convalescent; a person half-fit: military (officers'): 1915. F. & Gibbons.

demi-beau. See *sub-beau*.

demi-doss. A penny bed: vagrants' and low; ca. 1870-1914.

demi-rep. A woman whose general reputation or, esp. chastity is in doubt. First recorded in Fielding's *Tom Jones*, 1749. ... Vulgarly called a demi-rep; that is, ... a woman who intrigues with every man she likes, under the name and appearance of virtue ... in short, whom everybody knows to be what nobody calls her.' By 1800, coll.; by 1840 (except in the occ. variant *demi-rip*) S.E.; by 1900, ob. Ex reputation.

dem. See demn.

demmkkj, a coll. variant of *dammn*, is recorded by O.E.D. for 1785.

demm. From late C. 17 in 'profane' usage; the latter the gen. form in C. 19-20. Orig. euphemisms; but rather are they jocular coll.

when facetious, esp. in derivatives dem (earlier dem'd) and demnition (as in demnition bow-wow,
DEVIL, AMERICAN


deserve (or the) cushion. See cushion, deserve a.


despatchers, dispatches. False dice with two sets of numbers and no low pips: low; perhaps orig. c.: from mid-1790's. The Times, Nov. 27, 1866. They soon 'despatch' the unwary. Cf. dispatches.


desperately, adv. Both from early C. 17 in loose sense of 'awful(ly)'. Coll.; the adv. —esp. as an intensive (= extremely, very) —remaining so, the adv, having, ca. 1750, > S.E.


destiny. One's flanc'd (rarely flanc'd): from ca. 1910: middle-class coll.

describe. A frequent error for desiccate: late C. 16-20.

detail, but that's a ! or a mere detail ! In the 1800's, the former was 'a current phrase' humorously making light of something difficult or important; the latter is the more gen. post-War form: a c.p. > coll., > by 1930, S.E.

detachment. Incorrect for (legal) attachment: C. 18. As are detainor, -our, for (legal) detainer: C. 17-18. O.E.D.


detest, attest, protest and testify were, mid-C. 18-early 17, occ. confused. O.E.D.

detrimental. An ineligable suitor, also (and orig.) a younger brother to an heir to an estate: from ca. 1850—2. Hence, a male flirt: from ca. 1850. All three nuances are Society slang, slightly ob. by 1929. 3. In C. 20, a male pervert: coll.


decue; occ. decease, C. 17-18; decew, C. 17; dewse, C. 18; duce, C. 17-19 (O.E.D.). Bad luck, esp. in examinations (e.g. the desire for): from ca. 1650. Hence, perdition, the devil, esp. in examinations (e.g. the devil in the): from ca. 1850. Cf. its use as an emphatic negative (e.g. the devil a lot): from ca. 1710. These three senses are very intimately linked; they derive either from old Fr. deus, L. deus, or from the devil (Ger. das dase) at cards: cf. deceit, ace, a throw of two and one, hence a wretched throw, hence bad luck. —2. Hence also the two at dice or at cards (mostly among gamblers); and 3, two-point (mostly among gamblers and Dublin newsmen): both now and dating from ca. 1880. No. 3 is in B.E. as duce, q.v.

decue, do go to. To degenerate; to fall into ruin: coll.; from ca. 1840.

*decue-a-vil(le). See daisyville.

decue and ace. (A) face: rhyming s.: late C. 19-20. F. & Gibbons.

decue and all, the. Much in a violent or humorous sense: coll. —1782. Storm. (O.E.D.)

decue to pay, the. Unpleasant consequences or an awkward situation to be faced: from ca. 1830; in C. 20, coll. Thackeray, 1854, 'There has been such a row . . . and the deuce to pay, that I'm inclined to go back to Cumtartary.'

decue (or devil with, to play the. To harm greatly; send to rack and ruin: from ca. 1780; in C. 20, coll.

decued. (Of things) plagues, confounded; (persons) devilish; (both) excruciating. Also as adv. From ca. 1774. Mme D'Arblay (O.E.D.); Michael Scott, in The Midge, 1836, 'Quacco . . . evidently in a deuced quandary.' Ex deuce, q.v.


decually. Pungently; extremely: coll.; from ca. 1815. Thackeray. (O.E.D.)

*deuces. In racing c., from ca. 1860: odds of 2 to 1.

deece. See dece.

*deeseville. See daisyville. Hence deeseville-stampers, country carriers: late C. 17-18 c. B.E.—

*deus(e)wins. Twopence: 1767, Coles: c.

devastation; devastator. Incorrect for devastator, devastator. O.E.D.

devastating has from ca. 1824, been Society s., as in 'Quite too devastating, darling.' Cf. journalistic use. E. F. Benson, Transit of Gold, 1935, 'The banal epithets of prizeless and devastating just fitted her.'

devay. See deevie.

deevil. The errand boy in a printery—perhaps orig. the boy that took the printed sheets as they issued from the press: (—1083) orig. printers' s., by 1800 printers' j. and gen. coll.; by 1900, S.E. Punch in 1830 spoke of 'the author's paradise' as 'a place where there are no printers' devils.'—2. In law, a junior counsel that, go, without fee, does professional work, esp. the 'getting-up' of cases, for another: from ca. 1850; in C. 20 considered as S.E.—3. Hence, a person doing hack work (often highly intelligent and specialised work) for another: from ca. 1880; coll.; after ca. 1895, S.E. 'I'm a devil . . . I give plots and incidents to popular authors, sir, write poetry for them, drop in situations, jokes, work up their rough material,' J. R. Sims, 1889.―4. A (firework) cracker: from ca. 1740; coll. till ca. 1800, when it > S.E. Hence, perhaps, the C. 19-20 coll, sense, a piece of firewood, esp. kindling, soaked in resin.—5. A grilled chop or steak seasoned with mustard and ooc. with cayenne: late C. 18-20; coll. soon S.E. Grose, 2nd ed., defines it as a brutal tarkey-gizzard dully seasoned and adds, 'From being hot in the mouth.' Cf. attorney.—6. Gin seasoned with chillies: licensed victualers and then public-house in gen.; from ca. 1820. G. Smeeaton, Doings in London, 1828.―7. (Fighting) spirit, great energy, a temper notable if aroused: coll.; from ca. 1820.—8. A sandstorm, esp. a sand spout: military (India and Egypt; by 1890, South Africa); from ca. 1830. In C. 20, S.E. —9. Among sailors, any scam difficult to caulk: (7 C. 18.) C. 19-20—10. See devil himself.

devil, v. To act 'as devil' to a lawyer: from ca. 1860.—2. To do hack work: from ca. 1880. In C. 20, both senses are S.E. See devil, n., 2 and 3.

devil, a or the, followed by of a(n). An intensive of no very precise meaning: coll.; from ca. 1750. Esp. in a, the devil of a mess, row, man, woman. Michael Scott, 1836, 'A devil of a good fight he made of it.'—2. Also, the devil (without y) is used intensively as a negative, as in 'The devil a thing was there in sight, not even a small white speck of a sail,' Michael Scott in The Midge.

devil, go to the. To fall into ruin: late C. 18-20; but the imprecation go to the devil dates from C. 14.

devil, hold a light or candle to the. See candle.

devil, how or what or when or where or who the. An exclamation indicative of annoyance, wonder, etc.: the second, from M.E. and ex Fr. que diable!; the others C. 17-20: coll. The first occurs in Pope, the second in Garrick, the fifth in Mrs. Cowley.

devil, little or young. A coll. term of address, playful or exasperated: C. 17-20.

devil, play the. To do great harm; v.t., with. Coll. from ca. 1810; earlier, S.E. Egan, 1821, 'The passions ... are far from evil, | But if not well confined they play the devil.'

devil a bit says Punch, the. A firm though jocular negative: ca. 1850-1910; coll. (Without says Punch: from ca. 1700.)

devil and sailor from the. (Gen. preceded by there's.) A row, disturbance, affidavit: late C. 18-20, ob.; coll. Perhaps ex a sailors' riot at the performance of The Tailors: A Tragedy for Warm Weather. Cf. cucumber time, q.v.

devil (and all) to pay, the. Very unpleasant consequences to face: C. 15-20; coll. 'Swift in his Journal to Stella, 'Supposed,' says the S.D., 'to refer to bargains made by wizards, etc., with Satan, and the inevitable payment in the end.'

devil and baker. A C. 20 coll. allusion to the proverbial pull or haul devil, pull baker!, said of a context of varying fortunes, C. 17-20.

devil and ninepence go with (her, etc.)!, the. A semi-proverbial coll.: C. 18. T. Brown (- 1704), 'That's money and company.' (Apperson) In C. 19-20 (ob.), with sxipence for ninepence.

devil and Tommy. See Tommy, hell and devil and you'll see his horns or tail, talk of the. Applied to a person that, being spoken of, unexpectedly appears: coll. proverbial, C. 17-20.

devil beats or is beating his wife with a shoulder of mutton, the. 'It rains whilst the sun shines,' Grose, 3rd ed.: semi-proverbial coll.: late C. 18-mid. 19.

devil by the tail, pull the. To go rapidly to ruin; to take an undue risk; to be at one's last shift. Coll.; from ca. 1750.


Devil Dick. Richard Porsen, the scholar (d. 1808): very combative. (Dawson.)

devil-dodger. A clergyman, esp. if a rater; late C. 18-20. Lackington, 1791.-2. (Cf. holy Joe.) A very religious person: mid-C. 19-20. 'Ducange Anglicus.'—3. Also, a person that goes sometimes to church, sometimes to chapel (- 1800); ob. E., 2nd ed. Variants of sense 1: devil-catcher (rare), -driver or -pilot, and -scolder, all slightly ob. Cf. snub-devil.

devil doubt you, the. (Often with addition of I don't': which explains it.) A proletarian c.p. of late C. 19-early 20. Ware.


devil go with you and ninepence or sixpence. See devil and ninepence.


devil is blind, when the. Never; most improbably. Coll.: mid-C. 17-20; ob. Cf. blue moon.

devil-may-care. Reckless; spiritueto free and easy, with connotation of real or assumed happiness.

devil may dance in his pocket, the. He is penniless: C. 15-early 19 coll. Because there is no coin with a cross on it: no coin whatsoever.

devil-on-the-coals. A small, very quickly baked damper: from ca. 1800; Australian rural coll.: >, ca. 1900, S.E. The Rev. A. Polehampton, Kangaroo Land, 1882 (Morris).

devil-pitcher, -scolder. See devil-dodger.

devil take . . . ! Followed by me, him, etc. Variants of take are fetch, fly away with, snatch.

Exclamations of impatience, anger. Coll.: C. 16-20; earlier in other forms.

devil to pay. See devil (and all) to pay, the.

devil to pay and no pitch hot, the. See pay and .

devil's (occ. the old gentleman's) bed-post(s) or four-poster. At cards, the four of clubs, held to be unlucky: coll.; from ca. 1855. Captain Chamier, The Arbeuthna, 1837. Cf.:

devil's bedstead, the. The thirteenth card of the suit lad: whist players' coll. (- 1887). Baumann.

devil's bones, teeth. C. 17-20, 19 coll.: dice. Etheredge, 1664, 'I do not understand dice . . . hang the devil's bones!' Cf.:

devil's books, the. Playing cards: C. 18-20, ob.; coll. till ca. 1810, when it > S.E. Swift, 1720, 'Cards are the devil's own invention, for which reason, time out of mind, they are and have been called the devil's books.' Also, ca. 1640-1720, the devil's prayer-book, likewise coll. (Collinson.)


devil's colours or livery. Black and yellow: coll.: mid-C. 19-20, ob.

devil's daughter. A shrew: coll.: mid-C. 18-20; from ca. 1820, mainly dial. Grose, 3rd ed., 'It is said of one who has a termagant for his wife, that he has married the Devil's daughter, and lives with the old folks.'

devil's daughter's portion. A mid-C. 18-early 19 c.p. applied—on account of their impositions on sailors and travellers—to Devil, Dover, and Harwich; Helvoet and the Devil, Grose, 1st ed. (q.v.).

devil's delight, kick up the. To make a din, a disturbance: from ca. 1860; in C. 20, coll. Whyte-Melville in General Bounce.

devil's dinner-hour, the. Midnight: artisane: late C. 19-20; ob. Ware, 'In reference to working late.'

devil's dozen. Thirteen: coll.; ca. 1600-1850. From the number of witches supposed to attend a witches' sabbath. Cf. baker's (q.v.), printers' and long dozen.

devil's dust. Shoddy, which is made from old cloth shredded by the devil, a disintegrating machine: (- 1840, when Carlyle uses it); coll. recognised as S.E. by 1860. Popularised by a Mr. Ferrand in the House of Commons on March 4, 1842, when, to prove the worthlessness of shoddy, he tore a piece of devil's dust into shreds.—2. Gunpowder: military; from ca. 1870; ob. Hawley Smart in Hard Lines, 1883.

devil's guts, the. A surveyor's chain: mid-C. 17-early 19; rural. Ray, 1878; Grose, 1st ed., 'So called by farmers, who do not like that their land should be measured by their landlords.'
devil's in Ireland, as sure as the. A coll. asseveration (— 1823); ob. 'Jon Bee.'
Devil's Later Issue. See Dear Little Innocents.
devil's livery. See devil's colours.
devil's luck and my own (too), the. No luck at all: lower and middle classes' coll.: late C. 19–20. Ware. Cf. devil's own luck, q.v.
devil's own, adj. Devilish; very difficult or troublesome, as e.g. in devil's own dance or business. Coll.: C. 19–20.
Devil's Own, the. (Abbr. The Devil's Own Connaught Boys.) The 88th Foot: military: from ca. 1810. The name is supposed to have been given by General Picton in the Peninsula War, when the 88th were devils in battle—and in billet.—2. (Only as the Devil's Own) The Inns of Court Volunteers: bestowed by George III in 1803 (F. & Gibbons). Ex p.e.n. (see devil, n. 2). Mark Lemon, in his J.E. Book, 1864, gives a fanciful etymology: '... lawyers always went through thick and thin.' Cf. Devil's Royals, q.v.
devil's own boy. A young blackguard; a notable 'imp of the devil'; coll.: C. 19–20, ob.
devil's own ship. A pirate; coll.: C. 19.
devil's paternoster, say the. To grumble: C. 17–18; coll. TERENCE in English, 1614.
devil's prayer-book, the. See devil's books.
Devil's Royals, the. The 80th Foot, from 1881 the Royal West Kent Regiment: military: 1809, when at Vimiera, 'they charged a French column of five regiments with seven guns and routed it'; F. & Gibbons.
devil's smiles. April weather; alternations of sunshine and shower: C. 19–20, ob.; coll.
devil's tattoo. An impatient or vacant drumming on, e.g. the table, with one's fingers, with one's feet on the floor. Coll.; after ca. 1805, S.E. Scott, Lyonet, Thackery.
devilish, adv. Much, very: from early C. 17: coll.; in C. 19–20 almost S.E. Grose cleverly satirises its use. Orig. it had the force of the C. 20 hellichs (adv.).
devil, blue. See blue devil.
devor. A plum cake: Charterhouse, from ca. 1875. Ex the L.
devotional habits. Applied to a horse eager, or apt, to go on his knees: the tabbies (— 1860); ob. H., 2nd ed.
devy. Devon, Devonshire.
dew-clap. Incorrect for develop: C. 16. O.E.D.
dew-drink. A drink before breakfast, as to farm labourers before they begin a non-union day's harvesting. Coll.: mid-C. 19–20. Like dew-bit, more gen. and early in dial. II., 3rd ed.
dew on, (have) got a. (To be or) sweating: miners': C. 20. The Daily Herald, Aug. 11, 1936.
dew o' Ben Nevis. Whiskey: taverns': C. 20. Ex a specific whiskey. (Ware.)
dewce. See dence.
dewd. See dence, 2. Esp. in dew wins, two-pence: —dewse. See dence, 1.
dewse-a-vyle. Cf. dewseville and see daisville.
dewskitch. A thrashing, esp. a sound one: (— 1851, ob.) vagrants' e., and low s.
dexter. (On the, belonging to the) right: facetiously coll. ex heraldry. From ca. 1870; in C. 20, rare in England, very gen. in U.S., esp. in sport (e.g. baseball). Atkin in House Scraps (a humorous ballad of the Stock Exchange), 1887: 'His "dexter ogle" has a mouse; | His conk's dovold of bark.'
dhirzi. See derry.
dhobi wallah. A variant, late C. 19–20, of sense 1 of the proceeding.
diagram. (Facetious or) sol. for: diaphragm. C. 19–20.
dial. The face; low: from ca. 1830. Orig. dial-plate: Lex. Ital., 1811. (Cf. frontispiece, esp. clock.) Variant, dial-piece.—2. In c., a thief or a convict sailing from Seven Dials, (now part of W.C.1), London: ca. 1840–90.
dial, turn the hands on the. To disfigure a person's face: ca. 1830–1910; low.
dial-piece, -plate. See dial, 1.–alter one's dial-plate. To disfigure his face: 1811.
dialectal (of dialect) and dialectical (of dialectics) are, C. 19–20, often confused.
[Dialogue variegating on opp.: see note at Chants.]
Dials, the. The Seven Dials district, noted in C. 18–19 for being 'louzy' with low criminals: coll.: C. 19–20. Baumann. (Between Charing Cross and Oxford Street.)
diametrical. Incorrect for diametrically. O.E.D.
Diamond Coates. See Romey.
Diamond Dinks, Square Dinks, Triangle Dinks, etc. The 2nd, 1st, 3rd Battalion of the New Zealand Rifle Brigade: N.Z. military in G.W. The 4th is the Aree-Ups, q.v. Ex the shapes of the shoulder-patches.


dibble-dabble. An irregular splashing: noisy violence; rubbish: mid-C. 16-20; coll. till C. 19, then dial. By reduplication of dabble. O.E.D.

dib(b)a. Money: from ca. 1810. H. & J. Smith, 1812 (O.E.D.). Prob. ex distles, a children's game played with sheep's knuckle-bones or with rounded pebbles.—2. A pool of water: nautical coll.: mid-C. 19-20. Bowen. Ex Scottish dib.—3. Fita; esp. use one's dibs: C. 20. (George Ingram, Stap., 1897). Cf. origin of sense 1. *dibs. The names of false dice are orig. c. and few > s. The terms, q.v. separately, are: bristles, cingues, denises, dures, direct contraries, fulhams, gord(e)s, graniens, languets, aices, and frases or tresse. See also such terms as bar(re)d, caster, flat, long, vantage.

dice, box the. To carry a point by trickery: legal; from ca. 1850.

dic(h)rotal, dic(h)rotism. Incorrect for dicrotal, dicrotism: from mid-19th's. O.E.D.

Dick. A man; lad, fellow. As in Tom, Dick and Harry (see Words /, pp. 70-71); late C. 16-20. Ex Richard. (Coll. rather than s.)


*Dick, v.t. and i. To look, peer; watch: North County c.; from ca. 1850. H., 3rd ed. Ex Romany; cf. deko.


Dick, in the days or reign of Queen. Never: coll. from ca. 1800; ob. (Cf. devil is blind, when the; blue moon; month of Sundays) Grose, 3rd ed., however, mentions that that happened in the reign of Queen Dick was applied to 'any absurd old story' (cf. Dick's hadnabag, q.v.)


dick, swallow the. To use long words; esp. to use them without knowledge of their meaning. Coll.; from ca. 1870. See dick, n., 1.

dick, take one's. To take an oath: from ca. 1861. See dick, n., 2.

dick, up to. Artful, knowingly wide-awake; also, up to the mark, excellent: from ca. 1870. J. Greenwood, Under the Blue Blanket: 'Aint that up to dick, my boy!' As in the preceding term, dick abbr. declaration: cf. davy for affidavit (W.).

dick shot off. See dick, 4.


dicken! See dicken!

dickens (also dickins, C. 17-18; dickings, C. 19; dickons, C. 18-19, O.E.D.), the, rarely a. The devil, the deuce, esp. in exclamation: late C. 16-20: perhaps coll. Shakespear, Urrughal, Gay, Foote, Sims; C. Haddon Chambers. What the dickens could I do? 'In orizal a euphemistic evasion for devil; either an allusion from devilism (S.O.D.) or ex Dicken or Diccon (W.). Cf. dickin / q.v.

Dick(e)y. The second mate: nautical: mid-C. 19-20. Bowen. See sense 6 of:


dicky(e)-domus. A small 'house' or audience: theatrical: from ca. 1860; ob. Ex dicky(e)-ady, adj., 1, and L. domus, a house or home.

dicky(e)-flurry. 'A run on shore, with all its accompaniments': nautical: late C. 19-20. Bowden. See dicky, adj., 2.


dicky(e)-lagger. A bird-catcher: from ca. 1870; low. Ex lag, to seize.


dicky(e)-run. A naval variant of dicky(e)-flurry, q.v.: same period. Bowden.

Dick(e)y Sam. A native, occ. an inhabitant, of Liverpool: from ca. 19-20. Coll. ex Lancashire dial. H., 3rd ed., 1864; The Athenaeum, Sept. 10, 1870. 'We cannot even guess why a Liverpool man is called a Dicky Sam.'

Dick(e)y Scrub. A variant of the nickname Heigh-Ho, q.v.
dick(e)y with. all. (Rare, except in dial., in the absolute use exemplified in Thackeray: 1837, "Sam . . . said it was allicky.") Queer; gone wrong, upset, ruined; 'all up with'. From ca. 1790. Grose, 3rd ed. Poole, in Hamlet Travestied, 1811: 'O, Hamlet! 'tis all dickey with us both.' Moore; Barham. Origin?
dickin, dicken! 'A term signifying disgusting or disbelief,' C. J. Dennis: Australian: C. 20. Sometimes dickin on!, stop that, it's too much to believe, it's disgusting. Ex the dicken!淡.
dickings, dickens, dickens. See dickens.
Dick's handath. A makeshift: proletarian and provincial: C. 19-20; ob. Ware. Ex:
Dick's handath, as . . as. Any such adj. as queer relates the second as. An intensive tag of chameleon sense and problematic origin, mid-
C. 18-early 19; surviving in dial., as in the Cheshire 'All my eye and Dick's handath.' Grose, 2nd ed; Southey. (Apperson.) In C. 19, occ. as queer as Dick's handath, that went nine times round and wouldn't meet.
dickesse. See dixie.
dicky. See dickey, n. and adj., all senses.
dictionary, up to. Learned: coll.: C. 19.
did, does (or do) omitted: see 'present infinitive'.
—2. Occ. in sol. speech, did is inserted tautologically before ought: C. 19-20. E.g., Dorothy Sayers, Have His Carcass, 1932, 'I did ought to have spoke up at the time.'—3. (did.) Done: sol.: C. 19-20. Esp. in C. 20 jocular c.p., (4) can't be did, which is very ob. 
diddeys. A C. 18 variant (Grose, 2nd ed.) of:
diddies. The paps: low; from ca. 1780. Grose, 2nd ed. (as above). A corruption of tittles.
diddle, v. To swindle: 'do; 'do for', i.e. ruin or kill: from ca. 1803 (S.O.D. recording at 1806). Moor; Scott; 'And Jack is diddleed, said the baronet.' Ex Jeremy Diddler in Kenney's Raising the Wind, 1893. 2. To trifle time away (v. i.): from ca. 1827, ob.; coll.—3. To shake (v. t.) coll., perhaps orig. dial.: late C. 18-20, ob. as coll.—4. Hence, to copulate with: low coll. or s.: C. 19-20.—5. To toddle: rare (—1923). Manch

diddle-dabble. Nonsense; stuff and nonsense: coll.: from ca. 1770.
diddling. Sly, petty cheating or meanly sharp practice; chronic borrowing. Coll.: from ca. 1810. Ex the v., 1.
diddum, adj. Dishonest; illicitly manipulated: low, esp. grafters: C. 20. Philips, Allingham, Chepman, 1934. "It's these ruddy diddum machines won't do it's said." He. i.e. diddle 'em.
diddum back. The game of crown and anchor: military: from ca. 1880. (F. & Gibbons.)
diddly-pont. The pudendum muliebris: low; from ca. 1860. t rhyming s. on spout.
diddums! Did you (or did she, etc.) then! nursery coll. in counseling a child: late C. 19-20. Manchon. And see esp. Norah March's excellent article entitled 'Away with all the "Diddums" 'Jargon' in The Evening Standard, May 28, 1934. By perversion of did you (or he).
diddy, see diddies.—diddn. See did'n.
did-n' diden. Didn't: sol.: C. 19 (? earlier)-20. Time and Tide, Nov. 24, 1934, 'Ran right into the back of 'er, diden 'e?'
dido, cut a. A naval variant (C. 20) of the next.
F. & Gibbons.
didoes, cut up (occ. one's). To play pranks: orig. (from ca. 1830) U.S.; anglicised in the 1860's; slightly ob. H., 1st ed. Etymology ?
die. (Gen. pl.) A last dying speech; a criminal trial on a capital charge: low: ca. 1850-70. H., 1st ed.—2. See die of it.
die by the hedge. (Or hyphenated.) Inferior meat: provincial coll. (? orig. dial.): C. 19-20, ob. die dunghill. See dumphill, die.
Died(-)Hards, the. The 57th Regiment of Foot, now the Middlesex Regiment (British Army): military, from 1811. Supposed to arise ex the colonel's words at bloody Albuera, 'Die hard, my men, die hard.' F. & H.; F. & Gibbons.
die in a devil's or a horse's nightcap; one's shoes (later boots): like a dog; on a fish-day. To be hanged: coll. All four were current in late C. 17-18; the first and second survived in early C. 19. The second, with boots and owing to U.S. influence, has since ca. 1895 meant, to die in harness, at work.
die like a rat. To be poisoned to death: C. 17-18; coll. In C. 19-20, S.E. and of a blunted signification. Like the preceding set of phrases, it is in B.E.
die (of it), make a. To die: coll.: C. 17-20; ob. Cotgrave, 1611.
died of wounds. A military c.p., of the G.W. = hanging on the barbed wire and up in Nellie's room.

Dist of Worms, be or have gone to the. To be dead and buried: ca. 1710-1820. Addison, Grose. (Cf. Rot-his-bone.) When Luther attended the Dist at Worms in 1621, many thought that he would meet the fate of Huss.

dieu et mon droit (pronounced bright), Feb'k ya, Jack, I'm all right. An occ. variant (—1914-15) of feb'k ya, Jack, I'm all right, q.v.
diff. A difference, esp. in 'That's the diff': coll., orig. Stock Exchange: from ca. 1870. Were, 'There is a great diff between a dona [a woman] and a mush. You can shut up a mush (umbrella) sometimes.'
different. Special, unusual, recherché: (1912, Canfield) >, by 1935. Coll. O.R.D. (Sup.).
different, adv. Differently: from ca. 1840, sol.: earlier S.E. Kingsley (in dialogue).
different ships, different long-splices. A coll. nautical variation, mid-C. 19-20, of the landman's different countries, different customs. Bowen.
DIFFS

DIFFS. Monetary difficulties: theatrical: from ca. 1870; ob. Ware. Contrast diff, q.v.
dig. In boxing, a straight left-hand delivered under the opponent's guard: from ca. 1815; used by Tom Moore in Tom Crib's Memorial, 1819. (As = any sharp poke, S.E.) Cf. such terms as auctioneer, dif, coker, floorer, nobbler, toppor. 
(- 1887); slightly ob. Baumann, 'He had a dig at his Caesar or he was to Caesar goochat.' Cf. dig away. 
3. 'Dignity: ... elusive': lower middle-class: from ca. 1890. Prob. ex infra dig, q.v. Ware. 
4. Abr. digger, 2, but not heard before 1915.
dig. v. To live, lodge: from ca. 1900. Ex diggings, q.v.
dig. on. On one's dignity: schoolboys' (- 1909). Ware. Cf. infra dig.
dig a day under the skin. To shave every second day: from ca. 1870; ob.
dig about, give (a person) a. To mock or chaff: lower classes' (- 1923). Manchon.
dig away, v.i. To study hard: school coll. 
(- 1887); slightly ob. Baumann. Cf. dig out, 2, q.v.
dig in the grave. A shave: military ryming s.: 
C. 20. F. & Gibbons. As v.: gen. ryming s. 
from ca. 1880. Eeyerman, March 28, 1931.-2. 
The spade in Crown and Anchor: military ryming s.: from ca. 1910. B. & 
P. 
dig (oneself) in. To secure one's position: coll.: 
from 1915. Ex trench-warfare.
dig (a person) out. Esq. dig me out, call for me, ' 
' tear me from lazy loafing in the house': Society: 

dig up. To look for, to obtain, both with 
connotation of effort and/or difficulty: U.S. 
(late C. 19) >, ca. 1910, anglicised. Ex mining. 
-3. To tidy up (v.i.): military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. 
Cf. dig away, q.v.
dig out after. To try hard to get (something): 
lower classes' (- 1923). Manchon.
digger. The guard-room: military (- 1909); slightly ob. Ware. 'Short for "Damned guard-
room."' -2. A common form of address—orig. on 
the gold-fields— in Australia and New Zealand since 
after 1855, and esp. common in G.W. +. (Rarely 
apply to women, except jocularly.) -3. In 1915-17, 
a surname of the Australian soldier and the 
New Zealand soldier. Prob. revived, ex sense 2, by 
those who 'shovelled Gallipoli into sandbags', for 
this sense appears to have arisen after April 25, 1915 
(Anzac Day). Beyond the few relevant Forces, however, 
only (late 1916 +) the Australian soldier 
was thus named. B. & P. 
(1n post-war Australia and 
New Zealand, Digger is the official name for a 
man that served in the War. Cf. dod, 2.) Cf. 
Aussie and dinkum, n. -4. See the next two entries.
digger, up the. 'Up the line': in the trenches: 
military G.W. F. & Gibbons. Prob. up the flag 
(when flag = gadget or thingummy) influenced 
by diggings.
Cf. persuaders. -2. In card, the spades suit: from 
ca. 1840. Cf. diggums and big digger. -3. The 

DILLY

finger-nails: low: from ca. 1850; more gen. in 
U.S. than in the British Empire.
diggers' delight. A wide-brimmed hat made of 
felt: from ca. 1880; ob.
digging, n. Kneeling down to pray in dormitory 
at night: Shrewsbury School: from ca. 1880. 
Desmond Coke, The Bending of a Twig, 1906.
digging. Quarters, lodgings, apartment: coll.: 
orig. U.S. (1830s), anglicised in late 1850's. 
(See Diggings, Tid-fields, and digger, a miner, date 
from the 1830 s.). 2. ed. & 1st ed.: Clark Russell, 1884, 
'You may see his diggings from your daughter's 
bedroom window, sir.'
digmons. A gardener: provincial coll. or s.: 
C. 19-20. -2. In cards (cf. diggers), the suit of 
spades: from ca. 1840.
diggy. 'Inclined to give sly digs': coll.: C. 20. 
O.E.D. (Sup.).
digital. A finger: facetiously and pedantically 
coll.; from early Victorian days.
dignity men. (Extremely rare in singular.) 
'The higher ranks and ratings of coloured seamen': 
nautical: late C. 19-20. Bowen. Ex the dignity 
of brief office.
digs. Abr. diggings, q.v.: from ca. 1890. Ex 
Australian; common in theatrical s., before becoming 
Desmond Coke, as at digging, q.v.
dject. Incorrect for defect. O.E.D.
dike, dyke. A w.-: (low) coll.: mid-C. 19-20. 
Ex S.E. sense, a pit. Hence, do a dike, to use the 
w.c.
dick; dick-dari. Worry; worried: Anglo-
Indian coll.: from ca. 1870. Ex Hindustani dik(k), 
vered, worried. Yule & Burnell.
dikkop, play. To try to deceive as does a plover 
(Dutch dikkop) when, as one approaches its nest, it 
simulates a broken wing: South African coll.: 
(Pettiman). 
dilberries. Impure deposits about the anus or the 
diberry-bush. The hair about the pudend: 
low: mid-C. 19-20. Cf.: 
diberry-maker. The fundament: low (- 1811); 
ob. Lex. Bal.
dildo. An imago substitute for the membrum 
in C. 19-20, S.E. 'Hudibras' Butler's Dildades; 
Grose. Perhaps ex It. diluto, delight, hence this 
sexual substitute (cf. dildo-glass, a cylindrical glass), 
perhaps ex dildo, 'a tree or shrub of the genus 
Cereus.' (S.O.D.). See Grose, P.
dildo, v. To exchange sexual caresses with a 
woman: coll.; ca. 1630-1820. Ex prevailing.
dile. Sol. for dial, 1. q.v. 
diligent like the devil's apothecary, double. 
Grose, 2nd ed. 
dilirious, dilirium. † errors for delirious, delirium. 
O.E.D.
dill. Incorrect dile, the Scottish form of dule: 
mid-C. 19-20. O.E.D.-2. Distilled water: pharma-
caceutical chemists' (- 1909). Ware.
dillo-namo. An old woman: back s. (- 1859). 
H. 1st ed. Later, deo nammoose, q.v. 
Dilly, the. The Piccadilly Saloon: ca. 1850-60. 
Later, the Pic. -2. Piccadilly (the London Street): 
dilly. A coach: coll.; ca. 1780-1850. 'The 
dillies', Grosve, 1st ed., remarks, 'first began to run

dilly-bag. A wallet; a civilian haversack: Australian coll.; from ca. 1885. In C. 20, often used by women for a small shopping-bag or for a general utility purse-bag. In G.W., the Diggers oce. employed it as a facetious variation on ditty-bag for the small linen bag issued in hospitals for toilet and sentimental oddments. Ex dili, a basket; dills preceded ditty-bag by forty years. Morris.

Waro.
dim-mort, in B.E., is, I believe, a misprint for dimer mort, q.v. at dimber.
dimmer. Pretty neat; lively: low, prob. orig. (—1671), c.; † by 1840, except in dial. whence the late C. 17–19 (perhaps always c.) dimmer-damber, leader or captain of criminals or of tramps, as in Head, B.E., and Ainsworth's Rookwood; dimber cove, a handsome man, a gentleman (as in B.E.); and dimber mort, a pretty girl (presumably in B.E.: see dim-mort).—2. Moreover, dimmer-damber has become a Cockney adj.: C. 19–20; ob.: 'smart, active, adroit.' (Ware).
dime museum. 'A common show—poor piece' theatrical: 1884–ca. 1900. Ware, 'From New York which has a passion for monstrosity displays, called Dime Museums—the dime being the eighth of a dollar.'
dimensions, take. To obtain information: police s.: from ca. 1880; ob. Ware.
dimmock. Money: c. (—1812) >, by 1880, low. Vaux; H., 2nd ed. Hence, flap the dimmock, to display one's cash. Either ex dime = a tithe or ex dimes = an American coin of 10 cents (minted ca. 1785).
din, despite B.E., is not c.—nor otherwise eligible.
din-din. Dinner; hence, any meal; food; nursery coll.: late C. 19–20. In a certain house I know, one woman invites her baby to 'din-din', another to 'din-din!' to her cats.
dinah. A favourite girl or woman; a sweet-heart: Cockney (—1890). Dona(4) corrupted.

dinaries (or -ly); dinail (or -ly), etc. Money: from ca. 1845; low Cockney and (orig.) Parlyarse. Esp. in nanson dinaries, [I have] no money. Mayhew in his magnus opus. Ex It. or Sp. (ultimately L. denarius) via Lingua Franca: the gen. view. Possibly, however, through the Gypsies ex the Arabic and Persian dinar (itself ultimately ex L. denarius), the name of various Eastern coins.
dinum. A rare variant of dinum.
dine. To go without a meal, esp. dinner: mid-C. 19–20; coll., 'among the very lower classes', says H., 6th ed. Cf. go out and count the railings, dining out, and:
dine with St. Giles and the Earl of Murray. A Scottish coll. variant (C. 18–20; ob.) of the preceding. The Earl was buried in St. Giles' Church. W.
diner. The C. 20 racing c. form of deener, q.v.
dines l, by God's. A coll. oath of late C. 16–early 17. Perhaps ex digitusse. O.E.D.
ding, v.t., to strike, seems to have a coll. savour: actually, however, it is either s.E. (archaic in C. 19–20) or dial.—2. To ding a person is to abandon his acquaintance, or to quit him: ca. 1810–60, low. Vaux. Ex *-d. As to snatch, to steal, to hide, it is C. 18–19 c. (Capt. Alexander Smith, A Thieves Grammar, 1719), whence dinger, a thief that, to avoid detection, throws away his booty. Gross, 2nd ed.—4. As = dinge, a cupuleism, mostly U.S.—5. Oce. confused with din n.; mid C. 18–20. O.E.D.
ding, knock the; take ding. To receive property just stolen: c. (—1812); † by 1870. Vaux.
ding, upon the. On the proul: c.: c. 10. Bee.
ding-dong. As adj. and adv., despite F. & H., it has always been S.E.—2. In (—186) rhyming s.: a song: ob. by 1910, ex the dial. —1914. Anger: either dial. or provincial a.—a discrimination sometimes impossible to make. C. 19–20; ob.
ding the tot! Run away with the lot! Rhyming s.: from ca. 1870; low.
ding (something) to (a) mail. To convey to a friend something just stolen: c. (—1812); † by 1870. Vaux.
dingable. Worthless; easily spored: c. (—1812) >, by 1840, low; † by 1900. Vaux. Ex ding, 2. dingat. An officer's servant: Australian army; 1914. Apparently ex dingo + batman. B. & F.—2. 'A swab for drying decks': naval: from not later than 1915. F. & Gibbons. Perhaps ex the now mainly dial. ding to strike, dash down, move violently—'but as in brickbat.'

dinge. To render dingy: from ca. 1820; coll. (ob.) and dial. Ex dingy. O.E.D.

*dinger. See dingy, 3. (Grose, 1788.)

Dingers. Clubs and balls: jugglers, from ca. 1840. Ex the sound.


dingey. See dingy Christian.


Dingat. Hackneyed; used up: Society, ca. 1780-1840. The Microcosm (No. 3), 1786. 1 ex dingat, battery.

dingle-dangle. The membrum virile: low; from ca. 1895. The term occurs in a somewhat Rabelaisian song: Ex d.-d., a dangling appendage.

dingo. Slightly insane: British Army, 1915; +; ob. Cf. dingbats, q.v.


Dingus. See dinges.

Dining-out. (Of a seaman) undergoing punishment, esp. cells: naval: late C. 19-20. Bowen. See also dine out.

Dining-room. The mouth: low; from ca. 1892; ob. 'Jon Bee', 1823.

*dining-room jump. See jump, n.

Dining-room chairs. The teeth: low; from ca. 1820. Bee. Ex dining-room.

Dining-room post. Sham postmen's pilfering from houses: late C. 18-19; low or c. See esp. Grose, 2nd ed.


Dinkum, adj. (Often fair dinkum, occ. square dinkum.) Honest; true, genuine; thorough, complete: Australian: C. 20. C. J. Dennis. Perhaps ex dinky, adj., q.v.; but actually dinkum prob. derives ex fair dinkum, for in Lincolnshire dial. we find fair dinkum, fair play, before 1898; the E.D.D. derives it ex Lincolnshire dinkum, an equable share of work.

Dinkum, n., the. The truth: Australian: from ca. 1910. C. J. Dennis. Ex dinkum, adj.; cf. the straight wire, q.v.

Dinkums, the. (Rare in singular.) Those soldiers who had been on Gallipoli; also, hence, the 1st Australian Division: Australian military: 1916; ob. B. & P. Ex dinkum, adj.


Dinky. Neat, spruce; small and dainty: coll. (from ca. 1870) ex dinkly, itself ex Scottish dink, feat, trim, neat, as in Burns.


Dinner Bell, the. Edmund Burke (d. 1797). His long speeches interfered with M.P.'s dinners. Dawson.


Dinny Hayes, let loose; Dinny Hayes-er. To punch; a punch, esp. a mighty punch: Australian: C. 20. Ex a noted publister. John G. Brandon, Th' Big City, 1931. 'In New South [Wales] you just hauled off and spread the troublesome bloke on the floor with a Dinny Hayes-er.' Ibid., the other phrase.


dip, v. To pawn: mid-C. 17-20; coll. Ex the C. 17-20 S.E. sense, to mortgage, esp. lands, as in Dryden ('Never dip thy thals'). The Spectator; Thackeray: B.E. has dip one's terra firma.—2. In the passive, to get into trouble; be involved in debt: c.: from ca. 1870.—3. See n. 1.—4. To fail in an examination; more gen. be dipped: naval: late C. 19-20. Ex 'the salute of dipping the ensign,' Bowen. Cf.—3. To lose (e.g. a good-conduct badge), forgo (one's rank): naval: late C. 19-20. Same origin. Bowen.

Dip, the. A cook's shop that, in C. 18-early 19, was situated 'under Furnival's Inn' (Grose, 2nd ed.) and frequented by the lesser legal fry.

Dip into. (Gen. with pockets.) To pick pockets from ca. 1810.

dip one's beak. To drink: C. 19-20; low. (Cf. mosten one's whistle.) B.E.: 'He has dip his Bll, he is almost drunk': low: late C. 17—early 19; extinct in Cornish dial.


Diplomatia is a dictionary-error for diplomatical. O.E.D.

dipped, be. See dip, v., 2, 4.
dipped in wing.} Worst was: C. 19-20; ob.; coll. Perhaps ex bee's-wing, q.v.

*dipped into one's (gen. my) pockets, ft or that has. That has involved me considerable expense: coll. (1857); slightly ob. Baumann. Perhaps ex dip into one's... (p. 1857)

*Dipper. A pick-pocket: mid-C. 19-20; orig. c., then low. Cf. dīver. — 2. An Abapost or a Baptist: the S.O.D., recording at 1617, considers it S.E., but—witness B.E. and Grose—was probably coll. until ca. 1820. dipper (is) hoisted (the). (There is) a strict rationing of water: nautical: C. 19-20. Bowen. From 'the old ailing ship custom of hoisting the dipper to the truck after the water has been served out to prevent men stealing more than their regulation pint.'


dippy. Extremely eccentric or foolish; mad: from ca. 1910. Not necessarily ex Romany dio doi, mad, a madman (Sampson); cf., however, dips, q.v.— 2. Delirious: medical students' — (1933). Stang, p. 191.
direct O. A wireless operator employed directly by the shipowners: nautical: from ca. 1924. Bowen. directly. Conjunction, as soon as, the moment after: 1789: coll. R. H. Froude; J. H. Newman; Buckley. Abr. directly that (or when). O.E.D.
dirk. The membrum virile: C. 18-20; orig. Scottish, then low jocular coll.
dirk (occ. mud), cast, fling, or throw. (V.t. with at.) To be vituperative, malicious: from ca. 1640; coll. till ca. 1800, then S.E. Soldom (throw); Ned Ward ('Fling dirt enough, and some will stick'); 'John Strange Winter' (throw mud).
dirt, do (a person). To play him a mean trick: C. 20: mainly Australian. This is the chief use of dirt, q.v. Cf. dirty, do the.
dirt, est. To submit to spoken insult, degrading treatment: coll. (in C. 20. S.E.); from late 1850's.

H., 3rd ed.
dirt, the. The 'dirty': a mean trick: from ca. 1926. Anthony Weymouth, Hard Liver, 1936. On bate and pose,
discuss. To eat; drink: jocular coll.: 1815, Scott. Discussion, the consumption of food or drink does not follow until ca. 1860. (S.O.D.)
disregard, v.i. and t. To pay up; coll.: 1819-20. Ex the S.E. sense, to surrender something wrongfully appropriated.
disguised. Drunk: s. or, perhaps rather, coll.: late 19-20. ob. In C. 19-20, the gen. form (almost S.E.) by 1820. Diagnosed in liquor. Massinger, in The Virgin Martyr, 'Disguised! How? Drunk!' Goldsmith, of a handwriting in She Stoops to Conquer, 'A damned up and down hand, as if it was disguised in liquor.' Clark Russell, 1884, 'A third mate I knew, slightly disguised in liquor.' Ex the C. 16-20 disguise, to intoxicate with liquor. (Then, disguise, intoxication, is rare and rather S.E. than coll.)
disguised public-house. A worker's political club: political: ca. 1880-1900. Ware.
disgusting. Unpleasant; silly: Society: from ca. 1920. Denis Mackail, Greenery Street, 1925, "You can have a Russian bath—if you know what that is." 'Don't be doing that,' said Felicity—just to be on the safe side.' Cf. filthy, foul.
dish. An act of 'dishing': 1891, Sir W. Harcourt (O.E.D.). Ex:
dish. To cheat; lazzle completely; disappoint, 'let down'; ruin. From ca. 1708: and see dished up. The Monthly Magazine, 1708; Moore; Moncrieff, 1821, 'I have been dished and doodled out of forty pounds to-day'; Driacad, 1867, coined the famous disheying the Whigs. Ex meat being well cooked (done) and then served (dishèd): exactly analogous is done brown; cf. also cook one's goose and settle one's hash (W.).
dish, have a foot in. To get a footling; have a share or interest in: coll. (—1662). † by 1800. Bunyan, Ex a pig in his trough. (O.E.D.)
dish, have got a. To be drunk: coll.: ca. 1765-1760. Ray. (Apperson.)
dish-clout, make a napkin of one's. To marry one's cook; hence, to make a maslliance: from ca. 1760; ob.; a coll. of the proverbial kind. Grose, 3rd ed. Earlier (—1768) as make one's dish-clout one's table-cloth. (Ray) Apperson.
dish-water, dull as. A late C. 19-20 coll. variant of dish-wet. dull as. Collinson.
dish out. To distribute (food) equally or decorations indiscriminately: military coll.: 1914. B. & P.
dish(l)able, n. Undress: which is pardonable. Adj, undressed: which is ludicrous. From ca. 1790; ob. Ex Fr. (en) déshabillé.
dished. Of (electrotype) with letters having their centre or middle lower than their edge: printers: from ca. 1880.
dished up, be (whence dish, v.), is recorded by Grose, 2nd ed., for 'to be totally ruined'. In C. 20 displaced by dished: see dish.—'To be attended to in the sick bay' (Bowen); nautical: mid-C. 19-20.
dishaccommodate erroneously blends disconmodate and inaccommodate: C. 17. O.E.D.
dilogistic. Incorrect for dyslogistic: C. 19-20. O.E.D.
dismal, adj. A psalm sung by a criminal just before his death at the gallows: ca. 1800-1820: (perhaps orig. c., then) low, passing to low coll. B.E., Dyche, Grose.
dismal Jimmy. Mid-C. 19-20 coll., as in H. A. Vachell, The Vicar's Walk, 1933, 'Shown in his true colours, as a dog-in-the-manger, a spoil-sport, a wet blanket, a dismal Jimmy.'
dismals (esp. in the). Low spirits: from ca. 1760; coll. till ca. 1840, then S.E. Ex M.E. in the dismal.—2. Mourning garments: from ca. 1745-1830: coll. (S.O.D.) L. dies mali, unpatriotic days.
dismember for Great Britain. 'The last political nickname given to Gladstone. About the time of the Home Rule Bill; Society: 1880-early 87. Ware. (Gladstone supported Home Rule for Ireland.)
dispas, dispair. A portion (cut in advance) of a leg, or a shoulder of mutton (cf. coll.'s head); Winchester College: from ca. 1830; ob. See esp. Mansfield's School Life at Winchester College, 1870, at p. 84. Prob, ex to dis pass or perhaps dispair in the sense of unequal, or it may be a direct adoption of L. disparr.
dispatch. (Despatch is the inferior spelling.) V.t., to dispose quickly of food and/or drink: from ca. 1710; coll. Addison. O.E.D.
dispat, see dispair.
dispose. See dispair.
dispose. See dissolve.
dissecting job. Clothes requiring much alteration: tailors: from ca. 1870.
diss. See dis, v.
dissolute and desolate are often confused by the ignorant: C. 16-20 sol. Less illiterate persons frequently stumble at dissimize and simulate, while what we used to call the lower-middle class tends to err with dispose and depose.
d wastewater, flag one's. To have trouble in store, or the sense of having work awaiting one, in hand: ca. 1400-1800. Coll. † by 1000, S.E.
distiller. One easily vexed and unable to conceal his annoyance: Australian c.: ca. 1840-90. Ex English c. walking distiller, the same: 1812, Vaux. See carry the kag.
distinctive is often misused for distinct and distinguished: late C. 19-20. Fowler.
distracted division. 'Husband and wife fighting', Egan's Grose, 1823; † by 1860.
disesthesia, flag of. See flag of distress.
districts (or D.-). Shares in the District Railway: Stock Exchange coll. (—1895) >, by 1920, j. (A. J. Wilson, Stock Exchange Glossary.)
district, on the. (Of a student) doing his mid-wifery course, which involves the care of the parturient poor in his hospital's district: London medical students (—1933). Stang, p. 191.
dis. See dia.
ditch. To throw away: nautical: from ca. 1870. (Bowen.) Ex Ditch, Is, 2. Cf. ditched, q.v.

ditch-water, as dull as. Extremely dull: from ca. 1800; coll. till ca. 1880, then S.E.

ditch-water, clear as. Fig., far from clear: coll.: late C. 19-20. — Manchon.
ditched. As a loss; nonplussed: coll.: from ca. 1890.

*ditched, be.* To get into trouble, be abandoned: Canadian and English c. (mainly vagrants): C. 20. Orig. U.S.: ex being thrown into a ditch from a moving train.

*Ditcher.* See Ditch, 1 and 3.

dîle(,), not care a. A C. 20 coll. derivative of *not care a dîle* (ineligible here). O.E.D. (Sup.).
dîle(,), not care a. All of a dîle(,), dîle(,), trepidation; (an access of) nervous shiverings: from ca. 1860: coll. (orig. dial.). II, 2nd ed. (Hence adj., dîthering.) Perhaps ultimately ex shiver, via didder.

dîther, v.i. To be very nervous on a given occasion; to hesitate tremulously or bewilderedly: coll. when not dial.: from ca. 1880. Ex dîther, n., 2.


*dîto, brother smut.* See *brother smut.*

dîtoes, better dîtoes. A suit all of one colour and material: C. 19-20. Until ca. 1860, the gen. form is *suit of dîtoes,* though the S.O.D. records, as *suit of dîto,* as early as 1755. James Payne, 1882: 'He was never seen in dîtoes even in September.' In C. 19, occ. applied to trousers only. Both senses, imm. they > gen., are coll.; orig. tailor's s.

dîty. (Gen. in pl.) A fib; a long circumstantial story or excuse. Coll. (mostly Australian and New Zealand): late C. 19-20. Ex dial.: E.D.D.

dîty-bag. A small bag used by sailors for their smaller necessaries and sentimentals: from ca. 1860, orig., according to H., 3rd ed. and F. & H., coll.: in C. 20, S.E. ? ex dîfî; see dîly-bag.


dîve. A place of low resort, esp. a drinking-den: coll.: orig. (ca. 1880) U.S., anglicised ca. 1905, though it was fairly well known considerably earlier (e.g. in *The Referee,* May 10, 1885). Ware. Many 'dives' were still, are, in cells or, at least, in basements.— 2. A variant of *diver,* 2, q.v.

*dîve, v.t. and i. To pick pockets: from ca. 1600; ob. In C. 17, e.; then low. Ben Jonson: 'In using your nimble[s, i.e. fingers], in diving the pockets.'


dîve into one's sky. To put one's hand(s) in one's pocket(s); esp. to take out money. C. 19-20, ob.; low.

*dîve the twine. Gen. dîved . . . , applied to a school of fish that, surrounded a purse or line: net drawn through the net and escapes before it can be . . . closed' (Bowen): Grand Banks fishermen's coll.: late C. 19-20.

*diver,* rarely dive. (Diver only.) He who, assisting a 'curber' (q.v.), sends in a boy to do the stealing: late C. 16-early 17 C. Grose, Dikker.— 2. A pickpocket: from ca. 1600; c. till ca. 1800, then low. Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* has a character named Jenny Diver. Baumann, 1887, 'Smashers and divers and noble contrivers.' Cf. dip.—3. One who lives in a cellar: low; late C. 18-19-20. Grose, 1st ed. Cf. dive, n., 1.—4. See divers.— 5. 'A liner's boatswain in charge of the wash deck party': nautical: late C. 19-20. Bowen (the diver)


dîvers and diverse are often confused: C. 19-20. Orig. they were identical.

dîvet. Catastrophic for *vest or invest:* C. 17. O.E.D.

dîvy. See dîvy, 2.

dîve the house with one's wife. To turn her out of doors, 'give her the key of the street': mid-C. 18-19. Grose, 1st ed.

dîvident(s). Incorrect for *dividend:* C. 16-17.—

dîvation for *divinity:* C. 17. Both, O.E.D.


dîvine punishment. Divine service: naval: 1869 (or a few years earlier); ob. Ware.

dîviners († by 1921); diviners. Divinity Moderations: Oxford undergraduates: from ca. 1898. (Oxford-er.) Ware.

*dîving-bell.* A basement— esp. a cellar—, tavern. Cf. dive, q.v. From ca. 1885. This term may, however, be rather older and hence constitute the germ whence sprang the U.S. dive. —2. 'A sailing-ship that was very wet and plung'd badly': nautical: C. 19. Bowen. Ex S.E. nautical sense.

dîvolve. Incorrect for *dervole:* C. 15-20. O.E.D.

dîvol-dîger. An inexperienced and/or clumsy golfer: Australian (—1935).

dîvers. See diviners.

dîvies. See sense 2 of:

dîvîy. A division: military: from ca. 1880, esp. in G.W. As in 'the 29th Divîy,' which served on Gallipoli, 1915.—2. (Also *divîr:* 1897, O.E.D.) A share; a dividend (— 1890): coll.—3. Also as v.i. and t., with variant divey up: from ca. 1880.—4. As an adj., nautical: from late 1900's; † by 1921. Cf. decoy, q.v.

dîxia, dîxy. An iron pot, esp. as used in the Army, for boiling tea, rice, stew, vegetables, etc. Popularised by soldiers, who adopted it (—1789) ex Urdu.— 2. Also, the small, lidded can that, forming part of a soldier's equipment, is used for tea, stew, etc. Both senses were orig. a. or coll., but they soon > i., then S.E. and of gen. usage, which last they attained ca. 1917 or 1918. (In Frank Richards, *Old Soldiers Never Die,* the word is spelt *dickree.* )—3. *Dixie* is the nickname, from ca. 1926, of W. R. Dean, who, for Everest in 1927-28, made a record in the English League (association football): 60 goals in 39 games.


DO A SCRAP

a drink of something stronger than milk or water, the domestic trio (coffee, cocoa, tea), or soft drinks. *Do here = drink; it dates from ca. 1850. All, orig.s., are, except do a wet, coll. in C. 20. Cf. do a meal, to eat a meal: same period and status.

do a bill. To utter a bill of exchange; commerce; from ca. 1830. Barham, Thackeray.
do a bit. To cat something; coll.; from ca. 1850.—2. (Of men) to possess, have, a woman: low coll.; from ca. 1860.—3. The cricket sense is ineligible.
do a bit of stiff. To draw a bill: low commercial: from ca. 1850; ob.
do a bunk, a guy, a shift. To depart hastily or secretly: from ca. 1860. The second, orig. c.; the commonest, the first.
do a bunk, a shift. To case nature: low; from ca. 1860.
do a bust. See bust, do a.
do a cadge. To go begging: low coll.: from ca. 1820. See cadge, n. and v.
do a cat. To vomit: low: from ca. 1840. Cf. cat, shoot the (q.v.).
do a chuck. To effect an ejection; to depart.

Low: from ca. 1850; ob.
do a crib. To burgle: c. then, in C. 20, low: from ca. 1840.
do a does. To go to sleep: low: from ca. 1850. Cf. does, q.v.
do a drink (or drop). See do a beer.
do a duck. See duck, do a.
do a fluff. To forget one's part: theatrical: from ca. 1850.
do a Garbo, a Gaynor. See Garbo and Gaynor.
do a get. See get, do a.
do a grind, a mount, a ride, a tread. To have sexual intercourse (of men): low: from ca. 1860.
do a grouse. To go a-seeking women: low: C. 19.—2. In C. 20, to grumble.
do a guy. (See do a bunk, a guy . . .)—2. Among workmen, to absent oneself, without permission, from work: from ca. 1865.—3. In c., to make an escape: from ca. 1860. In C. 20, low. Ex sense 1.—4. See guy, do a, 1.
do a job. To commit a crime: C. 20 New Zealand c.
do a knee-trembler. See do a perpendicicular.
do a meal. See do a beer.
do a mike or a mouch. To go on the prowl: from ca. 1860; low.—2. In C. 20, also to depart: low.
do a moan. To growl: naval (—1900); ob.

Wares; do a mount. See do a grind.
do a nob. To make a collection: circus, showmen's: from ca. 1845.
do a perpendicicular or a knee-trembler. To have sexual intercourse while standing: low: from ca. 1860; the former, ob.
do a pitch—a rush—a snatch. See pitch—rush—snatch.
do a push. To depart; esp. to run away: a. (—1865); ob.—2. See push, do a.
do a ride. See do a grind.
do a rural. To ease oneself by the wayside: low: from ca. 1880; ob.
do a scrap. To have a fight: from ca. 1840.

**DIZZY**

adj. Astounding: from ca. 1895. I.e., apt to render dizzy (O.E.D. Sup.). Cf. dizzy limit.
dizziness, get. See get dizzy.
dizzy age, of f. Elderly: near Society: ca. 1860–1900. Ware, 'Makes the spectator dizzy to think of the victim's years.'

dizzy limit, the. The utmost: C. 20. Mostly Australian. C. J. Dennis. (It makes one dizzy.)

More gen. dlog, q.v.
d'n (dare or know). Don't: low coll. (—1897).

Baumann. But d'n know is nearly always written dunno (likewise in Baumann); d'n being pronounced dun, with which cf. the ud of 'd in its brevity and in its lightness of stress.

Do. Either of the Doherty brothers, the famous lawn-tennis players fl. 1897–1906.

do. A swindle, a fraud; a trick: from ca. 1810; perhaps coll. Dickens, in Box, 'I thought it was a do, to get me out of the house.' Ex do, v., —2. Action, action, performance, business, event; (a) success.


In The New Stateman and Nation, Sept. 23, 1933, we hear of 'a famous West Indies cricketer, who speaks perfect English' (Constantine, no doubt) being puzzled by the phrase, a slap-up, do, applied to a tea. The puzzlement was admittedly caused more by the slap-up than by the do, though the juxtaposition may also have been partly the cause. In this sense do obtained in dial. as early as 1820.—5. An attack; an offensive; military: 1915; slightly ob. by 1930.

B. & P.—6. In pl., a share; esp. fair doo's (or do's), q.v.

do. Does: sol.: throughout mod. English among the illiterate.—2. Do or does omitted: see 'Present infinitive.'

do. v. To swindle, cheat: from ca. 1640. Kenney, in that amusing play, Raising the Wind, 'I wasn't born two hundred miles north of Lunnon, to be done by Mr. Diddler, I know.' Hence, to deceive, trick, without legal connotations: C. 19–20. —2. In e., v.t. to utter base coin or 'quer' (q.v.): from ca. 1810. Vaux.—3. To give a bad time, punish: boxing; ca. 1815–1900. Earlier, to defeat. Grose, 3rd ed., mentions that Humphreys, writing from the boxing ring, said: 'Sir, I have done the Jew' (Mendoza). Cognate is 3, b.—to kill: low: 1823, Bee, —1850. Cf. for, 3.—4. Visit, go over, as a tourist or as a pleasure-seeker: coll.: from ca. 1850. Shirley Brooks, 1883, in the Gordian Knot, 'I'd did Egypt, as they say, about two years back.'—5. With the amiable, polite, heavy, grand, genteel, etc., do, is coll., the exemplar being Dickens's do amiable in Box.—6. See the senses implicit in done, done-for, done-over, done-up, qq.v.—7. To suffice (that'll do me), to answer its purpose: q. orig. (1846; Thornton, U.S., anglicised ca. 1860. —8. Hence, to please, meet the requirements of (a person): late C. 19–20. Bg. 'You'll do me.'—9. Moreover, do, like chuck, cop, get, 'is a verb-of-all-work, and is used in every possible or improbable connection' (F. & H.); this shows very clearly in the following group of phrases in do a . . ., where the status is a. or coll. according with the nature of the n.—10. To arrest: a.: C. 20. James Curtis, The Gut Kid. 1938.

do a beer, a bitter, a drink, a drop, a wet. To take
DO A SHOT

do (one) a shot. To outwit; to swindle: South African coll. (— 1890). Occ. do (one) a shot in the eye. Pottman.

do a shift. See do a bunk (both senses).
do a sip. To make water: back slang on pise: from ca. 1860; ob.
do a smile. See smile, n. (3 drink.)—do a snatch. See snatch, n.
do a spread or a tumble. To lie down to a man: low coll.: from ca. 1840.
do a stagger. To walk: Oxford University: from ca. 1918. Cf. stagger, v.
do a star pitch. To sleep in the open (à la belle étoile): low theatrical: from ca. 1830. Cf. hedge square, q.v.; and:

*do a starry. To sleep in the open: C. 20 c.
do a tread. See do a grind.
do a treat. See treat, a.
do an alley. To depart; to hurry away: military: 1915; ob. F. & Gibbons. Ex Fr. aller, to go.
do brown. See brown, do, 2.
do down. To cheat or swindle: from the 1890's. Cf. do, v., 1—2. Hence, get the better of: coll.: from ca. 1908.
do for. To rain, destroy; wear out (person or thing) entirely: coll.; from ca. 1750. Fielding (O.F.D.),—2. To attend to or on, as a landlady or a char for a lodger, a bachelor: orig. S.E.; since ca. 1840. coll.—3. In c., to kill: from ca. 1850; in C. 20, low. Cf. do, v., 3, b.—4. To convict: c.: from ca. 1850. H., 1st ed.
do gospel. To go to church: low coll.: from ca. 1860.
do it. To be in the habit of doing—or gen. ready to do—it, i.e. to have physical intercourse. As an evasion, euphemistic; otherwise, coll.

do it brown. See brown, do, 2.
do it fast (or fine). To act the fine gentleman: low (—1923). Manchon.
do it up. See do up, 2.
do it up in good twig. (See do up, 2.) To live comfortably by one's wits: low: C. 19—20; ob.
do more. A small raft, made of two logs: Canadian lumbermen's: later C. 19—20. Because a riverman can do more on two logs than on one log: John Beames.
do on one's head, with the left hand, while asleep, etc. To do easily: coll.; from ca. 1880. A variant is, do on the b.a., i.e. on the, or one's, bloody head.
done's balls on. Of a man) to fall utterly in love with: low coll.: late C. 19—20.
done's bit. In late C. 19—early 20 c., to serve a sentence. Warn.—2. In G.W., 'To serve in Army or Navy: ex the late C. 19—20 coll., do one's share, to help a general cause. In the Boer War, a soldier wrote of his fellows, 'They all do "their bit" well' (J. Milne, The Epistles of Atkins, 1902).
do one's block. See block, lose.
do one's business. To kill: C. 18—20, low coll. (Fielding, Thackeray, Rossetti), as is the sense (from ca. 1850), to evacuate, decapitate.—3. To have sexual intercourse with a woman (one's = hur): low: from ca. 1860.
do one's dash. See dash, do one's.—do one's luck. See luck.
do one's money. To lose all one's money: mostly Australian and New Zealand: C. 20.
do one's nut. To lose one's head: lower classes' and military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons.
do one's stuff. To act as one intends; perform one's social task: an Americanism anglicised along with know one's stuff (to be alert, competent) by 1931. E.g. David Kosel in The Daily Mirror, Nov. 18, 1933; A. P. Garland, in The Passing Show, June 16, 1934, 'The spring sun shone brightly, and larks were doing their stuff overhead.'
do oneself well. See do well.
do over. Knock down; persuade; cheat, ruin: low coll.; from ca. 1770. Parker, Dickens.—2. In C. 19 c., to search the pockets of; c. friek.—3. To seduce; also, to copulate with: low; mid-C. 19—20, ob. H., 5th ed.
do Paddy Doyle. See Paddy Doyle.
do proud. To flatter, act hospitably or generously towards: coll.; from ca. 1890.
do reason or right. To honour a toast: coll.; C. 19—20, ob.
do savage rabbits. See savage rabbits.
do the aqua. To put water in one's drink: public-houses': mid-C. 19—20. Ware. L. aqua, water.
do the dirty. See dirty, do the.
do the downy. To lie in bed: from ca. 1840. Cuthbert Bede, 1853. 'This'll never do. Gig lamps! Cutting choppe to do the downy.' C. balmy, q.v.
do the (e.g. religious) dodge (over). 'To pretend to be religious and so seek to obtain some favour' (from a person): coll. (—1931). Lyell.
do the graceful. To behave gracefully or fitly: non-aristocratic coll.: from ca. 1890. Ware.
do the handsome, oce., the handsome thing. To behave extremely well (in kindness, money, etc.) to a person: coll.; from ca. 1840.
do the High. To walk up and down High Street after church on Sunday evening: Oxford University, ca. 1850—90. H., 5th ed.
do the polite. To exert oneself to be polite; to be unusually polite: coll.: 1856 (O.E.D.).
do the swag. To dispose of stolen property: c.: from ca. 1840. Cf. fence and do it away.
do the trick. To gain one's object: from ca. 1810: c. >, by 1830, s. >, by 1860, coll. Vaux.—2. Hence, (of a man) to perform effectually the act
of kind; (of a woman) to be devirginated: both low coll., from ca. 1840.

**do time.** To serve a sentence in prison: from ca. 1870. o. till ca. 20, when s. > coll. H., 5th ed.; *The Cornhill Magazine*, June, 1884. 'He has repeatedly done time for drunkards and disorders, and for assaults upon the police.'

**do to death.** To do frequently and ad nauseam: coll.; C. 18–20.

**do to rights.** To effect or achieve satisfactorily; to treat (a person) well: proletarian: mid-C.19–20. Ware.

**do up.** To use up; finish; disable; wear out; exhaust; ruin financially: coll.; from ca. 1780; ob.—2. To accomplish one’s object: coll.: C. 18–19. 3. In C. 19–20 (ob.) c., to quieten, gen. in done up, silenced.

**do-ut-des.** Selfish persons: Society: 1883-ca. 1905. Ware. A pun on L. *do ut des*, I give in order that you may give.

**do well.** To treat, entertain, well: from ca. 1895. Esp. do oneself well (in food and comfort). O.E.D. (Sup.).

**do while asleep; do with the left hand.** See *do on one’s head.*

**do with . . . (I) could.** I would very much like to have: coll. (—1887). Baumann. By melosis.

**do without, able to.** To dislike (esp. a person): late C.19–20. Ex Yorkshire dial. ‘Well, I could do without him, you know.’

**do you feel like that?** A satirical, proletarian c.p. addressed to any person engaged in unusual work or to a lazy one doing any work: late C. 19–20; ob. Ware.

**do you hear the news?** See news?, do you hear the . . . ?

**do you know?** An almost expressionless coll. tag: 1883-ca. 1890. It > gen. in 1884 owing to its adoption by Beerebhoom Tree in The Private Secretary. Ware.

**do you say (you)?** Do you know: middle classes: ca. 1840–90. Ware. Cf. *do you know and don’t you know.*

**do you see any green in my eye?** Do you think I’m a fool? What do you take me for? A c.p. from ca. 1890. Cf. the Fr. *je le connais*, sc. cette histoire-là.

**do you to wainights.** An intensification of *do to rights,* q.v.: East London c.p. of ca. 1874–1915. Ex murderer Wainwright. (Ware.)

‘*doan.* In late C. 17–early 19 c., a cloak. B.E., Grose. Etymology?'


‘*doccy.* See doxy.

**dock.** Orig. (1896–1810), as in Warner and Jonson, prob. c. in its C. 19–20 S.E. sense, an enclosure for prisoners on trial in a law-court. (O.E.D.)—2. Hospital; chiefly in *dock.* Late C. 18–20: orig. nautical; in C. 20, coll. Grose, 1st ed.—3. Among printers, the weekly work bill or ‘pole’; from ca. 1800; ob. *dock, v. To deflower (a woman); hence, to ‘have a woman; from ca. 1660; ob. by 1800; † by 1840. Prob. orig. c.; certainly always low. Harman, Middleton, B.E., Grose. (Gen. with the deli, q.v.) F. & H. proposes Romany dukker, to ravish; but the S.E. dock, to curtail, with an implied reference to tail (q.v.), is obviously operative.—2. At Winchester College, C.19–20, ob., to scratch or tear out or, as in R. G. K. Wrench, to rub out; to knock down.—3. To take from (a person) part of his wages as a fine: dial. (ca. 1820) >, by 1890, coll. O.E.D.) (Sup.).

**dock, in dry.** Out of work: coll.: from ca. 1927. O.E.D. (Sup.).


**dock - shankers.** ‘Dock - mates’; nautical (—1823); † by 1870. Egan’s Grose, where, I surmise, the real meaning is, companions in a venereal hospital.


**dock to a daisy, (as like an a).** Very dissimilar: coll. (—1639); † by 1800. Aaperson.

**docked smack smooth, be.** To have had one’s penis amputated: nautical: mid-C. 18–19. Grose, 1st ed.

**dockers.** A dock labourer: from ca. 1880; coll. till ca. 1895, then S.E.—2. A brief from the prisoner in the dock to counsel: legal; from ca. 1890.

**docket, strike a.** To cause a man to become bankrupt; legal and commercial j. > coll. > S.E.: ca. 1805–90.

**dockets, play the game of.** See play the game of docket.

**docking.** ‘A punishment inflicted by sailors on the prostitutes who have infected them with the venereal disease; it consists in cutting off all their clothes, petticoat, shift and all, close to their stays, and then turning them out into the street’. Grose; low coll.; ca. 1700–1850.

**docking herself.** (Of a ship) taking the mud and forcing a position for herself: nautical coll.: late C. 19–20. Bowen.


‘*doctor.* A false dial. Shadwell, 1688, constitutes the earliest record. Until ca. 1740, c.; then low; in C. 20 ob., very ob. Fielding, in *Tom Jones,* ‘Here, said he, taking some dice out of his pockets, here are the little doctors which cure the distempers of the purse.’ Ex a doctor’s powers. Hence, late
C. 17-early 19 (as, e.g. in B.E.), put the doctor(s) upon, to cheat a person with loaded dice.—2. An adulterator, esp. of spirits (see Grose, 1st ed., 1785), but also of food, e.g. bread; among bakers, a Maton in Tricks of Bakers Unmasked, alias the doctor. O.E.D. records it at 1770.—3. Brown sherry : licensed victuallers’; C. 19-20, ob.: because a doctored wine.—4. Earlier (—1770), milk and water, with a dash of rum and a sprinkling of nutmeg; † by 1880.—5. The last throw of dice or ninepins: perhaps orig. c. C. 19-19, mostly among gamblers.—6. The headmaster: Winchester College, from ca. 1830.—7. (Occ. doc.) A ship’s cook: nautical, also up-country Australian; recorded by S.O.D. at 1860, but the evidence of H. shows that it must, among Englishmen, have been current some years earlier; it existed in the U.S. as early as 1821 (Thornton). Ex food as health-enurer.—8. A variant of Cape doctor, q.v.: always the doctor (or Doctor): 1856 (Petttman). But it is recorded for the West Indies as early as 1740 (O.E.D.).—9. A broker dealing specifically with collarch, nautical and commercial stuff (late 1800’s) >, by 1920, coll. O.E.D. (Sup.).—10. See doctors.—11. Till No. 9 in the Field Medical Chest: military: from 1914. Because so frequently prescribed.—12. Hence, 9 in the game of House: military: 1915. F. & Gibbons, as sense 11.—13. A synonym of punisher, 3 (q.v.), as also is gentleman, 2.

doctor, v. Confer a doctorate upon, make a doctor (‘philosophy’, not medicine): from ca. 1500; now very rare, yet not quite a ghost-word.—2. To treat, give medicine to, of a doctor or as if of a doctor: from ca. 1730.—3. Hence, to practise as a physician (—1865).—4. To adulterate; tamper with; falsify: from ca. 1770. Now coll.—5. Hence, to repair, patch up; revise extensively, distort a literary work, a newspaper article: C. 19-20. (Thus far, S.O.D.).—6. To ‘dope’ (a horse): sporting: from ca. 1860; little used after ca. 1910.)—7. Being the fashionable word.—7. * To undergo medical treatment: † coll.: from ca. 1880. All these senses are coll., though the fourth and the sixth had orig. a tinge of s.—8. ‘To prepare the warriors, by certain “medicines” and incantations, for war,’ Pettman; South African coll.: from ca. 1890. Ex witch doctor.


Doctor Dodypoll. See dodypoll.


Doctor Foster. 9 in the game of House: military: C. 20. Dr. Foster occurs in a nursery rhyme; ‘g’ is connected with pills (‘number nine’), hence with medical officers. Cf. doctor, n., 12.

doctor (in one’s cellars), keep the. Habitually to adulterate the liquor one sells: licensed victuallers’, then public-house’s: coll.; from ca. 1800. H., 5th ed.


Doctor Jim. Ex sailor, hat, and jacket of upper classes: 1896-ca. 1914. Ex Dr. Jameson’s Africander felt (Ware). Whence Jimkum, Jimmunt.

Doctor Johnson. The membrum virile: literary: ca. 1790-1880. Perhaps because there was no one that Dr. Johnson was not prepared to stand up to.

doctor on one, put the. To cheat, orig. with false dice and, orig. perhaps: c. late C. 17-20; ob. B.E.

doctor ordered, just what the. See just what.
doctor’s curse, gen. preceded by the. A dose of calomel (—1821): coll.; ob. O.E.D.
doctor’s stuff, occ. (C. 19-20) doctor-stuff. Medicine: coll.: from ca. 1770. ‘He could not take Doctor’s stuff, if he died for it.’ (O.E.D.)
doctors upon, put the. See doctor, n., 1.
dodderer. A meddler; a fool. (In S.E., a tettering, pottering old man.) C. 19-20, ob.; mostly Cockney. Variant, doddring old sheep’s head.
dodipool. See dodypoll.
doddle. Money very easily obtained: Glasgow 

(—1934). Cf. klondyke.
doddy, or doddy-doddy (‘all head and no body’). A simileton, an idiot: mostly Norfolk and orig. and mainly dial.: C. 19-20.
dodge. A shrewd and artful expedient, an ingenious contrivance: from ca. 1830; coll. in C. 20. Dickens in Pickwick: ’ ’It was all false, of course!’ “All, sir,” replied Mr. Weller, “reg’lar do, sir; artful dodge.” (Ex the corresponding v., which, like its derivative, dodger, is S.E., though the latter has a slightly different connotation.)
dodge, on the. Engaged in something dishonest: coll.: C. 20. O.E.D. (Sup.)
dodge Pompey. To steal grass: Australian: from ca. 1920. Pompey personifies the Law. Ex:—

2. To avoid work on shipboard: naval (pre-G.W.) >, by 1918 at latest, gen. nautical. Bowen.

dodger. Whyssall (d. ca. 1830), the all-England cricketer.
dodger. Artful: (low) coll. (— 1887); slightly ob. Baumann. See dodge.
dodipol. See dodipoll.
does. One who cheats another: from ca. 1840; ob. O.E.D.—2. A ‘character’; an eccentric or very humorous fellow: Australian; from ca. 1905. does, fair. See fair doo’s.
does it? A sarcastically intoned coll. retort: from ca. 1870; ob.
does your mother know you’re out? A c. of sarcastic jest or impertinent suggestion: from 1838, says Benham in his Book of Quotations. Punch, 1841; The Sun, Dec. 28, 1864. F. & H., s.v., gives a very interesting list of such saucy phrases: all of which will be found in these pages.
does your mother want a rabbit? A c. of the 1890’s and pre-War C. 20: non-aristocratic. B. & P. Ex the question of inconstant rabbit-vendors.
doesn’t (or don’t) give much away. Yield(s) few — or no — advantages; very keen: coll.: from ca. 1890. Ware. does. See dosey.
[dog, when used of a person who contemnuously or playfully, is considered by F. & H. to be coll., by the S.O.D. to be S.E.: the latter is, I think, in the right.]
dog. Abbr. dog-watch: nautical: from ca. 1890.
— 2. In the West Indies, a copper or a small silver coin, with variant black dog: (1797) nautical. (O.E.D.)—3. God: in coll. oaths: C. 16. O.E.D.
dog. To post (a student) for examination on the last day: Oxford University (— 1728); † by 1860. Amherst. O.E.D.—2, V.l. To have sexual connexion on all fours, i.e. like a dog: C. 19—20 low.
dog, an easy thing to find a stick to beat a. ‘It costs little to trouble those that cannot help themselves,’ B.E.: mid-C. 17—18 coll.
dog, blush like a blue. See blush. — dog, cash a.
See cash a dog.
dog.—fight, bear, fight. To fight till one party is overcome: C. 16—20 coll.; ob. Apha Behn, Scott.
dog, he (she) worries the. A c. directed at a visitor whose approach repels even the house-dog: lower-middle classes” (1900); ob. Ware.
dog, put on; occ. carry dog. To put on ‘side’: coll.: from ca. 1914. (O.E.D. Sup.) Cf. doggy, adj., 1.
dog, try it on. See try it on the dog.
dog, swim, give one’s dog a.
dog and bonnet. The lion-and-crown badge of the King’s Own Scottish Borderers; military C. 20. F. & Gibbons.
dog and cat, agree like. See cat and dog.
dog and maggot. Biscuits and cheese: Regular Army’s: C. 20. B. & P.
dog away one’s time. To idle it away: Cockney (— 1887); slightly ob. Baumann.
dog-basket. ‘The receptacle in which the remains of the cabin meals were taken—or smuggled—forward’ in sailing ships: nautical: C. 19. Dowen.
dog before its master, the. A heavy swell preceding a gale: nautical c.p.: late C. 19—20. Ibid.
dog bite my ear! See bite me!
dog biting dog. Applied to one actor’s adversely criticising another’s performance: late C. 19—20 theatrical.
dog-bolt. A coll. term of contempt: mean wretch. C. 16—17, later use being archaic. (S.O.D.)
dog-buffer. A dog-stealer that kills all dogs not advertised for, sells the skins, and feeds the other dogs with the carcasses: c.: late C. 18—19. Grose, 2nd ed.
dog-drawn. Said (low coll.) of a woman from whom a man has, in the act, been forcibly removed: C. 19—20; ob.
dog-fancier. A receiver of stolen dogs and restorer of the same to their owners—for a fee: c. (— 1661). Mayhew.
dog-flight. An Air Force coll. (1915) >, by 1930, S.E., as defined, implausibly, by J. C. Wren, in The Passing Show, Aug. 18, 1934. ’But best sport of all was a dog-flight, an all-on-all-to-all scrap between a flight of British Bristol Scouts and a bigger flight of Fokkers, everybody shooting-up everybody, a wild and whirling mêlée from which every now and then someone went hurtling down to death in a blaze of smoke and fire.’
dog-hole. A mean or a disgusting dwelling-place: coll.: from ca. 1570; ob.

[dog in the manger, like a, may orig. have been coll.: C. 18–20.]

dog is dead?, whose. Variant, what dog is a-haunting? What is the matter? C. 17–20 coll.; ob. Massinger, 'Whose dog's dead now? That you observe these vigil?'. (O.E.D.)


dog-Latin. Bad Latin; sham Latin. Cf. apothecaries' or dog or garden or kitchen Latin: from ca. 1800; coll. >, by 1820, S.E.


dog-leech. A quack: C. 16–18 coll. (In S.E., a veterinary surgeon.)

dog-nap. A short sleep enjoyed sitting: coll.; from ca. 1850. Cf. cat-nap. The variant dog-sleep is S.E.

dog-nose. See dog's nose.

dog on anyone, walk the black. A punishment inflicted on a prisoner by his fellows if he refuses to pay his footing: e.: late C. 18–mid-19. Grose.

dog on it! An outwardly affected, ca. 1800–90, by boys. Perhaps euphemistic for God damn it! dog out in, not fit to turn a. (Of weather) abominable: coll. (< 1887). Baumann.


dog that bit you, a hair of the. A drink taken to counteract drunkenness; a drink the same as another's the night before: coll. (< 1546).


dog to hold, give one the. To serve a person a mean trick: coll. (< 1678); by 1800. Ray. 1678. Cf. holding the baby. (Apperson.) Cf. dog-trick.

dog-trick. A mean or 'dirty' action, trick: C. 16–19 coll. B.E.


dogged. Adv., very, excessively: mainly sporting (< 1819), prob. ex dial., where only it is extant. Perhaps the orig. of the U.S. dog-gone.

dogged as if I, it's. Perseverance and pluck win in the end: a coll. opp. dating from the mid-1800's.

dogger. A professional hunter of dungs: Australian coll.: C. 20. The dingo is often described as a wild dog.—2. A dog: by 'the Oxford'er': from ca. 1910. (H. A. Vachell, Martha Penny, 1934.)

doggers, v. To cheat; sell rubbish: Charterhouse; from ca. 1880.


doggers. See dog's lady.


Cf. dog-collar.—5. An officer assisting an admiral at his work; a midshipman regularly attending a captain or flag officer: naval: from ca. 1910. Ex faithfulness to duty. O.E.D. (Sup.); Bowen.

doggo, lie. To make no move(ment) and say nothing; to bide one's time: C. 19–20. Prob., 'like a cunning dog' (W.). The -o suffix is common in s.

doggy, adj. Stylish; smart, whether of appearance or of action: from ca. 1885. Ex a sad dog, a bit of a dog. Now, 'just a little too gay and dazzling,' Denis Mackail, 1934.—2. N.; see doggie.—3. (Of Latin) debased: coll.: 1898 (O.E.D. Sup.). Ex dog Latin.


dogs, go to the. To go to ruin; to lead an extremely dissipated and foolish life. C. 16–20; coll. till ca. 1850, then S.E.

dogs, rain cats and. See cats.


dog's bottom. A facetious term of address: from ca. 1930.


dog's dinner, like a. Stylishly: low coll.: C. 20. James Curtis, The Gull Kid, 1936. 'The greazer that was with her was dolled up like a dog's dinner with a white tie and all.'

dog's dram. A spit into his mouth and a smack on his back: mid-C. 18–early 10 low. Grose, 1st ed.

dog's face. A coll. term of abuse: coll. > S.E.; from ca. 1670; ob.

dogs have not dined, the. A c.p. to one whose shirt hangs out at the back: mid-C. 18–early 19. Grose, 1st ed. (See Stang, p. 274.)


dog's lady or wife; doggyess; puppy's mamma. Jocular ways of calling a woman a bitch, Grose, 3rd ed.; coll.: late C. 18–mid-19.

dog's leg(s). The cheveron(s), 'designating non-commissioned rank, worn on the arm, and not unlike in outline to the canine hindleg,' Ware: military: late C. 19–20.


dog's match of it, make a. To do the act of kind by the wayside: low coll.: C. 19–20; cf. to dog.

dog's meat. 'Anything worthless; as a bad book, a common tale, a villainous picture, etc.,' F. & H. Coll.: from ca. 1820. Ex lit. sense.

dog's nose. Gin and beer mixed: low (< 1812); ob. Vaux. Occ. dognose ('Ducange Anglicus'; Baumann).


dog's paste. Sausage—or mince-meat: low coll.: from ca. 1850. Cf. dogg

dog's portion. A lick and a smell, i.e. almost nothing: late C. 19–20 (ob.) coll. In late C. 19–19

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occ. applied to a distant admirer of women. Grose, 2nd ed. Cf. dog’s soup.

dog’s rig. Sexual intercourse, to exhaustion, followed by back-to-back indifference: mid-C. 18–19; low. Grose, 2nd ed. Cf. dog’s match.


Dog’s Tail. The constellation of the Little Bear: nautical: from ca. 1860.


Dog’s wife. See dog’s lady.

dogun or D-. A Roman Catholic: Canadian: late C. 19–20. Possibly ex that very Irish surname, Duggan.

doing. A thrashing; a severe monetary loss: lower classes’ coll. (—1909). Ware. Ex dial. doing, a scolding: which in C. 20 is coll. doing l. nothing. ‘Certainly not!’ in retort to a dubious or unassuming offer or an amorous invitation from late 1890’s. In 1927, a schoolgirl, writing on Queen Elizabeth, said, ‘Philip of Spain asked her hand in marriage, but she replied: “Nothing doing!”’ Ex there’s nothing doing, no business being done.


doings, in the. In the guard-room: military: from ca. 1814. F. & Gibbons. Ex.
doings, the. The thing (easy thing): esp. what is at the moment needed or otherwise relevant: from ca. 1912. Perhaps ex the U.S. usage, the materials for a meal (1838): Thornton. See esp. F. & Gibbons and B. & P. Cf. gadget, ooj-a-piv.

doldrums. Low spirits; dullness: from ca. 1805; coll. till ca. 1890, then S.E. James Payn, 1883, ‘Serious thoughts... which she stigmatised... as the doldrums.’ Ex dull on tantrum: W.

dole. A trick, a stratagem: Winchester College: from ca. 1830. A development (though prob. straight from L. dolus) of the † S.E. sense, guilt, fraud.
dole, go on the. To receive unemployment benefit: s. (ca. 1926) >, by 1930, coll.
dolfer. One who contrives a trick: Winchester College; ex dole, q.v.
doll. A lady: Cockneys’ (—1804); † by 1000. Mayhew. ‘If it’s a lady and gentleman then we cries, “A toff and a doll!”’ (O.E.D.) Because well dressed.
doll, Bartholomew. See Bartholomew.

doll up, v.i. and reflexive. To dress oneself very smartly; mostly Australian: C. 20. Whence dolled—dressed ‘to death’.
dollar. A five-shilling piece; five shillings: C. 19–20 coll. ex U.S. ex C. 16–17 S.E. Hence half-dollar or half a dollar, a half crown.
dollar, holly. See holy dollar.—dollar groin. See groney.

dollars to buttons, it’s. It is a sure let: coll. American >, before 1900, English. Ware.

dolly. A mistress: C. 17–early 19.—2. Also (—1843), ‘any one who has made a faux pas’, Punch, 1843. Cf. the C. 17 S.E. doll-common, a harlot; in C. 17–early 18 coll., surviving as dial., dolly also bore this sense, plus that of a slattern.—3. A pet, i.e. a coll., name for a child’s doll: from late C. 18.—4. A piece of cloth serving as a sponge: tailors’, from ca. 1850.—5. A binding of rag on finger or toe: coll. and dial. (—1886). O.E.D.—6. The membrum striæ: low: C. 19–20, ob.—7. A ‘donkey-drop’ (q.v.): cricketers’ (1906), as in 8, the source (1926), a slow easy catch. Lewis.—9. The inevitable nickname (Dolly) of all men sur-named Gray or Grey: C. 20. Ex the famous song, Dolly Gray.—10. See Moving-Picture Slang, § 4. (Also Dolly.) All ex doll, which in S.E. has a corresponding term for the first four.
dolly. Perhaps only in dolly pales, dear friends or companions: c. C. 19. Possibly a perversion of dear suggested by dolly, n. 1.—2. Adj., silly: foolish: from ca. 1830; ob. Dickens. ‘You wouldn’t make such a dolly speech,’ where, however, the term may = babyish.
dolly-catch. The original (1895) of dolly, n., 8. E.D.D.

dolly-worship. The Roman Catholic religion: Nonconformists’ (—1909). ‘From the use of statues, etc.’; Ware.

Dollymop. See dolly-mop, 1.

doll-head; dollish. B.E. errs greatly in classifying these S.E. terms as c.
dom. Some of the C. 20 jocularities, e.g. Galworthy’s devil-may-care-derum, verge on the coll. W.
dome-stick. A servant: sol. or, when deliberate, jocular coll., † (—1891.) Obviously suggested by the C. 17–18 spelling of domestic. Cf. dram a-stick.
ediment. A variant of do, n., 3: dial and (?) low coll.: from 1890’s. O.E.D.

domerar. See domerar.
domestic afflictions. The menstrual period: coll.: from ca. 1850.
domin(i)e-do-little. An impotent old man: mid.

Dominion, the. Canada: C. 20; coll. adj. abbr.

Donkey. A knock-out blow: also as v.: from
ca. 1870. H., 5th ed. Cf. domino with (q.v.) Ex:
—2. An exclamation, it expresses completion —
of a punishment in the Victorian Army and Navy
(1864, H., 3rd ed.); among 'bus-conductors to signify
‘full up’ (—1882); ob. All these senses are
coll. ex the game of dominoes.—3. See dominoes.

domino-box. The mouth: from ca. 1820; orig.
low, in C. 20 inelegant and ob. Bee, 1823.
Contrast box of dominoes (see under).

domino-thumper. A pianist: from ca. 1880; ob.
Barrière & Leland.

domino with, it (or it's). It's the end of: there is
which the winner of a game of dominoes calls as he
plays his last piece, E.D.I.

dominoes. (Never singular.) The teeth, esp. if
discoloured (contrast ivories): from ca. 1820. Cf.
domiao, q.v.—2. The keys of a piano: from ca. 1880; ob.
Hence:
dominoes, box of. A piano: from ca. 1880. See preceding.

dominoes, sluice one's. To drink: low (—1823).
Moncrieff in Tom and Jerry, Act II, scene 6. Cf.
dominoes, 1, and domino-box, q.v.

*dom(un)er or -er; dummerer. A beggar pre-
tending to be deaf and dumb: mid. C. 16-18.
Harman.—2. Also, ca. 1870–1750, a madman.
Coles, 1676. Both are c.

Don. See Ack.

Don. An adept, a ‘swell’ or ‘toff’; a pre-
tentious person: coll. from ca. 1820. In C.17–18
S.E. a distinguished person. Ex the Spanish dons
as in 2, the English university coll. use, a fellow of a
college: from ca. 1600; orig. pejorative, (O.E.D.)
—3. (Gen. pl., and always D.) A Spaniard; a
Portuguese sailor; nautical: C. 19–20. Bowen,
‘A modern title than Dugas but not applied to
other Latins.’

don, adj. Expert, clever; excellent: from ca.
1800; ob. H., 2nd ed. Ex the preceding.

Don Caesar spouting. ‘Haughty public elec-
tion’: Society: ca. 1850–1900. Ware.

Don Peninsula. The world, the 'geographical'
range, of the dons: Oxford University, ca. 1820–
40. Eggn's Groes.

Don rag. A synonym of collekker, q.v.: Oxford
undergraduates’ C. 20.

dona, donah (mostly in sense 2), donna, doner,
rarely donnay. A woman; esp. the lady of the
house: from the 1850’s: Cockney and Parleyres.
H., 1st ed. Ex It. or Sp. via Lingua Franca.—2.
Hence, in Australia, from ca. 1890: a girl; a sweet-
heart. ‘Never introduce your dona(h) to a pal
has long been an Australian c.p.

dona Highland-finger. A music-hall singer:
rhyming s. (—1909). Ware.

dona Jack. A harlot’s bully; lower classes
(—1909). Ware.

*donaker. A cattle-stalker: C. 17–early 18; c.

Donald. A glass of spiritual liquor, esp.
whiskey: Scottish: 1869, Johnston, Poems
(E.D.D.).

Doncaster-cut. A horse: coll (—1629); t by
1800. Skelton, (Apperson) Doncaster famous
for horses.

donderkop. In address, blockhead: South African

done brown. See brown, done.

*done, have one's drum. To have one's house
searched by detectives: c. C. 20. See drum, n. 2.
done, it isn't. It is bad form: coll. from late
1870’s. (O.E.D. Sup.). An upper-class counter,
this. Hence, in C. 20, the done (correct) thing.
done-in. Exhausted; cheated; ruined; in c.,
robbed, convicted to prison, or hanged; (—1859)
see do for. The c. done for a ramp = convicted for
stealing (H., 1st ed.).
ecarily (only of women): C. 18–20; ob.—3. In c.,
same as done: see do-over.
done to death. See death, done to.
done to the wide: done to the world. Utterly
exhausted, defeated, or baffled; ruined: from ca.
1908: a now verging on coll.
done-up. *Used up, finished, or quieted': coll.
(—1859). H., 1st ed.—2. 'Ruined by gaming, and
extravagances,' Grose, 1st ed. ('modern term', he
adds): ca. 1780-1860.
doner. See dona. And:
doner. One who is done for, ruined, fated to die:
lower classes': C. 20. Ernest Raymond, The Jest-
ing Army, 1930.
dong. To strike; to punch: New Zealanders'
and Australians': C. 20. Perhaps cx the dong
emitted by a bell when struck; perhaps a blend of
ding + dot.
donkey. A compositor (cf. gig): printers’
(—1857). Variant moke.—2. A sailor's clothes-
chest: nautical: from ca. 1860.—3. A blockhead,
a fool: coll, from ca. 1840.—4. Even for an ass,
donkey was orig.: ca. 1780—coll. and remained so
for some fifty years. Cf. donkey dick, q.v. Per-
haps ex Duncan or Dominic: W.
donkey 1, a penny (or twopenny or threepence)
more and up goes the. A (low) London c.p. expres-
sing derision (—1841): coll. ex a street acrobat's
stock finish to a turn; ob.

*donkey, ride the. To cheat with weights and
measures: c.: C. 19. 'Duroe Anglica.'

Vbl.n., donkey-riding.
donkey, ride the black. See ride ...
donkey, take the hindleg off a. See talk ...
donkey, whack one's own. To be occupied, or
preoccupied, with one's own affairs; lower classes'
donkey ?, who stole the. Sometimes another person
added, the man in or with the white hat: this
latter represented also the occasion: ca. 1835–70.
Ex an actual incident.
donkey dick. An ass: ca. 1780–1820. A
variant of donkey, which is prob. ex Duncan.
Grose, 1st ed. From early C. 19, dicky(g) came to be
used by itself.
donkey-drops. In cricket, from ca. 1887, slow
round-arm bowling. A. G. Steel, 1888; the Hon.
E. Lyttleton, in his Cricket, 1890. (Lewis.) Also
dolly (see n., 7).
donkey-fragile. A 28-gun ship between a
donkey has of Sunday, have as much idea (of it)
as a. To be wholly ignorant: Cockney (—1887);
ob. Baumann.
donkey in one's throat, have a. To have phlegm
there: Cockney (—1887); slightly ob. Baumann.

donkey's ears. A shirt-collar with long points, already old-fashioned in 1891: s. or coll.: ca. 1870-1900.—2. A variant, dating from just before G.W., of:

donkey's years. A long time: suggested by the sound of donkey's ears: when illiterately pronounced donkey's ears, and the length of a donkey's ears: from ca. 1890.

donna and donny. See dona(h).—donneken.
See dannaken. (Bee's spelling.)
donovan. (Gen. in pl.) A potato: Anglo-Irish: from ca. 1890. Cf. murphy. Ex the commonness of the surname.
don't or don's week. The week before a general holiday: esp. a week out of work before it: tailors: from ca. 1860: ob.

Dons, the. The Wimbledon 'soccer' team: sporting: from ca. 1920.
don't. Do not: coll.: from ca. 1600.—2. As n., a reiteration of don't: a prohibition: from ca. 1890: coll.—3. Also, done it: coll.: early C. 18. Swift. See slang, p. 66.—4. And: does not: from ca. 1720, but sol. only since ca. 1840.
don't bother me now, (for) my hands are wet! A military c.p. of the G.W. Ex the weary impatience of harassed mothers. (B. & P.)
don't bully the troops! A military c.p. (C. 20) to an excessive or noisy talker. B. & P.
don't care a Pall Mall, (I.) (I) don't care a damn: clubmen's: 1865-ca. 1890. Ware. Ex the Pall Mall Gazette's articles entitled 'The Maiden Tribute' in July, 1885.—Pall Mall, a 'gal' or girl.
don't dynamite! Don't be angry! non-aristocratic c.p. of 1883-ca. 1900. Ware. 'Result of the Irish pranks in Great Britain with this explosive.'
don't fear! See don't (you) fear!
don't know who's which from when's what, (I.) (I, etc.) don't know anything about it: lower classes' c.p.: 1897-ca. 1905. Ware.
don't let me catch you bending! See catch bending. (Collinson.)
don't look down, you'd soon find the hole if there was hair round it! A drill-sargent's c.p. on the fixing of bayonets: late C. 19-20. B. & P. Cf. you're slower...
don't lose your hair! 'Keep your hair on!' non-aristocratic: from ca. 1880: ob. Ware.
don't make a Judy Fitzsim(m)ons of yourself. See judy Fitzsim(m)ons.
don't make me laugh—(I've cut my lip)! A c.p. of C. 20. Collinson. The latter part is very ob.
don't mention that. A c.p.: ca. 1882-84, as the result of a libel case (Ware). Ex don't mention it!, q.v. at mention.
don't mind me! Proceed: o.p., gen. irone: C. 20. I.e. 'Go ahead—don't mind me!'
don-name. (Comm.: street-name. Towns: jocular coll.: from ca. 1860; t by 1930. Cf. toponymics.)
don't seem to. Be inacapable of; as in 'I don't seem to see it': coll. (—1909). Ware.
don't sell me a dog! Don't deceive me!
Society: ca. 1860-80. Ware.
don't think, I. I do think so! middle and lower classes': from ca. 1880. Cf. not half! don't turn that side to London! A c.p. of con-
demnation: non-aristocratic (—1909). Ware. 'From the supposition that everything of the best is required in the metropolis.'
don't (you) fear! Take my word for it!; certainly not! coll.: mid-C. 19-20. Baumann. Cf. never fear! (q.v. at fear, never).
don't you forget it! See and don't you forget it! don't you know. As you well know; please understand!: coll. (—1887) Baumann. 'Sehr gebräuchlicher Zusatz' (a very frequent tag). In C. 20, almost meaningless except as a vague palliative. Cf. do you know, q.v., to which it may orig. have been an offset.
don't you wish you may get it? A c.p. of ca. 1830-50 = I don't like your chance! or I don't think! Barham: Punch, 1841, 1844.
doo-da or doods(h), all of a. Excited: from late 1914. Ex the echoic refrain doo-da, doo-da, doo-da day, prob. on all of a dither.
do ficker. 'Any mechanical tool, instrument, or gadget': Canadian military: 1915. B. & P. Cf.
dood. An affected, also a Cockney, variation of duced. Manchon. As:
doos is of dude. Ibid.
doodle, v. To make a fool of; cheat: from ca. 1820. Moncrieff, 'I have been . . . douelled out of forty pounds to-day.' In C. 20, rare except in dial.
doodle-doo, gen. preceded by cock a. A child's or a childish name for a cock: C. 17-20 coll. Grose.
doodle-doo man. A cock-breeder or -fighter: C. 18-19; cockpit s.
doodle-sack. The pudendum mulivere: mid-C. 18-20; ob. Grose, 2nd ed. In S.E., a bagpipe: this origin, like so many in C. 18, is crudely anatomical.
doose, occ. dooe; doe. Two, as in dooe saltar, two pence: Partysee: mid-C. 19-20. J. d. soldi.
dooey, doey. Always large doo(es), a large cup of tea: orig. and mainly, carmen's: from ca. 1920. Ex the notice: tea 1d., large doo, 2d.
doof. Half a cigarette: workmen's (—1935). Ex do for now, suffice for the present.
Whence: doogheno. A good one. doogheno hit, one good hit, i.e. a bargain, a profit. Back s. (—1859). H., 1st ed.
dookie; dukey. An unlicensed theatre; 'penny gaff': theatrical: from ca. 1880: ob. Perhaps ex a gaff-propritor with a large nose: of. ducker and dook, 3. (Ware.)


dooks. (Extremely rare in singular.) The hands. More gen. duke, q.v.
doos, doosie or doosian tap. Off one's head; mad: Regular Army. late C. 19-20. F. & Gribbons. Ex Doelits, a sanatorium in Bombay, and Hindustani tap, fever. Since ca. 1920, often abbr. to doollally. (See a so the Addenda.)
doolie. An ambulance: Anglo-Indian coll.: C. 18-20. Ex the S.E. sense, a litter or a rudimentary palanquin (C. 16—). Yule & Burnell.
dooly, dooly. Milk: military: 1914; ob. Ex Fr. du lait. (F. & Gribbons; B. & P.)
doos, up to the. See up to Dick.
door. A hole. 'Nock and breach of mutton, a joint which bends readily amongst the cervical vertebrae,' Ware: Cockney's: mid-C. 19—20.
door-mat. A heavy beard: 1856—ca. 1882. Cf. crinex, q.v.—2. Hence, says Ware, 'by 1882 . . . applied to the moustache only, probably because about this time the tendency to shave the beard and wear only a very heavy moustache became prevalent'.
door-nail. See dead as a door-nail.—door-plater. See brass-plater.—door-step. See doorseep.
dooring. Incorrect for door-ringing. O.E.D.
[doorman. One who, at shop or place of amusement, invites the public to enter: from ca. 1855. By F. & H. considered as coll., by O.E.D. as S.E. Cf. Barker.]
doors. A (gen. thick) slice of bread and butter: low: (1885). Cf. couple of doors, q.v.
doo's. See fair doo's.
dop. Alcoholic drink in gen.: South African coll.: C. 20. Ex dop, the native name for Cape brandy. O.E.D. (Sup.).
dose of salts, like a. Very quickly; esp. go through (something) like...: low, mostly Australian: C. 20.

dose of the balmy, have a. To sleep; coll.: C. 19–20, ob. See balmy.
doth. A ‘bivv’y (1914); hence, a funk-hole (1915): Canadian military. B. & P. Ex doth, q.v.

Dosingham. See Bandageham.

*doe (not before C. 19); (after ca. 1850, rarely) dose. A, and to sleep; lodging; to lodge; a bed. All impression and/or roughness: late C. 18–20; vagrants, C. > ca. 1890, gen.a. G. Parker, 1769; Mayhew. Presumably imm. ex †dor, dose; back, ultimately ex L. dorsum, the back. (Cf. doris, v.−2. Hence, to ‘hang the time out’, to loaf: telegraph-messengers’ (1935).

does, do a. See do a dose.
does-house. A very cheap lodging-house; low: from ca. 1860. On doesen.

*dosken. The same: c.; from ca. 1800. Cf. dosening-ken, q.v.
dosing-man. The keeper of a cheap lodging-house; low: from ca. 1835.
dos-mon. The price of a night’s lodging: low: from ca. 1870.
dosser. A frequenter of does-houses: low: from ca. 1865. Whence (kh)appy dosser, a homeless vagrant creeping in to sleep on chairs, or in passages or cellars: low (−1880). Sims in How the Poor Live. Presumably ex happy but just possibly ex haphazard.−2. Hence, a tram; tramps’ c.: C. 20.−3. The doser: the father of a family: from ca. 1885; ob. He who provides the does.


dosking-ken or crib. (Cf. does-house, does-ken.) A cheap lodging-house: c.; the former −1838; the latter −1851. See does.
dousy. Elegant; smart: from ca. 1885. †ex dosser, the ornamental cloth used to cover the back of a(n imposing) seat; or ex D’Orsay, for in Society, ca. 1850–45, one spoke of a man as ‘a D’Orsay’ (a perfect gentleman) —ex the Comte D’Orsay (Ware).

dot, v. To strike, gen. in form dot (a person) one, and esp. in sense ‘give a black eye’ (Ware): from the middle 1860’s. W. Pett Ridge, 1885, Minor Dialogues; C. J. Dennis has dot (one) in the eye, to punch (a person) in the eye.
dot, on the. (Constructed with be.) On the spot: Canadian: from ca. 1920. John Beames. Cf. on the dotted line.
dot, the year. A date long ago; coll.: late C. 19–20, 20’s. ‘The year 0’; esp. as in ‘Gumput’, Out of Evil, 1933. ‘He’s been in every frontier show [battle or skirmish] since the year dot.’ Cf. ‘I reckon he was born in the year dot, that ‘orse was’, W. Pett Ridge, Minor Dialogues, 1885.
dot and carry, or go one. A person with a wooden or a shorter or a limping leg. The mid-C. 18–mid-19 form is go; the C. 19–20, carry. Coll. Grose, 1st ed.; Barham. Also as v.−2. An inferior writing or arithmetical master: late C. 18–early 19. Grose, 2nd ed. Ex an arithmetical process.
synonyms are numerous.
dots on, put. To bore, to weary: orig. (1915 or 1916), military; slightly ob. Prob. ex dot one’s ′t′.
dotted line, sign on the. To sign; jocular coll.: from ca. 1925. Ex the instructions on legal and official documents.
dotter. A penny-a-liner; a reporter: from ca. 1870; ob.
dotty. Weak; dizzy: sporting and gen. (−1870); ob. Esp. dotty in the pine, unsteadily on one’s legs. Perhaps ex dotty, v.−2. Hence, idiotic; (a little) mad: from ca. 1888.−3. As n., a low harlot’s fancy man: c. (−1891).
double, tr. A trick: esp. in C. 18–19 tip, C. 19–20 give the double, to run away from one’s creditors, then, from ca. 1850, to escape; and in put the double on, to circumvent (−1870).−2. An actor playing two parts; also v. (from ca. 1890 and soon S.E.); theatrical (−1825)−3. Repetition of a word or sentence: printers’, from ca. 1870.−4. In a c. a street-turning: from ca. 1870.−5. (Gen. a double.) R Two score: fishermen’s coll.; late C. 19–20. Bowen. Ex double, a basket containing from three to four dozen fish.
double, v. For the theatrical sense, see n. 2.−2. See double up.−3. To double one’s effort or speed (v.l.): coll.: from ca. 1865.
double-ace poker. See Kangaroo poker.—double. Come the. See come the double.
double act, do the. To get married, be married: low (−1923). Manchon. Prob. ex run in double harness.
double back. To go back on an action, statement, opinion: coll.: mid-C. 19–20. Ex doubling back on one’s tracks.
double barrel. A field or opera glass: from ca. 1880; ob. Traill.
double-barreled. Applied to a harlot natural and unnatural (see fore-and-after): low: from ca. 1860.−2. Also to any person both normal and abnormal in sex: from ca. 1900.
double-breasted feet, occ. double-breasters. Club feet: coll.: from ca. 1850; ob.
double-breasted water-butt smashers. A well-developed man; an athlete: Cockeyes’: ca. 1890–1914. Ware.
double-cross or -double. Winning, or trying to win, after promising to lose a race: sporting: from ca. 1870. The v. is double, double-cross, or put the
**DOUBLE-CROSSER**

**double on, the last v.t. only: from ca. 1870.** Later, double-cross, etc., is much used by criminals for betrayal (n. and v.) in a criminal transaction: from ca. 1885: see passim, Edgar Wallace's detective novels.

**double-crosser.** The agent of the preceding; rare before C. 20.

**double-c* ted.** Sexually large: low coll. or vulg.: from ca. 1800.

**double dash.** Emphatic 'dash it!': Cockney (1876); ob. Bouman.

**double-decker.** A ship having two above-water decks: from ca. 1870. —2. A tramcar or 'bus with seats on top as well as below: from ca. 1895.

Both coll., the latter ex U.S.

**double-d* ded or -duged.** Large-breasted. N. of double. д. C. 19–20: the n. is low coll.; double-d* ded, low s.; double-duged, low coll.

**double-distilled.** (Esp. of a lie) superlative: coll.: from ca. 1870; ob.


**double-ender.** A skeleton key with a ward at each end: c.: mid-C. 19–20; ob. 'No. 747.'

**double event.** Simultaneous syphilis and gonorrhoea (men), or deflection and conception: low: from ca. 1870. —2. A glass of whisky and a glass of beer: public-houses (esp. in Glasgow): C. 20.

**double figures, go into.** To have 10 children at the least: lower classes' coll. (1923). Manchon.

**double finn.** A £10 note: low (? orig. c.): from ca. 1870. See finn and:

*double finnip (etc.).* The same: c. (1839). Brandon. See finnip.

**double guts, n.: double-gutted, adj.** (Of a person large-jaunched: low coll.: from ca. 1829.

**double-headed.** (Of a train) with two engines, one at the front and the other at the back: late C. 19–20: railwaymen's coll., now verging on S.E.

**double-header.** A coin with two heads: low coll.: from ca. 1875.

**double-hocked.** Having extremely thick ankles: low: from ca. 1890.

**double intenders.** 'Knock-down blows—labial or fistful': Ware: non-aristocratic (1909); virtually †


**double lines.** Ship-casualty or casualties: nautical: from ca. 1870. H., 6th ed. Ex the manner of their entry at Lloyd's.


*double, on the.** (Of doors, gates) double-locked: c.: C. 20. George Ingram, Stir, 1933.

*double on, put the.** See double-cross.

[Double passives, nearly always clumsy, and often cacophonous, are on the border-line between rephrasable catachresis and mere stylistic in felicity. See esp. Feiler.]


**double scooped.** 'Hair parted in centre, and worn low—gave way to the quiff', Ware: military: ca. 1890–95.

**double-shotted.** (Of a brandy, or whiskey, and soda) containing twice the usual proportion of alcohol: coll.: from ca. 1890.

**double shuffle.** A horripine step in which each foot is shuffled, rapidly and neatly, twice in succession: coll.: from ca. 1830, esp. among costermongers. Dickens.—2. Hence a trick, a piece of faking: from ca. 1870.

**double-shung.** (Of men) excessively equipped sexually: C. 19–20 (ob.): low. 'double-sung.'

*double slangs.** Double irons or fetters: o. (1812); ob. Vaux.

**double-sinker.** Abnormally developed *labia majora*: low: from ca. 1870.

**double thumper.** An 'outside' in boxing: from ca. 1850: coll.


**double up.** To cause to collapse (v. i. sense is rare): boxing (ca. 1814). *Moore, 'Double him up, like a bag of old duds.'—2. To pair off, e.g., in a cabin (rare as v. i.): coll.: 1837 (O.E.D.). H., 2nd ed. Oec., simply double.

**Double X's, the.** The 20th Foot Regiment, since 1881 the Lancashire Fusiliers: military: C. 19–20; ob. F. & Gibbons. Ex the figure XX.

**doubler.** A punch on side or belly: boxing: from ca. 1810. 'Peter Corcoran', 1821. *A doubler in the bread-basket."

*doublet.** A precious stone endorsed with glass: in C. 15–17, it was S.E.; then it > c.—2. See iron d. and stone d., a prison.

**doubty.** Doughty: incorrect form: C. 15–18. O.E.D.

**douce.** See douse.


**Douglas with one eye and a stinking breath, Roby.** The breech: nautical: mid-C. 18–19. Grose, 1st ed.

**dough.** Pudding: Public Schools', C. 19–20.—2. Money: U.S. (—1851), then (from ca. 1880) Australia, then—ca. 1895—Britain. (Thornton.)

**dough, one's cake is.** See cake is dough.

**dough-baker.** Deficient in brains: coll.: from late C. 16: in late C. 19–20, dial. Wycherley, 1675. 'These dough-baked, senseless, indolent animals, women.' Cf. half-baked.


**dough-nut.** (Gen. pl.) A Carley life-saving float: nautical: C. 20. Bowen. (Cheerful !)

**Doughboy.** An American infantryman: U.S. coll. (1867), anglicised ca. 1917. Thornton; O.E.D. (Sup.). 'In allusion to the "large globular glass buttons of the infantry uniform", in the American civil war.'—2. (d.) A punch in the face: low: from ca. 1919. G. Ingram, Stir, 1933, has in its usual form: give (a person) a doughboy.


**doughy, adj.** (Of complexion) pale or pasty: coll.: from ca. 1860; ob. Ware. Cf. underdone.


**douse, dowses.** To put, esp. down or (of a candle, lamp, etc.) out: low coll.: C. 18–20, chiefly in
DOUSER

doussé, a heavy blow; dousing (doussing), a threshing: resp. late C. 18–19 (Grose, 2nd ed.), C. 19. Both, low coll.
dove, soiled. A high-flying harlot: from ca. 1870; coll. Dove = purity.
dove-tart. A pigeon pie; coll.: from ca. 1850; ob. ‘Cuthbert Bede’.
Dover Castle boarder. A debtor compelled to sleep within the rules of the Queen’s Bench Prison; debtors: ca. 1830–81—the prison was demolished in 1881. Ex the Dover Castle, the most prominent tavern in that district. Ware.
Dower waggoner, put this reckoning up to the. (Gen. addressed to a landlord.) Score this up against me: a c.p. of ca. 1820–40. Bee, ‘The waggoner’s name being Owen, pronounced owing.’
dowdying. A drastic practical joke practised in C. 18 by one Pears, nicknamed Dowdy ox the burden, dow de dow, of one of his songs. Grose, 1st ed.
dowis. A draper. Coll.; from late C. 18. Ex the towelling so named; popularised by Daniel Dowis, a character in Colman’s The Heir at Law.
dowling. A compulsory game of football: Public Schools (— 1871); ob. Ex the gr. word for (a slave, or that for) to enslave. Desmond Coke, The Bending of a Twig, 1906, of the game as it is played at Shrewsbury School: ‘Any number from three hundred down (or up) can play a dawning; but if it happens that in reality some half-a-dozen punt the ball from end to end, while all the rest troop after it, like soldier-slaves round the great warriors of Ilion. And dawning is compulsory.’ Cf. the quotation at Skye.

*down. Alarm; suspicion; discovery: c.: ca. 1810–1900. Vaux,—2. Hence there is no down, there is no risk; all’s safe.—3. A tendency to be severe towards: coll. (— 1893). S.O.D. Ex down on, be in, to indulge against, hostility towards: Australian coll.: from ca. 1850. W. J. Dobie, Recollections of Port Phillip, 1856 (Morris). Ex sense 1.—5. See Downs.
down, v. To trick; circumvent: C. 19–20 coll.—2. The sense, to bring, put, throw, or knock down, is—despite F. & H.—S. & E., but down a woman, physically to overpower her for the act, is definitely low coll. if not a., from ca. 1850; cf. up, v.

DOWN UPON YOURSELF

aware: low († orig. c.): Vaux, 1812. Often with to, as in ‘Down to every move,’ Smedley, 1860. Cf. up to, aware of.—3. See:
down, adj. ‘Engaged in fagging in the cricket field, etc. (Peculiar to College)’: Winchester College coll.: from ca. 1860. Wrench.
down, preposition. See ‘Westminster School slang’.
down, be or come. To be ‘ploughed’ in a university examination: Australian coll.: 1886; ob. down, up or. See up or down.
down a pit, be. To be greatly attracted by a role: theatrical: from ca. 1860;†.
*down as a hammer (see also hammer, down as a) or as a tripper. To be alert, wide-aways: c.: ca. 1810–40. Vaux. Elaborations on down, adv., 2.
*down buttlock and sham file. See buttlock and tongue.
*down(hills). Disc cegged to run low: late C. 17–early 19: c. > low s. B.E. Cf. up-hills.
down on or upon, be. To be aware of, alertly equal to: from ca. 1790.—2. Hence, to pounce upon, treat harshly: s. (— 1800) >, by 1900, coll. H., 2nd ed.—3. See down upon.
down on (more gen. upon) one, put a. To inform on a person: from ca. 1840. Vaux.
down on the knuckle. See knuckle, down on the.
down pin, be. To be indisposed; depressed: C. 19. Extant in dial. Ex skittle.
down south, esp. with go or put. (Of money) to go or be put in one’s pocket, hence to be banked: from ca. 1890.
down the banks, get. To fail: Anglo-Irish coll. (— 1890). Waro, ‘Probably the outcome of life amongst the bogs.
down the Lane and/or into the Mo. (To take a stroll) in the Drury Lane district: Central London Cockneys’: ca. 1850–1910. Mo derives ex the long-disappeared Mogul Music Hall. (Waro.)
down the wind. See weather, go up the.
*down to, put. To learn a person’s designs or character: c. (— 1812); ob. Vaux. Cf. drop to and:
*down to, put (a person). To apprise one (of something); explain it to him: c. (— 1812); very ob. Vaux. See down, adv., 2.
down to dandy. Artful; excellent: low: from ca. 1860; ob. Cf. up to dicky.
down to it, get. See get down to it.
down to one, drop. To discover a person’s character or design; coll.: from ca. 1840.
down to something, put one. To explain; prime; let into the ‘know’: from ca. 1830.
down to the ground. Thoroughly; extremely well; coll.: from ca. 1865. Miss Broughton, ‘Suited me down to the ground,’ 1867. (O.E.D.) In C. 18–17 S.E., up and down.
down upon (occ. on) a person, be. To scold, reprimand severely; coll.: from ca. 1810. Scott, ‘We should be down upon the fellow . . . and let him get it well.’—2. See down on, be and put a.
down upon oneself, be or drop. To be melancholy: ca. 1810–60. Vaux.

*downright, the. Begging, esp. as a trap: tramps' c.; cf. 20. Whose...

*downright, on the. On the tramp, 'on the road': tramps' c. (—1832). F. Jennings, Tramping with Tramps. —2. As in:


*Downs, the. The Hollis Fields Prison: c. from ca. 1860; ob. Mayhew.
downstairs. Hell: C. 19 coll. Barham, 'Downstairs... old Nick.'
downy. An artful fellow: ca. 1820–80. Pierce Egan; II, 6th ed. See the adj. Perhaps associated with downy bird (W.), but imm. ex done on, be, 1: q.v.—2. A bed: from ca. 1850; ob. Trollope, 'I've a deal to do before I get to my downy.' Ex the down mattress.
downy, adj. Artful; very knowing: from ca. 1820. Moncrieff, 1823, 'You're a downy von'; Dickens; II. J. Byron, the dramatist. Ex down, n., 1. Cf. downy, n.—2. Fashionable: ca. 1850–90. 'Ducange Anglicus.'
downy, do the. See the doony.
downy bird or cove. A clever rogue (—1875; —1821 resp.). In pl., gen. the downies. Egan; Leman Rede, 'the downiest cove'; Greenwood. The bird form was suggested by a bird's down (cf. downy-bit), but the downy is ex down, n., sense 1.

dowry. A lot; much: low: from ca. 1850; ob. H., 1st ed. Prob. ex the S.E. word.
dowse. See douce.

*doxe, doxey, doxie. See doxy.
doxology-workers. A church, a chapel: from ca. 1870; ob. Cf. gospel-shop and preaching-shop, q.v.

doxy; also doxey, C. 17–19, and doxie or doxey, C. 17; occ. doocy, C. 16, and doxie, C. 16–17 (O.E.D.). In mid-C. 16–18 c., a beggar's trull, a female beggar. Harman, B.E., Grose. Prob. ex Dutch docks, a doll: cf., therefore, dolly. W.—2. Hence, in late ca. 16–20 (ob.), a mistress, a prostitute. Chapman, Dunton, Grose.—3. Hence, in C. 18 low a, esp. in London and among potters, a wife, Mayhew, tales turn up two analogous ideas: a sweetheart (—1818); app. later a slattern or (pejoratively) an old woman. E.D.D. This doxy lends point to the quotation in: —4. doxy, opinion: coll.; 1730. "Orthodoxy, my Lord," said Bishop Warburton... "is my doxy, —heterodoxy is another man's doxy." (S.O.D.)

Doyle, do Paddy. See Paddy Doyle.

dozen, Old; gen. the... The 12th Foot— from 1851 the Suffolk—Regiment: military: C. 19–20. F. & Gibbons.
dozen, talk (occ. run) nineteen to the. To talk very fast: from ca. 1850; coll. till C 20, then S.E. Read (talk), 1852; Sala (run), 1860. O.E.D. Cf.: dozen, talk thirteen to. To talk in the air, wildly, incoherently, without sense: coll. (—1923). Manchon. Ex preceding.
dozenth. Twelfth: coll.; from ca. 1710. (Hence, the rare half-dozenth) Coblenz, 'Let me repeat it—if for the dozenth time.' (O.E.D.)

Dr. Brightton; Dr. Jim; Dr. Johnson. See Doctor Brighton...
drab. Poison; medicine: low (—1851). Ex Romany, where draben'go (the suffix -engo = man) is a doctor: see exponential, Crotan and Sampson.—2. Despite F. & H., drab, a whore, a slattern, is S.E., as is the v.
drabbit 1. Abbr. (G)old rabbit! An old, mainly dial., explicative. Cf. drafi it!
driad. (Gen. in pl.) A card: back a., in C. 20 c. Charles E. Leach, On Top of the World, 1933. Also doraq(k).
draft on Altgate pump. A spurious banknote; fraudulent bill: ca. 1730–1800. Fielding, who notes it as 'a mercantile phrase'; Grose; Bee. Also at Altgate.
drag. A late C. 18–19 four-horse coach, with seats inside and on top. (In C. 20, a break.) Orig. s. or coll., as Moore's Tom Crib, Reynolds's The Fancy, and Lever's Harry Lorrequer (1819, 1829, 1839) clearly show; it > S.E. ca. 1860. (In C. 17–18 S.E., also a cart or waggon, whence the robberies senses.)—2. In late C. 19–20 c., a van. Leach.—3. A chain: C. 19 c.—4. A street or road (—1851): low, mostly Cockney. Mayhew.—5. The robbing of vehicles: c., ca. 1780–1830. G. Parker, 1781. Now van-drag, q.v. Hence done for a drag, convicted for such robbery, and go on the drag (Grose, 1st ed.), to embark on, or to practise, such robbery: same period. But, from ca. 1850 (ob.), go on (or, more gen., flash) the drag, is to wear women's clothes for immoral purposes (in drag, thus dressed): low if not c.—6. A trick or stratagem: C. 10–20, ob.; low.—7. Three months' imprisonment; o. (—1851). Henry Mayhew; Charles E. Leach. Now rather three moon.—8. Its hunting senses are j.—9. An obstacle: coll. (—1887). Baumann, 'That's where the drag is.'—10. 'Petticoat or skirt used by actors when playing female parts. Derived from the drag of the dress, as distinct from the non-dragginess of the trouser.' Ware: theatrical (—1887). Perhaps rather ex go on the drag (see drag, n., 5). Also as adj.—11. An arrest that the criminal considers is unjustified: o. (—1935). David Hume. Perhaps ex sense 9.—12. A harrow: Canadian coll.: late C. 19–20.
draw crabs. ‘To attract fire from the enemy artillery by exposing oneself on ground under observation’ (B. & P.): military: 1915. Ex crabs, body lice.
draw for. To borrow money from, as in ‘She drew him for a dollar’: coll.: C. 19-20, ob.
draw it mild! (Rare in other moods.) Expressive of derision; incredulity: supplication: coll.: 1857, Thackeray (O.E.D.); Punch, 1841; Barham; Martin & Ayton; cf. public-houses; cf. Barham’s ‘A pint of double X, and please to draw it mild,’ W.

*draw-latch. A thief, esp. from houses: in C. 14-15, S.E.; ca. 1560-1740, a member of an order of rogues (B.E.); in mid-C. 18—early 19, any house-rober (Grose, 1st ed.). The sense ‘loiterer’ is S.E.

*draw of. See draw, v., 5.
draw off. V.t. To throw back the body in order to hit the harder: orig. (ca. 1860) pugilistic s.: in C. 20, gen. coll. II., 3rd ed. Cf. the nautical haul off.—2. V.t., with variant draw one’s fireworks, to cool a man’s ardour by lying with him: a low, woman’s term: C. 19-20; ob. Cf. cooler.
draw out. To cause to talk, give an opinion; elicit information: coll.: from ca. 1775. Cf. draw, v., 2. Ex drawing a hodger (W.).
draw plaster. To angle for a man’s intentions: tailors: from ca. 1850; ob.
draw straws; or one’s eyes draw straws. To feel sleepy: coll. in late C. 17 early 19, then dial. Swift, in Polite Conversation, No. 3. (Esp.) Apperson; but see also straws, draw.
draw teeth. To wrench the handles and knockers from street doors: ca. 1840-70. Orig. and chiefly medical students’. (Gen. as vbl.n. drawing teeth.)
draw the bow up to the ear; draw (or pull) the long bow. See bow.—draw the cork. See cork. Cf. tap the claret.

*draw the King’s or Queen’s picture. To manufacture counterfeit coins: from ca. 1780; e. Gros, 2nd ed. (1788). After ca. 1860, perhaps a. In C. 20, ob.
draw the line at tick. (Of a woman) to be virtuous: wry-comics’, esp. lady singers’ (—1909); ob. Wars, ‘A covered allusion to the textile fabric used for the covering of beds and mattressess’.draw wool or worsted, v.t. and i. To irritate; to foment a quarrel: tailors: C. 19-20; ob.
drewad. Drew; drawn: sol. in mid-C. 19-20. Baumann. The pronunciation draw for draw, as is drawing, is mainly Cockney, though it occurs in gen. illiteracy.
draw, out of the top. See top drawer, out of the drawer-on. An appetiser (not of drink, which has puller-on): coll., other senses being S.E.: C. 17-20, ob.

*drawers. (Only in pl.) Stockings, esp. if embroidered: e.: mid-16-18. Harman, Head, Gros. The origin? Perhaps it is because one draws them on and off.
dread Drat!, as in ‘Dread the fellow!’ Cockney (—1887); ob. Baumann.
dreadful. A sensational story, article, print: coll.; from ca. 1884; ob. Earlier and more gen., penny dreadful, q.v. Cf. awful and shocker.
dreadful, adj. Very bad, objectionable, etc., etc., etc.; coll.: from ca. 1860.
dreadful, as adv., was in C. 17—early 19 S.E.; since, sol. (O.E.D.)
dreadnoughts. (Like the preceding, ex the battlefield.) Close-fitting (gen. thick) woollen or flannel female drawers: from 1898; low.
dream. a. A very delightful or agreeably odd person: coll.: C. 20, chiefly among either the nation’s youth and girlhood or romantic women. (As applied to things, even lovely dresses, it is S.E.)—2. See wet dream.
dreder. A sham dreder-man, actually a thief: (—1857): ob. See esp. Dickens’s ‘Down with the Tide,’ in Reprinted Pieces. (Dickens’s knowledge of unconventional English is very extensive, almost irreproachable.)
dreddy. A drowned sailor’s ghost: nautical: late C. 19-20. Bowen. Because his corpse runs, or had run, the risk of being brought up by a dredge.
drefle; gen. dreful. Dreadful: (Cockney) sol. (—1857). Baumann.
dress. At Winchester College, the players that come next in order after six or fifteen: because they attend matches ready to act as substitutes: from ca. 1850.
dress, more often dress down. To beat, thrash; hence, scold severely: coll.; from ca. 1660. Mrs. Centlivre, ‘I’ll dress her down, I warrant her.’ I.e. to ‘set to-rights’, W.
dress a hat. To practise a concerted robbery, from employers and by employers: low (—1864); ob. See esp. II., 3rd—5th edd.
dress-fencer. (A tramp or pedlar that is) a seller of lace: e.: C. 20. ‘Stuart Woodward’, Shade of the Prison House, 1932.
dress for the part. To be hypocritical: theatrical (ca. 1870) >, ca. 1880, Society coll. Ware.
dress to death (later to kill) or within an inch of one’s life. To dress ultra-smartly: coll. (—1869). H., 1st ed.
dressed like Christmas beef. See beef. (Cf. mutton dressed as lamb;) dressed to (or up to) the knocker (or mines). See knocker and mine—dressed up like a sore finger. See sore finger.
dressing, gen. dressing-down. A thraishing; a severe scolding or reprimand: coll.; from late 1760’s. Jane Austen, ‘I will give him such a dressing.’
dressy. Fond of dress: 1768.—2. Very smartly dressed (—1834).—3. Of clothes, extremely fashionable: 1818. All three—the first appears in Goldsmith—were orig. coll., but a generation later they were S.E. (O.E.D.)
drift. To go, walk: mostly Public Schoolboys’ and Society coll. (from ca. 1905) now verging on S.E. (Collinson.)
*drill. To entice by degrees: a. late C. 17—mid-18. B.E. Ex the patience exercised in drill, or that in using a drill. drill a hole in. To shoot a person with a rifle, also in G.W.—with a machine-gun: from ca. 1830. The p.p.pl. passive drilled, without complement, occurs in Marryat's Peter Simple. Both are coll.

drilling. 'Punishment by way of waiting, applied to needlewomen who make errors in their work.' Ware: workpeople's (—1885); ob. drily. A mildly erroneous spelling of dryly: C. 18—20. drunk. n. See big drink and cf. Thornton at drink.
drink. V. To supply with drink (water or stronger): coll. from ca. 1880. (O.E.D.)

[Drink, drink, drink; cf. v.i., late sense (—1916).]](https://example.com)

drink like a fish. See fish, drink like a.
drink like a funnel. A C. 19 variant (Apperson) of the preceding.
drink till one gives up one's halfpenny; only in past tense. (He) drank till he vomited; low: ca. 1875—1770. Low. (Apperson.)
drink with the files, n. and v. See Jimmy Woodson.—Drinking Parliament. See Drunken P—.

drinkitte. Thirst, but on the drinkitile is 'on the drink': East London (—1909); ob. Ware. Cf. bite-itile.
drinks on, have the. To have a person (at disadvantages) lower classes' (—1923). Manchon.

*driss. An oec. form of driz, q.v.
drive. A blow; a kick; coll.: from ca. 1850. Henry Kingsley.—2. Energy; coll.: from ca. 1905. By 1930, virtually S.E.
drive a quill. 'To work in an office', C. J. Dennis: Australian coll. (—1916). Ex the lit. S.E. sense (to write), recorded 120 years earlier.
drive to the last minute. To protest or defer as late as possible: coll.: from ca. 1880.
drives French horses. To vomit: mid-C. 19—20; ob. Ex the hue done of French carters.
drive oneself to the wash. To drive in a basket-chaise: C. 19.
drive pigs to market. See pigs to market, drive one's.
driver. One who compels his employees to do more work for the same wages: a. (1851, Mayhew) >, by 1900, coll. (O E.D.)—2. A captain notorious for crowding on all possible sail: nautical coll.; mid-C. 19—20; ob. Bowen.

driz. Lace. Hence driz fence, a seller of lace; a receiver of stolen lace, hence of other material. C.: from ca. 1810. Vaux, Mayhew. Oo. dries.
driz(-)kemesa. A lace shirt: c. of ca. 1830—70. Ainsworth, Rookwood, 1834, 'And sported my fastest trigger . . . My thimble of ridge, and my driz kemesa', E.D.D.


Drogheda Light Horse, the. The 18th Hussars: military: C. 19—20; ob. F. & Gibbons. Ex its first colonel, Lord Drogheda, who died in 1819.
dromack(k)iy. A harlot: North of England s.; ca. 1830—1900. Ex a strolling actress that used to play the part of Andromache.
dromedary. A (bungling) thief: hence, 2, a burglar resp., late C. 17—18 c., C. 18 c. or low s. Also, in sense 1, purple dromedary, late C. 17—18 c. In C. 19—20 dial. (ob.), as in C. 16—17 S.E., a dull or stupid person. Ex the dromedary's ungainliness.
dromerars, -era. See dromerar.
drops, the. A sinking or droopy feeling: lassitude: coll. from ca. 1912. A London underground railway advertisement of 1935 ran: 'Down those mid-morning "drops" with tea. You'll be better for a cup at 11 a.m.'

drop. V. To part with; give: from ca. 1670; low.—2. Hence (1849), to lose, esp. money.—3. V.i., to understand: low (—1909). Ware. Abbr. drop to, q.v.—4. To get rid of a person: New Zealand c. (—1932).
drop, give one the. To give him the slip: coll.

C. 18. Mrs. Centlivre. (O.E.D.)
drop, the new or, in C. 19, last. 'A contrivance for executing falons at Newgate, by means of a platform, which drops from under them,' Grose, 2nd ed.: ca. 1780—1900; coll.
drop a brick. See brick, drop a.
drop a tart or one's wax. To delate: low coll.: C. 18—20; C. 19—20 (ob.).
drop across. To scold severely: from ca. 1825. Lyell. Perhaps by confusion of S.E. drop across, to meet casually, and drop on, to scold or accuse.
drop anchor. To pull up a horse: the turf: from ca. 1860; ob.—2. Also, but gen. with one's, to sit down; settle down: orig. nautical: C. 19—20 coll.
drop down to. See drop down to.
drop-game. The letting fall a coin, pocket-book, etc., in order to cheat the innocent person picking it up; the piece so dropped is a cog. C. 19—
DROP IN ONE'S EYE 243

DRUM

90 (ob.) c. The gen. mid-C. 19-20 term is ring-dropping or fauney rig.

DROP TO ONE'S or THE EYE, HAVE A. To be slightly tipsy: from c. 1860; coll. B.E.; Swift, 'You must own you had a drop in the eye, for . . . . you were half-seas over.' Cf. dial. drop in the head.

drop—or hang, slip, or walk—into. To attack; later, to criticise adversely. From c. 1850; coll. The first, the most gen., prob. began in pugilism, where it means to thrash; the second is rare and †; the third is almost confined to physical aggression (including that of cotton) and was orig. nautical: the fourth is humorous.

drop it! Stop! Esp., stop talking or fooling. Coll. (—1854). Whyte-Melville.

drop of gels, a. See gels.

drop off the hooks. To die: coll. (—1857); † orig. nautical; 'Ducange Anglicus.'

drop on. To call on, or 2, to scold or accuse, a person without warning; 3, to thrash (cf. drop into): the first, coll.; the second, low; the third, pugilistic. All from c. 1850. † cf. the U.S. get the drop on: certainly cf.

drop on, have the. 'To forestall, gain advantage over,' orig. and esp. 'by covering with a revolver': (U.S. and) Australian (—1894). Morris: cf. get the drop on in Thornton.

drop on to or, loosely, onto. A variant—prob. the imm. origin of—drop on. 'Ducange Anglicus,' 1857.

drop one's bundle. See bundle, drop one's.

drop one's flag. To salute; hence, fig. to lower one's colours, to submit: coll. (orig. nautical); from c. 1840.

drop one's leaf. To die: coll.: from c. 1820. Egan's Grose. Ex the autumnal fall of leaves. Cf. hop the twig.

drop one's leg. (Of a woman) to curtsey: lower classes' (—1923). Manchon. Prob. suggested by make a leg.

drop short. To die: coll.: from c. 1820. † ex drop short in one's tracks, or is this latter, as I suspect, much more recent?

drop-shorts. Field artillery: military, mostly Australian and (naturally!) infantrymen's: 1915. Ex the shells occ. dropped short by one's own artillery.

drop the cue. To die: billiard-players' (—1909). Ware. Cf. drop off the hooks.

drop the main toby. To leave the highroad; turn off the main road: mostly vagrants: mid-C. 19-20. H., 1st ed. See toby.

drop the scales in. To work button-holes: tailors': from c. 1850; ob.

drop to. To come to understand a plot or plan, a man or his (bad) character: late C. 19-20: s. >, by 1920, coll. Ex drop down to (q.v. at down to, drop). Cf. tumble to, q.v.

dropped on. Disappointed: tailors': C. 19-20; ob.


dropping. A beating, thrashing, pugilistic, or other: Royal Military Academy, c. 1850-80.—2. Bribery: c. 20. E.g. in Edgar Wallace, Room 13, 1924.

dropping member. The membrum virile, esp. if gonorrhoea: C. 19 low.

drops, fond of one's. Addicted to liquor: Cockney coll. (—1887). Baumann. Ex fond of a drop, which is familiar S.E.

droop. A request to pay what is owed (esp. in money): low (—1935). Ex the effects of droopy and perhaps with reference to drop on, q.v. Cf. —


droad. See drawer—dro(r)ing. See drawing, drouty. Hesitant, wavering: Scottich (—1884). Ware.

drove. Driven: in late C. 18-20, a sol.

drown the miller. See miller.

drown'd, to drown; drown'd, drowned: sol.; C. 18-20. (Earlier, a S.E. variant.) Cf. ground.

Drowning Flotilla. 'The Flanders Flotilla in the German submarine service, on account of its heavy casualties': naval: 1917; ob. Bowen.

[drub, despite B.E. and Grose, has, I think, never been other than S.E., precisely as, despite F. & H., to drug and a drug in the market are S.E.]


drudge-store cowboy. (Gen. in pl.) A tyro cowboy, esp. one of those who carry a revolver dangling from a loose belt to somewhere near the knee: South American white men's derisive coll.: from ca. 1910 (C. W. Thurlow Craig, Paraguayen Interlude, 1935).


Ware.—4. (Ex Flash drum,) a brothel: low: from ca. 1900.—5. Among tailors, a small workshop (hence, in C. 20, occ. a workman): from ca. 1870.— 6. In Australia, from ca. 1890, a bundle of clothes carried on tram: ob. by 1897, † by 1910. Hence, lump one's drum, to go on tram: likewise †.


drum, v. To obtain, esp. custom(ers), by solicitation: from ca. 1840; coll. Cf. U.S. draw commercial.—2. In C. 20 c. a drum (a place) is to ring or knock to ascertain if it is occupied. Charles E. Leach. Hence a drummer is a woman that does this, or that gets a job as a servant in a house some months before her man robs it; drumming, robery by these means.


*drum, empty as an old. Extremely hungry: (mainly Cockney) coll. (—1885); slightly ob. Baumann.

drum, follow the. See follow . . .

drum, tight as a. Extremely drunk: C. 20. An elaboration on tight. For drunk as a drum, see wheelbarrow.

*drum-up. A drink of tea; the making of tea: trampe's c. (—1932). F. Jennings, Tramping with Tramps. Ex: —

*drum up. To make tea, esp. by the roadside: trampe's c. (—1884) > also, by 1914, military s. 'No. 747'; B. & P. Loosely, in C. 20, to cook a meal. Ex Romany drom, the highway.—2. Hence (?) to collect: military: from ca. 1915. F. & Gibbons.
DRUMMERAIDY A dromedary: Cockney sol. (—1887). Baumann.

 DRUMBOLO A late C.17—early 19 coll. variant of S.E. DRUMBULL, a dull, heavy fellow. B.E.; Grose.


 DRUMMER-UP; DRUMMING-UP. The agential and the subjunct of the verb drum up, 1; esp. among labourers on public works, the man that makes tea for the gang; the making of tea: C. 20.

*DRUMMING. See drum, v. 2.

 DRUMMOND. An infallible scheme, certain event: low: ca. 1810—50. Vaux. Ex the banking-house of Drummond & Co.


 Drum's entertainment. See Jack Drum's... drums, pair of. Trouser: tailors: from ca. 1860.


 DRUNK. A debauch: coll.: from ca. 1860.—2. A tipsy person: coll.: from ca. 1880. —3. A charge of being drunk (and disorderly): from 1883. (The various drunk[en] similes—Grose (3rd ed.), e.g., has drunk as a wheelbarrow—are recorded passim: see the key-n. For a short synonymy, see F. & H. at drunk, and Apperson.)

 DRUNK, on the, adj. Drinking continually for days: low coll.: from ca. 1870.

 DRUNK to see a hole in a ladder, too. See hole in a ladder.—drunk with a continuando. See continuaudo.

 DRUNKARD, be quite the gay. To be somewhat tipsy: coll.: ca. 1870—1906.

 DRUNKARD, come the. To pretend tipsiness; ready to be tipsy (t): coll.: from ca. 1890.

 DRUNKEN BARNABY. Richard Brathwait (d. 1673), that poet who, in 1638, published Drunken Barnaby's Journal.


 DRUNKEN (OR DRINKING) PARLIAMENT. The Scottish Parliament that met after the Restoration on Jan. 1, 1661: coll. nickname. (O.E.D.)

 Drury Lane Theatre: theatrical: ca. 1885—1910. On Coriolanus and with reference to Augustus Harris's nicknames Augustus Drurianus and the Emperor Augustus.


 Dry as... See the key-nn.; Apperson has all—or most—of the phrases.


 Dry bath. A search [of a prisoner] when stripped: c.: C. 20. George Ingram in his prison

 Dry-blower. A gold-miner (s.), esp. one who dry-blow gold instead of sluicing it (coll.): Australian: C. 20, v. 2.


 Dry flogging. 'Corporal punishment with the clothes on': nautical (esp. naval) coll.: mid-C. 19—20. Bowen. Cf. dry flogging.

 Dry Guillotine, the. Severe imprisonment; esp. imprisonment at Cayenne, most malarious: journalistic coll.: ca. 1860—90. Ware.

 Dry hash. A 'bad egg': ne'er-do-well; loafer: Australia, ca. 1870—50.—2. 'A baked pudding made of corned beef, tinned salmon, or anything else that comes in handy': mid-C. 19—20: nautical coll. >, by 1930, S.E.

 Dry in. A c. or low s. variant (—1923; slightly ob.): of dry up, v. 2. Manchon.

 Dry land! You understand! Rhyming s. (—1850); ob. H., 1st ed.—2. For dryland sailor, see turnpike sailor.


 Dry nurse. A junior that, esp. in the Army and Navy, instructs an ignorant superior in his duties: coll.: mid-C. 19—20; ob. H., 3rd ed. Ex the S.E. sense.


 Dry rot. See rot, n.—dry-rub. See dry-bang.

 Dry scrub; scrubber. A marker's signalling of a 'maggot', the disk being rapidly moved up and down in front of the target: Regular Army (not officers'): from ca. 1920.


 Dry smoke. A South African coll. as in Parker Gilmore, Days and Nights in the Desert, 1888, 'In his mouth was stuck a short pipe, out of which he was taking, in colonial parlance, a dry smoke—that is, it was alike substitue of fire or tobacco.' Pettman.

 Dry straight. To turn out all right (in the end): coll.: from mid-1890's; ob. O.E.D. (Sup.).

 Dry-up. A failure (cf. esp. frost): theatrical: mid-C. 19—20; † by 1918.

 Dry up, v. Cesea talking, notably in the imperative: s. >, by 1830, coll.: from ca. 1864. Ex U.S. (—1855). Rider Haggard, 1888, 'He... suddenly dried up as he noticed the ominous expression on the great man's brow.' Ex 'the figure of the "babbling" fountain', W.—2. In c. of ca. 1850—1910, to decamp, take to one's heels. Baumann.
dry-walk, gen. -walking. A moneyless soldier's outing: military: ca. 1860-1914. (Dry, liquorless, is a U.S. import.)

duck, the. On tuppence a day: military: ca. 1870-1920. Ex d., pence.

d'see. Do you see? Cockney coll. (—1887). Baumann. Ex d'ye see.

duy. Mine; my own. Hence, come the duv, to over-exercise one's authority: Military: 1915-18, but not very gen. F. & Gibbons derives it ex Dieu et mon droit.


F. & Gibbons.—See dubs.

*dub. v. To open: mid-C. 16-18; (by confusion with dup), to close, gen. in form dub up (Vaux): early C. 19 c. Prob. ex Wallon adouner, to strike, tap, W.

*dub, strike upon the. To rob (a house): c.: late C. 17-19. B.E. See dub, n. 1.


*dub-cove. A turnkey, gaoler, as is dubaman, occ. abbr. dubs.: c. of († late C. 18-19) 19. Vaux; the last in Henley.

*dub lay. The robbing of houses by picking the locks: late C. 18-19 19. Grose, 2nd ed. B.E. has 'dub strike it upon the dub... we will rob that place'.

dub' o' the lick. 'A lick on the head', Grose, 2nd ed.: late C. 18-19-19; low coll.


dubash. An interpreter; a commissioner: Anglo-Indian; from late C. 17. The former sense was † by 1902; the prevailing C. 20 one being, an European's native servant. Ex Hindi dalashi, a 'two-language man'. Yule & Burnell, 1903.

dubber. The mouth; tongue: c. 18-19 c., as, in late C. 17-19, is the sense, 2, a picklock thief (B.E.—).3. In Anglo-Indian coll., more properly dubba, a leather bottle or skin bag: from late C. 17.

*dubs. See dubs, 2.

dubby. Blunt; dumpy: dial. (—1825) >, by 1870, coll. O.E.D. (Sup.).

duberosus (1818); duberosome (1837). In doubt; dubious: (low) coll. and dial. O.E.D.


Dublin packet, take the. To run round the corner: (—1859) coll.; ob. Punning doubling.

Dublin packet, tip (a person) the. To elude openly; give the slip quietly: c. (—1812) >, ca. 1840, low, † by 1900. Vaux.

*dubs. Aailer: c. (—1789); ob. Abbr. dub-man.—2. (Also dubbs.) Money, esp. if of copper: c. (—1823); † by 1870. 'Jon Bec.' Ex dub, a fraction of a rupee.

dubs, adj. Double: Winchester College; from ca. 1530; ob.

Dubs, the. The Royal Dublin Fusiliers: military: late C. 19-20.

*dubaman. A turnkey. See dub-cove.


*duce, i.e. deuce, q.v., is tuppence: c.: late C. 17-18. B.E. Moncrieff.


duchess. A woman of an imposing presence: from ca. 1690. B.E. Contrast duch—.2. 'A woman enjoyed with her pattens on, or by a man in boots, is said to be made a duchess,' Grove, 1st ed.; † by 1890.

duchess,— hell! I said the. See 'hell! I said the duchess.

Duchess, ring up the; I must ring up the Duchess. These two c. p.p., applicable to resolution of a doubt or to settlement of a problem, arose in Jan., 1935, ex the play Young England: origin. and mainly London Society: ob.

*duchess, adj. Like a duchess (—1887); abounding in duchesses (—1870) coll. (O.E.D.)


duck. To avoid; to neglect to attend (e.g. a meeting): coll.: C. 20. (E. Shanks, The Enchanted Village, 1933.)

*duck, do a. In c., to hide under the seat of a public conveyance so as to avoid paying (—1800); but in gen. coll., to depart hurriedly (—1900).


duck, make a. See duck, 6.

duck—; duck's disease: duck's disease. 'Shortness of leg', O.E.D. (Sup.) (the Army explained it differently); a nickname (Duck's Disease) for any very short man: (low) coll.: from ca. 1910.

duck egg. See duck, 6.

duck, fake the. See fake the duck.

duck-footed, adj. Walking with toes turned inwards: coll.: C. 19-20; ob. But duck-legged, with very short legs, is S.E.

duck-ster. The man looking after the poultry on a warship: mid-C. 18—early 19; nautical. Grove, 1st ed.

duck in a thunderstorm. See dying duck.

duck of diamonds. A superlative of the admiring duck, 3; coll.: from ca. 1850; ob.

duck-pond. A canvas bathing-place for cadets: naval (—1900); ob. Ware.

duck-board is military j., except when (ex its arrangement of colours) it = a Military Medal ribbon (1916: B. & P.); but duck-board-glide, an after-dark movement along a trench, and duck-board harrier, a messenger, are military s. of 1917–18. It and he had to use the duckboard track. F. & Gibbons.


ducket. Any ticket; esp. a raffle-card or a pawnbroker's duplicate: c. and low (— 1874); ob. H., 6th ed. A corruption of docket. Also ducat.

duckey. See ducky.

duckie. See ducky.

ducking, go. To go courting: low coll.: from ca. 1850; ob. Ex duck, 3.


ducks, fine weather for. See fine weather ...

ducks and drakes with, later of. To squander money or potential money: from late C. 18; coll. till C. 19, then S.E. Chapman. 'Be like a gentleman . . . make ducks and drakes with shillings.'

duck's bill. 'A tongue cut in a piece of stout paper and pasted on at the bottom of the tymanum sheet', F. & H.: printers'; from ca. 1860; ob. Ex shape.


duck's disease. See duck-disease.

duck's egg. See duck, 6; break one's duck's egg occurs in 1867 (Lewis).


duckly; duckie, adj. Expressive of admiration (see duck, 3): coll.: from ca. 1830.—2. N., an endearment, thus a variant of duck, 3: from ca. 1815; coll. The former soiled, the latter mainly, a woman's term of endearment. D. A delicate weakening (†); person without ability and or spirit: orig. Scottish (— 1825), Jamieson speaking of 'a soft dud'; (†) used in U.S. in 1870; rare by 1896; rescuscitated in G.W., from sense of an unexplosid shell, hence of any very inferior or unsuitable object. In 1916 +, an adj.: e.g. 'a dud show', a poor entertainment. 'These terms have prob. been influenced by the C. 17–18 this dud, douse, a scorner, but the word may derive ultimately ex Dutch dood, dead (W.).—2. See duds.

*dudd(4)-cheats. Clothes and household effects: C. (— 1723); † by 1830. A New Caturing Dict. Cf. dude, 1, 2, q.v.

*dudder or whispering dudder, dudeman, and duffer (q.v.). A pedlar of supposedly smuggled wares: late C. 18–early 19; the first two being c., the third also c. but only at first. Grose, 2nd ed. Ex duds, q.v.—2. One who passes off harmless powder as cocaine or morphia: Australian (esp. Sydney) c. (— 1931).

dude. A swell, fop: orig. (1883) U.S. and almost imm. anglicised; coll. till ca. 1918, when it > S.E. The derivatives dudine, a female masquer, and dudette, dudinette, a young girl aping the belles, did not catch on in England. Where the etymology is a mystery, but the occasion known to be the Exhstetrie craze of ca. 1882–7, it is perhaps permisible to guess at dud (q.v.) influenced by attitude, the semantic transition being aided, maybe, by the dial. v.l. dud, to dress.—2. Light; a light: either low s. or tramps' c. (— 1923). Manchon. Ex Romany.

dundering rake. 'A thundering Rake ... one devilishly lewd', A New Canting Dict., 1725: C. 18–early 10. See dundering r.


duds. Clothes: mid-C. 16–17 c. (Harman, Head); in C. 18–20, low (Grose, Trollope). Ex C. 15 dudde, cloth, a cloak; cf. dudcery, q.v.—2. In C. 18–20 coll., occ. rags or old clothes.—3. The sense 'portable property' is, orig. in mid-C. 17–18, English c., but in C. 19–20 it is mainly U.S. 'standard'.

*dudd, sweat. To pawn clothes: C. 19–20 c.


due for the hammer or the shillelagh. An Anglo-Irish c.p. (C. 20) applied to a person about to be dismissed or to a team about to be beaten.

[Due to, because of, is objected to by many purists, but the O.E.D. and W. support it; moreover, the purists' preference, owing to, is, semantically, an exact equivalent.]

*dues, the. Money: orig. (— 1812) c.; by 1860, coll.; by 1890 ob. Vaux; Ainsworth.


duff. No good; inferior: Glasgow: late C. 19–20. Cf.:


*duff, v. To sell inferior goods, esp. clothes, pretending they are stolen or smuggled: orig. (— 1781) c.; by 1860, low.—2. Hence, to make old clothes appear new by manipulating the nap: coll.; from ca. 1835.—3. To alter the brands of stolen horses or, esp. cattle (— 1890); hence, to steal cattle by changing the brands: Australian s. > coll.; ob. Carton Booth in Another England, 1869; Boldrewood, The Squatter's Dream, 1890.—4. V.l. and t. To be a duffer (no good); to be a duffer at: ca. 1890–1915. Ware. Ex duffer, 4.

*duff, man at the. A seller of certain goods (see duff, n. 1.): C. 19 c. Cf. duffer.

DUFF OUT OF

DULLY


duke of (?) Seven Dials. ‘Satirical pecrage bestowed upon any male party dressed or behaving above or beyond his immediate surroundings’: proletarian London: ca. 1875-1900. Ware. Seven Dials was a very poor quarter.


dukes, grease the. V.i., to practise bribery; but the v.t. with of is much more gen.: low (— 1877). Horsley, Jottings from Jail.
dukes, put up the. To prepare for fisticuffs: orig. low s.; in C. 20, low coll. From ca. 1880.

duke. See dookin.
dukkering. See dookin.
dulcerate,-ation. Incorrect for dulcerate,-ation: C. 16-17. O.E.D.

Duleep. Duleepsinhji: cricketers: from 1925, when he first played for Cambridge. ‘To cricketers he liked to be known as “Smith” ’ (Who’s Who in World Cricket, 1934).

Dull Street, live in. I.e. in a dull quarter: coll. (— 1887) verging on S.E. Baumann. Cf. Queer Street.


Duke Humphrey. See dine with Duke Humphrey.
*dum tam.* A bunch of clothes carried on his back, but under his coat, by a beggar: North Scottish c.: C. 19. E.D.D. "This seems to be a cant phrase denoting that although this is carried as beggars carry their children, it is mute."

dumb. Stupid; dull; silent: S.E. ca. 1530-1550; (?revised) in U.S. as a.—Thornton records it for 1843; anglicised, likewise as s., ca. 1920. See quotation at marvellous.


dumb-logged—doodled, ppl. adj. Confused, puzzled, confounded: coll.: from ca. 1860; ob.

dumb glutton. The pudendum multibre: mid-C. 18—19 low (Grose, 1st ed.) as is the synonymous dumb, mid.C. 19. Hence feed the dumb glutton, mid-C. 18, "on the dummy, C. 19-20 (ob.), to have sexual intercourse.


dumb scraping. 'Scraping wet decks with blunt scrapers': nautical coll.: late C. 19—20. Bowren.

*dumb sparkler.* A silent match: c.; mid-C. 19—20. 'No. 747.'


dumbound. To perplex; put to confusion; silence: from ca. 1650; coll. until ca. 1800, then S.E. —2. Also, to beat soundly, thrash: ca. 1660—1820, as in B.E.E. 'I dumbedound the sawcy Rascal.' After confound.

dumby. A variant, prob. the original, of dummy, 1. (Bee, 1823.)

dumfounded, adj. Dumfounded: Cockney sol. (—1887); ob. Baumann.

dummaker. A knowing person; an astute one: ca. 1850—1810. H. 2nd ed. —1 ironically ex dial. dummock, a blockhead.

*dumnee.* A variant (Lex. Bal.; Egans' Gros) of dummy, 3, q.v.


dummock. The posteriors: low: C. 19—20; ob. Perhaps ex Roman dumce, the back (Sampson), +ock as in bitock.

DUN

DUST

dun, adj. See *scruff, n.

Dun Cow, The Old. The River Clyde, a steamer driven on the Gallipoli shore in April, 1915: naval and military: 1915. Ex. the wooden horse at the siege of Troy, whose site could be seen from her decks. (Bownen.)

dun is the mouse, gen. dun, s the mouse. A c.p. quibble made when done is mentioned, a mouse being a mis-scented; when spoken untrustily it connoted 'keep still!' Ca. 1680–1640. A later C. 17 form is dun as a mouse, which, implying no warning, prob. arises from the confusion of s = es or as (or, though not here, hes). (Apperson.)

dun territory, 'Circle of creditory to be had', Egan's Grose: Oxford University: ca. 1830–40.

*dunagan. An early C. 19 variant (Egan's Grose) of dunagan, q.v.


dunck. To dine at lunch-time: cultured middle class: from ca. 1929; very ob. Somerset Maughm, Cakes and Ale, 1930, 'Verbs that you only know the meaning of if you live in the right set (like "dunch")'.


dundering rake. This (B.E., ca. 1600) is almost certainly the correct spelling of Grose's dedugging rake, q.v. Dunn is a variant of the mainly Scottish dunner, to thuder.

[dunderhead and its variants have, despite H. and F. & H., always been S.E.]

dunndaries. A pair of whiskers that, cut sideways from the chin, are grown as long as possible: from Sothern's make-up in Our American Cousin (see the next entry); the fashion was antiquated by 1882, dead by 1892. This coll. term (1858) survives. Cf. Piccadilly weepers.

dundreary. A stammering, silly, long-whiskered dandy: coll.: from 1868, the year of Tom Taylor's one famous comedy, Our American Cousin, in which Lord Dundreary appears; hence, from ca. 1860, a foppish fool. The former δ, the latter ob.


dung. A workman at less than union wages: C. 19; in C. 20, merely historical.—2. Mid-C. 19–20, also a 'scab'.—3. Ca. 1760–1840, a journeyman tailor satisfied with regulation wages, Grose, 1st ed. With the last, contrast flini, q.v., and cf. scab, q.v.

dung-cart or -fork. A yokel; a country bumptkin: coll.; ca. 19–20; ob.


dunngaree, adj. Low, coarse, vulgar: Anglo-Indian: from ca. 1830; ob. Ex the coarse blue cloth and the name of a disreputable Bombay suburb.


dunghill, die. To die contrite or cowardly: esp. to repent at the gallows: coll.; ca. 1755–1839. (O.B.D.)

dunno. See *dunno.

dunngage. Clothes; baggage: nautical: from ca. 1830. Mayhew. Cf. duds. Ex the S.E. sense, matting or brushwood used in packing cargo (W).


*dunmakor or -kin; dunmkenn or -kin; dunnyken or -kin; dunagan, -egan. A privy: late C. 19–20; c. >, by 1800, low coll. In C. 17–18, dunmakon: orig. c., then low s.;; see dunna. Whence do a d., to visit one: low: late C. 19–20. Manchon. (The form dunnskew, in B. M. Carew, 1791, is prob. a misprint.)


dunna. See *dunno.—dunmake or -kin. See dunmakon.

dunner. An importunate creditor: from ca. 1680; coll. till C. 19, then S.E.; in C. 20 somewhat archaic. B.E. Dunning, vbl.n., coming late is S.E.

*dunnick-drag. A variant pronunciation of *dunno-drag (q.v. at dunna). Vaux.

dunno. Do not know: sol.: C. 19 20. Often dunno! I don't know. Occ. dunna or dunnow. See also d'n.

*dunock. A cow: (? C. 17,) C. 18 early 19 c. Grose, 2nd ed. *ex dun, adj.: the dun cow is famous and serves as a title to a satire by Robert Landor.

dunnyken or -kin. See dunmakon.

dunop. A pound (gen. sterilng): back s., from ca. 1865. Dnwp: > dunop, for the sake of euphony. See Words I, article 'A rhyming slang'.

duns, 'Trademen dealing with a ship or its crew': nautical: late C. 19–20. Bowen. They have the impudence to ask for their money.


*dup. To open: mid-C. 16–18 c.: now dial. Harman, Head. Elisha Coles, 1676, defines it as 'to enter [the house]'. Not do up but do open.

dupan. See *duley.

durance. A prison: coll.: ca. 1600–1750. B.E. (Unrecorded by O.E.D., this sense gives added point to in duration vide.)

duration, for the rarely the duration. For a very long time indeed: military: from 1915. Early in the G.W.I. one enlisted for years or the duration of the war. B. & L.

Durmam. A knock kne: late C. 18–early 19 coll. Grose, 3rd ed.: 'He grinds mustard with his knees: Dublin is famous for its mustard.'


durtike. Incorrect for diuritec: C. 16. O.E.D.

durn. durned. Variants of darn, dursd: low coll.: ca. 19–20. Freeman Wills Crofts, Mystery in the Channel, 1931, 'It's durned strange they didn't tell you themselves, without your comin' to me abaht it.'

durra, dhurra. Indian millet: Anglo-Indian coll.: from late C. 18.


durzea. A variant of derry, q.v.


O.E.D.

dust. Money: coll.: from ca. 1600. Esp. in
DUST

down with one's or the dust, to pay, as in Fuller, 1665. 'The abbots down with his dust, and glad he escaped so, return to Reading.' Prob. abbr. gold-dust.—

2. A disturbance, 'row,' esp. in kick up a dust, cause a 'shindy' from: ca. 1750; s. until ca. 1890, then coll. ( Raise a dust is S.E. and more lit.)

dust, v. To blind (fig.); befoul, as in dust the public; Stock Exchange, from ca. 1814; ob. Abbr. the S.E. dust the eyes of:—2. dust or dust off (or out), v. To depart hurriedly: in C. 17 S.E. ; in C. 19 U.S.s., whence C. 20 English s. dust bin. A grave: from ca. 1650; ob. dust (a ship) down. To sweep her decks: nautical: late C. 19—20. Bowen.

Dust Hole, the. The Prince of Wales's Theatre in Tottenham Court Road: theatrical, from ca. 1840-1900. (The theatre, which, ca. 1830-50, accumulated its sweepings under the pit while it was still the Queen's Theatre, moved in the late '80's.)—2. Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge: ca. 1860-85. H. 3rd ed. dust in the eyes, have. To be sleepy: cf. draw straw and the dustman is coming. Coll. ( ? F. 18) C. 19—20; ob. (through dust in the eyes, like bile the dust, is S.E.)

dust it away, gen. in imperative. To drink about, esp. quickly: late C. 17—18; coll. (pace the O.E.D.)
dust off. See dust, v., 2.
dust one's cassock, coat, doublet, or jacket, with for him (her) occ. added: to thrash; † criticise severely. Coll.: the first and third, C. 18, Smollett; the second, late C. 17—early 19, but anticipated in Tusher's 'What fault deserves a brushed coat'; the fourth and sole extant, from late C. 17, as in Farquhar, Barham.

dust out. See dust, v., 2.
dust-up. A variant of dust, n., 2: C. 19—20. Ware.
duster. A sweetheart (female): tailors': from ca. 1850; ob.—2. (Also the red duster.) A red ensign: nautical: from ca. 1895. Cf. coach-whip.
dustie. See dusty.
dusting. A thrashing; (nautical) rough weather: both from late C. 18.
dustman's bell, the. Time for bed: nursery coll.: from ca. 1840. See preceding entry, sense 2. Ware.
dustoor(y). Commission as 'take-off'; douceur; bribe: Anglo-Indian, the shorter form, ca. 1880—1830; then, mainly, the longer. Largely displaced by bac(ks)heesh.
dusty, none or not so. Good (cf. not so or too bad); from ca. 1854. Medley, in Harry Overdale, 'None so dusty that—oh! for a commoner like me.' Ex much earlier S.E. dusty, mean, worthless. Cf. muddy.
dusty-nob or poll. A miller: coll.: C. 16—17 the latter; C. 17—18 the former (rare). Cf. dusty, 3.
dusty pup. A 'dirty dog': Australian coll.: from ca. 1820; ob.

[Dutch. Both n. and adj., were, in C. 17—early 18 (owing to trade rivalry and naval jealousy) very opprobrious or derisive; the coll. sense endured throughout C. 18, some of the following phrases becoming S.E. in C. 19; but the few terms or phrases coined in C. 19 have remained s. or coll. See esp. 'Offensive Nationality' in Words and Grose, P., s.v. Dutch.]
dutch; esp. my old dutch. A wife: from ca. 1855; mostly Cockney and some costermongers'. Prob. coined by Albert Chevalier, who explained it by the resemblance of the word to that of an old Dutch clock: cf. dial, q.v. (I used, with W., to consider it an abbr. of duchess, but Chevalier, I now feel tolerably certain, is right.)

Dutch, beat the. To do something remarkable: coll. (—1775). Esp. in C. 19—20 that beats the Dutch, that beats everything, that's 'the limit', it's hardly credible.
dutch, do a. To desert; run away; absecd: military and Cockney: from ca. 1870; ob. Ware.
dutch, old. See dutch.

Dutch (or double Dutch or Dutch fustian or Big Dutch), talk. To talk a foreign tongue, or gibberish. The third, used by Marlowe, may never have > coll. or gen.; High, ca. 1780—1860; Dutch is C. 19—20 (ob.); double Dutch (H., 1st ed.), easily the commonest since ca. 1860. All are coll. A humorous variant for linguistic dexterity is the ca. 1870—1900 to talk double Dutch backwards on a Sunday.

Dutch auction or sale. A mock auction or sale; either at 'nominal' prices, esp. after the goods have been offered at a high price: coll.; mentioned in 1872 as 'the old Dutch auction', hence presumably much earlier. H. has it in 1864.

Dutch bargain, i.e. one-sided: coll.; from ca. 1850. With variant wet bargain, it also means a business transaction concluded with a drinking payment. Baumann.

Dutch brig, the. 'Colls on board ship or in the naval prisons': naval: mid-C. 19—20. Bowen.

Dutch build. (Of a person having) a thick-set figure: coll.: mid-C. 19—20; ob. Baumann.


Dutch cheese. A bald-headed person: low Cockney: 1882—ca. 1915. Ware, 'Dutch cheeses are generally made globular.'

Dutch clock; old D.c. A wife: almost imm. abbr. to dutch, q.v.; † by 1900.—2. A bed-pan: from ca. 1880; ob.

Dutch comfort. 'Thank God it is no worse.' Grose, 2nd ed.: coll.; from ca. 1787. A C. 19 variant is Dutch consolation (H., 1st ed.).

Dutch concert or medley. Where everyone plays or sings a different tune: the former (Grose, 1st ed.) from ca. 1780, the latter C. 19-20 (ob.) and gen. of voices only. Coll.

Dutch consolation. See Dutch comfort.

[Dutch courage, courage induced by drink, has prob. been always S.E. So too, I think, Dutch defence, a sham one (Fielding).]


**Dutch have taken Holland, the.** A C.17–early 18 form of Queen Anne's dead.

**Dutch medley.** See Dutch concert.


**Dutch oven.** The mouth: *boxers* (- 1923). Manchon.

**Dutch palate.** A coarse palate, lit. and fig.: coll.; ca. 1676–1800.

**Dutch party.** See Dutch treat.

**Dutch pegs.** Legs: rhyming s. (- 1923). Manchon.

**Dutch pink.** Blood: 1853, *Cuthbert Bede*. O.R.D. (Sup.). Ex the pigment so named.


**Dutch row.** 'A got-up unreal wrangle': Cockney coll. (- 1909); ob. Ware remarks that, even in his day, it was rarely heard.

**Dutch sale.** See Dutch auction.

**Dutch treat.** An entertainment at which each pays his share: coll.; from ca. 1875. Thornton records it for Iowa in 1903; in U.S.A. one finds also Dutch lunch and D. supper, while D. party is common to both England and U.S. in C. 20. Cf. Dutch feast.

**Dutch uncle, talk to a person like a.** I.0. severely. Coll.; from ca. 1830. Ex the Dutch reputation for elderly, vigorous discipline and the gen. idea resident in *patria vera* e linguas and Horace's ne *sae patrius mihi*, the particular idea in Dutch *baaz = boss = master* (ship's) captain.

**Dutch widow.** A harlot: coll.; ca. 1600–1750. Middleton, 1608, 'That's an English drab, sir.'

**Dutch wife.** A bolster: from ca. 1880; ob. Ex the S.E. sense, an open frame used for resting the limbs in bed.

**Dutchess.** See duchess.

**Dutchie.** A Dutchman; occ. a German (see Dutchman): allusive and nick-nominal: mid-C. 19–20 coll.


**Dutchman if I do it, I'm a.** Certainly not! Coll.; from ca. 1850. Earlier (1837) is I'm a Dutchman, i.e. I'm somebody else: a coll. equivalent for disbelief; Reade, 'If there is . . . gold on the ground . . . I'm a Dutchman.'

**Dutchman's anchor.** Anything that, eep. if needed, has been left at home: nautical: from ca. 1800. Bowen, 'From the Dutch skipper who explained after the wreck that he had a very good anchor but had left it at home.'

**Dutchman's breeches (occ. breaks).** Two streaks of blue in a cloudy sky: nautical coll. (- 1807). Smyth. Sailors gen. use it in form, enough to make a pair of breeches for a Dutchman.


**Dutchman's drink.** One that empties the pot: coll.; from ca. 1800. Cf.:

**Dutchman's headache, the.** Drunkenness: coll. (- 1809); virtually t by 1920. (Apperson.)

**Dutchmen.** See Dutchman, 4.

**Dutchy; Dutchie.** See Dutchie.

**Duty.** 'Interest on pawnbrokers' pledges': respectable lower classes (- 1909). Ware, 'Evasive synonym'.


**dye.** See die.


**d'ye want jam on both sides?** A military o.p. (1914); ob. imputing unreasonableess. B. & P. More gen., what do you want—jam on it?

**dying duck in a thunderstorm, look like a.** To have a ludicrously forlorn, hopeless, and helpless appearance: coll., orig. rural: from ca. 1850. (Ware.)

**dying man's dinner.** Something edible or potable snatched, opportunity favourable, when a ship is in peril and all hands at work: nautical: late C. 19–20; slightly ob. Bowen.

**dyke.** See die.


**dynamiter.** adj. (Of persons) violent, brutal, drastic, autocratic, powerful, expert—all or each to an alarming degree; of things extremely dangerous or sudden. Coll., from ca. 1914. Cf.:

**dynamiter.** Any violent person: ca. 1882–90. Ware. See dynamite, n.

**dynasty of Venus, the.** 'Indiscriminate love and misguided affection'; Egan's Grose: Oxford University: ca. 1820–40.

**d'you feel like a spot?** See how will you have it? (For d'you, see d'ye.)

**dyspepsia.** Delirium tremens: military hospitals' (- 1909). Ware.

EARWIG

Early. Keeping early hours; rising early: coll. (— 1893), by 1920, S.E. (O.E.D.)
early, rise or wake or get up very. To be wide-
awake, ready, astute: rise, C. 18; the other two
C. 19–20, with get up the commoner in C. 20.
Orig. coll.; in C. 20, S.E. Swift.
early, small and. See small and early.
Earl Bird, title. An express goods-train carrying
provisions, through the night, to London: railway-
men’s: from ca. 1920. The Daily Telegraph,
Cf. custom-house officer. — 2. ’A sharp, business-like
person’: coll.: U.S. >, ca. 1895, anglicised.
Ware. Ex early, rise, q.v.

Early Riser, the. A fast freight train running
London: from ca. 1920. (It arrives early in the
morning.) The Daily Telegraph, Aug. 15, 1936.
early-turner. A performer taking his ‘turns’
early in the programme, hence before the more
fashionable part of the audience has arrived:
music-halls’ coll. (— 1909), Ware.
early worm. One who searches the streets at
dawn for cigar and cigarette stubs: coll.: from
c. 1870; ob. Ex S.E. sense. Baumann.
earn. To find or ‘win’, i.e. to steal; get by
looting: naval and military: O.W. +. Cf. make:
q.v. F. & Gibbons.

earnest. A share of the booty: mid C. 17–18 c.
Head; B.E. Cf. S.E. sense.
ears. ’Small advertisements appearing on each
side of the title of the first page of a periodical’
(including newspapers): copy-writers’ s. (from
ears, tickle (a person’s). To flatter: coll.
(— 1831), Lyell.
ears are (or were) worth, it’s (or it’d be) as much
as one’s. It is, would be, very risky for him: coll.: from
c. 1860.
ears back or put back!, get your. Get your hair

earl, ’ave an. See heart, I, have a.
earth. An early variant of earth (q.v.), three.
H., 1st ed.
earth-bath, take an. To be buried. By itself,
Moncrieff, 1823. Alluding to those who stop up
foxes’ earths.
earthed, be. (Of an aeroplane) to be brought
down against its pilot’s wish: Air Force coll.: 1915.
F. & Gibbons. Ex a fox earthed.
earthem. Incorrect for earthen: C. 18–20; now
rare. O.E.D.
earthly, no; not an earthy. No chance whatsoever:
coll.: resp. 1899 (Ware); 1907 (O.E.D. Sup.).—2. no earthly is also an abbr. of no earthly
good: coll.: from ca. 1920. Galworthy (cited by
earwig. A private and malicious prompter or
Scott. — 2. In C. 19 c. to express low, a, a clergyman.

earwig, v. To prompt by covert assertions;
whisper insinuations to; rebuke privately: C. 19–
20; S.E. in the latter. Marryat, ’He earwig the
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**EASE**

**EAST**

**EBONY**

**OPTIC**

**EASE**

- **Captain in fine style.** Ex n. 1. The vbl.n. *ear-wigging* is more frequently used than the v. *ease.*
- **East and west.** Breast: rhyming s. (—1923). Manchon.
- **East of the Griffin.** (In) East London: London coll.: 1885, The Referee, Oct. 11; very ob. Ware. *Outcome of the city Griffin on his wonderful pedestal replacing Temple Bar.*
- **East (or e.) Roll.** A slow, gradual roll without jerks; nautical coll.: late C. 19–20. Bowren.
- **Easterling.** *Erroneously used by early antiquaries for *sterling*, the English silver penny of the Norman dynasty.* W.
- **Easterny.** Private business: *cheapjacks* (—1876); ob. Hindley in his classic ‘editing of’ cheapjack life.
- **Eastralia.** Eastern Australia: Australian coll. (—1898); virtually † Morris. On *Westralia.*
- **Easy.** A short rest, exp. as take an easy: coll.; from ca. 1880.
- **Easy, v.l. To dispose oneself suitably to the sexual embrace: low coll.; from ca. 1900.
- **Easy, adv.** Without difficulty: in C. 19–20, coll. where not sol.; earlier, S.E.—2. Comfortably; at an easy pace, e.g. in *take it easy,* without severity, as in *let one off easy,* Coll. (—1779). Cf. the Irishism *be easy,* don’t hurry!
- **Easy, honours.** Honours divided: coll. (1884: O.E.D.) >, by 1920, S.E. Ex cards.
- **Easy, make.** To gag; to kill: mid-C. 18–early 19, low if not c. Grose, 1st ed. For the latter sense, quiet was occ. preferred.
- **Easy as damn it or kiss my ass or my eye or pissing the bed, as.** Extremely easy: coll.: first, second, and third, C. 19–20; fourth, C. 18–20 (ob.). The polite variant and original of the second is (as) *easy as kiss my hand,* 1870, Cotton (Apperson). Cf. Shakespeare’s *easy as lying* and Ray’s (1678) *easy as to kick a dish.* *Easy as an old shoe and as falling off (a chair, a leg, etc.)* were orig. dial., not earlier than 1800.
- **Easy does it!** Take your time: coll.; from ca. 1840; ob.
- ***Easy mort.* Mid-C. 17–18 c.: ‘a forward or coming wench’, B.E.
- **Easy over the pimples or stones!** Go slow! Be careful! Coll.: from ca. 1870. The former ex the barber’s shop, the latter ex driving on bad roads.
- **[Easy Street, in. prosperous, is rather S.E. than coll.]**
- **Easy virtue.** ‘An impure, or prostitute’, Grose, 1st ed.: from ca. 1780: s. >, by 1820, coll. >, by 1900, S.E. Cf. the S.E. *easy,* compliant.

**EAT COKE: EAT CROW.** See coke: crow.

**Eat.** To enjoy enthusiastically: theatrical: from ca. 1932. John G. Brandon, *The One-Minute Murder,* 1934, *‘The audience were, in theatrical parlance, literally eating this scene.‘*—2. To worry; sorrowly puzzle: from ca. 1919. P. MacDonald, *R.I.P.,* 1933, *‘But I don’t think that’s what’s eating you.‘* See *what’s biting you* and cf. dial. *eat oneself,* to be very vexed (E.D.D.).

**Eat a child.** See child, eat a.

**Eat a fig.** To break into a house: s. rhyming imperfectly on (crack a) crib: from ca. 1865; ob. c. H., 1st ed.

**Eat a sword.** To be stabbed: C. 16: coll. *Eat-Apples, Eatables; Eetap(s).* Eatables in France: military: G.W.

**Eat bull-beef.** See bull-beef, eat.

**Eat like a beggar man and wag one’s under jaw.** *A jocular reproach to a proud man*, Grose, 1st ed.: late C. 18–mid-19: coll. c.p.

**Eat more fruit!** A Coll. of ca. 1927–34. Collinson. Ex the trade slogan.

**Eat one’s boots, hat, head.** Gen. as I’ll or I’d eat my . . ., hat being the commonest and earliest (Dickens, 1836). A coll. declaration.

**Eat one’s head off.** To be idle; cost more than its, or one’s, keep. Orig. (—1730) of horses; then of servants (—1874); finally (—1920) of other employees. O.E.D.; F. & H.

**Eat one’s terns, occasion dinners.** To go through the prescribed course of study for admission to the bar: a legal coll. (—1834). Ex the eating of a few meals each term at an inn of court. (O.E.D.)

**Eat the wind out of a ship.** To get nearer the wind than another ship is: nautical coll.: late C. 19–20. Bowren. Cf. *wipe (a shooter’s) eye.*

**Eat up.** To massacre (a man and his family) and confiscate his property (1838); hence, to vanquish in tribal battle (1850); coll. Pettman. Prob. ex a Zulu metaphor. In late C. 19–20, gen. = to ruin, hence to be much too strong or too skilful for another.

**Eat vinegar with a fork.** See fork, etc.—Eatables. See *Eat-Apples,—eaten a stake.* See *swallowed a stake.*

**Eatings.** Board, meals, food: proletarian: C. 10. Ware.

**Eat.** Food: C. 20 coll. Cf. *eat, M.E.,* a meal, and C. 11–early 17, food, both S.E.

**Earn.** Incorrect for *ea,* a canal: mid-C. 19–20. Confused with Fr. *ea.* O.E.D.

**Eautybeau.** Beauty: music-hall transposition (—1909); ob. Ware.

**Ebb-water.** Lack of money: late C. 17–18. B.E. says it is c.; perhaps it is, rather, low s. or low coll.

**Ebenecus.** In fives, a stroke that so hits ‘line’ as to rise perpendicularly: Winchester College. ? A Biblical reference or ex *Ebenecus,* coll. (1856) >, by 1890, S.E., a Nonconformist chapel (a term that —cf. *bethel*—is S.E. j. as used by Dissenters themselves). See also Addenda.


**Ebony, bit or piece of.** A variant (—1923) of *ebony,* 1. Manchon.

**Ebony optic.** A black eye; e.o. *albonized,* the same—painted white: C. 19. ‘Ducange Anglicus.’
  *eclipse. In gaming, a fraudulent man pulation of a die with the little finger: late C. 17–18, e.
eceity is an astonishingly frequent misspelling among those who should know better.
ed. Editor: only in compounds, as city-ed: C. 20 journalistic. Cf.
ed (or ed.), the. The editor; journalists’ and authors’ coll.: C. 20. Neil Bell, Winding Road, 1934.
edication. See education.
edgarism. Atheism; loosely, agnosticism: clubmen’s: 1882. Ex Edgar, ‘the villain-hero’ of Tennison’s prose play, The Promise of May. (War.)
  *edger! Run away!, be off!: c. (— 1886); ob. Ware. A deviation from S.E. edge (away).
edge, outside. See outside edge.
edge, short top. A turned-up nose: tailors’ from ca. 1860.
edge, side. Whiskers: tailors’ s.: from ca. 1860, as is:
  edge, stitched off the: likewise tailors’: (of a glass) not full.
edge ’em. To commence drawing a crowd: market-traders’ (e.g., Petticoat Lane): C. 20.
edge of nothing, the thin. A coll. c.p. (— 1931) applied ‘when people are very crowded and there is hardly room to sit’ (Lyell). Exp. sit on the thin edge of nothing.
  edge off, or, v.t., out of. To slink away; to desert gradually: coll.: from ca. 1860. Cf. the S.E. usages, whence it naturally develops.
  edge on, have (got) an. To be impudent; put on ‘side’: Public Schools: C. 20. P. G. Wodehouse, 1903, ‘Doesn’t it strike you that for a kid like you you’ve got a good deal of edge on’? Contrast:
  edge on, have the. To have a slight advantage over: Canadian coll: C. 20. John Beames. Ex U.S.
  edge up. (Gen. in imperative.) To move quickly: Glasgow (— 1934).
edjeways, not able to get a word in. To find oneself unable to take part in a conversation or discussion: coll.; from ca. 1870; earlier and S.E., edjewise.
  edication, edication, edication. Education:
edity. Edifice: a C. 16 sol., for which there is the excuse that it occurs only in the pl. (O.E.D.)
edition, first, second, etc. One’s first, second, or other child: journalists’, authors’, and publishers’ s. fast becoming a gen. bookish coll.: from ca. 1890. (There is prob. a further pun on addition.)
edod I Rare coll. variant of adod I: late C. 17–early 18. O.E.D.
  -ee. Often to humorous, occ. to coll. effect (imitative of legal terms) as in kicke, the person kicked: from ca. 1860. Somewhat pedantic.
  eecker. Check: central s.: from ca. 1880. Ware.
  eel-skin(s). Very tight trousers: ca. 1820–60. Bulwer Lytton, 1827, ‘a ... gilt chain ... stuck ... in his eel-skin to make a show’. A very tight dress: Society coll: ca. 1881–90. Ware.
  e’en. Even (= just, nothing else but) ‘prefixed’ to vv.: mid-C. 18–19 coll.; in C. 20, dial. Richardson, 1741. ‘E’en send to him to come down.’ (O.E.D.)
  ecause; eetsewe. Queen; sweet: transposed or central s.: from ca. 1870. Ware.
  eeps. See Eeps.—Eetap(s). See Eat-Apples.
  -eer is often jocular, occ. coll. as proficient was at first (1916).
  eff, the; the Eflfy. The Effingham Saloon, an East-End music-hall, fl. 1864.
  effect, effection, effective. See affect.
  effluvium is occ. used ignorantly as a singular (effluvium): mid-C. 17–20. Cf. data.
  Effy. See Eff.
  efinck. A knife: back s. (— 1859). H., 1st ed. E- is a common initial litter in back-s. words, for it ensures euphony.
  egg, old. See old egg.
  egg, sound. See sound egg.
  egg in that !, there’s an. That’s worth the trouble! : semi-proverbal coll. (— 1925). Manchester.
Egg-trot. A colt abbr. of egg-wife's trot, a gentle amble; ca. 1680-1900. Ex her pace when riding to market.

eggs, teach one's grandmother to roast, more gen. suck. To inform or lecture one's elders, superiors, or intellectual betters: coll.: from ca. 1700. Earlier forms are teach one's dame or grandame (grandam) to spin or to grope ducks (or a goose) or to sup sour milk. (Apperson.)


eggs (a penny, and four of them addle or rotten), come in with five. To interrupt fussily with worthless news or an idle story: coll.: ca. 1540-1800.

eggs are, be, or is eggs, as sure as. Undoubtedly: certainly: coll.: the first two, late 17-18 (e.g. Otway); the third from (—)1772. The last perhaps, as A. de Morgan suggested, influenced by X is A, the logician's statement of identity. (Apperson.)

eggs are cooked, I. The. Everything's done; that's done it; his number is up! New Zealanders: from ca. 1910.


egmat, stains and winders. A private coachman's three-cornered gala hat: coll.: ca. 1870-1900. Ex a one-corned famous firm. ego, often with capital. Myself; yourself; himself: jocular coll.: (—)1824; ob.—2. (ego 1) See qua?.

egod! See egad.


Egyptian Hall. A ball: rhyming s. (—)1850. H., 1st ed.

eh? What's that (you say)?: coll.: C. 19-20. (O.E.D.'s earliest record is for 1837.)

eccesies. Pieces; transposed or central s.: from ca. 1890.—2. Hence, money: from ca. 1890. Ware.

Eiderdown. Ouderdon on the Western Front: military in G.W.: (W. H. L. Watson, 1915.)

eight, one over the. One drink too many; hence, slightly drunk: military (>), by 1926, gen.: from not later than 1914. F. & Gibbons; Lyell. Eight boors being considered permissible.

eight eyes, I will knock out two of your. A mid-C. to early 19th Billingegato fishwives' c.p. The other six, as Grose, 2nd ed., enumerates them, are the two 'bubbles' (q.v.), the belly (prob. implying the navel), 'two pope's eyes' (the anal and urinary orifices), and 'a *** eye' (what?): by the 'pope's eyes' he perhaps means rump and anus, while by the asterisks he almost certainly understands the sexual aperture.


Eightier. An 8-ounce loaf: c., mostly prisoners': from ca. 1870.

Eiley Maxwellen. A non-paying debtor: commercial (—1808); ob. Ware. Ex that song by P. W. Crochet, in which occurs the words; 'It may be for years, and it may be for ever.'
either, either of + n. with a pl. v.: catachresia: C. 19-20; Ruskin, 1874 (O.E.D.); Freeman Wills Crofts, Mystery on Southampton Water, 1904, 'This was not to say that during those wearing days either of them were idle.'—2. Catachresie, too, is either (sing. n.) or (sing. n.) with a pl. v., as in Tindal, 1833, 'Religious rites by which either Thulees or Eleusis were afterw. distinguished', O.E.D.—3. Often either is used illogically, as twice in this short passage (from G. D. H. & M. Cole, Superintendil Wilson's Holiday, 1928): 'He might have either been hidden in the vicinity or taken away, probably by car, to some distance. For traces either of burial or transport by road one would have to search by daylight.' To impute pedantry to a person indicating such lapses is to adjudicate both logic and subtlety, or, at the least, both clarity and nuance.—4. See Addenda.

ek dum. See ak dum. 1. Thus in Richard Blaker, Here Lies a Most Beautiful Lady, 1855, of an Indian Army officer: 'We'll go ek dum,' said the Major.

ekame. A 'make', i.e. a swindle: back s. (—1859). H., 1st ed.


elastic. Stretchable without permanent change of shape or size: coll. (in C. 20, almost S.E.): from ca. 1780.

elbat. See halbat.

elbow, crook the. See crook. App. lift the elbow is not recorded before 1916 (O.E.D. Sup.).


elbow, shake the. To play dice: coll.: from ca. 1690; ob. Vanbrugh. He's always shaking his heels with the ladies—i.e. dancing—and his elbows with the lords;—in Swift's Nightcap.

elbow?, who is at your. A late C. 17-18 c.p. caution or warning to a liar. B.E. Cf. watch your step!


elbow-grease. Hard manual labour: coll. (—1839). Clarke's Paramiologia Anglo-Latina: Marvell; B.E., 'A desirous Term for Swott'; Grose; George Eliot, 'Genuine elbow-polish, as Mrs. Poyser called it.' Cf. the Fr. huile de bras or de poignet (recent de coude), the primary sense being that of vigorous rubbing.

elbow in the hawae, (there's) an. A nautical coll. applied to a ship that, with two anchors down swings twice the wrong way, causing the cables to take half a turn round one another', Bowen: mid-C. 19-20.

elbow-jigger or scraper. A fiddler: coll.: from ca. 1820; ob. Egan's Grose.

elbow-shaker, shaking. A gamerist; gaming; adj. and n.: coll.: the first from early C. 18, the second (—1718; the third, C. 19-20, ob.

elbows, out at. (Of an estate) mortgaged: coll.: C. 18—early 19.
Elechi. See Elchi.—elch(ə)rwer. See helcherwer. 
eldest, the. The first lieutenant: naval s. verging on coll.: C. 10. Bowen. Contrast the old man, the captain.
electrify. Violently to startle: from ca. 1750; coll. till ca. 1860, when it > S.E. Burke; Barham.
elegant. 'Nice': coll. verging on s. : C. 18–early 19. Cf. fair, adj., 1 (q.v.).—2. Hence, first-rate, excellent: coll. from ca. 1840; ob. Prob. owing to influence of the U.S., where it was so used early as 1765 (Thornton). As a jocular Irishism, it is spelt iligant: mid-C. 19–20. Cf. nice.

Elegant Extracts. The 86th Foot (British Army) on being remodelled in 1812 with officers chosen from other regiments: military; ob. Ex Vicemus Knox's and others' elegant-extract anthologies so popular ca. 1780–1820.—2. At Cambridge University those students who, though 'plucked', were given their degrees: from ca. 1850; ob. H., 3rd ed. Cf. gulf.
elphant, bang through the; elephant, bang up to the. See bang.
elphant, see the. To see the world; gain worldly experience: coll.; orig. (ca. 1840), U.S., anglicised ca. 1860. H., 2nd ed.; Laurence Oliphant.—ob. (Gen. to have seen the elephant.) To be seduced: from ca. 1875; ob. Cf. Fr. avoir vu le loup.

elphant dance. The double shuffle or 'cellar-flap', q.v.; ca. 1870–1910.
elphant trunk. An occ. variant of elephant's trunk, q.v. The Evening Standard, Aug. 19, 1931.
elphanter. Incorrect for elephanta: mid-C. 19–20. OED.
elphants. See elephant's trunk.
elphant's ear. Swert, a 'lilacious plant bearing a single ... leaf, resembling an ear': Queens-town (South Africa) juvenile coll. (—1913). Pettman.
elphant's trunk. Drunk: rhyming s.; from ca. 1855. H., 1st ed. By 1873, often abbr. to elephant's or elephants. Cf. process in china (plate), q.v.
elvate. To render slightly drunk; gen. in p. pl. passive used as an adj.: from ca. 1700; in C. 18, S.E.; then coll. Dickens, 'Except when he's elevated, Bob's the quietest creature breathing.'
elevation. Slight tipsiness: coll.; from ca. 1820. Scott.—2. Opium (—1850); ob. —3. Whence, a 'pick-me-up': coll.; mid-C. 19–20; now mostly dial. O.E.D.

Ellenborough Lodge or Park or Spike. The King's Bench: ca. 1810–50. Ex Lord Chief-Justice Ellenborough (d. 1818), fl. 1802–18 in that office.

*Ellenborough's teeth. The cheveaux de frise around the King's Bench Prison wall: c.; ca. 1810–50. See preceding entry.

Ellersley. The London School Board: from ca. 1870; very ob. Cf. Else and:


elpa. See helps.
elrig. A girl; back s. (—1859). H., 1st ed.
else's, as in somebody else's: coll.; from ca. 1600. Pepys.


Elie. East London College: London University undergraduates': C. 20; ob. since 1931, when renamed Queen Mary College.

El(t)chi(, El(t)ch(e)wer. The Great. Sir Stratford Canning, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe (d. 1880): coll.; from ca. 1860; ob. Ex the name given him by the Turks. Ex Turkish elchi, ambassador. W. elude, delude, and illude are often used, sol., one for another: the same applies to their corresponding adj. and nn.: C. 19–20.

elecampane, occ. elecampane. See allcampan. (Moncrieff, 1823.)

England; then: coll. from ca. 1880; earlier, S.E. though not, since ca. 1840, literary. Baumann.

emag. Game; trick; dodge: back s. (—1873). Ware dates it 1870.

embroidery. Exaggerations; fancy-work manipulations of or additions to the truth: coll.; from ca. 1885. The corresponding v. is C. 17–20 S.E.


eminent, -ency, and imminent, -ency, have, in C. 17–20, often been confused: hence sol.—The same applies, with some excuse, to emigrant and immigrant.

ender. A performer inferior to even an 'early-turner' q.v.; music-hall's colloq. (—1909). 

Wage ends, at loose. Neglected (of persons), (of things) precarious: coll.: from ca. 1860; ob. (Cf. end, at a loose, q.v.) Original, nautical, of an unattached rope. W.

ends up, all. Easily: coll.: from ca. 1920. (O.E.D. Sup.) With a play on anyhow.

enemy, the. The; the clock, watch, etc.: coll.: esp. as how goes . . . ? or—ob. in C20—what says . . . ? Dickens in Nicholas Nickleby, 1839. Hence kill the enemy, to pass time; ob. engaged ring. Engagement ring: coll., mostly London (—1887). Baumann.

engine. A sewing-machine; tailors': C. 20. E.g., The Tailor and Cutter, Nov. 29, 1928.


English manufacture. 'Ale, Beer, or Syder', B.E.; late C. 17-18; coll.

English pluck. Money: proletarian (—1900); virtually †. Ware.


enchantment. Incorrect for enspiracy (divination by the mirror): mid-C. 19-20. O.E.D.

Eno's. He knows: derisive: C. 20. Punning Eno's Fruit Salt. Also 'e knoses.

enough for anything after an adj. = either that adj. preceded by very or, gen., to satisfy anyone, in all conscience. Coll.: mid-C. 19-20. E.g. 'G.K.C. is witty enough for anything, don't you think?' enough to . . . See the key-phrase -vv.

 enquiry (for inquire) is a hybrid form, but, though rightly frowned on by purists, it is not yet considered as indubitably catachrestic.

ensign-bearer. A drunken man; a drunkard.

Esp. one with a very red face; late C. 18-early 19. Grose, 2nd ed. (It serves as a flag.)

enthusiastic: To be enthusiastic; speak enthusiastically: (mostly jugular or semi-jugular) coll.: orig. (—1880). U.S.; anglicised ca. 1900. Cf. the U.S. sense (1859: Thornton), 'to kindle into enthusiasm'.

enthusiastically. Enthusiasm; Society: ca. 1870-1900. Ware.
ephemera is ococc. used incorrectly for ephemera: C. 19—20; O.E.D.

esp. A pipe: back s.: from ca. 1865.

Epsom races. A pair of races: rhyming s. (1867). "Ducange Anglicus."—2. Also, ca. 1850—1900, faces, now 'rhymed' airs and graces.

Epsom salts. Coll., from ca. 1870, for Epsom salt, equality (or E-) Jack. An officer treating those under him as equals: naval coll.: ca. 1810—70. Marrayt, 1836.

equally as for equally or as (e.g. in 'Stoke-hold is equally as correct as stoke-hole') is 'illiterate tautology': C. 19-20. Fowler.


er. (-or) is coll., when, in the game known among school-children as 'conquerors', one speaks of e.g. a niner, nine shootguns 'conquered'.—2. Illiterate for -orc, as in modern, q.v. Co-extensivo with Mod. English.—3. See 'Oxford er, the' — 4. Illiterate for a. and t. and J. for of. as in 'A pint or beer'.—5. Coll. when agential as in pea-soup: mid-C. 19-20.

'erb. A wag; also in address to a person of name unknown to the speaker: Cockney and military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. I.e. Herbert.


'eriff. A rogue 'just initiated, and beginning to practice', Grose, 1st ed.: C. 18—early 19 c. Recorded first in A New Castin Dict., 1725. Ex the sense, a canary (bird) two years old, for canary (bird) itself = a rogue.

erk. A lower-class rating: nautical: late C. 19—20. Bowen. Perhaps ex dial. irk, to grow weary, or from officers' impatient 'They irk me, these — !' See also irk. It is, in the aircraft engineering trade, the s. term for an aircraftman: ↑ since 1916. The Daily Herald, Aug. 1, 1936. Prob. by telescoping.

errand, send a baby on an. To undertake a probable failure: coll.: mid-C. 19—20; ob.

error, and no. See mistake, and no.


erth. Three: back s. (1850). Hence, erth-pu, 'three up', a street-game; erth sith nons, three months' imprisonment; erth gens, three shillings; erth shu(n)ep, three pence. Also earth.

eruscation. An ignorant error for coruscation: C. 17. On the other hand, eruscation is merely an incorrect spelling of eruscum. O.E.D.

-es is a frequent suffix in s. and coll., esp. in C. 20 and at schools and universities. Cf. Hurnery, q.v.

escolop. A policeman: back s. (1850). H., 1st ed. The c is never pronounced, the e gen. omitted: hence the well-known slop.

Eska, on Egyptian service, is the military nickname of men surnamed Moffatt: C. 20. Ex Arabic.


-esque is an often jocular, occ. coll. ending, as in cigarosque, q.v. The same applies to ess, as, e.g., in panessence.

eroch. A horse: back s. (1850); H., 1st ed. The c is added for naturalness. Occ. eroph.

esse. See -esse.


establish a funk. To create a panic—invended by a great bowler, at cricket, who enlivened this distincition with some cannon-ball bowling': Oxford University (1909); ↑ by 1920. Ware. Cf. bowl for timber.

estacade. Incorrect for estocade: C. 18. O.E.D.

esurient is catachrestic when, as from ca. 1820, used as = gastronomic. O.E.D.

-et for -it. See shet.—2. For -it, as in ketch for catch: sol.: C. 19—20. See also e. 4.

et cetera; etc. Catachrestically insulating when applied to persons: mid-C. 19—20. (Publishers sometimes put etc. at the end of an incomplete list of authors.)—2. For its slovenly use, see the astringent, invaluable Fowler.—3. A bookseller: c.: early C. 18. Street Robberies Considered. (Prob. ex booksellers' habit of short-titling books in their catalogues.)


[Eton slang. A. Clutton-Brock, Eton, 1900, writes thus: 'There are not many slang terms in common use at Eton. . . . At Winchester to 'furf' (Latin jurca, a fork) means to expel. At Eton [it] is used only in connection with the wall game, and means to extract the ball out of the "bully" by a particular process. The player who performs this process is called the furker. Many . . . words peculiar to Eton are based on the "Lucus a non lucendo" principle. . . . call over is termed "absence" because every one has to be present. . . .

2. The most common slang term at Eton . . . is "scug"; this is primarily a term of abuse. It does not mean "sad", like "lout" at Rugby, or "chaw" at Harrow. . . . It has various elusive meanings, ranging from a person of no account to one of dirty appearance, unpleasant habits, and undignified behaviour. . . . "Grub" at Eton is called "sock" (q.v.), and confectioners' shops are "sock shops". To work hard is to "sap" (Lat. sapio, to be wise ?), and a "sap" is too often a term of abuse. To kick behind is to "fit", and to kick on the shin is to "sick". 'Check' is [at Eton] "nervous". When a boy is cased by his fag-master or any other boy in authority he is "worked off".

1 Both R. Townsend Warner and R. G. K. Wrench, however, derive— and correctly derive—the Winchester sense from an Old English word.
EWE DRESSED LAMB FASHION

[For "pop", see that term; an excellent account of that institution occurs in this book by Clutton-Brock.]

3. The origin of . . . . "wet-bobs" and . . . . "dry-bobs" is . . . . unknown. That of the word "tug" is disputed. A tug is the oppidan word for a rower, and is said to be derived from the Latin "gens togata," the "gowned race." A more probable explanation is that the word originally meant a certain waste part of the mutton on which the cows were supposed to live. [Cf. Charles Lamb's "gag" and "gag-eater," which once had the same meaning at Christ's Hospital.] Abbreviations are usually unfashionable at Eton [whereas at Charterhouse they are very general], and are considered the mark of a boy fresh from a private school. Thus, no one may say "ma" or "mi" for major or minor. An elder brother speaks of his younger brother as his "minor," and a younger of his elder as his "major." Cf. "Harrow slang." -Ex. often locular, is occ. coll., as in munitioned. Very rare before 1850.

euphemism and euphuism are sometimes used one for the other: mid-C. 19-20: catachresis; -2. For euphemism itself, see Slang and the essay in Words & Euro. The Europa battle-ships: naval (- 1909); †. Ware.


In Evans, Mrs. 'A name frequently given to a she cat, owing, it is said, to a witch of the name of Evans, who frequently assumed the appearance of a cat,' Grose, 1st ed. coll.: mid-C. 18-19-mid.19.
evaporate. To run away: coll.: from ca. 1850. Dickens, 'The young man, looking round, instantly evaporated.' Ex S.E. sense, to disappear.
evatch. To have: back s. (- 1874). H., 5th ed. Instead of 'un-English' evuth.


event, quite an. Something important, significant, or unusual: C. 20 coll.
ever in the best, greatest, worst ever. The best, etc., that has ever been: coll.: anglicised ca. 1930 ex U.S.
ever?, did you. (Self-contained.) Have you ever seen, or heard, such a thing?: coll.: mid-C. 19-20. O.E.D. (Sup.).
ever, seldom or. Seldom if (indeed) ever; seldom or never: sol.: C. 18-20.
ever a(n), e'er a(n). Any: in C. 19-20 (ob.), low coll.; earlier, S.E.
ever is (or was), as. A coll. tag, orig. intensive, as in 'Bad riding as ever was,' 1708. Now approximately = 'mark you' (parenthetic) and, mostly, rather illiterate. O.E.D. (Sup.).
ever since Adam was an oakum boy. Very old: naval coll.: C. 20. F. & Gibbons.

Ever Sworded, the. The 29th Foot, since 1831 the Worcestershire, Regiment: military: mid-C. 18-20; ob. F. & Gibbons. Ex a custom resulting from a massacre in 1746.
ever the, adv. At all; any: e.g. 'Ever the richer,' preceded by negative, = no richer. Coll.: from ca. 1620. O.E.D.

evergreens, the. The 13th Hussars: military. C. 19-20. Ex their motto viaret in aerumn. (F. & Gibbons.)
everlasting knock, take the. To die: sporting: 1889. The Referee, March 10.


Everton toffee. Coffee: rhyming s. (- 1857). 'Ducange Anglicus.'
every day and in every way, to which is often added I shall get better and better. A C.P. of ca. 1923-6. Ex Coniunct.
every man Jack; every mother's son. Absolutely everyone: coll.: the former, from ca. 1840, e.g. in Dickens; the latter. C. 14-20. Ex in Shakespeare, Scott. [Apperson.]
every which way. In every manner or direction: jocular coll., orig. (1840) U.S.; anglicised ca. 1910. Perhaps ex confusion caused by every way (in) which, everybody or everyone followed by they (them, their). See their.
everything, in the predicate, = (something) very important, is coll.; from ca. 1870. E.g. 'Bring the money; that's everything!' everything in the garden's lovely! All goes well! a C. 20 c.p., now ob. Ex: everything is lovely. See goose hangs high.
everything is nice in your garden! 'A gentle protest against self-indulgence': 1896-ca. 1910. Ware supports with an anecdotal origin.

eveethee. See hevethere.
evidence, v., as a mere synonym of show, is catachresic: mid-C. 19-20. Fowler.
evil. Five: back s. (- 1830). H., 1st ed. Also ewif.
evelenet. Twelve: back s. (- 1850). H., 1st ed. Naturally eluted, looking un-English, was changed.
evolute. Incorrect for involute: C. 19-20. O.E.D.

ewe, or white swe, gen. preceded by the. An important, because very beautiful, woman in a band of rogues, a criminal gang: e. late C. 17-18. B.E.; Grose, 1st ed.

ewe dressed lamb fashion, an old. An old woman dressed like a young girl: late C. 18-19; coll. Grose, 1st ed. In C. 19-20 the usual form is mutton dressed up to look like lamb; orig. and mainly Cockney.
ewe lamb. A nhlan: military: in G.W.

ewe-cumition. An elderly harlot or amateur prostitute: C. 19–20; ob.

ewif. A variant of ewif, five; ewif being more euphonious.

ex. Exhibition; gen. the Ex; some specific exhibition, such as the Earl's Court Exhibition in 1899; late C. 19–20. (Ernest Raymond, A Family That Was, 1929.)

Ex, Sir. His Excellency (the Governor-General): Australian; C. 19–20.


"I'm boiled if I die, my friends", quoth I. (And "exactly so", quoth he) (O.E.D.).

exagonal. Incorrect for hexagonal; C. 17. O.E.D.


examination. Examination: school a.; in C. 20, gen. coll.; from ca. the middle 1870's. James Payn, 'I read all about it for my exam.', 1883.

examiner. See 'Winchester College slang'; § 3.

exasperate or hexasperate. To over-aspirate one's s's; from ca. 1890; ob. 'Cuthbert Bede', 1883.

exceedings. "Expenditure beyond income": Oxford University coll. (— 1909); ob. Ware.


Excellers, the. The 40th Foot, from 1881 the South Lancashires: C. 19–20 (ob.) military. Ex XL'ere.—2. Occ., the 12th Battalion, the London Regiment, formerly the 40th (XL) Middlesex Rifle Volunteers. F. & Gibbons.

except as a conjunction: see Fowler. To be avoided, except in archaic writing.

exceptional and exceptional are, C. 19–20, frequently confused, as were, in late C. 14–17, exception and exception. O.E.D. See also Fowler.


exciting. adj. Excellent; amusing; pleasant; unexpected: coll.; from ca. 1880.

excursions. Very tight boots, esp. with pointed toes: coll.; from ca. 1865; ob.


excuse! Pardon me! do not be offended: South African coll. (— 1906). Watkins, From Farm to Forum, at that date. Ex Dutch influence. (Petman.)


execution. Washing day: Monday; late C. 17–20 (ob.): low coll. B.E. Ex hanging clothes on the line.

exes. Expenses: coll. (— 1864). H., 3rd ed.— 2. Those who were once something else: coll.; from ca. 1829. Tom Moore, 'We x's have proved ourselves not to be wise.'— 3. See tommy and exes.

exes (or exes) to fare. Odds of 6 to 4; racing a.; C. 20. For exes, see exes; fare is four corrupted.

exhibition of oneself, make an. To show oneself in an unfavourable light; coll.; from ca. 1880.

exis. Six; esp. in exis-evis gen. 6 × 5 shillings, 30s., and exis-evis yeancaps, 6 × 5 pence, lid. Back s. (— 1893). H., 1st ed.— 2. See exes to fare.

EYE, PIPE THE


expect = to suppose or surmise and followed by a that, i.e. an immediately dependent noun-, clause has, since ca. 1870, been coll. when not dial.; in C. 16–early 10, S.E.


expensive. Wealthy, sumptuous; exceedingly or distinctively stylish: from ca. 1920: a., by 1930, coll. Cf. extensive, q.v.


explosion. The birth of a child: low; from ca. 1855; ob.

extensive. Showy; given to, or actually, displaying wealth, fine clothes, conversational ability or effectiveness: (—)1859; ob. H., 1st ed. (Introduction).

extinguish. To reduce (an opponent) to silence: from ca. 1890; coll.; earlier (1878), S.E.

extinguisher. A dog's muzzle (— 1890). The Standard, May 12, 1890.

extra.. Dull, boring: from ca. 1929; ob. A. A. Milne, Two People, 1931.

extracted. Included in the list of elegant extracts, q.v. II., 3rd ed. Ob.


extrumps or ex(-)trumps. Extemporize; without preparation (of a lesson): Winchester College, from ca. 1860.


[—ey for -y or -ie is unnecessary, and often incorrect, in diminutives. See esp. Fowler.]

eye. A place where tradesmen (orig. and esp. tailors) hide stolen material: 'Called hell, or their eye: from the first, when taxed with their knavery, they equivocally swear, that if they have taken any, they wish they may find it in hell; or alluding to the second protest, that what they have over and above is not more than they could put in their eye,' Grose, 1st ed. (at cabbage): trade: mid-C.18–mid-19.— 2. Incorrect for nye: C. 15–mid-18. O.E.D.


eye, be a sheet in the wind's. To be slightly drunk: nautical: 1863, Stevenson (O.E.D.). Gen. abbr. to be a sheet in the wind.

eye, glad. See glad eye.

eye, have a drop in the. See drop in one's eye.

eye, in the twinkling of an. See bedpost.

eye, lick the (or one's). To be happy, joyous: lower classes' (— 1923). Manchon.

eye I, mind your. Be careful! From ca. 1850, low coll.; earlier. S.E.

eye I, us or all my. See Betty Martin and cf. eye I, my.

eye, pipe the ; or put (the) finger in (the). To weep: derisive coll.; the former, C. 19–20; the latter, C. 10–early 19 (Grose, 3rd ed.).
eye, to have fallen down and trod[den] upon one's.
To have a black eye: mid-C. 18—early 19. Grose, 2nd ed. (at eight eyes).

eye, wet or the. To drink: from ca. 1830; ob.
eye-brows. See eye-lashes.
eye-glass weather. See eye-glass weather.
eye-hole. See garter-hole.
eye in a sting, have an; with one's. (To be) crushed or defeated: perpetrator coll. (—1909). Ware.
eye-lashes or -brows, hang (on) by the. To be extremely persevering, tenacious, esp. in a difficulty: coll.; from ca. 1860. The gen. ca. 1770—1850 form is hang by the-eyes, applied to a dangerous position.
eye-limpet. An artificial eye: ca. 1875—1900.
eye of another shooter, wipe the. "To kill game that he has missed" (S.O.D.): sporting: from ca. 1885.
eye-opener. The membrum virile: C. 19—20 low; ob.
eye peeled or skinned, keep one's (best). To be wary: coll.: U.S. (1852; Thornton), anglicised in late C. 19. Cf. fly, wido, up to snuff.
eye-(s)ight, nearly lose one's. To obtain an unexpectedly and very intimate view of a member of the opposite sex: coll.; from ca. 1860.
eye-wash. Something done, not for utility but for effect: coll. (—1884); prob. orig. military.

*e-eye-water. Gin (—1823); ob. C. >, by 1850, low. Egan's Grose; H., 1st ed.; Whyte-Melville;
Judy (an 1880's rival of Punch), Aug. 4, 1886, 'He imbibed stupendous quantities of jigged gin, dog's nose, and Paddy's eye-water.'
eyes, googoo. See googoo eyes.
eyes i., my. An exclamation indicative of surprise: ca. 1835—1910. Dickens, in Oliver Twist, 'My eyes, how green! . . . Why a heak's a madg'ctraie.'

Eyes and Limbs, the. 'The foot guards were formerly so called, by the marching regiments, from a favourite excitation in use among them, which was, dawning their eyes, limbs, and blue breeches,' Grose, 1st ed.: app. ca. 1720—60.

eyes are set, one's. One is drunk: coll.: C. 17. Shakespeare. O.E.D. (See also eyes set.)
eyes draw straws, one's. See both draw straws and straws, draw.
eyes out, cry one's. To weep long and bitterly: coll.: from ca. 1705. Swift, 'I can't help it, if I would cry my Eyes out.'
eyes peeled or skinned, keep one's. See eye peeled.
eyes set (in one's or the head), have or be with one's or the. To be drunk: C. 17—18 coll. Shakespeare, 'O he's drunko . . . his eyes were set at eight i' th morning.'

Eyeties. Italians: military: G.W. (F. & Gibbons.). Ex the sol. pronunciation Ey(e)italian.
ca. 1880. Coll.; post-War, S.E. Perhaps ex acting on the stage.

*face-ticket, have a. To be so well known to the janitor that one is not asked to present one's ticket: British Museum Reading Room coll. (—1909). Ware.


*faces, make. To beget children: C. 18—early 19.—2. (make faces at.) To deceive, disappoint, or verbally attack a friend: c.; ca. 1870—1920.

*facey. A workman facing another as he works: tailors'. Hence, facey on the bias, one not directly in front, and facey on the thick, a workman just behind one's vis-d-vis. From ca. 1870.

*facias. See fieri facias.

*facings, go or be put through one's. To be reprimanded or to show off: military s. > gen. coll.: from ca. 1865. In C. 20, S.E.


*fact. Factor: catchastic: very rare before the crime-novel craze (from ca. 1922). E.g., A. Fielding, Death of John Tait, 1932, 'Altogether she was a strange fact in the case.'

*Factory, the. Old Scotland Yard: c. of ca. 1860—90. 'No. 747.'

*facdy. Full of facts; coll. but never very gen.: from ca. 1880. 'A facdy' ['newspaper' article], The Pall Mall Gazette, Nov. 2, 1883. O.E.D.

*facdy. Impudent, insolvent: C. 17—20; coll. till C. 19, then dial. Ex face, n., 2.

*fad, fa-d, fa-dee, far-dee. A farthing: Charterhouse: from ca. 1870. Cf. ha'd.


*fadidist, fadidoner. One devoted to a public or private fad: coll.; from ca. 1850. Vbl.n., fade-mongering.

*faddle. To toy or trifle: coll. in C. 19; † by 1890, except in dial. Hence, n., a busybody; also an affected and very effeminate male. The v. arose ca. 1820 (orig., to caress a child); the n. ca. 1800, though the sense, triflery, foolery, 'bosh', hardly before 1860.

*faddy. Full of fads; coll. from ca. 1820. Mrs. Sherwood, 1824. Ex dial. (O.E.I.)

*fade away! Go away! smart a. (—1913); ob. by 1920, † by 1930. A. H. Dawson's Dict. of Slang.


*fadge, v. To suit; fit: late C. 16—19. Succeed: from ca. 1600. Both coll. The former in Na, shakespeare, B.E., Horace Walpole; the latter in Cotgrave, Borrow, Nares: 'Probably never better than the present day.' 'I know no fadge in the streets.' 'I know in it won't fadge, it won't do or serve.'—2. fadge, with, to tolerate (a thing), agree or rub along with a person, is C. 17—early 18 and rather S.E. than coll.


*fag, v. In c., to beat, thrash: late C. 17—19; after ca. 1830, low coll. B.E., Grose.—2. (I hence.) V.t., to have (a boy) as one's fag: schoolboys': from ca. 1780; ob. Grose, 2nd ed.—3. V.i. (Ex n., 2.) To do menial jobs for a schoolboy-illow higher up in the school: from ca. 1805: schoolboys' >, by 1860, gen. coll. In C. 20, both the n. and its derivative are, in this sense, gen. regarded as, therefore are, S.E.


*fag out. To serve as a fag; esp. in cricket, to field: from ca. 1840; coll., schoolboys', orig. and esp. at Winchester College. Lewis.


*fagger, fagger or figure. A boy thief that, entering by a window, opens the door to his confederates or even hands the booty out to them: c. (—1785); ob. Grose, 1st ed.; whereas fagger (Grose, 1st ed.) arose in late C. 18, figure, its derivative, is of C. 19—20.

*faggery, faggery. Serving as a fag, q.v., in a school: schoolboys': from ca. 1850, 1820, resp. De Quincey in his autobiographical sketches, 1853. 'Faggery was an abuse too venerable and sacred to be touched by profane hands.'

*fagging. A beating, thrashing, thumping: low: not recorded before 1775, but prob. used as early as 1700. Ex o. fag, to beat.—2. See faggery.

*fag(g)ot. A 'baggage'; a pejorative applied to a woman (—1600), also—gen. preceded by little—to a child (—1850): coll., the former in C. 20 being dial. —2. A rissole: low coll.: from ca. 1850. Mayhew. Also, butcher's oddmotes or 'stickings' (?) hence the name: low coll. (—1859). E., 1st ed.—3. A man mustered as a soldier but not yet formally enlisted: late C. 17—18. B.E. Hence, a man hired to appear as a solider: on a muster list: C. 18—19. Grose, 1st ed. Both nuances are military; the latter, also naval.

*fag(g)ot, v. In C. 17—19, to bind, truss, i.e. as sticks in a faggot. Prob. coll.; never, despite
FAG(G)OT-BRIEFS

B.E. was it —2. C., however, is the sense, to garrote: late C. 19–20. Manchon.—3. In low s., v.t. and i., to copulate (with); to frequent harlots: C. 19. Ex faggot, n., 1.

fag(g)ot-briefs. A bundle or bundles of dummy briefs carried by the briefless: legal (1859). Sala, ' Pretend to pore over faggot briefs.' Ob.
fag(g)ot-master. A whoremonger: low; from ca. 1825; ob. Cf. faggot, v., 3.
fag(g)ot-vote. 'A vote secured by the purchase of property under mortgage, or otherwise, so as to constitute a nominal qualification.' F. & H.: political coll. (1817, C.O.D.), ob. by 1920; S.E. by 1840. Gladstone, Nov. 25, 1879. Perhaps ex faggot, n., 3. Hence fag(g)ot-toter.
fag(g)oteer. Same sense, period, and status as faggot-master, q.v.
fag(g)oty. Incorrect for faggoty: mid-C. 19–20. O.E.D.

fail. To report a candidate as having failed in an examination: from ca. 1880; coll. till ca. 1920, then S.E.

fain I; fains; fain it; fainits A call for a truce; a statement of opposition: schoolboys: from ca. 1810. See also faynights! Prob. a corruption of fen!, ex fend! or possibly ex claim(s) I! or foreign. Cf. bags (I), its opposite. The earliest forms are fen!?, q.v., and fin or fanny, q.v.

fains, the. A tendency to faint: coll. : from ca. 1890.


fair, adj. 'Nice:' coll. verging on s.: C. 17. In C. 18, the word was elegant. See Slang, p. 28.—2. Undoubted, complete, thorough: dial. (< 1872) >, by ca. 1885, s. (O.E.D. Sup.). See fair cop and (at cow) fair cow.


*fair cop, it's a. It's a clear arrest: c.: late C. 19–20. Ware.

fair cow, a. See cow, 4.

fair dinkum. See dinkum.

fair doo's or dose or dose or do's. A fair deal; justice; just proportion: military (ca. 1912) >, by 1920, gen. B. & P. Ex Yorkshire dial (1865; E.D.D.): fair-gang, the. Gypsies; coll.: from ca. 1830; ob. by 1900, † by 1919. From their frequenting fairs in gangs or communities. Prob. a corruption of fav-gang, itself ex Faas, a Scottish-Gypsy surname (O.E.D.D.).

fair herd. A good attendance of strangers: Oxford University: 1883, The Daily News, June 13; ob. (Ware.)

fair itch. Utter imitation: low (< 1909); ob. Ware.

cow rations. Fair dealings; honesty: sporting: from ca. 1875.


fair speech, you have made a. A late C. 17–18 c. In derision of one that spends many words to little purpose, B.E. See fair thing.

fair thing. A wise proceeding, a clear duty, justice; enough, esp. in a fair thing's a fair thing. Coll. : C. 20. C. J. Dennis, 1918.

fair trade, -trader. Smuggling; a smuggler: nautical (< 1887). Baumann; Bowen.

fair-weather friend. One who writes only once a year and that in summer-time: Anglo-Irish: C. 20.

fair wind, give (something) a. To pass (e.g. the sail): nautical: late C. 19–20. Bowen.

fairing. Cakes (or sweets) bought at a fair; esp. gingerbread nuts: coll. when not dial. : from mid-C. 18. (O.E.D.)


fairybabe. Incorrect for fair-babe, a bugaboo: C. 17. O.E.D.

[faith is, in C. 14–19, often used exclamatorily and expeditively, by itself or in combination.]

faithful, one of the. A drunkard: C. 17 coll. The Man in the Moon, 1809.—2. A tailor giving long credit: late C. 18–19, either c. or low e. > low. Groce, 1st ed. Hence, his faith has made him woe, too much credit has bankrupted him: Groce, 1st ed.

Faithful Durhams. The 68th Foot Regiment, from 1881 the Durham Light Infantry: military: traditionally from 1772; ob. F. & Gibbons.

faithfully. With obliging assurances: from late C. 16; coll. 'He promised faithfully to send the book the next day,' O.E.D.

faistor. See fater.

fake. An action, esp. if illegal; a dodge; a sham (person or thing): from ca. 1825: low. James Greenwood, 1883, 'Naming the house in [this] ridiculous way was merely a fake to draw attention to it.' For etymology, see the v., though it may abridge fakement.—2. Anything used in illicit deception or manufacture: 1886 (O.E.D.). Hence —3. A mixture for making a horse safe (cf. dope): ca. 1870–90. H., 6th ed. Cf. dope, n.—4. (Ex senses 1, 2.) A gadget; a 'thingummy'; Cockney; from ca. 1890. Clarence Rook, The Hooligan Nights, 1899.

*fake, v. To do anything, esp. if illegally or with merely apparent skill or ability; to cheat, deceive, devise falsely; tamper with; forge; 'dope' (a horse); to steal. In c. and then, by ca. 1880, in low s., a verb of multiple usage: gen. only from ca. 1830 (cf. however, fake away), though doubtless used in c. as early as 1810, Vaux recording it in 1812. Vbl.n., faking. Perhaps ex L. facere, to do, influenced by fayer as understood in Fr. c., but more prob. ex Ger. fegen, (lit.) to sweep, itself in extensive s. use (W.): cf. feauge (q.v.), which is either cognate or the origin form. —2. To hit: Parloryee: C. 20. Edward Seago, Circus Company, 1933.—3. V.l. To hurt, as in 'It faker like hell!': low s. or c. (—1925). Manchon. Prob. ex —4. V.t.; to hurt: c. (< 1812). Vaux. Exsense 1; possibly influenced by ache. Cf. fake oneself, q.v.—5. See fake up.

*fake a cly. To pick a pocket (see cly): c. : from ca. 1810; ob. Vaux.
FAKE A CURTAIN

fake a curtain. 'To agitate the act-drop after it has fallen, and so perhaps induce a torpid audience to applaud a little, and justify the waiting actor to "take a curtain",', Ware: theatrical: 1884.

fake a dance, step, trip. To improvise a step when, in dancing, one has forgotten the correct one: theatrical: from ca. 1860. Cf.: fake a line. To improvise a speech: theatrical: from ca. 1860.-

fake a picture. 'To obtain an effect by some adroit, unorthodox means': artistic coll.: from ca. 1860. Ware.

*fake a poke. To pick a pocket: o. late C. 19-20. The People, Sept. 6, 1806. (Ware.)

*fake a screw: To write a (begging) letter: o.; from ca. 1810. Vaux.

*fake a screw. To make a false or a skeleton key: C. 19-20. Ibid.

*fake out or trip. See fake a dance.

*fake away! Go it! Splendid—don't stop! C., perhaps only 'literary': ca. 1810-1900. Vaux. See fake, v.

fake one's pin. See fake oneself.

*fake one's slangs. To file through letters: o.; from ca. 1810; ob. See slangs. Vaux.

*fake oneself. To disfigure or wound oneself; C. 18 ct. B.S.W. Cf. fake one's pin, to 'create' a sore or wounded leg: likewise o. Ibid.


fake-pie. A pie containing 'left-overs': straitened Society: 1880; ob. Ware.

fake the broads. To 'stack' the cards; to work a three-card trick: c.; from ca. 1840.

*fake the duck. To adulterate drink; to swindle, cheat: o.; from ca. 1830; f.

*fake the rubber. To stand treat: o.; from ca. 1850; ob. H., 3rd ed.

fake the sweetener. To kiss: o. ca. 1840-1900. See sweetener.

fake up; ooc. simply fake, v.t. and reflexive. To paint one's face: theatrical; from ca. 1870; ob.—2. To adapt for the theatre: theatrical (—1887), Baumann.—3. To falsify: mid-C. 19-20. Ibid.

faked: ooc. faked-up. Spurious; counterfeit; low coin; from the 1800's. H., 1st ed. See fake, v.

*fake-man-charley. See sense 3 of: *fakement. A counterfeit signature (—1811), hence a forgery; a begging letter, a petition (—1830).—2. A dishonest practice (—1838); hence, any trade, action, thing, contrivance (—1857).—3. Small properties, accessories: theatrical; from ca. 1875. The first senses, o.; the second group, low; the last, s. The term derives prob. ex fake, n., 1.—4. (Cf. sense 1.) Also fakeman-charley. A private mark of ownership: o.; from ca. 1810; ob. Vaux; H., 1st ed.

*fakement-chorley. Ware's variant of fakeman-charley: see last sense of fakement.

*fakement-dodge; -dogger. The practice of writing begging letters; the beggar or impostor employing this 'dodge': o.: mid-C. 19-20; ob. Mayhew.


fakes and slumboes. Properties; accessories: theatrical: from ca. 1880; &.

faking. Vbln., corresponding with all senses of fake, v., q.v.: low s. > coll.: (—)1845.

fakir. See faker, 4.

fale. A girl: rhyming s. (1868) on pal; ob. Ware.

fadlerals (or -ols). Silly ideas; coll.: 1823. Manchon. Ex fadleral, a trinket, a trifle; imm. ex dial. sense: an idle fancy.

fall, v. To conceive a child: coll.: C. 19-20; ob.—2. In e., to be arrested (—1883).—3. Hence, to go to prison; e.g. fall for three years; c.: C. 20. 'Stuart Wood,' 1932.—4. (Prob. also ex sense 2.) To fall: c. and low s.; from ca. 1910. James Curtis, The Gift Kid, 1936.

fall, have a bad or good or lucky. To have a piece of bad, or good luck; make a (bad) strike: coll. (—1887); ob. Baumann.

fall across. To meet (a person) unexpectedly: from ca. 1888; coll. till C. 20, then S.E.

fall down (on). To make a bad mistake or error (in or at): s. >, ca. 1935; coll.: U.S. (ca. 1870) anglicised ca. 1910. Often with on. (O.E.D. Sup.)

fall-downs. Fragments of workshop puddings; collected, they are sold cheaply. Cockney: C. 19. Ware.

fall for. To be greatly attracted by (esp. a member of the other sex): U.S. (ca. 1910), anglicised ca. 1920; by 1935, coll.

fall in. To be quite wrong: coll.; from ca. 1900.

fall in the thick. 'To become dead drunk ... Black beer is called thick, so is mud': low (—1900). Ware.

fall of the leaf, (at) the. (By) hanging: low or c.: ca. 1780-1840. George Parker.

fall through. To be unable to keep, or to go back on, an appointment: coll.: 1924, Galsworthy.


*fan; ooc. famn (B.E.) or fem. The hand: low, orig. c.; from ca. 1690; f. by 1870. f ablbr. famble, q.v.—Hence, 2, a ring: c. of ca. 1770-1850.


*fan-grasp. A hand-shaking: o.: late C. 18-19. Ex the v.t., late C. 17-19. The v. also = to agree, or to come to an agreement, with a person, a sense recorded by Cole in 1876. Lit., to grasp by the 'fam' or hand.


fan-matcher. A glove: low: ca. 1820-60. Pierce Egan may have coined it.


*fan-struck. Baffled in a search; handcuffed: C. 19 c.


*famble. The hand; mid-C. 18-20 c. Harman, B.E., Grose, Hindley. Prob. ex famble, to tumble
Perhaps ex Fanny, the 'heroine' of John Gielgud's Mémoire of Fanny Hill, 1749, the English classic of the brothel, as La Fille Écossaise, 1877, or perhaps rather La Maison Teller, 1881, is the French and Besie Cotter, 1935, the American; the English novel, it may be added, is by far the most 'actionable'.—2. A can for liquor: naval: C. 20. F. & Gibbons; Bowen. Ex Fanny Adams, 1–3. (Fanny.) The inevitable nickname of men surnamed Fields: military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Ex Fanny Fields, the music-hall actress.—4. (Fanny.) A member of the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry; military: 1914. B. & P.—5. (Fanny.) The cricketers' or footballers' nickname for Frederick Walden, captured for England at 'soccer' in 1914; retired from cricket in 1927. Ex Fanny: anyone small and neat (or dainty): late C. 19–20.—6. Talk; eloquence: c.: from ca. 1910. See right fanny and fanny, put up the.—7. Esp. a gruffer's sales-talk: griffers: from ca. 1920. Allingham.

fanny, fanny. To 'tell the tale': market-traders (e.g. Petticoat Lane): C. 20. Cf.: *fanny, put up the.* 'To explain the working of a job to other criminals to induce them to come in' (David Hume): c.: from ca. 1930. Perhaps ex sense 6; perhaps ex sense 1,—for semantics, cf. bullshit.

Fanny Adams. Tinned mutton: naval: (—1889) >, ca. 1900, also military. Barrère & Leland; esp. B. & P. Ex Fanny Adams, a girl that, ca. 1812, was murdered and whose body, cut into pieces, was thrown into the river at Alton in Hampshire (O.E.D. Sup.). Cf. Harriet Lane.—2. Hence, F.A., nothing at all, often sweet F.A.: military: 1914. Euphemising f*ck all, b****r all, (absolutely) nothing. B. & P.

Fanny Blair. The hair: rhyming s. (—1859); † H., 1st ed. A c. and U.S. variant of Barnet fair.


Fanny the. (Members of) the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry Corps, founded in 1909: military coll. F. & Gibbons.


fantail. A person with a tail-coat much too long for him: ca. 1820–50, 'Jon Bee.' fantastically dressed. 'With more rags than ribbons', Grose, 3rd ed.; ironic coll.: late C. 18–early 19. fantague, fan-tague. On the spree or 'loose': Am. ca. 1760–1800.—2. Cf. fantaque or fantique, dial. and old; for a form very exciting his passion: a vagary: a joke, a 'lark': from ca. 1830. Dickens, 1837. Ex fatigue (see E.D.D. at fantique), or perhaps ex frantik after fatigue (the rare variant fantique occurs—see O.E.D.—in 1826).

fantee or fanti, go. To run amok: orig. and mainly British West Africa (—1917). Ex the S.E. sense, to go native, Fantee being the name of a Gold Coast tribe.

fantod, fantigue. See fantague, 2.

fantod. A fad: a faddy naval officer: these senses are prob. S.E.—2. the fantods,—Galsworthy 1928, has the very rare singular,—restlessness, restless inquietude; esp. give (a person) the fantods, make him restless, uneasy, hence (in C. 19) nervous: U.S. (1885) anglicised, ca. 1905. Imm. ex fantod, a fad, on Kentish fanted, restless; ultimately ex fantague (q.v.) or fantasy, (O.E.D. Sup.)


far-away. In pawn: lower classes: 1884; ob. Ware, 'From a song'.—2. Hence (—1900), to pawn: likewise ob. Ware, 'I far-awayed my tools this blessed day—d id!'

far-(back). An inferior workman; hence, an ignorant fellow: tailor: ca. 1870. Ex an apprentice's position at the back of the work-room.

far-dee. See fa'd.


far (enough) if ... I'll be. I'll certainly not (do so and so): Sheffield (low) coll.—not dial. : from ca. 1860. O.E.D.

far off. Preposition = far from. Coll.; from ca. 1860.

faradiddle. Bee's spelling (1823) of taradiddle, q.v.

faradiddle. Any light piece that fails: theatrical: 1885–ca. 90. Ex Ashley Sterry's name for H. J. Byron's posthumous half-finished comedy ... The Shuttlecock, which was a 'frost'. Ware.

farden. A farthing: Cockney: from ca. 1840. (Also in dial.) Cf. Covent Garden.


farfar. Incorrect for fanfare: C. 17. O.E.D.


Farraginous City or Village, the. Adelaide: Australian coll. nickname: ca. 1870–1010. A. Trollope, 1873 (Morris). Wheat is the chief export of South Australia. Cf. Holy City, q.v.

farm. A cheap establishment for pauper children (—1869); for illegitimate children (—1874). Also v. (—1838). Coll. soon > S.E. See esp. Dickens, Oliver Twist, ch. ii.—2. In c., a prison officer. Hence, fetch the farm, to be ordered hospital diet and treatment. From ca. 1875.


Farmer White. J. C. White, the Somerset and England cricketer: cricketers: from 1931. He is also a farmer.

*farting.* See *facing.

fart. An anal escape of wind, esp. if audible: C. 13-20; S.E., but in C. 18-20, a vulgarism, as is the v. Chaucer, Jonson, Swift, Burns. In 1722, there appeared the 10th edition of the anon. author's pamphlet (I saw it listed in a bookseller's catalogue in 1938) *The Benefit of Farting Explain'd*, 'wrote in 'Spanish Dress.' D. Fart in Hand. Translated into English by Obadiah Fizle. — Hence, a symbol of contempt: C. 17-20. Crowne, 1685, 'A fart for your family' (O.E.D.). — Hence, a contemptible person (cf. silly *crass*): low coll; from ca. 1860. — Also in not care or give a fart for, not worth a fart: the former, C. 17-20 (earlier set not . . . ); the latter, C. 19-20.

fart, let a brewer's. (Occ. followed by grains and all.) To befoul; to defecate; low: c. late 18-19-mid-19. Grose, 2nd ed. — Cf. the late C. 18-19 low coll. not to trust one's arm with a fart, to have diarrhoea (ibid.).

fart about. To dawdle; to waste time; play about: low coll, late C. 19-20. Ex dial.


fart-daniel. The pudendum nubecere: low: C. 19. Obscure: I surmise that *fart - dantal, alleged to = a litter of pigs, and that *dantal* —cf. *Anthony pig*—is the youngest pig (see E. D. 1.1; at dantel and *fart*), hence that this strange term is orig. dial. (not in E. D. D.); it may, however, be merely a misprint for *fare-dantal*, dial. for a sucking pig that is the youngest of a litter.


farting, not to care a brass. Not to care at all: coll. >, by 1890, S.E.: from ca. 1800. Earlier, without brass. (James II, dehiscing the country, issued brass fartings, halfpence, and penny.)

farting-faced chit. A small, mean-faced, insignificant person: Cockney (— 1900): ob. Ware.


fartick, fartkin. Diminutives of fart, q.v.: C. 19; low coll.


false one's beard. To get annoyed or exasperated: Scottish coll (? dial.): 1789, Davidson (E. D. D.).

Manch. Cf.:


fast, v. To be short of money: ca. 1850-1900. 'Ducange Anglicus.' Cf.

fast, adj. Short of money: coll. but orig. and mainly dial.: C. 19. Perhaps semantically = bound fast. — Dissipated: going the pace: coll. in 17-18, S.E. (I, C.); impudent: low coll.: ca. 1870-1900. Don't you be so fast! = mind your own business! — 4. As in I'm fast, my watch is fast: coll. (— 1887) >, by 1900, familiar S.E. Baumann; O. E. D.

fat and loose, play (orig. at). To be incontinent; variable; inconsistent: C. 10-20. Coll. till ca. 1700, then S.E. G. Harvey, Ned Ward, Dickens. Ex the game now—though even this is ob.—known as prick-the-garter, and played with a string or a strap.

*fast**-f**ek*. A rapid or a standing coltion: harlots': C. 19-20.


[fastness, a bog is, by B.E. and Grose, 1st ed., treated as a. or coll.; prob. S.E.]

*fat*. In, c., money: C. 19. More gen. in U.S. than in Britain.—2. 'The last landed, inned or stow'd of any sort of Merchandise whatever, so called by the several Ganges of Water-side Porters, &c.: late C. 17—early 19 c. B.E.; Grose.—3. Hence, among printers, composition in which, e.g. in dictionaries and esp. in verse, there are many white spaces, these representing profit (— 1788). Grose, 2nd ed.—4. Hence (theatrical), a good part; telling lines and situations: from ca. 1880. The Referee, April 15, 1888, 'I don't want to rob Miss Claremont of her fat, but her part must be cut down.' Cf. grease.—5. In journalism, a notable piece of exclusive news: from ca. 1890 (S.O.D.). — 6. A lower-class nickname for a fat person (gen. a man): late C. 19-20. Cf. fatily.


fat, cut it. See cut it fat—fat, cut up. See cut up fat as a hen in the forehead or as a hen's forehead. Very thin: meagre: coll.: the former, from ca. 1600, is in Colgrave and Swift, but rare after 1820, when the latter, now ob., > gen. (Apperson.)

fat-arsed. Broad-bottomed: C. 19-20 coll. Cf. barge, broad-, and heavy-arsed, the third in Richard Baxter's *Shoe to Heavy Arsed Christians*, i.e. slow, dull ones.

fat burnt itself out of the fire, the. (And in other tenses.) The trouble blow over: lower classes' coll. (— 1900). Ware, 'Antithesis of "All the fat's in the fire."

fat-cake. 'A ridiculous name sometimes applied to *Eucalyptus leucoxylon*: Australian s. or coll. (— 1898); ob. Morris cites Maiden's *Useful Native Plants.*

fat cock. A stout elderly man; jocular: from ca. 1850; ob. A 'double-sucker,' q.v.

*fat* coll. See fat, adj. 1. In B.E. and Grose.

fat-face. A term of derision or abuse: coll.: 1741, Richardson. (O.E.D.)

fat-fancier or -monger. A man that specialises in fat women: low: the former, C. 19-20; the latter, C. 19.

fat flab. A slice from the fat part of mutton breast: Winchester College: from ca. 1860; ob.


fat-head. A fool: from ca. 1840: coll. (As a surname, C. 13.)

fattigew(ed). See fati-gued.

fati(y)mus, fati(y)ma. A fat man, woman resp.; facetious or endearing: -ca. 1800–1900. Too artificial to last.

Faugh-a-Ballagh Boys. The 87th Foot, in late C. 19–20 the Royal Irish Fusiliers: military; from 1811. Ex Fag an Beadh, Clear the Way, the regimental march. Also Agliers and Old Pgs. (F. & Gibbons).

faulk(e)ner. (Cf. the spelling of fast(e)ner.) One that decoys others into dicing or card-playing; also a juggler: late C. 17–18 c. B.E. Perhaps ex falconer, via falkeur.

fault, at. At a loss: orig. (1833), hunting s.; coll. by 1850, S.E. by 1870. (O.E.D.—2). In fault: sol.: from ca. 1870.

faulx. An incorrect pl., as in 'Where this happens, it is their own faults,' 1738. O.E.D.

fau(n)ny. See faunny.

favour. 'To deal gently with; to ease, save, spare': C. 16–20, S.E. till ca. 1790, then coll. and dial. (S.O.D.—2). 'To resemble in face or features': orig. (early C. 17); S.E. since ca. 1820, coll. and dial. (O.E.D.).

favourite vice. One's usual strong drink: club or man-to-man's; ca. 1880–1915. *The Daily News, Oct. 6, 1885, 'When the bottles and the cigar-case are to the fore, even a bishop may enquire of you, with a jovial smile of born companionship, What is your favourite vice? ' (War). Replaced by poison.

fawn(e)y, form(e)y, rarely faun(e)y. A ring (hence faunnt, adj., ringed); ring-dropping (see faunny-dropping): the former low, the latter c.: late C. 18–19. Parker, 1781.—2. Also, though rare, a 'ring-dropper': late C. 18–early 19 c. Parker, 1781.—3. Ex sense 1 is U.S. phoney, ilicit, sham, spurious, counterfeit: familiarised in England ca. 1930. Prob. faunny derives ex Irish fátina, a ring.

fawn(y), go on the. To practise faunny-dropping, q.v.: late C. 18–19 c.

fawn(y)-bounner. Slinging rings for a supposed wager: c.: mid-C. 19–20; ob. See esp. H., 1st ed. A faunny-bounner is one who does this.


fawn(y)-dropping or -rig (or -rigging): 'No. 747'. C. 19, late C. 18–19 resp. Grose, 2nd ed., 'A fellow drops a ring, double gilt, which he picks up before the party meant to be cheated, and to whom he disposes of it for less than its supposed, and ten times more than its real, value.' See fawnny.

fawn(y)-fam'd or -fammed; fawnny. 'Having one or more rings on the finger', Vaux: c.: ca. 1810–60.


fawnny-rig. See fawnny-dropping.—fawnny. See fawnny.

fay appears in C. 14–19 coll. verging on S.E. explications. 'Form of faith.'—2. See quotation at NORA: C. meaning.

faynights. A late C. 19–20 variant of fainites, q.v. at fainies/ Collinson.

faulx. See faulx.

faux. Grease: Post Office telegraph-messengers' (esp. in London); from before 1935.


*feager. See feager.


feaker. See faker.

fear. To frighten: since ca. 1870, coll.; earlier, S.E. Also common in dial.; c. 19–20. 

fear, for. Short for fear that or lest: coll. from ca. 1840.

fear I, never. No danger, or risk, of that! coll.: † earliest in Bulwer Lytton, 1838 (O.E.D.). Cf. don't you fear I, q.v.

fear, lo. Certainly not! Coll.: from ca. 1880.

Cf. never fear.

fear'd. See feared.

fear'fully, fearfully. Adj., adv.: a coll. intensive (cf. awful, terrible): from ca. 1880. Earlier in dial. D. Mackail, Greenery Street, 1925, 'I say, you're looking most fearfully fit.'

fearful frights. 'Kicks, in the most humiliating quarters': lower classes: ca. 1890–1914. Ware. 

fearmonght. 'A drink to keep up the spirits. 1880', S.O.D.; ob.

fearsome. Timid: sol. when not dial.: from ca. 1880.

feastings even. Incorrect for Fastens E(r)n: Scottish and Northern. O.E.D.


feather and flip. See feather, 3.

feather, high or low in the. With one's oar well or badly held while out of the water: sporting: from ca. 1870. Andrew Lang, Bailed of the Boat Race, 1878. Ex the S.E. feather an oar.


feather, Jack with the. (Variant, a plume of feathers.) A trilling person: coll.: late C. 16–17.

feather, ride a. To be a jockey weighing less than 84 lb. : ca. 1810–1900; sporting coll.

feather, show the white. To show oneself a coward: orig. (—1842) coll.; S.E. by ca. 1895. A cross-bred game-cock has a white feather in the tail.


feather in one's mouth, having (or with) a. 'Capable of showing temper, but holding it in': nautical: late C. 19–20; ob. Ex that foam at a ship's cut-water 'which shows there either has been, or will be, dirty weather' (Ware).

feather one's nest. To enrich oneself with perquisites, licit and/or illicit; to amass money: C. 16–20; coll. till ca. 1830, then S.E. Greene, Vanbrugh, G. Eliot.

feather to fly with, not a. 'Plucked': universities: late C. 19–20; ob. Ware.


feature, n. and v., in newspapers and films, is s. (> by, 1925, cinematic coll.) if simply = either a part, or to present (prominently). U.S. (ca. 1897), anglicised ca. 1905. (O.E.D. Sup.)


feaze. To harm; to trouble: Canadian: C. 20. Ex English dial.

Feb. February: coll.: C. 20. Ex the abbr. The only other months thus treated (so far!) are January, as Jan, and, rarely, August, as Aug (org.).

*feck. To discover a safe method of robbery or cheating: C. 19 c. Duncombe, 1848. Ironically ex feckless or, more prob., a corruption of feak = fake, q.v.

fed to the back teeth. An intensive variant, dating from ca. 1910, of the next. Occ. fed up ... or fed to the wide. (Manchon.)

fed-up. Bored; disgusted; (with) tired of: original, possibly ex the Beers (witess Pettman): from ca. 1899. G. W. Stevens (d. 1900), 'We're all getting pretty well fed-up with this place by now.' Cf. Fr. en avoir souvet. W. in the G.W., a military c.p. ran, fed-up, f**ked up, and far from home.

feed. A meal; an excellent meal: coll.: both from ca. 1805. Ex the stables. Bulwer Lytton, in Paul Clifford, 'He gave them plenty of feeds.'—2. Same as, and ex, feeder, 3: theatrical: from mid-1920's. J. B. Priestley uses it in 1929 (O.E.D. Sup.).

feed. v. To take food: M.E.–C. 20. Of animals, S.E.; of persons, coll. since ca. 1850.—2. In football, to back, v.i. and t.: from ca. 1880: coll. >, in C. 20, j. > S.E. Ex rowdiers.—3. In the theatre, to supply (the principal comedian) with cues: from ca. 1890.—4. In the universities, to cram': C. 18–19.—5. To bore or disgust: from ca. 1910. Cf. fed-up, its prob. origin.


feeder, the. A G.W.R. express goods-train connecting 'several important services' carrying pro-


*feeding-birk. A cookshop: c.: late C. 19-20. Ware, ‘ ’Birk’ being possibly a corruption of ‘barrack’.’


*feel. See fake.

*feel. (1) Take liberties with (one of the opposite sex): low coll.: C. 18-20.—2. V.i., with infinitive, to feel, imagine, that one does: low coll. (—1830); ob. (O.E.D.) Cf. feel like, q.v.

feel cheap. See cheap, feel.

feel like. To have an inclination for a thing or—sep. in form feel like doing—to do something: from ca. 1870, orig. (—1855), U.S.: coll. A 1933-4 trade-slogan ran: ‘A. I feel like a Guinea.—B. I jolly well wish you were!’ feel like a boiled (or shewed) rag, or like nothing on earth. See resp. boiled rag and nothing on earth.

feel one’s oats. See oats, feel one’s.

feel one’s own man. To feel (quite) oneself, i.e. fit or normal; coll.; from ca. 1910. Cecil Litchfield in Buffets.

feel the collar. To perspire while walking: stable coll. (—1909); Ware.

feel the draught. To be gravely inconvenienced; esp., to be hard put to it financially: 1925 (O.E.D. Sup.).

feel the shrimps. See can’t you feel the shrimps? feel. A girl; a daughter; loosely, a child (H., 1st ed.). In pl., occas. = mother and daughter. Low Cockney: from ca. 1840. Ex It. figlia, via Lingua Franca. In Parlyaree, often feeler (Seago, 1933). Cf. donna(h), q.v.

feeler. A tentative question, comment, or device: from ca. 1890; coll. till ca. 1890, then S.E. Titt’s Magazine, Sept., 1841, ‘The Times is putting out feelers on the corn-law question.’—2. The hand: c. (—1877); ob. Cf. fumble.

feeler. See feel.

feet, how’s your poor. A c.p. rampant in 1862, nearly † in 1890.


feet uppermost, lie. To receive a man sexually: low coll.: C. 19-20; ob. Cf. have a good look round.


*fell. A late C. 18-19, now dial., expiactive: faithful distorted; cf. fay.

*feint. A pawnbroker: c.: ca. 1830-70. † punning S.E. feint and c. fence.

*fake. Methylated spirits: c. (—1932). See the next entry. Also finish (and finish-drinker).


fell a bit on. To act craftily or underhandedly: tailors: from ca. 1850; ob. Fell, in tailors’ j., = to stitch down (a wide edge) so that it lies smooth.

fell-and-didn’t. A person lame-walking: tailors: from ca. 1840.

fella(h); feller. A coll. pronunciation, the former somewhat affected and aristocratic, and form of fellow: resp. C. 20 and from ca. 1870. Esp. young fella(h)—or feller—me lad, jocular locative: C. 20. (O.E.D. Sup.) Winifred Holtby, Truth Is Not Sober, 1934, ‘Among the things a Fella does, correct grammar is not necessarily included’ (1931).—2. See:

feller in ‘pidgeon’, esp. in that of the South Seas and of Australia, is a tautological perennial—of no, or little, meaning and frequent use. Thus, in Ion L. Idries, Lasser’s Last Ride, 1931, we find: ‘ “How much you want longs these feller spears ? ” inquired Taylor ’; a black gin defining a pair of well-worn corsets as ‘that feller belly leggings ‘; and ‘The [Australian] natives have no idea of counting. Any number above four they describe as “big feller mob”.’

fellow. As a male person it is S.E. of M.E.—C. 20; as ‘chapp’ it is coll. (—1711). Note my dear or good fellow and what a fellow !—2. A sweetheart: coll.: late C. 19-20.—3. Jocularly, C. 19-20, of animals: coll.


fellow, old. A familiar, gen. affectionate, term of address: coll.; C. 19-20.—2. In some English schools it = a former member of the school (—1844); ob. (O.E.D.)

fellow-commoner. An empty bottle: Cambridge (—1788); ob. by 1840. Grose, 1st ed. The Oxford term was gentleman commoner. Contrast empty bottle, q.v.


*felon. Felony: c.: C. 18. A New Canting Dict., 1729; Grose. The term had existed in this sense in C. 14. See also dose, i.

felonious. Thievish: (somewhat low) coll.: mid C. 18-20.


felt. A hat made of felted wool: coll. until ca. 1600, then S.E. Dekker; Moncrieff, 1823, ‘Don’t nibble the felt, Jerry.’ (Caution: perhaps always S.E., even when, as occ. in C. 17, used of any hat whatsoever.)

* fem. See fam., n.

female. A woman, has long been pejorative: in C. 20 it has a coll. hue.

feme. In C. 16-early 17 a coll., jocular in this survival of Anglo-Fr. legal usage, for a woman. (S.O.D.)

fen. An early (—1815) variant of or alternative to *fains*, q.v.: esp. at marbles. Cf. also *fin*, and *finjy* that or you, Winchester College and Christ's Hospital resp. As a gen. term of protest or warning it has the ↑ variant *fen live lumber* (—1877). Note F. & H. at *fains*, *fen*, *fin*, and *finjy*; and, here, see *fains*! Perhaps ex *fend*.


**fence.** A purchaser or receiver, and/or a storer of stolen goods: late C. 17-early 19 c.; then low; then, in C. 20, increasingly gen. B.E. Dyche, Grose, Dickens. Cf. *billy-fencer* and *father*. For etymology, see the v., 1.—2. A place where stolen goods are received or purchased, and/or stored: from ca. 1700. Always c. Cf. *dolly-shop*, *fencing-crib*.

**fence, v.i.** To purchase or receive, and/or store, stolen goods: c. (—1610). Rowlands, *Martin Mark-All*;—2. V.t. To spend (money): late C. 17-18: c. Coles, 1676; B.E. Both n. and v., 1, derive ex S.E. *fence = defend*, while fence, v., 2, is prob. a deliberate derivation from v., 1.—3. To sell: c. (—1839). Brandon.

**fence, over the.** (Of a person) unashamed, scandalous; greatly; very unreasonable: New Zealanders' variant (late C. 19-20 of S.E. *beyond the pale*). Perhaps ex local rules for cricket.

**fence, sit (upon) the.** (Rarely ride, occ. be.) To be neutral, waiting to see who wins: orig. political s., ex U.S. (—1830), Anglicised ca. 1870; in C. 20, coll.

**fence-shop.** A shop where stolen property is sold; low coll.: from ca. 1780; ob. G. Parker.


**fences, crush one's.** See crush one's fences. Cf. rush one's fences.

**fencing.** The 'profession' of purchasing or storing stolen goods: orig. (ca. 1850), c.; in C. 20, low.

**fencing-crib.** C. 19-20,—ken, late C. 17-early 19. A place where stolen property is purchased or hidden: c. The former, Ainsworth; the latter, B.E.

**fencing-cully.** A broker or receiver of stolen goods: mid. C. 17-early 19. Coles; B.E.; Bailey; Grose, 2nd ed. See *fence*, n. 1.

**fend off.** To take: New Zealand c. (—1932). I.e. fend a thing off from another, i.e. for oneself.

Fenian, a. Three-wealthiness of Irish whiskey and cold water: taverns': either from 1867, when the Fenians Allen, Larkin and O'Brien ('the Manchester Martyrs') were hanged for the murder of Police Sergeant Brett; or from 1882, when three Fenians were hanged—and therefore grew cold—for the murder of Cavendish and Burke in the Phoenix Park, Dublin. Also three cold Irish: which likewise was ob. by 1910, Æ by 1920. Ware.

feoffee, feoffo(ure). Incorrectly for *feoffee*: C. 15-early 17. O.E.D.
nautical: to arrive at. —5. (Of a pump) to empty
the bilge. —Conway's cadets' coll.: from ca. 1860.
of fetch the water up.
fetch a circumdubitus. Make a detour: C. 19—
20; ob.


f. fetch a bowl. To weep noisily; cry out; low
coll.: C. 19—20. (Fetch — utter, however, is S.E.
as in fetch a gnu or a sigh.)
f. fetch a lagging. To be imprisoned; serve one's
term: C. 19—20; ob. (By itself, fetch, to get, is
S.E.)
f. fetch a stagger. To strike (a person)
heavily: coll.: from ca. 1860.

f. fetch away. To part; separate: coll.: from ca.
1850; ob. 'A fool and his money are soon fetched
away,' F. & H.
f. fetch law. To bring an action against: coll.

f. fetch down. To bring down by blow or shot:
coll.: from ca. 1700. — To force down (prices,
value): coll.; from ca. 1840.

f. fetch the brewer. See brewer. — fetch the farm.
See farm.

f. fetching. Attractive: from ca. 1880: coll. until
c. 1926, then S.E. not yet literary.

f. fetid waistcoat. See waistcoat, 2.

f. fettle, in good or proper. Drunk: coll.: ca.
1870—1920.

f. few, a good. A fair number: coll. (and dial):
from ca. 1860. (O.E.D.) Cf.:

f. few (just). a. Adv., much, greatly; decidedly,
certainly; s. > coll.: from ca. 1700; ob.
Dickens, in Bleak House, 'Mr. Smallwood bears the
concise testimony, a few.' Cf. rather', the U.S.
some, and the Fr. un peu, which last may be the
source.

f. few pence short in the shilling. a. A c.p. = 'silly'
half-witted; (slightly) mad: C. 20.

ff. for v. See 'f for th', 2.

fipence.

f. fl. Abbr. fieri facias, a legal writ: legal:
C. 18—20. Cf. fieri facias, q.v.

f. fl. See fis-fl.

By euphonic manipulation.

f. flasque. A fiancé; occ., a fiancée: jocular coll.
from ca. 1920. Cf. finanche.

f. fl. A trifling falsehood: early C. 17—20; a lie:
C. 17—20. Coll. Perhaps ex + fiddle-faddle (on
fable): W.—2. A liar; coll.: (—1861); an isolated
pre-C. 19 instance occurs in C. 16 (O.E.D.). H.
Kingsley, in Rowneshowe, 'Oh! you dreadful flib,' said
Flora.'—3. A blow: low coll. or s.: from ca.
1814 (O.E.D.), when boxing was at its palmoest.
Ex fis, v., 3, 4.

Prob. ex flib, n., 1, q.v. Hence, 2; to tell a lie: in
C. 18, chiefly among children (Johnson). Congreve,
1694, 'You fib, you baggage, you do understand,
and you shall understand.'—3. To beat, thrash,
strike: mid-C. 17—18 e.; Head, Colus.—Hence, 4,
in C. 19 puapistm, v.t. and t., to punch in rapid
repetition. Southey, 1811; Thackeray ('My boy;
fl with your right'). Origin obscure: but cf.
possibly false, v., and certainly fob, v.

fliber. A liar, orig. small, soon great or small:
coll.: from ca. 1720.

flibbery. The telling of lies: from ca. 1850; ob.
coll. 'Ducange Anglica.'

flibbing. The telling of lies: coll.; from ca.
1740. Fielding. —2. In puapistm, C. 19, a rapid
pummelling; a sound beating. Tom Moore. See
fib, v., 4.


fl. face or foosey. 'A small windy escape backwards,
more obvious to the nose than ears'; Grose, 2nd ed.,
late C. 18—19; low coll. Earlier, S.E., esp. as fit.
fl. A quid of tobacco: late C. 18—20 (ob.):
nautil. Grose, 2nd ed. (Collinson's fit, a true
derivative, is ineligible, being a mere personal
'neologism'. Ex fit, an oakum-plug for the vent of
a gun.

fiddle. A sharper, occ. as old fiddle: C. 18—early
19. Ex fiddle, v., 2, q.v. —2. A watchman's or
policeman's rattle: low; S.E.; Grose, 2nd ed.
Cf. strum, v., —5. One-sixteenth of £ : Stock
Exchange: from ca. 1820; ob. —6. A writ to arrest:
face the music. —7. A whip; low: mid-C. 19—20
(ob.). 'Ducange Anglica.' —8. A piece of rope and
a long crooked nail' for the picking of oakum;
prison c. (—1877). —9. An exasperating task or
job; lower classes' coll. (—1923). Manchon. Ex
fiddling job.

fiddle, v. To play the fiddle: M.E.—C. 20: S.E.
till ca. 1820, then coll. —2. To cheat: C. 17—20;
S.E. until ca. 1800, revived by the underworld ca.
1840. Perhaps ex sense 2.

fiddle, fit as. Excellent; in good health, con-
Fletcher; J. Payn. Cf. the dial, as fine as a fiddle.

fiddle, get at the. To cheat: low and/or com-
mercial: late C. 19—20.

fiddle, hang up the. To desire, esp. from an
enterprise: coll.; from ca. 1870.

fiddle, have a face as long as. To look dismal,

fiddle, have one's case made of. To be irre-
sistibly attractive or charming: coll.; from ca.
1600. Smollett, Scott.

fiddle, play first (ob.) or second fiddle. To occupy
an important, esp. the most important, part or to
have but a secondary place: coll.; from ca. 1770.
Dickens, 'Tom had no idea of playing first fiddle in
every social orchestra,' 1843.

fiddle, Scotch and Welsh. See those adj.

fiddle, second. An unpleasant job: tailors': ca.
1870—1915.

fiddle-back. A chabasle having a fiddle-shaped
back: coll.; late C. 19—20. O.E.D. (Sup.).

fiddle-bow. The penis: cf. fiddle, n., 4. Low:
from ca. 1830; ob.


fiddad, fid-fad. A 'fuss-pot,' an habitual fuser: a fiddling tribe: coll. from ca. 1750; ob. Goldsmith, 1754, 'The youngest . . . is . . . an absolute fidad.'


fiddle. A paper spill: cultured coll. (— 1829); ob. Ex C. 17 Ger. students' s. O.E.D., W., 'fiddle.'

fiddling (or fiddlence.) Also fiddling: coll. from ca. 1810; ob. Cf. fiddle, v., 6; fiddlestick.


fiend, fiend. The female genitals: schoolgirls': from ca. 1820. Cf. fiddle.

field. A baked sheep's-head: late C. 18–19. Grose, 1st ed. Ex a low London thoroughfare leading from the bottom of Hillborn to Clerkenwell and, for the greater part, demolished ca. 1870.


field-running. The building of 'rickety houses rapidly over suburban fields': builders': ca. 1860–1910. Ware. Cf. the ease with which tongue-in-cheek barbarians (financiers, they call themselves) evade, and the cynicism with which Governments allow them to evade, the strictures on 'ribbon-development' in the 1930's.

fielder. One who backs the field, i.e. the rest, against the favourite: late C. 1850. Also, a bookmaker; ca. 1865–90. The turf. Cf.: fielding. The laying of odds against the favourite: horse-racing (— 1874); ob. H., 5th ed.

fields of temptation. The attractions held out to young men at the university, Egan's Grose: Oxford University: ca. 1820–40.

fiery facias, to have been served with a writ of. Have a countenance habitually red: late C. 16–20; in C. 16–19. F. ‘m., in 18–19. gen.; in 20, † except in legal s.—and even there it is decidedly ob. (Cf. ft-fa, q.v.) Nashe, Dryden, Grose, H. Ex the English pronunciation of the L phrase (lit., cause to be done!), with a pun on fiery face.

fiery furnace has that (got) to do with you? What the. What the hell, etc.: euphemistic (—1923); ob. Manchon.


fiery snorter. A red nose, snorter being a nose: from ca. 1870; ob.

fl. Fifteen, in calling lawn-tennis scores: (trivial) coll.: from ca. 1890.—2. Also of time: coll.: C. 20. (E. F. Benson, David of King’s, 1924, ‘“Where and when?” “Two fift. Our ground”’.)

filer. A waistcoat workman: tailors’: from ca. 1890.

fish-puzzle, a. Confusion: incomprehensibility: coll.: middle-class coll.: ca. 1880–90. Ex a type of puzzle (movable cubes) very fashionable in 1879. Ware.

fifteen years of undetected crime. (Applied to) the long service and good-conduct medal: naval (ca. 1895) >, by 1910, also military. Bowen.


fifth, and so forth and so. And so on: e.o.p.: C. 20; ob. Running fourth.

fifth rib, dig or hit or poke one under the. To hit hard; dumbfound: coll. (—1890). Ex C. 17–19 S.E. smite under the fifth rib, i.e. to the heart.


fig, occ. fig of Spain. A contemptuous gesture made by thrusting the thumb forth from between the first two fingers: whence not to care or give a fig for in use, see course, dam(n), straw, etc.). In C. 16–17 often as fico. Coll. Shakespeare, ‘Fico for thy friendship’.—2. The pudendum muliebre: C. 19–20 (ob.) low. Semantically connected with the gesture.—3. See fig, in full.—4. A coin (value unknown) issued by a counterfeiter: c. (—1798). O.E.D. Also fig-thing.


fig, give (a person) the. To defy with contemptuous gesture (see fig, n.): from late C. 16; ob.

fig, in full. In full dress: s. >, ca. 1880, coll.: from ca. 1840. Hughes, ‘Where we go in full fig of cap and gown’, 1881. Perhaps ex feaque (v.); perhaps fig-leaf; prob. abbr. figure.


fig-leaf. A small apron worn by women: from ca. 1870; ob. H., 5th ed. Ex the fencing protective pad.

fig out, v.t. and reflexive. To dress in one’s best: coll.; from ca. 1820; ob.

*fig-thing; occ. figthing. See fig, n., 4.

fig up. To restore, reanimate, enliven: coll. (—1854). Morere, ‘I try did they try to fig up the old lad. ’ Ex fig, v., 1.


figgins. See figs.

figgory-dowdy and -duff. A boiled fruit-pudding: nautical coll.: mid-C. 19–20, the former being used orig. and mainly by West Country seamen. Smyth (—dowdy); Bowen (both). Cf. Shropshire dial. figgelly-dumping, a boiled pudding made with figs.

fight. A party, as in tea-fight: coll.; from ca. 1870. Cf. worry.

fight a bag of SH’t, not able to be. To be no good at: fisticuffs: low Australian coll.: from ca. 1905. More gen., not to be able to fight one’s way out of a paper bag: id.: C. 20.

fight or play cocum. See cocum.


fight one’s way out of a paper bag, unable to or can (or could) not. See fig a bag . . .

fight space with a hairpin. To attempt the impossible: Oxford University coll.: 1892–ca. 1914. Ware.

fight the old soldier. See old soldier, fight the. fight (or buck) the tiger. To play against the bank, orig. and cep. at faro: U.S. (fight, 1851; buck, late C. 19), anglicised ca. 1900, but never wholly acclimatised. Thornton.

Fighting Brigade, the. See Old and Bold, the.

fighting cove. A pugilist, esp. one travelling with fairs: low; mostly tramps (—1890).

fighting drunk. Quarrelsomely tipsy: coll.; from ca. 1890.

Fighting Fifteenth. The 16th Hussars: military coll. traditionally from 1760, ex their exploits at Emsdorff. F. & Gibbons.

Fighting Fifth, the. The 5th Foot Regiment, in late C. 19–20 the Northumberland Fusiliers: military coll.: from ca. 1810; ob. Also The Old Bold Fifth and Lord Wellington’s Body Guard, both from ca. 1811; also The Shiners, from 1764. Cf. Fighting Fours and Fighting Ninth.

Fighting Fitzgerald. George Fitzgerald, a C. 18 swashbuckling dandy and duellist. Dawson.


Fighting Fours, the. The 44th Foot Regiment: military coll. (—1891). Ware.


Fighting Ninth, the. The 9th Foot, from 1881 the Norfolk Regiment: military coll. C. 18–20; ob. Also The Holy Boys: from ca. 1810.

Fighting Parson, the. See Parson Bate.


figs; occ. figgins. A grocer: coll.: from ca. 1870. Ex his commodities.

figure. A price; value; amount to be paid: coll.; from ca. 1840. In C. 20, S.E. Sala, 1883, 'The "figure" to be paid to Madame Adelina Patti for her forthcoming season'.—2. (Esp. in no figure.) The female breasts and buttocks: coll.; from ca. 1870. The post-War term is curve.—3. A person untidy or, in appearance, grotesque (quite a figure, such a figure, etc.): coll.; 1774. (O.E.D.)—4. See also.

figure, v. In billiards (—1891), to single out or 'spot'.—2. App. only as figure on, as in The Gentleman's Magazine, 1773, 'His antagonist... figured on him... at... whist, about $20,' i.e. totalled against him: non-proletarian; † by 1800. O.E.D.

figure, cut a. See cut a figure.

figure-fancier. One who prefers his 'women' to be large: low: ca. 1870-1910. Ex figure, n. 2.

figure-head. The face: nautical: from 1840 (in Marryat).

figure-maker. A wencher: low; from ca. 1875. Ex figure, n., 2.

figure of fun. An oddity: coll.: from ca. 1810; slightly ob. Cf. figure, n., 3.

figure on. See figure, v., 2.

*figure, voc. number, six. 'A lack of hair brought down from the forehead, greased, twisted spirally, and plastered on the face,' F. & H. C. of ca. 1840-95. Mayhew, "Hair... done in figure-six curls". Cf. aggravator, q.v.

filbert. A very fashionable man about town: Society: ca. 1900-20. Popularised by the song about: Gilbert | The Filbert, | Colonel of the Nuts'. See mut.—2. The head, as in: filbert, cracked in the. Slightly—or very—eccentric; crazy: Cockney: from ca. 1880; ob. Baumann.


*filch, v. To steal; pilfer; rarely, rob: o. in mid-C. 16—early 18; then low s.: in late C. 19—20, low coll. Awdelay. Possibly ex filchman; perhaps, however, cognate with fale, q.v.—2. To beat, strike: o.: mid-C. 16—17. Cf. flab, v.

*filch, on the. On the watch for something to steal: o. (—1877). Anon., Five Years' Penal Servitude, 1877. Cf. bum, on the, q.v.

*filcher. A thief, esp. an angler, q.v. In mid-C. 16-18; o.; then low; in C. 20, low coll. See filch, n., 2, and v., 1.

filching, vb.l.n. Theft, stealing, robbery: mid-C. 16-20; o. until C. 18, low until ca. 1850.


*filcher. A thief’s hooked staff or stick: o.: mid-C. 16—17; cf. filch, n., 1. Awdelay. Head. The man is prob. man—man, man, the suffix.

*file; ooc. foyl- or file-doly. A pickpocket; mid-C. 17—19 o. Head; B. & E. Cf. bung-nipper and bulx, q.v.—2. Hence, a man, a chap; orig. a very cunning one: low (—1812). Vaux: Dickens. Often in combination, e.g. old filx, an elder. Ob. The word may derive ex the tool; perhaps, however, it is connected with Fr. filou, a pickpocket: cf. also Fr. lime soonde (O.E.D.).

*file, v. To pick pockets; to pick the pockets of; occ. to cheat: c.: late C. 17—19 B.E. Cn., 1, and Fr. flouter.


file on to. To grab; take: Canadian (—1932). John Beames. Perhaps ex military j.

*file. The same as filch, n., 1: q.v. as form.


fill, give (a person) a. To put on the wrong scent; to deceive: o. (—1909). Ware. fill a gentleman's eye. (Of a dog) to have thoroughly good points: sporting, esp. dog fanciers': from ca. 1870. Ware.

fill one's pipe. To be able to retire from work: coll.: ca. 1810—1910. Egan, 'According to the vulgar phrase, to fill their pipe'

fill the bill. To 'star'; theatrical: ca. 1880—1910. Ex bid, a programme; fill refers to the large letters 'featuring' the star performer (W.).—2. Hence (? ex U.S.) to be effective, very competent, and, now †, to be a whopping lie: coll.: from ca. 1885.


*filler. A large coal, used in filling-out a sack with illicit intent: o. of late C. 16—early 17. Greene, A Notable Discovery, 1591.

*fillet of veal. A house of correction: o. (—1857); † by 1900. 'Ducange Anglica.'

*filibrush. To flatten; praise insincerely, ironically: coll.: ca. 1890—90. H., 2nd ed. † ex filthy, q.v.

Filin Jim. See Phil and Jim.

filling at the price. Satisfying: coll.: from ca. 1840; ob. Landon Figure, May 28, 1870, concerning baked potatoes. Perhaps ex Dickson's remark about crumpets in Pickwick, ch. xlv.

filip, give nature a. See give nature a fillip.

fillup(p)ey. Satisfying: ca. 1840—80. Cf. filling at the price.

filly. A girl; a wanton: from early C. 17. Etheridge, 'Skittish fillies, but I never knew an' boggle at a man before.'—2. In C. 10—20 o. c. a daughter. Ex Fr. fille; cf. feels, q.v.—3. 'A lady who goes racing pace in round dances': ballrooms' (—1909); virtually †. Ware.

*filly and foal. 'A young couple of lovers sauntering apart from the world': proletarian (—1909); ob. Ware.

filling-hunting. A search for amorous, obliging, or mercenary women: C. 19—20 low.

*fillman. A C. 18 variant (a mispepping) of filchman, q.v.

filter. A synonym (—1927; very ob.) of tricke, q.v. Collinson. Cf. coze.

filthily. Very: C. 20. (G. Hoyer, Death in the Stocks, 1938; 'He was filthily offensive.') Ex: filthily. A. C. 20 coll., pejorative and intensive adj., applied e.g. to an entertainment, holiday, present, etc., etc. I an Hay, 'Pip,' 1907; Collinson. Cf. foul. It occurs in Devonshire dial. as early as 1733 (E.D.D.) in the sense: excessive. Cf. the Oxfordshire 'I be in a filthy temper' (E.D.D., Sup.; 1906).


filibble-fumble. A poor excuse or an unsatisfactory answer: coll.: C. 19. Ex the ideas implicit in S.E. filibble, fumble, and fumble.

fin. An arm; a hand: nautical > gen.: late C. 18-20. Grove, Ist ed (one-finned, having only one arm); Dickens; Thackeray. Tip the fin, to shake hands: from ca. 1850; slightly ob.—E. Absr. fin. (fins) of fish, v.:—3. Variant offen, etc. Cf. fines and fining.


final numbers. In Royal Air Force coll., from ca. 1915, 'it is usual to allude to aircraft by the final numbers of their Service registry—thus 'X 1933' would be known in the Squadron as '33' to all and sundry. Nicknames and so on are rarely bestowed,' writes an R.A.F. officer.

finals. (Orig. at Oxford.) The last of a series of examinations, esp. that for the B.A., B.D., B.E., or B.Sc. Coll.: from ca. 1894. Grant Allen (B.O.D.)

finance. A fiscus, esp. if rich: jocular cultured; also Society s.: from ca. 1905; F. ex U.S. Cf. fiasco, q.v.

financial. In funds: Australian: C. 20. Jice Doone, to be a financial member, to have paid one's due subscription.

fess. A mess of three or four upper-form boys, breakfasting or teasing in one another's rooms in turn. Hence, fess-gay, a younger boy attending to a 'fess's' wants. Harrow: late C. 19-20; ob.—2. A person worth knowing, a thing worth having: C. 20 coll.—3. See find, a sure.

find. v. To suffer from, feel to an unpleasant extent (e.g. the temperature): coll. (ob.) and dial. in C. 19-20; formerly, S.E. (O.E.D.)—2. To steal; military, G.W. +. Cf. earn, win; also make. Perhaps reminiscent of the C. 16-18 proverbial find things before they are lost. Cf. Gor. found in military s.; note, too, that Caesar uses invenire thus in his Gallic Wars.

find, a sure. A person, occ. a thing, sure to be found: coll.: 1838, Thackeray. O.E.D.

find a pie. To find a person willing to make a small loan or to offer a drink: theatrical: C. 20. See pie.

find cold weather. To be ejected: public-house (— 1909); ob. Ware. Cf. give (a person) the key of the street.

*find it. To back a winner: turf c.: C. 20. Slang, p. 245.


fine, adj. Very large; coll. from ca. 1830. (Cf. wee little.) Often followed by big, large, etc. (O.E.D.)

fine, cut. See cut it fine. Also run it fine: from ca. 1890; likewise coll. (O.E.D.)

fine and large, all very. A coll. c.p. comment expressing admiration or, more gen., incredulity or derision. Popularised by a music-hall song much in vogue 1880-8.


fine as fivepence or fip'sence. Very fine; 'all dressed up': coll. from ca. 1650. Wycherley, 'His mistress is as fine as fip'sence, in embroidered satins.' Ex that oin's rightness. Coll. (as) minepence. Dial. (see Apperson) has some picturesque variants; coll. English, grand for fine.

fine day for the (young) ducks. An exceedingly wet day: C. 19-20, ob. The C. 20 prefers great weather for ducks. Coll.

fine days, one of these. Some day; in the vague future: coll.: from ca. 1850. ? a development ex the C. 19 proverb, one of these days is none of these days, influenced by the Fr. un de ces beaux jours. In C. 19, occ. mornings.

fine (-) drawing. The aly accomplishment of one's (gen. illicit) purpose: tailors: from ca. 1860; ob. Very delicate stitching being almost invisible.

fine ham-an-haddie! All nonsense: Glasgow (— 1934). Cf. gnommon and spinnich.

fine madam. A woman above her station: pejorative coll.: from ca. 1800.

fine twig, in. Finely, splendidly: low (— 1812). Vaux. (See gommon the twicce.)

fine weather for ducks. (Very) wet weather: coll.: 1840, Dickens (Apperson).

fine words butter no parsnips! A sarcastic comment on fine-sounding statements or promises: coll. (C. 20, S.E.): from ca. 1750. C. 17 variants are fair words, or those words, and mere praises, etc.

fine. occ. fynn (q.v.) or finny or finnee. 'Done for': no more (of supplies): military: late 1914. Ex Fr. fini. Cf. finish, q.v. B. & P.

fine (etc.) kapout (or kaput). 'Napoo' or 'finoo,' q.q.v., but much less gen.: military: 1916. Via Fr. Army s. ex Fr. caput (w.) or ex L. capit, the head. B. & P., 'In surrendering to the French, Germans would often say, "Kamarade, pas kapout," i.e. Don't shoot, don't kill me! To which the answer was often, perhaps, "Fini kapout."' Daumetz gives: 'Capout: tué; vérifiable mot passe-partout, qui signifie tour à tour 'fini, abîmé, cassé, tué,'

fineering, vbl.n. (The v. is very rare.) The ordering of specially made goods and the subsequent refusal to take them unless credit be allowed: C. 18. Goldsmith. Perhaps rather unassimilable than coll. Ex Dutch fineer, to amass riches.

**FINGER**


**finger.** To caress a woman sexually: low coll.; from ca. 1800. Cf. feel.

**finger, a bit for the.** An extremely intimate caress, the recipient being a woman: C. 19 low.

*finger and thumb. A road: e. rhyming on Gypsy drum, q.v.: late C. 19-20.—2. Also (-1850), rum: gen. rhyming a. H., 1st ed. 'Ducange Anglicus', 1857, records it as finger-thumb, a form soon > rare. finger-first. V. i. (of women only) to masturbate. Vbl.n. in -ing. C. 19-20 low coll.

**finger in the (eye) pot.** See eye, pipe the.

**finger-post.** A clergyman: late C. 18-20. Grose, 2nd ed. He points out the way to heaven, but does not necessarily follow it himself. 'Do as I say, not as I do.'


**finger-thumb.** See finger and thumb. 2. **fingers are made of lime-twigs, (e.g.) his.** He is a thief: coll.: late C. 16-18. Harington, 1596; Bailey, 1736. Apperson.

**finger or finny!** An exclamation of protest: Winchester College: from ca. 1840. Cf. and see fin, fen, and esp. fains.

**fin.** A Rare variant of finee.—finif, finip. See finif and finith.

**finith.** The 'end' of a person by death; social, professional, physical ruin: low coll.; from ca. 1820. Cf. finith!, q.v. 2. See Finith, the, 2. 3. See feke.

**finith.** To kill; exhaust utterly, render helpless: from ca. 1600; S.E. until ca. 1830, then coll. Cf. acte.

**finish!** I'm (or he's, etc.) done for!; that's the end of it!; orig. (1915) military. Possibly influenced by finee, q.v.; cf. finish, n.

**Finith, the.** A Covent Garden (opp. Russell St.) coffee-house (Carpenter's, says Bee) at which those making 'a night of it' finished very early in the morning: late C. 18-early 19. Grose, 3rd ed. 2. Hence (without the and uncapitalised), any such house of entertainment: C. 19. Thackeray.

*finish-drinker.** See feke.

**finished, be.** To have finished (v.t. or absolute); loose coll.: C. 20. finisher. Something constituting a person, administering the final or decisive blow or touch: coll. (orig. pugilistic): from ca. 1815.

*finish or finif.** Five; e.g. finith to fere, (odds of) 5 to 4: racing c. C. 20. Of same origin as finith, q.v.

**finitive.** In mid-C. 18-18-17, misused for 'of the frontier' and 'final'. O.E.D.

**finly.** See finny.

**fin.** See I don't think!

*finm.** See finif.—fined. See fin, n. 1.—finnee. See see.

**finni.** See finee. Dorothy Sayers, The Five Red HERRINGS, 1931, 'I says, finni meaning, is that O.K.? complete? 'ave yer done?'

*fin(a)dy, -ip, -uid, -up; ooc. derivatively finny, finf, fin. In C. 20, ooc. finnico (Chas. E. Leach). A £5 note, hence double finf (etc.) = a £10 note, and ready finif (etc.) = ready money. C.: from ca. 1835; in C. 20, often heard in low rating s. Brandon (1839); Snowden, Magazine Assistant, 1846 (O.E.D.). Ex Ger. -finf, five, by Yiddiah.

**finny.** See finee.

**fine.** Put out one's. To bestir oneself: C. 16 (f. C. 16); coll. Paston Letters. (O.E.D.)

*finuf or finup. See finif.


**fipenny.** A clasp knife: Australian e.: ca. 1860-1910. Ex England, where recorded by Vaux in 1812. O.E.D.

**fire.** Danger: on fire, dangerous: C. 19 e.


**fire, catch on.** To catch fire: either sol. or coll. (-1886). O.E.D.

**fire, like a house on fire.** See house on fire, like a.

**fire, pass through the.** To be venerably infected: C. 19 20 (ob.); low.

**fire, set the Thames on.** (Gen. ironically or in sarcastic negative.) To be very able or clever. Coll.: late C. 18-20. In Thackeray, 18-20, S.E. Foote, Jane Austen, Pinero (1915). See esp. Apperson and W.

**fire a gun.** To introduce a subject un-skilfully, late C. 18-19; lead up to a subject: C. 19. Coll. ? ex military s. Grose, 2nd ed.

**fire a shot.** (Of the man in coil!) to have an emission: C. 19-20 low.

**fire a slug.** To drink a dram: late C. 18-20 (ob.); orig. military. Grose, 2nd ed.


**fire away.** (Gen. an imperative.) To go ahead: coll.: from ca. 1770. Fitzgerald.

**fire-box.** 'A man of unceasing passion': ca. 1900-15. Waro classifies it 'passionato pilgrima'.


**fire-escape.** A clergymen: from ca. 1850: ob. Cf. devil-dodger.

**fire-fool.** An innominate: coll. (-1897). O.E.D.


**fire in the air.** 'To shoot in the bush', i.e. to eject externally: low: C. 19-20.

**fire out.** Same as (to) fire: C. 19-20. (In U.S., 1885; in England by 1896, says Ward.)

**fire-plug.** A (young) man venerably infected: low (1823); f by 1890. 'Jon Doe'. Suggested by fire-ship, q.v.

*fire-stripper.** One who, pretending to help, robs at fires: c. or low: C. 18-19. See pigger and esp. Defoe's Moll Flanders.

**fire-ship.** A venerably diseased whore: low: ca. 1670-1850. Wycherley (O.E.D.); B.E.

**fire-shovel when young, to have been fed with a.** Have a large mouth: late C. 18-19 coll. Grose, 2nd ed.

**fire-spaniel.** A soldier apt to sit long by the barrack-room fire: military: from ca. 1870; ob. by 1010; f by 1918.
fire up, v.i. To light one's pipe; coll.: from ca. 1890. Ex a furnace.
first-rater, n. Very fiery spirits; ex U.S. (—1826), anglicised ca. 1850: coll. that, by ca. 1890, is S.E. ‘Awful firewater we used to get,’ T. Hughes in Tom Brown at Oxford.


fireworks on the brain, have. To be flustered; coll.: ca. 1870–1906. Cf.: fireworks out of (a person), knock. To make him see stars: jocular (—1923). Manchon, ‘Lui faire voir trente-six chandeliers.’

Firinghee, a. A variant of Feringhee, q.v.


firm, a. long. See long firm.


first-class, a. See chop.


first-classer, n. A person, thing, of the first class; coll.: ca. 1925. (O.E.D. Sup.)

first-fleeter, n. One of the earliest settlers in Australia: Australian: ca. 1840–70. I.e., one who went there in the first fleet with Governor Phillip. O.E.D. (Sup.).

first flight, in the. Active, or first in, at the finish of a race or a chase: from ca. 1850: coll. > ex fox-hunting. Contrast the S.E. sense.

first-floor, n. The tenant or lodger occupying the first floor: coll.: from ca. 1800. O.E.D.

first-night, n. A theatrical coll. (1882–5) for a band of men intent on spoiling first-nights. Ware.

first-nights, n. An habitué of first (orig. theatrical) performances: from ca. 1855; journalistic & >: ca. 1900, gen. coll., and, ca. 1910, S.E. Baumann.

first of May. The tongue: low (—1857); † by 1920. ‘Ducange Anglicans.’

first of the moon. ‘Settling day, after pay’; naval: C. 20. Bowen. I.e. of the month.

first on the top-sail and last in the beef-ship. (Of a sailor A.B.) perfect: naval c.p. (—1909); ob. Ware; Bowen implies that it dates well back into C. 19.

first-rate, a. adv. Excellent; in good health; coll.: from early 1840’s. (The adj., C. 17–20, S.E.) See first-class.
fish on one's fingers, find. To devise and/or
allege an excuse: late C. 16-early 17: coll.
Greene. (Apperson.)

fish to fry, have other. To have something else to
do: coll.: mid-C. 17-20. Evelyn, 1660; Swift;
C. Brontë; E. V. Lucas. (Apperson.)

fisher. A toady: C. 19—2. In C. 20, an angler
for benefit or compliment. Both senses are
coll. Ex fish, v.—3. See:

Fisher. 'Treasury note signed by Sir Warren
Fisher, replacing (Oct., 1910) the earlier Bradbury',
W. Bradbury, said to own > coll. and, at its withdrawal
from circulation on July 31, 1933, it was almost S.E.
The Daily Telegraph, Aug. 1, 1933. Cf. Bradbury,
q.v.

Fisheries, the. The Fisheries Exhibition held in
1883; coll.: 1883; now only historical.

fisherman's. A C. 20 abbr. of the next. P. P.,
Rhymin Slang, 1932.

fisherman's daughter. Water: rhyming s.: late
C. 19—20. E.g. in Julian Franklin's This Gutter
Life, 1934.

fisherman's walk, a. To which is gen. added three
steps and overboard, which explains: nautical:
C. 19—20; ob.

Fishermen, the. Grimsby Football Club: sport-
ing: C. 20. Grimsby is a fishing port.

fishiness. See fishy, 1: Rare before C. 20, when
coll.

fishing, go. To seek for an obliging or a mercy-
ful woman: low: from ca. 1850; ob. Cf.
'jelly-hunting, fish (n.), 4', grousing.

fishing-fleet. 'The wives and families of naval
officers spending the season at Malta': naval:
from ca. 1890. Bowen.

fishy. Morally or financially dubious; equivocal,
unsound: from ca. 1844: s. >, by 1880, coll.
Punch, 1859: 'The affair is decidedly fishy.' Cf.
fish, n. 2. Whence fishiness, the corresponding
abstract n.—2. 'Sordy, indisposed: exp. in and
ex has fishy, i.e. a glazed, eye.' Coll. : from ca.
1860. (S. 0.1.)

fishy about the gills. Having the appearance of
recent drunkenness: Cockney's (— 1900). Cf.
'fishy, 2, q.v. Ware, 'Drink produces a pull-down
of the corners of the mouth, and a consequent
squaring of the lower cheeks or gills, suggesting
the gill-shields in fishes.'

*Fano. A warning, exp. in give someone the fano:
c.: from ca. 1840; † by 1920. 'No. 747.' Origin?
† fistic. Handwriting: coll. > s. > coll. again;
from ca. 1470. In C. 15—17, prob. S.E. 'A good
running fist', anon., Mankind, 1475. (W.)—2.
A workman (tailor): tailors: from ca. 1860. Exp.
good or bad fist. —3. Among printers, an index
hand: from ca. 1860. Jacobit.

† fist, v. To apprehend; seize: coll.: late C. 16—
20; ob. Shakespeare, 'An I but fust him once!'
—2. Whence the C. 19—20 low coll. sense, take of:
'Just you fust that scrubbing-brush, and set to
work,' F. & H., 1891.

† fist, give a person one's. To shake hands: coll.:
late C. 19—20. Exp. in give us your fist!
† fist, make a good, poor, etc., at. To do, or
attempt to do, a thing, with a good, bad, etc.,
result: orig. (1834), U.S.; anglicised ca. 1890.
Coll.

† fist, put up one's. To admit a charge: tailors:
from ca. 1860; ob.

Fistic. Masturbation: of males only (con-
fits, beat into

ob. E. & Gibbons. Ex the (orig.) small stature of the men and its first colonel's surname.

fits, beat into. To 'beat hollow': coll.; from ca. 1835. Hood, 'It beats all the others into fits' (O.E.D.). In C. 20, often beat to fits (Manchon).

fits, give a person. To defeat humiliatingly: coll.; from ca. 1870. Orig. U.S.

fits, forty. See forty fits.

fits, lick into. To 'beat hollow': coll. (—1887). Baumann. Ex give a person fits.

fits, scream oneself into. To scream excessively: coll.; from ca. 1840. (O.E.D.)

fits, throw (a person) into. To alarm or startle greatly: coll.; from ca. 1855.

*fitter. A burglar's locksmith: c.; from ca. 1860.


Five-and-three-pennies, the. The 53rd Foot, from 1881 the Shropshire Light Infantry: military: C. 19-20; ob. Ex the 5 and 3, also ex the ensign's daily pay.

five-barred gate. A policeman: Cockneys': 1886-ca. 1915. Ware, 'The force being chiefly recruited from the agricultural class'.

five-boater, -master, -rater. These are nautical coll. of obvious meaning, all three referring to ships: from ca. 1887. O.E.D.

five-eighths (or -eighths). A mere lance-corporal: military: 1914-18. (That part of a corporal.)


five-master. See five-boater.

five o'clock, a. Afternoon tea at five o'clock: coll.; from ca. 1890. Cf. Fr. des fave o'clock à toute heure.

five-oners; five ones man. One who gets a fist class certificate in each of his five examinations for lieutenant: naval: C. 20. Bowen.

five or seven. Intoxicated; a drunkard: policemen's and Cockneys': 1885-ca. 1914. Ex five shillings or seven days', 'the ordinary magisterial decision upon "drunks" unknown to the police' (Ware).

five over five, adv. and adv. Applied to those who turn in their toes: from ca. 1820; ob. Egan's Grose.

five-pot piece. See pot, n., 5.


Five P's. Wm. Oxberry (d. 1824), printer, publisher, player, poet, and publican. Dawson.

five-rater. See five-boater.

five-shares (om. pl.) A fisherman, whaler, etc., working for a share of the profits: nautical coll.: late C. 19-20. Bowen.

five shillings, the sign of. The tavern-sign of the crown. Hence ten shillings, fifteen shillings, the sign of the two, the three crowns. Mid-C. 18-early 19. Grose, 2nd ed.

five-star Frenchman. A Chasseurs Réunis steamer: nautical: C. 20. Bowen, 'From the painting of her funnel'.

fiver. Anything that counts five, but gen. a £5 note or oc. its equivalent: from ca. 1850. Whyte-Melville, 'Or, as he calls it, a fiver':—2. In c., a fifth term of imprisonment (—1872). O.E.D.

fivepence, fine or grand as. See fine as fivepence.

fivepence halfpenny. A military c.p. (G.W.) for something invisible or not there. F. & Gibbons. Ex the Government messing-allocation.


fives going, keep one's. Constantly to thrive, esp. to pickpocket: c. or low s.: ca. 1820-50. *Jon Bee*, 1823.

fix. A dilemma: orig. (1833), U.S.; anglicised ca. 1840; coll. till ca. 1890, then S.E.

*fix, v. In c., to arrest: late C. 18-early 19.—2. As a coll. verb-of-all-work, it is an importation — rare before 1840—is the U.S. (1708: Thornton); the n. fixings (in U.S., (1826) has been less warmly received.—3. To preserve (tissues) in, e.g., formalin: medical coll. (—1853), now verging on j.


fix up. To arrange, e.g. a rendezvous, esp. for another: ex. U.S., anglicised ca. 1855. In C. 20, occ. be fixed up, to have an appointment.—2. fix (a person) up. To provide him with lodgings or other quarters: coll.: from ca. 1888.

fixed bayonets. A brand of Bermudian rum: military: late C. 19—early 20. F. & Gibbons. Ex its sting and effects. But among prisoners of war in Germany in 1914-18 it was applied to a spirit made of potatoes and apt to render one 'fighting drunk'.

fixing. Strong drink: Australian (—1889); ob. by 1912, † by 1924.

fixings. See fix, v., 2. Of doings, q.v.—2. As furniture: 1887, Baumann.

fixes. See pawfix.


fix around. To 'buss around': move speedily and busily: from ca. 1930. 'Ganpat', Out of Evil, 1933.

fix(e)-gig. From such S.E. senses as a squib, a whirringly, a silly pastime, the word has come, in C. 20, to approximate, in its meaning, to gadget. Coll.—2. An informer to the police: c. of Sydney, N. S. W.: from ca. 1830.

fixer. Any first-rate thing (e.g. a theatrical role) or, rarely, person: coll. (—1886).—2. A very fast ball: cricketers' coll. (1904). O.E.D. (Sup.).—3. A charge-sheet: military: from ca. 1920.—4. A vendor of soft drinks: mostly Cockneys': 1895, H. W. Nevins. Ex:

flaxing, adj. Excellent (—1859). H., 1st ed. — Also as adv.: from ca. 1880; ob. C. stunning.


fizzle out. To tail off; end lamely; become a failure; fail: orig. (ca. 1848), U.S.; Anglicised ca. 1870— or coined till ca. 1905, then S.E. Ex fireworks, esp. if dim.


flag. A great or fourpenny piece: ca. 1560—1890: c. Harman; B.E.; Mayhew, 'A tremendous black doll bought for a flag (fourpence) of a retired rag-merchant.'—2. An apron: low, or low coll.: from ca. 1845.—3. A sanitary pad or towel. Hence, the flag (or danger-signal) is up: she is 'indisposed': from ca. 1850.—4. Abbr. flag unfurled, q.V.; late C. 19—20: ob. Ware.—5. Words missed in composing: printers (—1900). Ex the appearance of the 'out' words written at the side of the 'copy' or of the proof. Ware.

flag, fly the. To post a notice that workmen are needed: tailors: from ca. 1860. Cf. colt's face up and flag-flying, 2, q.v.

flag, show the. To put in an appearance, just to show that one is there: business and professional men's coll.: from ca. 1919.

flag-about. A strumpet: low, or low coll.: ca. 1820—70. Cf. flagger, q.v.

flag-flasher. One who, when off duty, sports the 'insignia of office'—cap, uniform, badge, etc.: from ca. 1880. H., 5th ed. Ex flag, 2.

flag-flying. Adj. and vbl.n. corresponding to flag, n., 2 (cf. flag-flasher) and 3 (cf. Captain is at home, the)—2. A bill's being posted up when hands are required: tailors (—1890). Barrère & Lelandu.—3. Overbidding (pec. a tendency to overbid) at bridge: from ca. 1915: s. >, by 1930, coll. O.E.D. (Sup.)

flag is up the. See flag, 3.


flag of defiance or bloody flag, hang out the. To have a red face owing to drink; to be drunk: late C. 17—early 19 nautical. B.E.; Grose, 1st ed., 'The flag of defiance or bloody flag is out, etc.'


flag unfurled. A man of the world: rhyming s. (—1859); ob. H., 1st ed.

flag-wagging. Flag-signalling, esp. at drill; naval and military: from ca. 1885.—2. Hence, in C.W., a signal-lan was called flag-wugger.

flagger. A harlot, esp. one walking the streets: low (—1885); ob. Mostly London. Either ex pavement-flags or ex flag-about.

flagrant delight. A (mainly legal) jocular Englishing of flagrant delicto: C. 20. Compton Mackenzie, Water on the Brain, 1933. 'To-night's the night for flagrant delight.'


flags, the. The cotton market, Liverpool: Stock Exchange: from ca. 1890.

flam, humbug, a trick, a sham story, after being S.E. in C. 17—18, is in C. 19 coll., in C. 20† excepting in dial. and Australian, the same applying dialectically to the rare adj. and the common v. Perhaps abbr. flim-flam, which, however, is recorded later: W. suggests that it derives ex Scottish flum-flum, a trifle, gew-gaw.—2. The single beat of a drum: (1791; ob.) orig. military a.; in C. 19 gen. s. > coll.; in C. 20, S.E. but ob. Grose, 3rd ed.—3. In c., a ring: ca. 1850—70. H., 1864.

flamdoodle, flam-sauce. See fladoodle.

flame. A sweetheart; a kept mistress: after being S.E., this term, esp. as an old flame, a former sweetheart or lover, is in C. 19—20 increasingly coll. and jocular. The modern semi-jocular use is perhaps directly ex C. 17 Fr. 'flamme and dme riming in the Fr. classics almost as regularly as herz and echmers in Ger. lyrics', W.—2. In C. 19 low coll. ors., a venereal disease.

flamer. A person, incident, or thing very conspicuous, unusual, or vigorous; e.g. as in Cockton's Valentine Voz, 1840, a 'stiff' criticism: ca. 1808—1890.—2. In pl. a kind of safety-match giving a bright flame: from ca. 1885; ob. Baumann.—3. An aeroplane coming down in flames: Air Force: from 1910. (P. C. Wren, in The Passing Show, Aug. 18, 1934.)

Flamers, the. The 54th Foot, in late C. 19—20 the Dorsetshire Regiment; military: 1781, when they took part in the burning of New London. F. & Gibbons.

flames. A red-haired person; occ. as term of address or personal referent: coll.: ca. 1820—50. 'Jon Be.' Cf. carrot, ginger.

flaming. Very or too noticeable or vigorous; 'stunning': border-line coll.: from ca. 1800; ob. Ex the S.E. senses (C. 17†), flagrant, startling.—2. (Of tobacco) very strong: low (—1887). Baumann.—3. Adj. and adv., 'bloody': euphemistic coll.; from early 1800's. (O.E.D. Sup.). Cf. ruddy.


Flamingo. (Gen. pl.) An inhabitant of Flanders: from ca. 1910. Ernest Raymond, Mary Leith, 1931. By sound-suggestion ex Fr. Flamand, as if = 'flamming'.


Flanderkin. Late C. 17—18 coll. for 'a very large Fat Man or Horse; or natives of that Country' (Flanders), B.E. Cf. the next three entries.
FLANDERS FORTUNE. A small one : late C. 17-18 : coll. B.E.

FLANDERS piece. A picture that looks 'fair at a distance, but closer near at Hand', B.E. : late C. 17-18 : coll.


flanges. See wingers, 2.

flank. To hit a mark with a whip-lash (-1830).
—2. To crack a whip (vt.) : from ca. 1830. Both are coll. verging on S.E., the standard sense being, to flick ; ob. —3. To push or hustle; to deliver (esp. a blow) : coll. ; from ca. 1860 ; ob. Cf. Fr. flanquer un coup à quelqu'un, whence, presumably, it derives.

flap, a plate of thin. A cut off a joint of meat : low coll. : from ca. 1860 ; ob. 


flanker, do (a person) a ; absolutely, work a flanker (esp. in the Army). To deceive, trick, outwit; give the slip; lower classes' (—1923). Manchon.

flankey. The posterior: low (perhaps orig. c.) : from ca. 1840. Duncombe.


flannel (often pron. flamin')-jacket. A navvy's: contractors' : from ca. 1890 ; ob. Ware. From his flannel shirt or singlet. The flamin' or-en form comes from dial.

flannel-mouth, n. and adj. (A) well-spoken (person, esp. if a man) : Canadian : C. 20. I.e. soft-spoken.

flannels, get one's. To obtain a place in a team (origin. cricket): schools ; esp. and initially Harrow : from ca. 1850. Coll. ; by, 1910. S.E. Ex flannel-garment.

flannin or -in. See flannel-jacket.


flap, v. To pay; 'folk out'. Esp. in flap the dimmock (money). Low. From ca. 1840; ob. —2. In c., rob, swindle: C. 19-20; ob. —3. V.l., fall or flop down: coll. ; from ca. 1860 (O.D.); —4. To talk (always with about): from ca. 1825; slightly ob. Ex flap one's mouth (gen. about), the same: 1910. H. G. Wells (O.E.D. Sup.); ob.


*flap a Jay. To cheat or swindle a greenhorn : c. (1900). See flap, v. 3.

*flap one's mouth. See flap, v. 4.

flap (in C. 16-17, occ. slap) with a fox tail. A rude or contemptuous whispered; a mild rebuke: coll. : C. 18-early 19. Palgrave, 1530; Smollett; Scott. (Apperson.)

FLAPPING.

flapdash. Very clean; shining; lower classes' (-1923). Manchon. Prob. by a confusion of words and ideas.

flapdoodle. Empty talk; transparent nonsense: coll. ; from ca. 1830. (? orig. U.S.) Marryat, 1833. 'Flapdoodle . . . the stuff they feed fools on.' Also a v., as is very rare with the variants: flap-sauce, flam-sauce, flamdoodle. —2. The members virile: late C. 17-18 low coll. Cf. doodle. Like flabbergast, flapdoodle is arbitrarily formed.

flapdoodler. An empty, inept, talkative political charlatan: journalists': ca. 1886-1910; then gen. but ob.


*flapman. A convict promoted for good behaviour: prison c. (—1863); ob.


flapper-bracket, -seat. A (mostly, motor) bicycle seat at the back for the spatial transference of a youthful female: resp. s. (from ca. 1915) and coll. (from ca. 1918; ob.).

flapper fan. See flapper, 7.

flapper-shaker. The hand: low coll.; from ca. 1860; ob. Ex flapper, 1.

flapper-shaking. Hand-shaking; hence, a preliminary ceremony: from ca. 1850. 'Cuthbert Bede,' 1803.

flapper vote, the. The franchise granted in 1928 to women of 21 years and over: coll. : 1928. C.O.D. (1934 Sup.).


flapping: occ. flapper (sense 7 of the n. above). Racing not subject to either Jockey Club or
flapdoodle. See flapdoodle. (No connection with the ↑ S.E. term.)


flap-up, n., adj. Flap-doodle. See flapdoodle. (No connection with the ↑ S.E. term.)


flap, n., adj. Flap-doodle. See flapdoodle. (No connection with the ↑ S.E. term.)

*flash mollisher. A woman thief or swindler: e. (-1812); † by 1890. Vaux.—2. See flash girl.

flash-note. A counterfeit banknote: C. 19 low (orig. c. flash(f) light. A gaudily or vividly dressed woman: South London (1809); virtually †. Ware.


flash one's gun. To talk. esp. much; boast: low (-1819). Tom Moore, 'His lordship, as usual, ... is flashing his gab.'

flash one's most. See flash it.

*flash one's own sticks. To expose or draw (not to fire) one's pistols: ca. 1810-50; c. Vaux.

flash one's ticker. To take out one's watch rather often: low: from ca. 1850.

flash-penny. See flash-case.


*flash song. See flash-cha(unt). Perhaps low s. rather than c.

flash(-)tail. A harlot picking up toffs at night: low (-1808); ob.

flash the dubs. To spend one's money: low: from ca. 1840; ob.

*flash the drag. See drag, flash the—flash the flag. See flag, 2.

*flash the hash. To vomit: late C. 18-19: o.

Grose, 2nd ed.

*flash the ivory or one's ivories. To grin or laugh: o. of late C. 18-19 and low s. of C. 19-20 resp. Grose, 1st ed. Contrast tickle the ivories.

flash the mizzle. To bring forth a pistol: low (-1823); ob. by 1870; † by 1900.

*flash the screens. To pay: o. of ca. 1820-40. See pew, stump the.

flash the upright grin. Of women] to expose one's sex: low: from ca. 1860; ob.

*flash the wedgie. To 'fence' one's 'haul', 'swag', or 'botty': c. C. 19.

*flash to. To be able to, to understand fully: c.: ca. 1810-60. Vaux.


flash vessel. A very smart-looking ship that is undisciplined: nautical: ca. 1860-1915.

*flash woman. A harlot mistress of a 'flash man' (2): o. (-1823); † by 1890. 'Jon Boe.'


flasheur. A would-be wit; hence, an empty fop: ca. 1790-90; coll. that perhaps > S.E. Mme D'Arblay, 1779, 'They are reckoned the flashers of the place, and everybody laughs at them.'—2. A synonym of *quickes* (q.v.): Glasgow (-1834).—3. In Glasgow o. (-1834), a 'dud' bank-note.

flasheury. Tawdry elegance; showy or vulgar display or action: coll.: ca. 1820-80. Never much used.

flashily; flashy. See flashy.

*flash it, go. To have sexual connection: low; from ca. 1840; ob. Cf. flash it and flash a bit.

flashy. Showy, gaudy; ostentatious: in late C. 18-20, coll.; earlier, S.E. Hence adv. flashily, o.: C. 19-20, but very rare in C. 20, and flashily, coll., C. 18-20. Miss Braddon, 1864, 'He chose no ... flashily cut vestments.'

*flashy blade or spark. A dandy: ca. 1815-30.—2. Hence, a cheap and noisy dandy or would-be dandy: ca. 1830-75. Both, coll. verging on S.E.

flat. A greenshorn; a fool; no easy 'gull' or dupe: from ca. 1760. Barham, '... He gammons all the flats.' Cf. the C. 20 story of the girl that refused to live either with or in one. By contrast with *sharp*.—2. An abbr. of *flattie*, 4: c. C. 20. David Hume.—3. See flats—. (the flat.) The season of flat horse-racing; sporting coll.: from ca. 1910.

flat do or have a bit of. To have sexual connection: low: mid-C. 19-20.

*flat pick up a. To find a client: harlots' o.: C. 19-20.

[flat, that's. That is certain, undeniable! Late C. 16-17. Shakespeare.—2. I'm determined (on that)! C. 18-20. Addison. Perhaps both senses are best classified as literary with a strong coll. flavour.]

*flat as a flounder or a pancake. Extremely flat, lit. and fig.: coll. The former: C. 17-19; the latter, C. 18-20, but with cafe as early as 1842. Apperson. Ware notes the C. 18-20 variant (likewise coll.), flat as a frying-pan.

flat back. A bed bug: low: from ca. 1840; ob. by 1900; † by 1920.

flat broke. Penniless; ruined; coll.: from ca. 1830.

*flat-catcher. An impostor, a professional swindler; a decoy: orig. (-1823), c. then low. Moncrieff, Mayhew, Whyte-Melville.

*flat-catching. Swindling: o. (-1821), c. then low. J. Greenwood, 1869, 'Flat-catching, as the turf slang has it'.

*flat-cap. A citizen of London: coll.: late C. 16-early 18. Marston, 'Wealthy flat caps that pay for their pleasure the best of any men in Europe'. Temp. Henry VIII, round flat caps were fashionable; citizens continued to wear them when they had become unfashionable.

*flat-chicken. Stewed tripe: proletarian (-1900); slightly ob. Ware.

flat-cock. A woman: low (-1785); † by 1890. Grose, 1st ed. Ex one of two possible anatomical reasons.

flat feet. The. The Foot Guards, British Army: from ca. 1860. H., 3rd ed.—2. Hence, various other line regiments; also, militia men as opp. to regulars: military: from ca. 1870.

*flat fish. gen. a regular. A dullard; occ., an easy prey: from ca. 1850. Ex flat, stupid + fish, something hookable.


*flat-iron. A public-house at a corner; low; from ca. 1860; ob. Ex its triangularity.


*flat move. A plan that fails; folly or mis-
management: ca. 1810–80: c. >, by 1823, low s.
Vaux: 'Jon Beo'. i.e. a flat's action.
flat spin, go into a. See go into a flat spin.
*flats and chits. Bugs and fleas, says Baumann, who classifies it as c. is but this an error for flats and chates, bugs and lice ?
flats and sharps. Weapons: coll.: ca. 1780–1800. Scott, in Midlothian, 'He was something hasty with his flats and sharps.—2. See flats 4.
flat. (As, redundantly, in Grosse.) See flat.
*flatter-tramp. The mouth: c. or low: from ca. 1840; ob.
"flatty-ken. A thieves' lodging-house where the landlord is not 'fly' to the tricks of the underworld: c. (—1861); ob. Mayhew. Ex flatie, 2, q.v. + ken, a place.
flavour, catch or get the. To be drunk: low coll.: from ca. 1880; ob.—2. To feel somewhat inclined for sexual intercourse: low: from ca. 1870: i ob.
flay or skin a flint. To be mean; miserly: coll. > S.E.: mid-C. 17–19. Marryat, 'She would skin a flint if she could.' Cf. flea-flint, q.v.
flay (orig. and gen. flea) the fox. To vomit: coll.: late C. 16–19. Cotgrave; Urquhart; H., 5th ed. The mod. term is whip the cat.
flax, fit as. See so fit as a flax.
flax- or flay-flint. A miser: coll., > S.E. in C. 19: C. 17–20; ob. D'Urfey, 1719, 'The flaxflints ... strip me bare.' Ex flay a flint, q.v.
flax in one's or the ear, have a. To be scolded or annoyed; to fail in an enterprise: coll.: C. 16–20. Heywood's Proverbs, 1546. (Anticipated in C. 15.)
flax in one's (or the) ear, send away with a. To dismiss annoyingly or humiliatingly: coll. (—1602). Middleton; George Eliot; Weyman, 19:22. (Apperson.) Cf. dial, flea in the ear ( hole) and flea in the lug, resp. a box on the ears and a scolding or sharp reproof.
flax the fox. See flay the fox.
flax, sit on a bag of. To sit uncomfortably: be uncomfortable: coll.: from ca. 1830. If of hush fleas, then in extreme discomfort.
flax for, catch (one's). To be very intimate with: of a man with a woman: low coll.: C. 19–20; ob. fleas' leap, in a. Very quickly or promptly: coll.: from ca. 1840.
*flax, in C. 17 often fleax, to gain, etc., has, pace B.E. and F. & H., never been other than S.E.]
became the centre of British journalism early in C. 18.

_Fleet-Streeter_. A journalist: C. 19–20 (ob.); coll. in C. 19, 'a journalist of the lower sort; a spurning prophet (q.v.); a sharking dramatic critic; a spicy (q.v.) paragrapheer; and so on', F. & H., 1893.

_Fleet-Streeter*. The English of the Fleet-Streeter, q.v.: coll.; in C. 20, neutral; but in C. 19, to quote the same authority, 'a mixture of sacquipedalian and slang; of phrases worn threadbare and phrases sprung from the kernel; of bad grammar and worse manners; the like of which is impossible outside of Fleet Street (q.v.), but which in Fleet Street commands a price, and enables not a few to live.'

_Flem_. A Fleming: coll. (1909) by 1930 varying on S.E. (O.E.D. Sup.)


_Flesh*; Flesh and Fire*. As coll. exclamations: late C. 17–mid.18. Ex God's flesh! (Langland), where flesh has a spiritual or religious sense. O.E.D.

_Flesh and Blood*. Brandy and port equally mixed: from ca. 1825: ob.

_Flesh-bag*. A shirt: a chemise: low: from ca. 1810; ob. Vaux, 1812; _The London Magazine_ (the like of which we need to-day), 1820 (vol. I), 'They are often without a flesh bag to their backs.'


_Flesh-Creeper*. A 'shocker or blood or 'dreadful': 1887, Baumann; † by 1930.

_Flesh Fish*. Not good red herring, neither. See flesh nor fish.

_Flesh-fly* (Copper), -maggot, -monger; flesh-market or shambles; flesh-mongering. Rather (pace F. & H.) S.E. than coll., and all ob. or †.

_Flesh* (Other forms are S.E.) To 'know a woman': C. 16–20 (ob.): low coll. Cf. _fleshing_, q.v., and the S.E. flesh one's sword. (Flesh, generative organs, C. 16–20 literary: see Grose, _P. at flesh-broker._)

_Flesh-tailer*. A surgeon: C. 17; jocular, but † coll. or S.E. Ford, in _Tis Pity She's a Whore._

_Fleshier*. A shirt: military coll.: late C. 19–20; ob. F. & Gibbons. In the Army, it is worn next to the skin.


_Fleshy*. n. See cat's head.

_Fleshy Part of the Thigh*. The buttock: jocular coll.: 1809–ca. 1912. Ex military new evasion. Ware, 'Came into use upon the news from S. Africa of Lord Methuen having been wounded in this region'.


_Flick; flickr*. V. To cut: o. from ca. 1670; ob. Coles; B.E.: Disraeli in _Venetia_. Ex the flicking of a whip.—2. Gen. _flick along_. To cause (e.g. a motor-car) to move rapidly: from ca. 1915: s. how verging on coll. Galsworthy, 1924.


_Flicker*. To drink: o. (?) C. 18) C. 19. Ex _flicker_, n., q.v.—2. To grin; laugh in a person's face: late C. 17–20; dial. after ca. 1830. B.E.


_Flickering; flickering*. The former with _flick_, v., and _flicker_, v.; the latter with _flicker_, vbl.n.

_Flick, the*. The films; the moving pictures; (go to the flicks) a cinema: 1927 (Collinson); ob. by 1935. Ex the flickering of the pictured screen; imm. ex.—2. (flick.) A moving picture; the performance at a cinema: 1926, Edgar Wallace (O.E.D. Sup.); † by 1936.

_Flier*. A short association football, a shot in the air: sporting: from ca. 1890.—2. See _flier_, all senses.

_Flier, take a_. To copulate without undressing or going to bed: low: from ca. 1780; ob. Grose, 1st ed.—2. To fall heavily: coll. (—1931). Lyell. Ex the lit. S.E. sense, to take a flying leap.


_Flies about (a thing, a person), there are no. It, he, etc., is particularly good: Australian (—1848); † by 1890. O.E.D. (Sup.). Whence:

_Flies on a person, there are no. (Occ. with about for on.) He is honest, genuine, not playing the fool: coll. (—1864). H., 3rd ed.—But, 2, since ca. 1895, and owing to U.S. influence, it has meant: he is wide-awake; esp. very able or capable.

_Flies won't get it at where the_. (Of drink) down one's throat: coll.: late C. 19–20. Cf. (at coach) the coaches won't run over him.

_Flight, in the first_. See _first flight._


_Flim-flam*, n. and adj., is S.E. until C. 19, when it > coll.: since ca. 1850, it has been archaiz. Cf. _flam_, of which it may possibly be a reduplication, even though the doubled form is app. the earlier.


_Flimmy*, put on the_. Gen. v. To rob on the highway; to rob and garotte: o. from ca. 1835; ob. Brandon.
**fimper.** See *fimp*, 1.

**fimpy.** Stealing from the person: a, (— 1839).


**fimsey, v.** To write on *fimsey* (sense 2): journalists': from ca. 1885: coll. >, by 1910, S.F.

**finch-gut.** Whale's blubber: whalers': mid-C. 19-20. Bowen.— 2. Hence the hold in which it is stored: whalers': late C. 19-20. Ibid.

**fling.** A sowing of one's wild oats; a spree: from ca. 1825: coll. soon S.E. Thackeray. (With key hall.)

**fling, v.** To cheat or trick; v.t. with out: coll.; mid-C. 18-20: almost †. Grose. Esp. *fling out of*, e.g. money.

**fling, in a.** In a fit of temper: coll.: C. 19-20; ob.

**fling-dust, occ. -stink.** A harlot that walks the streets. C. 17-18 (? later): coll. Fletcher, 'An English whore, a kind of fling-dust, one of your London light-o'loves', 1821 (O.E.D.).

**fling (or flap) it in one's face.** Of a harlot. to expose the person: low coll.: C. 19-20.

**fling out, v.i.** To go out or away in noisy haste; esp., in a temper: coll. > S.E.: C. 18-20.

**flint.** A worker at union, mod. trades-union, rates: from ca. 1760. Opp. dang, q.v. Both terms are in Footes's burlesque, *The Tailors*. Ob. by 1890, † by 1910.

**flint, old.** A miser: coll. (— 1840). Dickens in *The Old Curiosity Shop*. Ob.


**flip, v.** To shoot, gen. v.t.: c. (— 1821); very ob. Vaux.— 2. To fly in an aircraft, esp. in an aeroplane: aviators' (1915) >, by 1920, gen.— much less gen. than the corresponding n., whence, by the way, it derives. F. & Gibbons.


**flirtina cop-all (sic. men).** A wanton: low coll.: from ca. 1860. > after *concertina*.

**flip, do a.** To run away with another's share: c. (— 1833). Charles E. Leach.

**flip, do a moonlight.** To quit one's tenement, flat, or house, or one's lodgings, by night and without paying the rent or (board and) lodging: low coll.: mid-C. 19-20.

**flivver.** A cheap and/or small motor-car (1920) or aeroplane (ca. 1925). O.E.D. (Sup.). Prob. ex U.S. *flivver*, a failure,—itself perhaps a blend or rather a confusion of *flapper* + *flizzer*.

**float.** The row of footlights; (also in pl.) the footlights: theatrical: ca. 1860-1830. (In C. 20, S.E.) Before gas, oil-pans with floating wicks were used.— 9. A till; the contents thereof: c. (— 1835). David Hume.


**float one's hat.** To get soaked—to lose one's hat in the water: Canadian lumbermen's: C. 20. John Beames.

**float-up.** A person's casual approach: New Zealanders': C. 20. Ex:

**float, v.** To stroll up to a person or a group; to arrive unexpectedly: New Zealand coll.: C. 20.


***floating academy.** The convict hulks: mid-C. 18-19-20 c. or low s. Grose, 1st ed. (at academy). Cf. *Cambridge* academy, q.v., and *floating hell*.

**floating batteries.** Broken bread dipped in tea: military: ca. 1890-1914.

**floating coach-and-four, the.** The Isle of Man paddle-ship *Ben-My-Chree*, after being re-boilered and fitted with four funnels: nautical: C. 20. Bowen.


**floating-hell, occ. in sense 2 only.** Hell *afoot*. The hulks: ca. 1810-50.— 2. *See* Bowen. Ex. the repulsive conditions.— 2. Hence, a ship commanded by a brutal bully, hence by any rigid disciplinarian: nautical coll.: from ca. 1850. Cf.

**floating L's.** See *L's, floating*.

**floating skeleton (or F.B.), the.** 'The Russian
flock of sheep. White waves (cf. 'horses') of the
sea; coll.: C. 19–20; ob.—2. A dominoes-hand
set out on the table; from ca. 1870.

floy (or Floey), drunk as. Exceedingly drunk:
prolateral (~1909). Perhaps ex some very
illogical Flora. Ware.

*flog. To whip; from ca. 1670. Until prob. ca.
an echo of the verb of Dutch flegelaren. — 2. To beat,
excl.: ca. 1840–1910. — 3. In late C. 19–20 mili-
tary, to sell illicitly, esp. Army stores; and, in
post-G.W., to sell 'swag' to others than receivers.
F. & Gibbons; B. & P. Ex flog the clock or flog
the glass. (Cf. flogging, adj., v. q. v.—4. Hence, to
get the better of (a person), esp. in a bargain: mili-
tary: 1015. F. & Gibbons.—5. Hence (?), to exchange or
barter: c.: from ca. 1920. Anon., Dartmoor from
Whitchurch, 1926.—6. To flog it.

flog a willing horse. To urge on a person already
eager or very active: coll.: mid-C. 19–20.

flog it. To walk: military: from ca. 1912.
F. & Gibbons. Ex the effort (flog oneself along).

flog the cat. To cry over split milk: nautical:

flog the clock. To move its hands forward
(—1894): coll. Prob. suggested by the nautical
flog the glass, turn the watch-glass (—1799); ?
(O.E.D.)

flog the dead horse. See dead horse.

*flogged at the tumbler. Whipped at the cart's
tail: c.: late C. 17–18. B.E.

flogger. A whip; late C. 18–19. George
Parker, 1780.—2. 'A mop used in the painting
room to whisk (charcoal) dust from a sketch':
thratical: ca. 1870–1920.

*flogging. 'A Naked Woman's whipping (with
Rods) an Old (usually) and (sometimes) a Young
Lecher', B.E.: C. 17–19 c.—2. The frequent vb.l.
of flog, v., 3, q.v.

flogging. adj. Mean; grasping: late C. 19–20;

*flogging-cove. An official dealing out the
corporeal punishment: c.: late C. 17–early 19.
B.E.—2. A C. 18 variant of:

*flogging-cully. A man addicted to flagellation
for sexual purposes: C. 18–early 19: c. A New
Casting Day, 1725; Gross, 1st ed. Cf. flogging, n.,
q. v.

Flogging Joey. Captain McCulloch, R.N.,
founder of the Coast Blockade: nautical: early
C. 19. Bowen. He was a severe disciplinarian.

*flogging-stake. A whipping-post: late C. 17–
19 c. until late C. 18, than low. B.E.

flogster. A person addicted to flogging as a
punishment: coll.: C. 19–1-3; ob. A naval nick-
name for William IV when Duke of Clarence.

flocculence is entirely unnecessary for fluence, q. v.

floc. That which nonplus or discomfits one;
ca. 1840–1920; coll. (O.E.D.)—2. A miscalculation:
coll.: ca. 1845–1910. The former ex floc, v., 1;
the latter, which has a corresponding but very rare
v. l., is influenced by flase.—3. As in first-floc, q. v.—
4. The ground outside a house: South African
Miami's coll. (—1910). Pettman. Cf.—5. The
ground; the outside of the floor, to get hold of (a
catch): cricket coll.: 1903 (O.E.D. Sup.).

floor. v. (Coll.) To vanquish, silence, or non-
plus, esp. in an argument (~1838). L. Oliphant,
1870, 'if floor all opposition.'—2. To drink; 'get

outside of' (~1851); ob.—3. (Of an examiner)
to plough: ca. 1840–1910.—4. (Also university)
answer every question of; reply brilliantly to (an
examiner); from ca. 1850; ob. Prob. ex sense 5:—
To do thoroughly; complete, finish: 1836.
(S.O.D.)—6. See floored, 2.—7. See ibid, 3.

floor, have or hold the. To be speaking; esp. too
much or to another's displeasure: coll.: from ca.
1850. Ex S.E., orig. political sense.

*floor on the. Peninsular: c. (~1933). Charles
E. Leach. Prob. ex boxing.

floor one's licks. To 'shine'; do unusually
well: low: ca. 1840–1900.

floor the odds. (Gen. of a horse) to win despite
heavy odds: the turf (~1882). The Daily Tele-
graph, Nov. 16, 1882, 'The odds were . . . floored
from an unexpected quarter.'

floored, plp. adj. Senses as in to floor, q. v.—2.
Dead drunk: from ca. 1810. Vaux.—3. Among
painters: hung low at an exhibition, whether
exhibit or exhibitor: from ca. 1860. H., 3rd ed.
Opp. skied, q. v.

floorer. A knockdown blow (cf. auctioneer):
pugilistic (~1819), > gen. ca. 1860.—2. Hence,
unpleasant news, decisive argument or retort;
a notable check: from the 1830's.—3. In universities
and schools: a question or a paper too difficult to
answer: from ca. 1850.—4. In skittles, a ball that
knocks down all the pins: from ca. 1840.—5. In
(c. : a thief that in assisting a man that he has tripped
robs him: 1795 (O.E.D.).

floorer, first-, second-, third-. One who rooms
on the first, second, third floor: lodging-houses' (~
1887). Baumann.

flooring. Vbl.n., in senses of to floor, q. v., but
esp. among pugilists (~1819). Tom Moore.

flop. The act or sound of a heavy or a clumsy
fall; a blow: late C. 17–20 coll. when not dial.—
2. Hair worn low down over the forehead by women:
low London: 1881–ca. 1900. Ware.—3. A failure,
e.g. of a book, a play, a project: from ca. 1890:
coll. > , by 1930, S.E. F. & H.—4. Hence, a 'soft'
person; a spineless, toneless one: 1909, H. G.
Wells (O.E.D. Sup.).

flop, v.t. In boxing: to knock down (~1888);
ob.—2. In gen.: v.t. to swing loosely and heavily:
coll.: C. 17–20.—3. V.t., move heavily, clumsily or
with a bump: late C. 18th. —4. V.t., throw with
flopping suddenness: coll.: from ca. 1820.—
5. To move, esp. wings, heavily up and down:
coll. (~1860). (S.O.D.)—6. (Of a book, play,
plan) to fail: from ca. 1918: s. now verging on
coll. Cf. flop, n., 3.—7. To sleep; tramps' c.:
Ex S.E. flop down.

flop, adv. With a heavy or a clumsy fall. Often
expletively. Coll.: from ca. 1725. J. Payn,
'She'll roll down, papa, and come flop.' (O.E.D.)

flop, do a. To sit or fall down: from ca. 1870.—
2. To lie down to a man: low: ca. 1875.
Contrast flop a judy, to cause a woman to lie ready
for the sexual act: low: from ca. 1875.

flop about. To lie about, lazily and either
lethargically or languorously: coll.: from ca.
1870.

flop in. To effect introduction: low: latter
C. 19 (? C. 20).

flop on. e.g. the gills. A blow on the (e.g.)
mouth: low coll.: from mid-C. 19.

flop out. v. Of a bather leaving the water with
noisy awkwardness: coll.: from ca. 1870.—2. To
knock down with a blow, cause to fall in a heap; coll. (— 1923). Manchon. Cf. flop, v., i.
flop over, v.i. To turn heavily: coll.: from ca. 1860.
flop round. To loaf about: coll.: from ca. 1865: coll.
florence. A girl that has been tussled and ruffled: late C. 17.—early 19: coll. R.E. Cf. the ob. Northants, florence (to go about untidily dressed), by which the Christian name, as a type, was probably influenced.
Florence Ford. A motor-car or -lorry; military: G.W. Ex Ford car + Miss Florence Ford, the actress. (E. & Gibbons.)
floridification (— 1826) is incorrect for floridification.

D. U. M.

Ex Fr. fleur = fleures = L. flor ex fieure, to flow (Lat.).

flowers, I say it with. A c.p. (from ca. 1925; ex U.S.) = send flowers!; also, say it nicely! (Collinson.)


flovery language. A jocularly euphemistic collage for obscenity and for blasphemy: from before 1903.


'flu, flu; occ. flue. Influenza; coll., gen. with the: from late 1830's. Southey, 1830, 'I've had a pretty fair share of the flu.' (O.E.D.)


flue, v. To put in pawn: low: from ca. 1860. Ex in or up the flu.

flux, be up one's. To be awkward for a person, as in 'That's up your flu': from ca. 1870; oh.

flu, in or up the Flux. From ca. 1820. Cf. up the spout, q.v. Flue is itself s. for the spout in a pawnbroker's shop.

flu or spout, up the. As in preceding entry. — 2. Collapsed, physically or mentally; dead: low: ca. 1850—1910.


flue (or florue), the. Delicate or subtle influence: Australians' and New Zealanders': from ca. 1930. Ex the next, q.v. Neville Cardus, Good Days, 1934, 'Grimmety's fingers are always light and wonderfully tactile: when he passes the salt at dinner he imparts the "flue."'

fluecence, on, put the. To persuade: mostly Australian and New Zealand: from ca. 1910. Abbr. influence and ex hypnotism, the original, Australian sense, dating from ca. 1900 and obs. by 1924, being coll.: to hypnoze. — 3. Cf. the Cockney sense of ca. 1850—85: to attract, subdue, overcome by mental force (War). futures, overseas one's. To get drunk: jocular (— 1923). Manchon. Lit., set the chimney on fire.


fluff, do a

about in the hope of tips: railwaymen's (—1923).
Manch. Cf. sense 1.—6. (V.t.) To boast; to
tell lies; military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Perhaps ex
sense 3.

fluff, do a. To forget one's part: theatrical:
from ca. 1870.

fluff, little bit of. A girl: mostly Australian:
C. 20. O.E.D. records it at 1903; C. J. Dennis,
1918. Cf. fluff, n. 3.

fluff in. To deceive (a person) 'by smooth
modes': 'lower classes' (—1909). Ware. Prob.
ex fluff, v. 2.

fluff in the pan. A failure: from ca. 1860:
coll.; ex Scottish.

fluff it! Go away! Take it away! (—1859).
Ob. H., 1st ed.

fluffer. A drunkard: from ca. 1880. Cf. fluffi-
ness.—2. A player apt to forget his part: thea-
trical: from ca. 1880. See fluff, v.—3. A term of

fluffing; fluffings. The practice of, and the pro-
ceeds from, giving short change: railways: from
c. 1870. See fluff, n. 1, and v. 1.

April 4, 1886.—2. A tendency to forget words:
theatrical: from ca. 1885.

fluffy. Of uncertain memory; theatrical: from
c. 1880. Ex fluff, n. 2. See also Major McFluffier.
—2. Unsteady; stupidly drunk: from ca. 1885.

fluke. A stroke of luck: coll.; from ca. 1880.
Ex billiards. H. 2nd ed.; Black, 1873, 'It is a
happy fluke.'—2. An easy dupe, a 'flat': ca.
1860–30. Ex fluke, a flat fish.

fluke, v. To do a thing (well) by accident: coll:
from ca. 1880. Hence, vbl.n. and adj., fluking. Ex
billiards.—2. To shirk: Eton (—1864).

flukes, peak or turn the. To go to bed: nautical:
mid-C. 19–20. Ex a whale's peaking the flukes, i.e.
going under. O.E.D.
fluke(e) pl. gen. flukie. A whale: nautical coll.;
from ca. 1920. (O.E.D. Sup.) Ex a whale's
flukes.

fluky(e), adj. Chancy, uncertain; achieved less
by good management than by good luck: coll.;
from ca. 1880. Hence, flukiness, abounding in
flukes, and adv. flukily.

flumiddle. A coll. variant (—1923) of flum-
erry, q.v. Manch. I.e. flumerry influenced by
diddle.

flumergast, gen. as pl. adj. To astound or
confound: coll. (—1849); ob. Variation of
flabergast, q.v.

flumery. Flattery; polite nonsense: from ca.
1750; coll.; after ca. 1830, S.E. Ex the lit. sense,
'oatmeal and water boiled to a jelly', not 'over-
nourishing', C. 1st ed. Cf. bollocks.

flummoxes (rare); flummox, flummox. To per-
plex, ashe, silence; victimise, 'best'; disappoint,
dodge, elude: 1837: Dickens. Variant. I. con-
flummox, flummox. Ex dial. Cf. flabergast.—2. Hence, to
confuse another player: theatrical: from ca. 1880.
flummocky, In bad taste: coll. (—1891).
Blackwood's, March 1891. Ex preceding.

flummox, A failure: 1837, 'Ducange Anglais';
ob. flummox, v. See flummoxes.

flummox by the lip, to talk down; vanquish in a
slanging match: low: from ca. 1860; ob.

flummoezed. Silenced; disappointed, outwitted;
spoiled; ruined; drunk; sent to or sure of a month
in prison (o. only): from the 1850's. H., 1st ed.;
Punch, Aug. 30, 1890, 'I'm far flummoezed.'
Ppl. adj. ex flummox, see flummoxes. W. hence:

*flummut. A month in prison: vagrant's o.
(—1851). Mayhew equates it to the beggar's sign.
See flummoxed.

flummex, flummuxed. See flummoxes, flum-
mozed.

flump. An abrupt or heavy fall, making a dull
noise; the noise: late C. 19–20 (ob.) coll. Cf.
flump, v. To fall, or be so; esp. gently, thumpingly,
or hurriedly: coll. v.l., 1816; v.t., 1830; as adv.,
1790. (S.O.D.) Thackeray, 'Chairs were flumped down
on the floor.' A blend of flop and thump (W.).

flump, adv. With a flump: coll.; late C.

flunkey. A parasite, a toady: coll.: from ca.
1855; in C. 20, S.E. Ex sense, a man-servant
esp. if in livery.—2. A ship's steward: nautical
(—1883); ob. W. Clark Russell,—6., ward-
room attendant: naval: from ca. 1880. Bowen.

flunker out of collar. A footman out of work:
1867, 'Ducange Anglois'; ob.

flurry one's milk. To be angry, perturbed,
worried: low coll.; from ca. 1820; ob. Cf. Fr.
se faire du mauvais sang.

flurryment. Confusion, bustle; excitement,
agitation: low coll. (—1848). Pleomast on
flurry, *after flusterment.

flush, v.t. To whip: coll.; mid-C. 18–20; ob.
H., 3rd ed. Hence flushed on the horse, privately
whipped in gaol: mid-C. 19–20; ob. prob. c.
Perhaps ex flush, to cleanse, or to make red.

*flush, adj., with of. Having plenty of money,
esp. temporarily: C. 17–20. In C. 17, esp. as flush
in the pocket or job, o.; in C. 18, low > gen.; in
C. 19–20, S.E. Dekker; Trollope, 'Long before
that time I shall be flush enough.' Cf. S.E. flush of
success and flush, level, hence full.—2. Tipsy:
C. 19–20; ob. Ex flush, level with, i.e. full to the
top.

flush, adv. Full; directly: pupilistic, of a blow
(—1888). Ex C. 18 S.E.

flush a wild duck. To single out a woman for
amorous attentions: low: C. 19–20; ob. Ex
shooting; flush = to cause to take wing.

flush hit. A clean hit; a punch fair on the mark:
pupilistic: ca. 1810–20; a. > j. by 1870.

flush on one, come. To meet a person suddenly,
flushed on the horse. See flush, v.

or sol. By complicate out of fluster.

flustrate. To confuse; excite. (Gen. in past
pl. passive.) Spel.: C. 18; ob. The Spectator,
(No. 493.) 1712, 'We were coming down Essex
Street one night a little flustrated.' Ex fluster.
Like next, occ. jocular.

flustration. Confusion, bustle; excitement,
flurry: sol., perhaps orig. nautical: from ca. 1740;
ob. Smollett, 'Being I was in such a flustration' ;
Mortimer Collins. In C. 19–20, also flusticate.

flute. (Cf. flue, n.) A city recorder, esp. of
London: ca. 1690–183; ob. Ex flute, v. 2.

flummoxes (rare), flummox, flummox.
flummoezed, flummoezed.
[flutter, flautist. See Fowler, who defends the former.]

flutter. A short visit or trip, esp. a joyous, informal one: coll. : 1857 (O.E.D.).—2. A venture, an attempt; a spec.; a gamble: from ca. 1870. H., 5th ed.; The Saturday Review, Feb. 1, 1890, ‘Fond of a little flutter’.—3. The spinning of a coin: from ca. 1872.—4. See flutter, have had a. All senses refer to the flutter of excitement; 3 also to the fluttering movement.

flutter. V.t., to gamble; from ca. 1870. Cf. sense 2.—2. Also, to indulge in pleasure: from ca. 1880.—3. V.t., to spin (a coin), as in flutter a brow: from ca. 1870; ob. H., 5th ed.

flutter, be on the. To be on the spree; sexually adept: low: ca. 1875. Cf.

flutter, do or have a. To have a small gamble; go on the spree; (of either sex) to have sexual intercourse, for pleasure rather than passion: from ca. 1870: s. >, by 1920, coll.

flutter, I, give her a. Toss a or the coin! C. 20.

flutter, have had a. To have had sexual experience; to have lost one’s virginity: low: from ca. 1875.

flutter a judy. To pursue a girl; to possess one: low: from ca. 1850.

flutter a skirt. To be a (street-walking) harlot: low: from ca. 1850.

flutter for, have a. To try hard to do, get, etc.: coll. (—1873)

flutter (or fret) one’s kidneys. To agitate; greatly annoy: low: from ca. 1860. Cf. flurry one’s milk.

flutter the ribbons. To drive (horses): coll.: ca. 1890-1910.


fly, v. To give way; become damaged: pugilism: (—1865).—ob. 2. To toss; raise (e.g. a window): c. (—1857).—3. Send quickly, hastily: coll.: ca. 1845-1900. Darwin. O.E.D.—4. See fly a kite or tile; fly the mags.—5. V.t. (of a horse) to outdistance easily: sport (—1887). Baumann.

fly, adj. Artful, knowing; shrewdly aware: low (? orig. c.): from ca. 1810. In Scots (flee), however, as early as 1724 (E.D.D.). Vaux. Variants a-fly, amy, fly to the game, fly to what’s what. Perhaps ex the difficulty of catching a fly, more prob. cognate with hedge, hedged, as Sewell, 1706, indicates (W.): though Bee’s assertion that it is a corruption of flea, abbr. flash, is, considering the devices of c., not to be sneered at.—2. Dextrous: from ca. 1834: low. Ainsworth.—3. (Of women) wanton: low: from ca. 1880. Ex senses 1 and 2. Cf. U.S. fly Dame, a harlot (—1888).

fly, let. V.t., to hit out: coll. (—1859). Punch, July 25, 1859, ‘Lord Lyndhurst let fly and caught him . . . an extremely neat one on the conk.’

fly, make the fur or feathers. To attack successfully (one’s for the); to quarrel noisily: coll.: orig. (1825), U.S.; anglicised ca. 1860.

fly, not to rise to that. Not to ‘bite’, i.e. not to believe: coll.: from ca. 1870; ob.

fly, off the. Laid up; doing nothing; retired, esp. from the giving or the pursuit of pleasure: low: from ca. 1890.


*fly, beg on the. To beg from persons as they pass: c. (—1861). Mayhew. Cf. fly, on the, 2.

fly, take on the, v.t. To beg from in the streets: e.: from ca. 1845; ob. 20.

fly a, the, kite. To raise money by means of accommodation bills: from ca. 1808. Whence fly a bill, to gain time by giving a bill (1860, O.E.D.).—2. Merely to raise money (—1880). In Anglo-Irish lanks, it = to cash a cheque against non-existent funds: C. 20. Also cash a dog, pay the bearer.—3. In c., to depart by the window (—1860): esp. from low lodging-houses. H., 2nd ed.—4. With at, to set one’s cap at (—1863). Henry Kingsley.—5. (Gen. fly the kite.) To seek publicity: Society: from the 1890’s; ob. Ware.—6. To test public opinion by tentative measures: copy-writers’ coll.: from ca. 1926. Cf. sense 2.

fly a tile. To knock off a man’s hat: Stock Exchange: ca. 1820-1900.


fly-balance; shudder; sighter. A column of figures added correctly at the first attempt: bank-clerks’: C. 20: resp. coll., now verging on j.; s.; a. Obviously shudder derives ex at the first shot; sighter ex rifle-shooting.

fly-blow. A bastard: coll. (—1875); ob. † corruption of by-blow.


fly blue paper. To issue a summons: legal: from ca. 1880; slightly ob.


FLYING COP


fly-flapper. A heavy bludgeon: from ca. 1840; ob.


fly high or rather high. To get or to be dunked: low: from ca. 1860.—2. To keep good company and fine state; venture for big stakes: coll. > S.E. ca. 19–20.

fly in a tar-box (in C. 19–20, glue-pot), like a. Nervously excited: coll. (— 1659); the former, ob. by 1800, † by 1900. Howell, 1659. (Apperson.)


fly loco. See Kentucky loco.

fly low. To be modest and retiring: from ca. 1836: coll., > S.E. by 1895.—2. In c., to hide from justice: ca. 1870–1920.


fly member. A very shrewd, sharp person: low (— 1909). Ware.

fly my kite. A light: rhyming s. (— 1857). 'Ducange Anglicus.'

fly off the handle. To lose one's temper: orig. (1825). U.S.; anglicised ca. 1860. Also (— 1931), fly off the deep end, evidently influenced by go (in) off the deep end: Lyell.

fly on a wheel, break or crush a. To make much fuss about very little: (— 1859); coll. > S.E. by 1900.

fly on the wheel, the. One who considers himself very important: coll. > S.E.: late C. 16–20; ob. From *ape's falde.


*fly-paper, be on the. To be justiciable under the Prevention of Crimes Act: c. from ca. 1912. James Curtis, The Old Kid, 1926. Ex:


fly-rink. A bald head: lower classes': 1875; ob. Ware.


fly-stuck (possibly S.E.); stuck (coll.). Bitten by the tsetse: South African: from ca. 1880 and esp. among hunters, as F. C. Selous, who uses both forms, makes clear in A Hunter's Wanderings in Africa, 1881. (Pettman.)

fly the blue pigeon. To steal lead from roofs: see blue pigeon: C. 18–19 c.

fly the flag. (Of harlots) to walk the streets: low: from ca. 1840.—2. To have the monthly flux: low: from ca. 1850.

fly the kite. See fly a kite.

FLYING MATINEE

*fly the mags. To gamble; properly, by throwing up halfpence: c. (— 1812) >, by 1850, low. Vaux.

fly the pigeons. See pigeons, fly the.

fly to. See fly, adj., 1. Cf. down to, up to, flash to.


fly with, not a feather to. Penniless; ruined: coll. C. 19–20; slightly ob.


flying, look as if the devil had sh*t him or her. To be filthy or deformed: low coll.: C. 19–20; ob.


*flying carper. An escape from prison: c. (— 1864); ob.


flying county or country. A district where one can ride fast and safely: hunting: from ca. 1850; s. > j. by 1900. Whyte-Melville, 'Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, and other so-called "flying counties"'.

flying dustman. See stiff one.


flying light. (Of a seaman that, when he joined his ship, was) possessed of nothing but the clothes on him; nautical coll.: mid-C. 19–20; ob. Bowen.

flying man. In Eton football: a skilful skirmisher (— 1864); ob.

flying mess, in a. Hungry and having to mess wherever one can: military (— 1860); ↑ by 1915. H., 2nd ed. Ex the difficulty of obtaining a good meal on a forced march.


flying pasty. Excrement that, wrapped in paper, is thrown over a neighbour’s wall: from ca. 1700; ↑ by 1803. Grose, 3rd ed.


*flying porter.* An impostor that gets money by giving, to robbed persons, information that will (prob. not) lead to the arrest of the thieves: c.e.: late C. 19. Grose, 2nd ed.

flying stationer. A hawk of street-ballads, penny histories, etc.: late C. 18–19: low. Grose, 3rd ed. Ex the fact that such a hawkers keeps moving. Cf. the C. 19 running patterer, q.v.

flying trapeze. Cheese: rhyming s.: late C. 19–

B. & P.

flymp. See flimp.—flyms(e)y. See flimsy, 1.


foal and foily dance. A ‘dance to which only very young people ... are invited’: Society (— 1909); ob. Ware. Cf. flyly and foily.

foaled. Thrown from one’s horse: hunting: C. 19–20; ob.—2. Manchon asserts that it = fogged, q.v.; I doubt the validity of this.


foh, v. To pocket: C. 19–20; ob.; coll. Cf. pocket, v.—2. To cheat, rob; procure dishonestly: C. 17–20; ob. Congreve; Wolcot, ‘To use a cant [i.e. fashionable a.] phrase, we’ve been finely fob’d!’ Cf. fab, n., 1—3. To deceive; trifle with: coll. > S.E.: late C. 16–20; ob. Shakespeare. In all senses, an early variant is fab, q.v.

*fob, gut a.* To pick a pocket: low, r.: c. ca. 1815–90. Moore, 1819, ‘Diddling your subjects, and getting their fobs’.

fob of, fob out of. To cheat or deprive illicitly (a person) of (a thing): coll.: from ca. 1840, 1850 resp. O.E.D. (Sup.). An extension of fob, v.—2.

fob off. To put off, or ignore, contemptuously, callously, unfairly, dishonestly; deceive in any of those ways. (Variant fub off.) Coll. > S.E.: late C. 16–20; ob. Shakespeare, ‘You must not think to fob off our disgrace with a tale.’

fob of. See fob of.


fodder. Abbr. bum-fodder, q.v.: C. 19–20 low, verging on coll.


fotus, tap the. To procure abortion: medical (— 1893). By the way, fotus should be fetus, as W. points out: mistaken pedantry (cf. Welsh rarebit).


fog, v. To smoke: pipe: either low s. or c.: C. 18–early 19—2. Mystical, perplex; occ. to obscure: coll. (orig. S.E.): from ca. 1815. The Daily Telegraph, Sept. 29, 1883, ‘We turn what we say into tangle talk so as to fog them.’—3. V.i., to set fog-signals along the line: railwaymen’s: ca. 1855–1920. O.E.D.


fog in. To see (a place) by chance, to achieve (a purpose) by accident: Society (— 1909); virtually ↑. Ware.

fog(e)y; occ. fogey, foggie(e): fogram, q.v. An invalid or, later, a garrison soldier or, derivatively, sailor: ↑ Scottish military: 1780. Grose, 1785, shows that, even then, old gen. preceded it. Ca. 1850, the sense > wholly that of an elderly person; an old-fashioned, occ. an eccentric; person: a meaning it possessed as early as 1780. Thackeray, 1865, ‘A grizzled, grim old fogy’. Grose derives ex Fr. fougueux, W. ex foggy, 2, q.v.—2. Hence, an old maid: low coll. (~ 1887). Baumann (‘eine alte Schachtel’); —3. Whence foggish, old-fashioned, eccentric (1875)—fogreym, the being a fogy, fogies as a class (1859)—fogreym, an example of fogreysd, a fogeyish trait (1859): these three terms, somewhat coll. at first, had > S.E. by 1880.

fogged. Tipsy: from ca. 1840; ob. Cf. foggy, 1, its imm. origin. ~2. Bewildered, puzzled, at a loss: coll.; from ca. 1850.

fogger. A pettifoggling lawyer: coll. (~ 1800) > S.E.; ↑ by 1700. Ex Fugger, the merchant-financier family. S.O.D.

foggie. See foggy. This form is recorded for 1812.

foggiest (notion), have not the. To have no idea; no suspicion. With of or that. Coll., now verging on S.E.: from ca. 1903. Variant, faintest: from ca. 1905: by 1930, S.E.

fogging, vbl.n. Fumbling through one’s part: theatrical: ca. 1885–1915.


*fogle.* A (silk) handkerchief: c.e.: from ca. 1810; ob. Lex. Bal.; Egan; Dickens in Oliver Twist. ‘Ger. sogeil, bird, has been suggested, via “bird’s eye wipe”’ W.; perhaps rather ex It. foglia, a pocket; cf. Fr. fouille.—2. Whence fogle-hunter, a thief specialising in silk handkerchiefs: from ca. 1820; ob. And fogle-hunting, occ. f-draw ing: from ca. 1820; ob. Bee.

fogo. See hogo.
foigrum, foigrum. (Cf. foigray, q.v.) 'A fusty old man,' Grace, ed. ca. 1775–1850.—2. Liquor; esp., wine, for its superior quality: nautical: (— 1867); ob. Smyth; Bowen.—3. Adj., stupid, old-fashioned: app. earlier than foigray: witness e.g. Mme D'Arblay in 1772 and O'Keefe, in A Trip to Calais, 1778, 'Father and mother are, but a couple of foigrum old fools,' the foigrum old being significant. (O.E.D.)

foigrumite. An old-fashioned or eccentric person; coll.: ca. 1820-1880.

foigrum. An old-fashioned way or custom: Mme D'Arblay, 1766.—2. Hence, eccentricity.—3. A foigray, q.v. All coll. See preceding entry and foigray.

foigrum. See foigrum.

foigray. To have a strong or objectionable odour: New Zealanders (— 1930). Perhaps ex fug, fugowy.


foigray. See foigray.—fohm. To form: see fower and stan.

foigray-gras. Pâté de foigray gras: coll.: 1818, T. Moore. (O.F.D. Sup.)


foigray, v.t. and i. To have connexion with a woman: low: late C. 10–17. Ex S.E. sense.


*foigray, foiy, fyst. v.t. and i. (very frequent as vbl.n.). To pick pockets; trick, swindle; c.: late C. 10–18. Greene, Dekker, Middleton, Grose.—2. To break wind silently: low coll.: C. 16–early 18.—3. The dicing senses may have begun as c., the same applying to:

*foigray, foiy. A pick-pocket; swindler; low, c.e.: mid-C. 16–17.

*foigray. See foiy, v. and i.


fokei, fokey. See foiysall.

fokei, foikey. Col. If not indeed sol. for folk, people (indefinitely), individuals: late C. 18–20. See the quotation at devil's daughter. (Even folk, in this sense, is, in C. 20, coll., though certainly not sol.)—2. As = parents, family, relatives, it is S.E. though not literary. Cf. the U.S. sense: respectable people. (See esp. Fowler.)

follow. To accompany (a corpse) to the grave; (also v.i.) to attend the funeral of a person: coll.: 1819 (O.E.D. Sup.).

follow-me-lads. Curls or ribbons hanging over the shoulder: coll. (— 1872); t by 1925. Con- trast Fr. suivre-moi jeune homme.

follow the drum. 'To belong to the Creed of the majority of a Battalion' for Church parade: military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Con- trast fancy religion, q.v.

follow your nose, i., often with and you are sure to go straight. A c.p. (non-cultured) addressed to a person asking the way (— 1854). Other forms, e.g. and you will be there directly (C. 17), are earlier, and the phrase is clearly adumbrated in C. 14. (Apper.)

follower. A female servant's sweetheart or suitor, esp. if he frequents the house; coll.: 1838. Dickens, 'Five servants kept. No man. No followers.'—2. A scoundrel serving always, if possible, under the one captain: naval coll.: C. 18. Bowen.—3. A young officer doing the same with a view to promotion: id.: id. Ibid.

fool, adj. Silly, foolish; often a pejorative intensive: C. 13–20: S.E. till C. 19, then (low) coll. and dial. Esp. in a, the, or that fool thing. (O.E.D.)

fool around (with). To daily riskily, with one of the opposite sex: v.t. and i. Coll.: from ca. 1880. In U.S., v.t., without with.

fool at the end of a stick, a; a fool at one end and a maggot at the other: mid-C. 19–19 c.p. 'gibes on an angler'; Grose, 2nd ed.


fool-monger. An adventurer, -ursus; swindler; betting man; coll.: late C. 10–early 18.


fooleries, the. April-fooling; coll.: prob. from ca. 1880, on Colinderies and Fisheries, q.v. Christopher Bush, The Case of the April Fools, 1933, 'April the First, and what people are accustomed to call the fooleries', 'sir, actually expire at midnight.'

foolish, adj. Of one who pays: harlots e.: from ca. 1788; t ob. Grose, 2nd ed., 'Is he foolish or flash?'


fool's father. The pantaloon or 'old un'; theatrical: ca. 1870–1910.

fool's wedding. A party of women; coll.: from ca. 1875. Cf. hen party.


foot. Feet, as in 'Six foot two': coll.: C. 15–20. foot !; or foot 1, foot ! Get out of it, go away!: coll.: C. 19–20; ob. Ware implies equivalence to Fr. fous-moi le camp and remarks that it is 'cast after the respectably dressed person who wanders into strange and doubtful bye-ways'.

foot, know the length of one's. To know a person well; discover his weakness: coll. > S.E.: late C. 16–early 18. Later, have or get ... : slightly ob. Apper. Prob. orig. a shoemaker's metaphor (W.).

foot, me or my. Rubbish ! not at all! low: late C. 19–20. C. J. Dennis; Hugh Walpole, Vanessa, 1933, 'But, Rose, you're wrong ...'
FOOT a BILL

"Wrong my foot! you can't kid me." Occ. pig's foot. foot a or the bill. To pay; settle an account: coll.: from ca. 1844. Until ca. 1890, an Americanism.

foot-and-mouth disease. The tendency of golfers to talk at night of the day's exploits: jocular coll.: from 1923 or 1924: cultured. (Ware, 1909, records that, in Lancashire, the phrase indicates 'swearing followed by kicking'.)


foot in the grave, have one. To be seriously ill, near death; very old: from ca. 1630; coll. > S.E. ca. 1850.

foot in(to) it, put one's. To get into trouble; cause trouble: coll.: from ca. 1790.

foot it. To walk: coll.: from ca. 1840. Cf. Fr. faire du footing.—2. To kick, 'hoof' (q.v.), use one's feet: from ca. 1850: sporting, esp. football.


foot-(')lights, smell the. To come to like theatricals: theatrical coll.: from ca. 1870.

foot-pad. A pedestrian highwayman: orig. (C. 17), c. or low; C. 18, coll.; C. 19–20, S.E. Cf. low pad and see pad. For the vocabulary of foot-paddy, see the relevant essay in Words / foot-riding, vbl.n. Wheeling one's machine instead of riding it: cyclists (ca. 1887); ob. T. Stevens, Round the World on a Bicycle.


foot-scamp. A footpad: C. 18–early 19, low or e. Parker. See scamper.


foot the bill. See foot a bill.

foot up. To 'total' at the foot of a bill: coll.: ex U.S. (1840), anglicised ca. 1860. But as foot in S.E. for centuries before.

foot-wobbler, -wobbler. An infantryman: 1785, Gros; ob. by 1860: military. Cf. mud-crusher and foot-sledger. (Grose is notable on early military a.)

foot-walk (it). To travel on foot: Australian coll. (—1935).

football. A British 60-pound trench-mortar shell: military coll.: 1918–19. F. & Gibbons. (It was spherical.)


footing. Money paid, on beginning a new job, to one's fellow-workers: in C. 18, coll.; but thereafter, S.E. Cf. chummage.

fool. Nonsense; twaddle: from ca. 1893.

fool, v. To dawdle, potter, trifle about; act or talk foolishly; coll.: from ca. 1890; slightly ob.

By fuddle out of dial. footer, fouler (ex Fr. fouler), to trifle. F. Anstey in Voces Populi. (O.E.D.)


footlight favourite. A chariot that thrusts herself forward: theatrical coll. (—1935).

footling. Insignificant; trivial; pettily fussy: coll.: from ca. 1893. Ex foolie, v.

footman's inn. A wretched lodging; a gaol: coll.: ca. 1860–1900.

footman's maund. An artificial sore, made to resemble a horse's kick or bite: late C. 17–late 19 c. B.E. Cf. fox's bite and see maund.

Foot's horse, take or travel by (Mr.). To walk: coll. verging on S.E.: from ca. 1820; ob. Bee. Cf. Shank's mare.


footy:—See esp. Grosse, F.


foozle, v. To miss; make a bad attempt at; bungle; sporting j. > gen. s. or coll. The Field, Feb. 25, 1888, 'Park foozled his second stroke.' Ex foolie + zizzle; or, more prob., dial. footer (to blue) + zizzle. The vbl.n., foozling, bungling, is frequent in C. 20.


foozled, footly. Blurred; indistinct; spoilt: coll.: from ca. 1890.

foozler. A bungler: from ca. 1890: sporting s. > gen. s.


foozling. See foozle, v.

top-doodle. A top; a fool; an insignificant man: coll.: ca. 1640–1700.


Top's alley, Fops' Alley. The gangway between stalls and pit, orig. and esp. in the Opera House: theatrical: ca. 1770–1830. Mme D'Arblay in Cecilia, 1782.

[for-, fox-].—See Fowler.

for certain sure. See certain sure, for.

for it, be. To be due for punishment; hence, imm. in trouble: military s. (1915: ? late 1914 >), by 1919, gen. coll. The it = punishment. Cf. Grosse, P. 

for to. In order to: once S.E.; but since ca. 1780, sol.

forage. To 'procure, seek, bring back' [coll.]; 'find places at other tables than one's own, at meals'. J. S.: Bootham School (—1925). Anon., Dict. of Bootham Slang.


FORAKERS.
foraminite. To have sexual connexion with (a woman): C. 19: low pedantic. Ex L. foramen, an orifice.


foreman of the jury. One who monopolises the conversation: late C. 17—early 19. B.E. It is the foreman who delivers the jury's verdict.

forensic. Incorrect for *forinsec (foreign): C. 18. O.E.D.

foreskin-hunter. A prostitute: low coll.: C. 19—20 (? ob.).

forest of debt. The payment of debts: Oxford University: ca. 1820 40. Egan's Grose.

*forestall. In garotting, a look-out in front; the one behind is the backstalk. C. of C. 19—20, ob. See stall.

forever gentleman. 'A man in whom good breeding is ingrained': Society: ca. 1870—1915. Ware. Contrast temporary gentleman.


forget. A lapse of memory; an instance of suchapse: coll.: from ca. 1820; ob. E.D.1.

forget about. To fail to remember the facts of or about: fail to take action about: coll.: from ca. 1895. O.E.D. (Sup.). Actually, this is a slipshod, unnecessary elaboration of forget.

forget it!, don't you. See and don't you forget it!

forget it, (and) don't (you). An admonitory coll. e.p.: U.S. (— 1888) >, by 1900, anglicised. (O.E.D. Sup.)

forget oneself. (Of a child) to urinate or defecate unconventionally: euphemistic coll.: late C. 19—20. Cf. Fr. s'oublier.

forgot. Forgotten: once S.E. (Shakespeare, Pepys); since ca. 1850, except as an archaism, it is sol.

*foricus. See *forkers.


fork, eat (or have eaten)—or, properly, have been drinking (Baumann)—vinegar with a fork. To be sharp-tongued or snappish: proverbial coll.: mid-C. 19—20; ob.
fork, pitch the. To tell a sad or doleful story: low coll.: from ca. 1860; ob.
fork in the beam! A late C. 19–20 naval c.p., ‘an order from the sub for all midshipmen to retire from the gunroom.’ Ex a fork ‘actually stuck into the beam in the old wooden ships’.
fork out; rarely—except in U.S.—over or up. Hand over (valuable or money): pay; ‘shell out, q.v.; from ca. 1830: s. > coll. by 1900: Dickens, ‘fork out your balance in hand.’ Ex forks = hands or fingers. Cf. stamp up (W.).
forker. The vb.n. corresponding to fork in the beam (q.v.); n. = ‘forker, fomey. A fallen man; user; 1821; ob. Ex fork, v., l. Cf. forking, q.v.—2. See:
forker, wear a. To be a cuckold: via cornuted: C. 17. Marston, 1606. (O.E.D.)
forking. Thieving; the practice of theft: o.: C. 19. Ex fork, v., 1.—2. The undue hurrying of work; tailors: from ca. 1850; ob.
forking the beam. The vb.n. corresponding to fork in the beam (q.v.)
forkless. Clumsy; unwornamlike; e.—(1821); ob. As if without forks, hands or fingers—prob. the latter.
forks. See fork, n., 2.—2. Only in pl., the hands: from ca. 1820. An extension of fork, a finger, or of forks as at fork, n., 2.
form. Condition; fitness: orig. of horses (ca. 1700) and s.: by 1870, coll.: by 1900, S.E. Esp. in or out of form. Hawley Smart, in Post to Finish, ‘What’s the Indian’s appearance, lose their form at three years old, they are apt to never recover it.’—2. Behaviour, esp. in bad or good form: coll. (1868) ex the turf, though anticipated by Chaucer and Shakespeare. In C. 20, by the class that uses this magic alternative and formula, it is considered S.E.—3. Habit; occupation; character: low coll. (—1884); ob.—4. The height of one’s attainment: Public Schools. A. H. and F. G. Wodehouse, 1902, ‘He shone at footer, and jeeves at cricket. Croquet is his form, I should say.’—5. (Gen. with in) high spirits; ‘concert’ pitch; coll.: from ca. 1875. (O.E.D.)
form, a matter of. ‘A merely formal affair; a point of ordinary routine’: coll.: 1824, H. J. Stephen. O.E.D. (Sup.). Ex the legal a matter of form, ‘a point of formal procedure’ (ibid.).
form? what’s the. What’s it like (at, e.g., a house-party)?; Society: from the middle 1920’s. Evelyn Waugh, A Handful of Dust, 1934, of a household, ‘What’s the form?’ ‘Very quiet and enjoyable.’
—former, e.g. fourth-former. A pupil in the (e.g. 4th) form: Public Schools’ coll.: C. 20.
fornicator. The male member. Whence fornicator’s hall, the female pudend: C. 19 low. (? C. 20.)—2. In pl., the old-fashioned trousers with a flap in front: ↑ by 1880, the trousers being antiquated even earlier.
fora(r)der, gel no or (not) any. To make (no) headway: coll. (orig. illiterate, now mostly jocular): 1898, The Daily Telegraph, Dec. 15. Ware.
Forties, the. A well-known gang of thieves of the 1870’s—early 80’s: low (1887 —); ↑ by 1910. Baumann. Ex the Forty Thieves.
Fortnum and Mason. A notable hamper: Society: mid-C. 19–20. Ware. From the perfection of the establishments sent out by this firm of grocers in Piccadilly,—whence comes also the cleverest advertising matter known to this century. (The firm was established in C. 18.)
fortune, a small. An extravagantly large sum paid for something, esp. for something small: coll.: from ca. 1890.
fortune-teller. A judge or, occ., a magistrate: c.: late C. 17—early 19. B.E., whose definition is so ambiguous that the term may, even there, bear the usual meaning: in which case that sense may orig. have been c. or, more prob., s. or low coll. Grose, 1st ed., seems, however, to be clear as to the ‘judge’ interpretation, though he may merely be glossing B.E. Cf. lambein man, conjurer, cunning man, which Egan considers = a judge.
forty is, in C. 17–20 S.E. as well as coll., used frequently to designate a large though indefinite member, or quantity, or degree: Shakespeare, who has ‘I could beat forty of them,’ twice employs ‘forty thousand’ in a highly hyperbolical manner common to the Elizabethan dramatists. Forty pence, a customary amount for a wager, C. 16–17, and the later forty thieves may be operative reasons for the continuance of this coll. or coll.-tending forty. (Tinoues.—)2. A sharper: Australion: from ca. 1925. (The O.E.D. Sup. records it at 1927.) Perhaps suggested by the forty thieves.
forty-faced. Arrant; esp. shamelessly given to shameless deception: e.g. forty-faced flirt or liar.
forty fits, have. To be much perturbed or alarmed: coll.: late C. 19–20.
forty-foot, forty-guts. A fat, dumpy person (pejoratively): the former stressing the shortness, the latter the fatness: low coll.: resp. from (—)1864, (—)1857. H., 3rd ed.; ‘Dunsage Anglicas’. Cf. guts, tubby or tubs.
forty-legs. A centipede; late C. 17–20; coll. (ob.) when not dial.
forty-lunged. Stentorion—or very apt to be. Coll.: from ca. 1850.
fifty to the dozen. Very quickly; with talk, more often nineteen to the dozen; with walk off, the
sage of the domestic servants poured upon London by the metropolitan Foundling Hospital'.

fountain. A pork-butcher's shop; loosely, any shop: proletarian (—1909); ob. Prob. ex 'the noisy vibrations of the sausage machine' (Ware).


four-and-two. A sandwich; C. 20. (Neil Bell, Andrew Otway, 1931.) Cf. four-by-two, q.v.

four art. A Cockney form of four half, q.v. Ware.

four bag. A flogging: naval; mid-C. 19–early 20. Bowen; F. & Gibbons. The bluejacket received four dozen lashes; if he discharges, then four bag and a blanket; the latter being his discharge ticket with one corner cut off.

four-bones. The knees; c. from ca. 1850; ob. Punch, Jan. 31, 1857.

four-by-three. Small; insignificant (rarely of persons); from ca. 1924. Dorothy Sayers, Have His Carcase, 1932, 'An adjectival four-by-three watering-place like Wilvercombe'.


four-flusher. A bragart, a cheat: military coll.; from not later than 1918. F. & Gibbons. Ex U.S. senses, a pretender, a humbug, themselves ex poker.


four-half. Half-ale, half-porter, at fourpence a quart; 1884 (O.E.D.). Cf. four thick, q.v.

four-holed. A fisherman's spade; fisherman's shovel; (mainly Mar., chiefly in Devon) a spade; (mainly Devon.)—2. A house; (and by met.) a well-equipped house; Devon; F. & Gibbons; ex the Devonian shingle on which a house is built.

four-legged. A watch-dog: jocular coll.; from ca. 1880.


four-legged frolic. Sexual connexion: low coll.; from ca. 1850. Perhaps ex the ob. C. 16–20 proverbs, 'There goes more, or more belongs, to (a) marriage than four bare legs in a bed.'


four-letter word. A term of abuse: jocular coll.; ex the language of a sailor.


fowl-a-day (with). To supply or provide with a person; coll.; late C. 18–20; ob. excepted in Western Scotland in the form dirty a plate. Grose, 3rd ed.


foul Weather Jack. Sir John Norris, an early C. 18 Admiral of the Fleet; Commodore Byron, a mid-C. 18 navigator. Dawson, 'From the bad weather that was supposed to attend them'.

fuel-rich. A source of fuel; ex coal.

four, but more gen. three, sheets in the wind.
Drunk: nautical, from ca. 1840.

four thick. "Fourpence per quart beer—the commonest there is (in London), and generally the muddiest": public-houses: late C. 19-early 20. Ware. Cf. four-half.


fourpenny bit. See fourpenny one and contrast fourpenny pil.


fourteen hundred; or f. h. new fives. A warning cry = There's a stranger here! Stock Exchange: from ca. 1885. Atkin, House Scraps, 1887. For a long time the Stock Exchange had never more than 1,300 members: the term has remained, though by 1930 it was ob. and though even as early as 1890 there were nearly 3,000 members.

fourteen penn'orth of it. Fourteen years' transportation: c. 1820-80. Bee.

fourth. A w.c.; a latrine,—the vbl phrases being keep a fourth, go to the fourth: gone 4 is the esoteric sign on an undergraduate's door. Cambridge s. (—1880). H., 2nd ed. Not ex the Fourth Court at Trinity College, as 'explained' by H., but perhaps (W.) ex a staircase-number. Cf. rear(s).— 2. See first.

fourth estate, the. Journalists; journalism as a profession: S.E., applied by Burke, > literary s. (—1855) >, by 1910, outworn journalist: already in 1873 it was much in use among penny-a-liners (H., 5th ed.).


fouasty. Stinking: coll. when not dial.: from ca. 1810. Ex foist, n., 3, influenced by frost, froast.

foutier, v., and foutering, vbl.n. See fouter, 3, for all remarks.

foutier or fouter, care not a. To care not at all: coll.: late C. 16-20, ob.

foutie or fouty. See footy.

fou. See fou.


fowl. A troublesome seaman: nautical: late C. 19-20. Also a bird or an irk. Perhaps there is a pun on foul and queer bird.


fox, v. To intoxicate: C. 17-20; until ca. 1760, S.E.; then coll. The Sporting Times, April 11, 1891. 'And so to bed well nigh seven in the morning, and myself as near foxed as of old'—2. To cheat, rob: Eton (—1859). H., 1st ed.—3. V.t. and v.i., to watch closely though alvy: London c. (—1859) > low s. H., 1st ed. V.i., fox about: Cf. fox's sleep, q.v.—. V.i., to shamb: early C. 17-20; S.E.; until C. 19, then coll. and dial. Ex a fox's habit of pretending to be asleep. (O.E.D.) This is prob. the sense posed by 'Ducange Anglicus', 1857: to be half asleep,—5. To criticise adversely a fellow-actor's acting: theatrical (—1864). H., 3rd ed.—6. To mend a boot by 'capping' it: from ca. 1790 (?). > a. > s. > S.E. Grove, 3rd ed.

fox, catch a: gen. to have caught a fox (B.E.). To be or become very drunk: C. 17-19 coll. A late C. 16-17 variant is hunt the fox. Cf.


Fox Hall. Vauxhall (gardens): Society: mid-C. 18- mid-19. (Ware, at chappie.)

fox ( or fox's) paw, make a. To commit a blunder, esp. in society or (of women) by carelessly allowing oneself to be seduced: late C. 18-19 low coll. Grove, 2nd ed. (fox's paw). A. (prob. democratic) perversion of Fr. faux pas. Cf. fopper, q.v.

fox to keep one's geese, set a. To enthrone one's confidences and or money to a sharper or an adventurer: coll.: from ca. 1830.; ob.


foxing. Vbl.n. ex fox, v., but not for sense 1, rarely for senses 2 and 6; mostly for sense 3.


fox's paw. See fox paw, make a.


foxy. Strong-smelling: coll. verging on S.E.: C. 19-20.—2. The other foxy senses in F. & H. are all S.E.


foyi-cloy. See foil-cloy.—foyse. See face.— foyst, n. and v. See foist—foyster. See foister.


fr. For: coll.: C. 19-20. E.g. fr' instance, pronounced almost as if frinistance.

fragment. A dinner ordered by a master for a favoured boy, who could invite two school-fellows to share it: Winchester College: ↑ by 1891. Winchester Word-Book. A fragment = three dishes or courses.—2. In Shakespeare, a pejorative term of address.


frail cat. A frightened or a timorous person: coll., mostly children's: from ca. 1870.

frail. A woman: U.S., partially anglicised by Eric Linklater in 1931 (Don Juan in America). O.E.D. (Sup.)

frame. A picture: artist's: ca. 1800-1912. Ware. Ex picture-frame.—2. See frame, v., 2; variant more gen.: frame-up.

frame, v. To work up and present an unjustified case or serious complaint against: orig. and mainly U.S.; acclimatised ca. 1924. See Irwin.—2. To effect a pre-arranged conspiracy, a faked result: U.S. (from ca. 1906), anglicised ca. 1924. Irwin; O.E.D. (Sup.). Also n.

frammagem. See frammagem.

franco-dieu. 'A man who gets away quickly and won't dance': Society: ca. 1890-1915. Punning Fr. sense. Ware.


freeze to. See freeze to.

freeze out. To compel to retire from business or society, by competition or social opposition: orig. (ca. 1867) U.S.; anglicised ca. 1895 as a coll.

freezer. A very cold day (from ca. 1895, S.E.); a chilling look, comment, etc.: coll. : from ca. 1848. — 2. An Eton jacket (without tail); coll. or s. : from ca. 1880. ↑ abbr. bum-freezer or -perisher.— 3. A sheep bred for frozen export: New Zealand (– 1893); Australian, from ca. 1900. Coll. >, by 1920, S.E. (Morris.) [French words: see the excellent account in Fowler.]

French, loose. See loose French.

French, speak. (Of a horse) to be an excellent steeplechaser: turf (: – 1923). Mancehon.


French Devil, the. Jean Bart (d. 1702), an intrepid naval commander. Dawson.

French elixir. See French article.

French faggot-stick, a blow with a. A nose lost through syphilis: late C. 17–18: low. B.E.


French foods or gout. See French crown.


French lace. See French article.

French leave, take. To depart without intimation or as if in flight; to do anything without permission: from ca. 1770: coll. in C. 18–mid-19, then S.E. Smollett, 1771. (Cf. Fr. filer à l’anglaise.) Ex the C. 18 Fr. custom of departing from a reception, dinner, ball, etc., etc., without bidding good-bye to host or hostess.


French pie. Irish stew: City of London restaurants’ (– 1809). Ware.


French pigeon. A pheasant mistakenly shot in the partridge season: sportsman’s (– 1893); ob.


fresh as a dairy, a new-born turd, an eel, flowers in May, paint a rose. Very healthy, strong, active: coll., the second being low: resp. from ca. 1815, 1830, 1410, (1400–1600), 1440, 1850; the third and fifth soon > S.E. and indeed poetical, while the first is in C. 20 almost S.E. For the first, third, fifth and sixth (perhaps orig. ironic for the first or the third) see esp. Apperson.

fresh bit. (Of women, in amorous venery) a beginner; a new mistres: low : from ca. 1840. Cf. bit of fresh, the sexual favour.

fresh hand at the bellows, (there’s) a. A sailing-ship coll. c.p. of mid-C. 19–20 (now ob.), ’said... when the wind freshened, especially after a lull’ (Bowen).


fresh on the graft. New to the work or job: from ca. 1890. See graft.

fresh shot. Incorrect for frechet: C. 18. O.E.D.


freshen one’s way. To hurry: nautical: (£ 1893)

a. > j. Ex freshening wind.


freshen up. To clean, smarten; revive: coll. : from ca. 1850. An example of a S.E. term (freshen) being made coll. by the addition of pleonastic adv. fresher.

An undergraduate in his first term: university, orig. (– 1882) Oxford. Perhaps the earliest example of the Oxford -er. See Slang, pp. 208–9, and note that R. Ellis Roberts thinks that possibly it arose from a new man being described as fresher than fresh.

Fresher, the. ‘That part of the Cam which lies between the Mill and Byron’s Pool... Frequented by freshmen,’ F. & H.: Cambridge University: from ca. 1880; ob. Cf. freresher, q.v.

freshman. A university undergraduate in his first year: at Oxford, in his first term: late C. 18–20: orig., university a., but in C. 19–20 to be con-
sidered S.E. Nashe; Colman, 1767. *As . . . melancholy to a freshman at college after a joba-
tion *. Whence frecker. —2. Also an adj. 19-20, ob.—3. The C. 17-20 freskmanship is, I think, ineligibl.

freshman's Bible. The University Calendar: mostly Oxford and Cambridge: from ca. 1870; ob. Cf. freshman's landmark, q.v.

freshman's church. The Pitt, i.e. the Cambridge University, Press: Cambridge: from ca. 1870; ob. Ex its churchly architecture.

freshman's landmark. King's College chapel, Cambridge: Cambridge University: from ca. 1870; Ex its central situation and 'recognisability'.


freshwater mariner, seaman. A begging pseudo-
sailor: ca. 1550-1640, 1600-1840, resp. as are Harman and B.E. Perhaps c., orig.

freshwater soldier. A recruit: late C. 18-18; orig. coll.; but in C. 17, S.E. Florio, 1698, defines as 'A goodly, great milke-soppe'. Cf. S.E. fresh-
water seaman, which may, just possibly, have at first been coll.


fret one's giblets, gizzard or guts; one's cream, kidneys. To worry oneself with trifles: low coll.: in gen., from ca. 1850, the gizzard form antedi-
tating 1756; ob., except for gizzarded. Cf. flarry one's milk and:

fret oneself to fiddle-strings. A coll. variant ( —1923) of, and prob. suggested by, the preceding. Manchon.

friar. A white or pale spot on a printed sheet: printers': from ca. 1690. Contrast monk, q.v. In C. 19-20, both are .


[trible, a triller, has, despite F. & H., never been eligible.]

Friday, black. See black Friday.

Friday face. A glum, depressed-looking face or person: coll.: from ca. 1690; ob. by 1889; by 1956 almost †. Greene; Grose, 1st ed. (Adj., Friday-faced, from late C. 19; ob.) Variant. C. 18-20, Friday look. Ex Friday as a day of fasting. Apperson.


fridge. See frige. (This form occurs in W. Collin Brooks, Frame-Up, 1835.)

fried carpet. The exceedingly short ballet skirt . . . especially seen at the old "Gaiety": London theatrical: 1789-82. Ware. —2. An im-
proved Cockneyism for "fish and tatters": from ca. 1890; ob. Tit-Bits, Aug. 8, 1891 (E.D.D.). By jocular perversion.

friend, go and see a sick. To go womanising: low: from ca. 1860.

friend has come, my (little); I have friends to stay. The victim's announcement of the menstrual flux: 19-20 low: ob. Cf. the captain is at home.

friend in need. (Gen. Al.) A house: low: C. 19-20; ob. † ex C. 18 gentleman's friend.

friendly. Abbr. friendly match, one played for fun, not competition-points: from ca. 1894; coll. for five years or so, then S.E.—2. An enemy shell passing high overhead; one of one's own shells falling short on one's own lines: military coll.: 1915. F. & Gibbons.

friendly lead. An entertainment organised to assist an unlucky, esp. an imprisoned man—or his wife and children: from ca. 1870; orig. c., by 1895, s., by 1910 coll., by 1920 S.E.

friendly panicking. A drink shared with another from that uenial: Australian coll.: ca. 1890-1910.

friends to stay. See friend has come.


Ex the v. —2. See frige.


frig about, v.i. To potter or mess about: low coll.: mid-C. 19-20. (It has been in use among Conways cadets since before 1891: John Macfie, The Conway, 1923.) Cf. *frig*, about.


frigate. A woman: orig. (—1690), nautical. Esp. a well-rigged frigate, 'a Woman well Drust and Gentile' (i.e. Fr. gentille), as B.E. has it.

frigate on fire. A variant (ca. 1810-50) of fire-
ship, q.v. Bee.


frige; occ. frig. Pronounced fridge. A re-

frigging. The practice, or an act, of self-abuse (cf. frig, n.): low coll.: C. 17-20.—2. Trilling; irritating waste of time: C. 18-20, ob. except with about.


fright. Any thing or person of a ridiculous or grotesque appearance: coll.: from ca. 1790.

fright hair. 'A wig or portion of a wig which by a string can be made to stand on end and express fright ': theatrical coll. (—1900). Ware.

frightened of. Afraid of: coll.: from ca. 1830. In 1858 The Saturday Review could illuminatingly write, 'It is not usual for educated people to perp-
etrate such sentences as . . . "I was frightened of her."
( O.E.D.)

frightful. An intensive adj.: coll.: from ca. 1740. (Cf. awful, terrible.) Dr. Johnson notes its constant use 'among women for anything unpleas-
ing'. —2. A low coll. variant (C. 19-20) of:

frightfully. An intensive adv.: coll.: from ca. 1830. Ex preceding. Cf. awfully and P. G. Wode-
house, Not George Washington, 1907, 'Thanks . . . Oh, thanks . . . Thanks awfully . . . Thanks awfully . . . Thanks awfully . . . Oh, thanks awfully . . . (with a brilliant burst of invention, amounting almost to genius) Thanks frightfully.'

frightfulness. Anything, esp. behavior, that is objectionable: jocular coll.: 1914; ob. Ex the lit. sense, which translated the German Schrecklich-
keit (Aug. 27, 1914). W.

frigo. Frozen or chilled meat: American >, in early 1918, English military s., though never very
Fríster. An adoption of Fr. s.a., itself representing *vianc frivóle*.

Fríger, frígestra. A male, female masturbates.

Frill. Affection: late. C. 19–20; coll. —, by 1920, S.E. —, 2. a girl; a woman: from ca. 1833. John G. Brandon, The One-Minute Murder, 1934, 'The hen, the frill—the skirt!'


Frillies, explore one's. To caress a woman very intimately; low coll.: ca. 1888–1914.

Frills. Women's underclothing: coll.: ca. 1870–1910. Cf. undies, eroticus, by the former of which it was gradually superseded: see Words, p. 99.

Frills. Swagger, conceit, 'side'. Hence put on one's frills, to swagger; also, low coll. or s., to grow very amorous. Also culture and accomplishments (music, dancing, foreign languages). Orig. (—1870), U.S.; anglicised ca. 1890. Kipling, 1890, 'It's the commissariat camel putting on his blooming frills' (frill is in book form, in 1879).

Frills, have been among a woman's. To have known her: ca. 1860–1914.

Fringe. Irrelevant matter: coll.: from ca. 1885; ob. (O.E.D.)


Frisk. As frolic and a lively dance-movement, it is S.E. as also is frisker, a dancer; but as sexual connexion it is low coll.: C. 19–20.—, 2. To stand frisk, to be searched: c. (—1812) —, by 1900. Vaux. Ex.: • Frisk; occ. friz (for senses 3, 4), v. To search (the person); examine carefully for police evidence: c. (—1781). Parker, Grove.—, 2. Hence to pick the pockets of, pick (a pocket, rob a till): c. (—1919). Vaux.—, 3. To have a woman: low: C. 19–20.—. 4. To hoax: ca. 1820–60. (O.E.D.)
• Frisk, dance the Paddington. To be bugged; mid-C. 18–early 19: low or c. Grove, 1st ed.

Frisk at the tables. 'A moderate touch at gaming': London coll.: from ca. 1880. Ware.


Frisko(e). See frisco.

frisk(y). Whiskey: from ca. 1890. Ex the popular saying (—1887), whiskey makes you frisky.

Frisky. Playfully amorous; fond of amorous encounters: coll.: from ca. 1890.—. Bad-tempered: low London: from ca. 1880; ob. Ware.

Fritz. A German: gen. a German soldier: 1914 —, but, in 1917–18, less common than Jerry, Jerry, q.v. Also adj., which Jerry very rarely is, and, derivatively, a German shell, 'plane, etc.: 1915. A pet-name form of Friedrich, an extremely popular Ger. Christian name. See esp. Words —. 2. An inevitable nickname of men with German surnames: C. 20.

Frivol, frivel, frivole. To behave frivolously: coll., almost S.E.: from ca. 1865. W. Black, in Yolande, 1883, 'If you want to frivole... I shut my door on you.' Ex freasons, on frile.

Frivoller, frivolposing. A trifler; trifling; coll.: resp. 1887 (Baumann), 1882 (O.E.D.).


Frisole. Champagne: ca. 1860–70. H., 2nd ed. t a perversion of jizz.

*Frizier. A hawk's c.: from ca. 1840; —, by 1920, 'No 747.' Origin?


Frog. A policeman: low s. verging on c.: from ca. 1855. 'Ducange Anglicus'; H., 2nd ed. More gen. in U.S. than in Britain. Ex his sudden leaping on delinquents.—. (Frog.) A Frenchman (also Froggy): from ca. 1870. It has > the 'invariable' nickname (also Froggy) of men with French surnames: lower classes'. (In Fr. s., orig. a Parisian.) Ex the toads on the Parisian shield and the 'quaggy state of the streets', F. & H.—. In C. 17, however, it means a Dutchman: cf. Froglander.—, 4. A foot (cf. creeper) low: C. 19–20, ob. Ex the frog in a horse's hoof. —. The bluejacket's 'frock, before the days of the jumper': naval coll.: C. 10. Bowen. Ex the tailors' frog.—, 6. Abbr. (—1838) of frog and toad: tramps c.

Frog-action. Bicycle polo, very popular in early C. 20 with the officers stationed at Whale Island (on the east side of Portsmouth harbour): naval. Bowen.


Frog in the throat. A boating: rhyming s.: C. 20. B. & P.

Frog. It. To walk, to march: military: 1914 or early 1915. F. & Gibbons. Either ex frog-march or, by jocular perversion, ex frog it, q.v.

Froggie or Froggy. A Frenchman: from ca. 1870. The Referee, July 15, 1863. Also adj. All the frog terms for a Frenchman refer to the eating of frogs. Contrast Froglander.—, 2. See frogs, 2.

Froglander. A Dutchman: late C. 17–19 (though after ca. 1820 only among sailors), and, in U.S., C. 19–20, though ob. B.E.

Frog's march (gen. with give the): occ. frog-march or -trot. The carrying of a drunken man face downwards, e.g. to the police-station. Coll.: from ca. 1870. The Evening Standard, April 18, 1871; The Daily News, Oct. 4, 1884.—. Also, from ca. 1884, v.t.


from. Is pleonastic and therefore, strictly, a sol. before hence, thence, whence: C. 17–20.—. 2. For since, it is catachrestic, as in 'disabled from 1917': C. 19–20.


*Front, v. To cover the operations of an associate pickpocket: c. (—1879); ob. —, V.I. and t., to break in by the front door: c. (—1933). Charles E. Leach. Vbln., fronting.

front, clean one's. To clean one's front doorstep and proportionate share of the adjoining pavement: lower- and lower-middle-class coll.: late C. 19–20.

Front attic, door, garden, parlour, room, window. The female pudend: low. None, I think, before
frozen milk, give the. To cold-shoulder: U.S. Anglicised in 1918. Collinson.


fruit, old. See old fruit.

fruit of a gibbet. A hanged felon: coll.: C. 18. Gay. (Ware.)

fruitful vine. The female genitals: either low coll. (it appears in the Lex. Bal.) or 'dubious' euphemism, the double pun being indeclicet: C. 19–20, ob.

fuition. Catechistically (-1885) for fruit. O.E.D.

fruitly. Very rich or strong (e.g. language); very attractive or interesting or suggestive (e.g. story): coll.: 1900 (O.E.D. Sup.). Prob. suggested by juicy.

frume. See frum.

frumetly-kettle. See furmity-kettle.

*frummagem; app. only as frummagemmed, choked, strangled, spolt: c. of ca. 1670–1830. Head, Coles, Grose, Scott (in Guy Mannering).

fryology.

[frump, n. and v., and frumpish, adj., are, despite F. & H., S.E. in all their senses.]


fry. To turn into plain English; gen. in passive: from ca. 1880; ob. James Payn, in Grape from a Thorn, 1891.

fry in one's own grease. To suffer the (natural) consequences of one's own folly; 'drew one's weird': coll.: C. 14–20. See esp. Apperson.

*fry the pewter. To melt pewter measures: c. of ca. 1850–1010. ? suggested by fry the potato.

fry your face, go and. A c.p. retort indicative of contempt, incredulity, or derision: ca. 1870–1905. Cf. the Suffolk fry your feet, nonsense! E.D.


frying-pan brand. 'A large brand used by cattle-stalkers to cover the owner's brand', Morris: Australia (-1857); ob.

frying-pan into the fire, jump from or out of the. To be thus worse off: from ca. 1520, with antecedents in Plato, Lucian, Tertullian: coll. until ca. 1890, then S.E. More, Harington, Gerrick. Barham. See esp. Apperson.


fub, v. See fob, v., of which it is a late C. 18-17 variant.—2. V.i., to potter about: cricketers' coll. (—1906). Lewis. (Ultimately ex sense 1.)
fuberry, trickery, cheating, stealing, occurs in Marston. See fob, n. and v.
fub(b)’, n. ‘A loving, fond Word used to pretty little children and Women’ (B.E.), esp. if (small and) chubbty: C. 17-18: col?. Cf. the next two complete entries.
fubbl’. See fuberry.
fub(see)y. Plump; (of things) well filled: C. 17-20 (ob.) coll. ‘Applied by Charles II to Duchess of Portsmouth’, W.; Grose; Marryat, in Snarlery-Yow, 1837, ‘Soated on the widow’s little fubsey sofa’; Variant, fubby. Ex fub(b), q.v.
fubusiness. Fatness; ‘well-filledness’: col?. from ca. 1780. Ex preceding term.
fubsey. See fubbery.
f*ck, v.t. and i. To have sexual connexion (with): v.i. of either sex, v.t. only of the male: a vulg., C. 16-20. The earliest and latest dictionaries to record it are Florio (s.v. f*tere) and Grose, the O.E.D., S.O.D., E.D.D. all 1 naming it (cf. note at c**e): the efforts of James Joyce and D. H. Lawrence have not restored it to its orig. dignified status. Either ex Gr. *φτερος, L. futere, Fr. fouire, the med. c. and the abridged form being due to a Teutonic radical and an A.S. tendency, or more prob., as A. W. Read (after Kluge) convincingly maintains, ex Ger. ficken, lit. to strike, hence to copulate with: cf., therefore, bang and knock. Transitive synonyms, many of them S.E., occur in Shakespeare (9), Fletcher (7), Unquhart (4), etc., etc.; intransitive in Unquhart (12), D’Urffy and Burnis (6), Shakespeare (5), etc., etc. See esp. B. & P. (the Introduction); Grose, P.; and Allen Walker Read, ‘An Obscurity Symbol’ (sec. II) in American Speech, Dec., 1934,—all at this term.—2. See f*ck off.
f*ck-beaggar. An impotent or almost impotent man whom none but a beggar-woman will allow to ‘kiss’ her: mid-C. 18-early 19 low coll. Grose, 1st ed., ‘Soe buss beggar’.
f*ck-hole. The pudendum muliebre: C. 19-20 low. (Obs. in bang-hole.)
f*ck off. To depart, make off: low: late C. 19-20. Cf. b**ver off, p**ss off, q.v.v.—2. Esp. in the imperative, id. id.
f*ck, n. Jack, I’m all right! A c.p. directed at callowness or indifference: nautical (late C. 19-20); hence military in G.W., and after. B. & P.
f*ckable. Of women) sexually desirable; nubile: low coll. or a vulg.: C. 19-20. Cf. and contrast f*cksome.
f*cked and far from home. In the depths of misery, physical and mental: a military c.p.: 1815. (But believed to have existed as a low c.p. from at least as early as 1910.) Ex the despair of a girl seduced and stranded.
f*cker. A lover; a harlot’s ‘fancy man’; C. 19-20 low coll.—2. A pejorative or an admiring term of reference: from ca. 1850.—3. Hence, a man, chap, fellow: from ca. 1895; esp. in G.W., when the less Rabelaisian substituted mucker.
f*cking, adj. (C. 19-20 low) ‘a qualification of extreme contumely’, F. & H., 1893; but in C. 20, esp. in G.W., often a mere—though still a very low—intensive, occ. replaced by mucking.
f*cking, adv. Very, exceedingly. Somewhat stronger and much more offensive than bloody (q.v.). From ca. 1840; perhaps much earlier—records being extremely sparse. Cf. f*cker, 3.
f*cksome. (Of women) sexually desirable: a C. 19-20 vulg.
fud. The pubic hair; coll. when not Scottish or dial. late C. 18-20, ob. as coll. Ex sense, a hare’s or rabbit’s snot.
fudder, the v., like fudder and fuddle-cap, a drunkard, fuddling, vbl.n. and adj., and fuddled, ppl. adj., stupefied or muddled with drink, is, and prob. always has been, S.E. (far from literary), not c. nor s. nor even coll. cf., however, F. & H.’s opinion with the O.E.D.’s.
fudge. A lie, nonsense; aggravation; humbug or a humbug: 1790. Also (e.g. in Goldsmith, 1766), an exclamation, roughly equivalent to, though slightly pleasanter than, boost / (coll.) C. 18-20. Anecdotal orig. improbable; perhaps ex Ger. futsch, no good, corrupted by Fr. fouts (W.), with the anecdote helping and fudge, v., reinforcing.—2. A forged stamp: schoolboys: from ca. 1870.—3. A farthing: Dubliners’, esp. newsboys’ late C. 19-20. Ex fudge, n.: cf. the Manx not worth a fudge, worthless or useless (E.D.D.).
fudge, v. To interpolate (as in Foote, 1776); do impressively very little (Marryat); fabricate (Shirley Brooks); contrive with imperfect materials, as e.g. writing a book of travel without travelling (Sala, 1859); forge (mostly schoolboys’ from ca. 1870). Coll.: all nuances slightly ob. and, in C. 20, almost S.E.—2. Botch, bungle, v.t.: coll. from ca. 1700.—3. V.i., to talk nonsense, tell fibs: from ca. 1834.—4. Advance the hand unfairly in playing marbles: schoolboys’ from ca. 1875. In C. 20, almost S.E.—5. Copy, crib: also schoolboys’ and -girls’: from ca. 1870.—6. At Christ’s Hospital (—1877), v.i. and t., to prompt oneself in class; to prompt another; hence, to tell. Ex fudge, prob. influenced by forge.
fug. A stuffy atmosphere: from ca. 1888. f ex fog, influenced by fusty, of which it prob. a schoolboys’ or a dial. perversion (W.). In C. 20, coll.—
2. Hence (~1923), one who likes a 'fug', a boy that doesn't play games: mostly schoolboys'.

Manchon.


fug shop, the. The carpenter's shop at: Charterhouse (~1900). A. H. Tod.

fugel, fugle, v.i. To cheat, trick: s. or dial.: C. 18-19. D'Urfey. (F. & H.'s definition is wide of the mark: perhaps the wish was father to the thought hi.)


fulke. See fugel.


fulham, fulham. A loaded die: practically never in singular. Mid-C. 16-early 19: low; in C. 17, perhaps c. Nashe, Shakespeare, Jonson, Butler, B.E., Grose, Scott. Fulham in South-West London was either a main factory or a notorious resort of sharpers. (A high fulham was marked 4, 5, or 6; a low, below 4.)


fulk. 'To use an unfair hand in the playing at taw' (marbles), Grose, 3rd ed.: schoolboys', mid-C. 18-early 19. Prob. ex dial., like so many other schoolboy s.: certainly it is extant in dial.

fulke. To have sexual intercourse (mainly v.i.): ca. 1820-1900: low pedantic. Ex the first and last words of Byron's Don Juan.

fulker. A pawnbroker: coll.: mid-C. 16-17.

Gaseigne, 1566, 'The Fulker will not lend you a farthing upon it.' Ex Ger. (cf. foggier, q.v.)


full as an egg. Very drunk indeed: Australian: from ca. 1925.

full as a goat. Extremely drunk: taverns': C. 18-19. Ware considers poss. to be a corruption of goiste.

full as a tick. Replete (with food and/or drink): coll.: mid-C. 17-20; after ca. 1850, mainly dial.—2. Completely drunk: from ca. 1890: mainly Australian.

full as a tun(ne). Replete: coll.: ca. 1600-1660.

Heywood the proverbist. (Apperson.)

full belly. One who ensures that his belly be full: C. 17 coll.


full-bottomed, -breeched, -pooped. Having a broad behind: coll.: C. 19-20, the first and third being orig. nautical.


full feather, in. See feather.

full fig. in. See fig.—2. Adj. and adv., priapistic: low (~1893); ob.


full house. A busy time: coll.: from ca. 1925. (Richard Blaker, Night-Shift, 1934, 'Sunday nights were, perhaps, the fullest house.') Ex full house notices at places of indoor entertainment.


full march by [e.g. the crown-office, the Scotch Greys are in. The lice are crawling down his (e.g.) head: a low c.p. of ca. 1810-30. Lex. Bal.


full of. Sick and tired of: Australian (~1898); ob. by 1915, † by 1930. Morrise. Cf. full on and full up, 2.—2. Covered with; e.g. full of mud: South African coll. (~1913). Pettman, 'It is an imitation of the Dutch idiom.'

full of beans. See beans.—full of bread. See bread.


full of *fck and half starved. (Often preceded, occ. followed by like a straw-yard bull.) A friendly reply to 'How goes it?' 'Low c.p., from ca. 1870; ob.

full of guts. Vigorous; courageous; (pictures, books, plays, etc.) excellently inspired: coll. from ca. 1885. See guts.

full of it. See full in the belly.—2. Much impressed by any event or subject already mentioned: coll. (~1887). Baumann.

full of oneself. Conceited; somewhat ludicrously arrogant: C. 19-20 coll. Ex the C. 18-19 proverb, He's so full of himself that he is quite empty.

full on. More than ready; eager: coll.: from ca. 1800.—2. Australian, from ca. 1890: sated with, weary of, disgusted with; ob. by 1914, † by 1920. Cf. full up, q.v.

full on for it or for one. Ready and extremely willing: gen. of an indelicate connotation: coll. from ca. 1860.

full pack; full pack up. See Christmas-tree order.—full-pooped. See full-bottomed.


full suit of mourning, have or wear a. To have two black eyes: half-mourning, one black eye. Pugilistic: from ca. 1870; ob.

full swing, in. Very or fully active or engaged;
fully succesful: coll. (—1861). In the swing is C. 18–20; full swing is C. 16–18. See swing.

full to the bung. Exceedingly drunk: low coll.: from ca. 1860. Cf. bung-eyed.


fullam. See fullam.


fulled, be. To be committed for trial: a.: from ca. 1865. If, 2nd ed. Ex fully committed.

fun. Women’s drawers that are very full: feminine coll.: from 1933. See quotation at neatth.-set.

fulness enough in the sleeve-top, there’s not. A derisive reply to a threat; it implies lack of muscle. Tailors’: ca. 1870–1920.


fumbler. An impotent man, gen. old; an un-performing or inadequate husband: mid-C. 17–19 coll. One of D’Urfeys titles is The Old Fumbler. Ex fumble, q.v.—2. The adj. fumbling, sexually impotent, C. 16–19, seems to have always been S.E.

fumbler’s hall. ‘The place where such [i.e. fumbler’s] are to be put for their non-performance’. B.E.: late C. 17–18 coll.: —2. The female predicable: late C. 18–19. For free of fumbler’s hall, see free of... Cf. the dial. fumbler’s feast mentioned by Southey in 1818.


fun. The breeze or the behind: late C. 17–early 19. B.E.: Prob. abbr. fundament.—2. A cheat, a trick: late C. 17–early 19. B.E. Both senses were orig. c. ex funny: certainly funny business is cognate, while U.S. phoney business is from another radical.—3. Difficult work; exciting and/or dangerous events: military: from mid-1800’s; in G.W., from early Somme days (July, 1916), gen. bitterly ironical. (O.E.D. Sup.)


fun do or, gen., have a bit of. To obtain or to grant, or enjoy together, the sexual favour: low coll.: from ca. 1860.

fun, have been making. To be tipsy: coll.: from ca. 1860; ob.

fun, like. Very quickly; vigorously: coll.: from ca. 1815: see like.—2. Also ironically as a decided negative: from ca. 1870.

fun at, poke. To joke (ob.), ridicule, make a butt (of). Also absolute without at. Coll.: from ca. 1836. Barcham. ‘Taking fun at us plain-dealing folks’.


fungus. Tobacco smoke; tobacco; a strong stink: resp. late and early C. 17–early 18 c. B.E.: Ned Ward, 1703 (2nd nuance).—2. (A state of) fear, great nervousness, cowardice: orig. at Oxford, 1743, in to be in a funk. Often preceded by cursed (Grose), mortal, awful, blue (q.v.), or, in C. 19–20, bloody.—3. Among schoolboys, a coward: from ca. 1860. Anstey in Vice Versa, 1882. The second and third senses derive ex the first (itself prob. ex Flemish fonk), as appears from:

fungus, v. ‘To smoke; figuratively, to smoke or stink through fear’. Grose, 1st ed. The stink sense occurs in 1708; that of smoking a pipe, five years earlier, and that of blowing smoke upon a person, four years earlier still. As to fear, the v.i. is recorded for 1737, the v.t., fear, be afraid of, not until a century later, and that of shirk, fight shy of, not until 1857, while the f sense, terrifying, occurs in 1810 (e.g. in Mayhew, 1858).—3. With sense 1, connect ‘to smoke out’, at least as early as 1720: D’Urfeys, Moncrieff; with sense 2 (v.i.), cf. schoolboys’ v.i. funk, unfairly to move the hand forward in playing marbles: from ca. 1810; ob.: cf. fudge, v., 4. (O.E.D. and S.O.D.). Perhaps n. and v. are ultimately derivable ex L. fumus, smoke, fumigare, to fumigate or smoke.


fungus-room. That room at the Royal College of Surgeons in which, on the last evening of their final examination during the adding of their marks,


funkum. See funk 'um.

funky. Afraid: timid; very nervous: coll. from ca. 1837. Redae, 'The Remaining Barking-tonians were less funky, and made some fair scores.' Cf. windy, (have the) wind up.


funnily, funniness, ex funny, adj., q.v., in the corresponding senses: C. 19-20.

funny. A narrow, clinker-built boat for sculls; a racing-skiff: Cambridge and nautical s. > j. from ca. 1709. Barham; The Field, Jan. 28, 1882.


funny, feel. To feel ill: from ca. 1895.—2. To be overtaken with drink or with emotion (e.g. of amorousness): the former (†), from ca. 1890; the latter from ca. 1890.


funny bone. The extremity—at the elbow—of the humerus, the 'funniness' being caused by the ulnar nerve: coll.: from ca. 1840. Barham. Presumably by a pun on humerus, but greatly influenced by funny feeling, i.e. sensitiveness.


funny for words, too. Extremely funny: coll.: late C. 19-20. Prob. suggested by too funny for anything, which was orig. (the late 1880's) U.S. (Thorneton.)


funny party. 'A warship's minstrel troupe or entertainers of any kind': naval coll.: late C. 19-20. Bowen.


fur and feather(s). Game: sportsmen: from ca. 1830: orig. s., then coll., then, in C. 20, j. or S.E. fur fly, make the fur. See fly, make the fur.

fur out, have one. To be very angry: Winchester College: from ca. 1870.

fur trade. Barristers: ca. 1830-80. 'Multiple' journalist Reynolds, 1839.

fuschia. A very frequent error for fuchsia. Cf. camelia for camellia.

fuss. See squeeze, n. 6.

fuss-box. A post-1910, mostly upper-class variant of the next. O.E.D. (Sup.).

fuss pot, fuss-pot. A very fussy person: coll. (not the upper classes): from ca. 1890.

fussock, fussocks; a mere fussocks. ‘A Lazy Fat-Ars’d Wench’, B.E., who proceeds, ‘A Fat Fussocks, a Flusom [f fusem], Fat, Stripping Woman’; Grose (1st ed.) has ‘an old fuss-ock; a frowsy old woman’. Coll. and dial.: late C. 17–19; † except as dial. Connected with (to) fosaic, q.v., and:


fussocks, a mere. See fussock.

fuzzy. (Of a garment) very, or too, elegant: from before 1923. Manchon. Ex S.E. fussy about (clothes).

fussy man, the. A school-attendance officer: urban: from ca. 1925.


fustian, n. and adj., bombast(ic), has never, I think, despit F. & H., been other than S.E.— 2. Wine: but gen. with white = champagne, red = port, the latter occurring in Ainsworth, 1834. Law: late C. 18–19.

fustilarian. A low fellow, scoundrel: coll.: late C. 16–17. Shakespeare. † fusty (see also next entry) + suffix -arian as a variation on the later- recorded:


fut, go. See phut, go.

[futter, coined by Sir Richard Burton, is, despite F. & H., S.E.—indeed literary—rather than unconventional. Ex Fr. fouter, it = to cot with.]

futures, gen. with deal in: to speculate for a rise or a fall, esp. in cotton: Stock Exchange coll.: from ca. 1880. In C. 20, S.E. Baumann.


G.H! Queen Anne’s dead!: an abbr. of George Home, q.v.

g.m. A.M.; only of the ‘small’ hours, e.g. ‘2 g.m.’, ‘some time g.m.’: jocular (— 1923). Manchon. Perhaps ex ‘good morning’.

G.P.; the Street. Great Portland Street, London: esp., the car-mart there: motor-trade, now very occurring on coll.: from ca. 1928. R. Blaker, Night-shift, 1934, ‘Great Portland Street— The Street’ one and only and unmistakable; ‘G.P.—the street,’ periodization.

G.S. hairy. See hairy, n.

g.v. or G.V., the. The ‘governor’ (q.v.): somewhat jocular (— 1923). Manchon. Ex gov.

g.y. Abbr. galley-yarn, q.v.


fuzz-ball. A puff-ball (the fungus fregipendron bene) coll.: late C. 18–20. (S.O.I.) Of such long usage as to be, C. 19–20, virtually S.E.


fuzziness. A drunken condition: hence incoherence, bewildermest; a temporary dense stupidity: coll.: from ca. 1801; ob. The C. 20 prefers fuzziness.— 2. An intentional blurring: artists’ and, later, photographers’ s. (— 1808); in C. 20 j.


fuzzy. Tipsy: coll.: from ca. 1770.— 2. Hence, incoherent, temporarily ‘dense’, bewildered: coll.: late C. 18–20; ob.— 3. Rough, e.g. ‘a fuzzy cloth’; bag, vigorous, e.g. ‘a fuzzy wench’; and esp. fluffy (1825): of those three nuances, the first is coll., the second s., the third orig. coll. but soon S.E. — 4. Prob. ex sense 1 is the nautical sense: rotten, unsound (of a ship): from ca. 1860. Smyth.


-fy is sometimes a jocularly coll. or, as in argufy, a sol. suffix: C. 19–20. But most such coinings have remained money-words.


*fyre-buck (see also buck). A sixpence: in late C. 18, c.; in C. 19, low; † by 1883; already ob. in 1859. G. Parker’s View of Society, 1781.

*fylich(e). See flich.—fyst(e). See foist.
gab, flash the, voc. one's. To show off in conversation: low (— 1819); ob. Moore.

gab, gift of the. 'A faculty of speech, nimble-tongued eloquence', Grose, 1st ed.: low coll.: from ca. 1790. Shelley in Edipus Tyrannus. Earlier († ca. 1640), gift of the gab, as in B.B. = the form prevalent until ca. 1730. gab your stop. Be quiet! A C. 19–20 low coll. variant of Scottish speak (shut up) your gab.


gabber. A prater, ceaseless talker: coll.: from ca. 1790. (O.E.D.)

See goby.


gabble, to. Talk rapidly, volubly, inconsequently: late C. 16–20; S.E. till ca. 1820, then a decidedly pejorative coll. The same applies to gabbling, vbl.n.

gabble-gabble. A contemptuous variation on gabbly, n. and v., qv.


gabbling. See gabbly, v. gaby. See gaby.

gable, gable-end. The head: orig. builders' s.: from ca. 1870. Ob. Strangely, the Old High German radical proposed by W. means a head.


† ex gape (cf. gape-ned) influenced by baby; it occurs in Lancashire dial. in 1740 (E.D.D.). It is not to be connected with the Scottish adj. gaby, garrulous.


gad the hoof. To go without shoes; hence to walk, roam about: low: from ca. 1845. Cf. pad the hoof, hoof it, qv.v.

gad up and down. To go a-gossiping: late C. 17–18 coll. B.E.

See gad yang. 'A Chinese coasting junk': nautical: late C. 19–20. Bowen. Prob. because they gad about, and yang ex the Yangtse-kiang or as a typical Chinese name.

gadabout. A gossip moving from neighbour to neighbour; a housewife too frequently talking to or visiting others; a woman constantly out shopping, visiting, and otherwise enjoying herself: cf. the C. 18 gower, 'gadding gossips shall dine on the pot-lid'. Coll.: from ca. 1837. Also adj.: coll., 1817 (O.E.D.). In C. 20, both n. and adj. are S.E.
gadget; occ. gadjet. A small mechanical con-

trivance, a tool, a part of a mechanism: nautical coll.: from ca. 1855, though not in print before 1866 (O.E.D. Sup.). Prob. ex Fr. gâchet, a piece of mechanism (W.); cf. however, S.E. gasket.—2. Hence, an adjunct; a knick-knack: coll.: from ca. 1914. The O.E.D. (Sup.) records it for 1915— &. Hence, loosely, any small object: from ca. 1918. —of the gadget, 'the trick', the right thing to do: military: 1917; Manchon. Prob. ex sense 1.

gadabout! I.e. God's bug! (the infant Saviour): coll.: late C. 17–18. Congreve. (Wars.)

gado. The penis: late C. 17–19: low coll. Variant catoe. Ex It. cazzo. —2. As an interjection: late C. 17–19:19. Dickens, "Gado!" said the undertaker. An interesting example of the (politely ob.) phallicism of many oaths and other expletives: cf. and see b**lle, b**ss, c**ning, f*ck, g*e*ck, tu*t.

gadzooks. A mild expletive: either ex gadeo or a corruption of God's hooks (hocks, houghs, W.): coll.: late C. 17–20; but since ca. 1870, only as deliberate jocularity or in 'period pieces'. There are many other gad(s) variations, but these need not be listed.


*gaff, v.i. To toss for liquor: c.: >, ca. 1820, low s.: ca. 1810–80. Vaux. Cf. gaffling.—Also, 2, to gamble: same period.—3. To play in a 'gaff' (see n., 6): from ca. 1860—ob.

gaff, blow the. To inform; divulge a secret: low (perhaps orig. c.): from ca. 1810. (Earlier blow the gad, see gab. See also blow.) Vaux; Manrvey.


gaffer. To have sexual intercourse: C. 19. † ex gav, v. implicated in chawsering (sexual intercourse), q.v.: app. a corruption thereof.

gaffing. A way of tossing three coins in a hat to say who is to pay for drinks; only he who calls correctly for all three is exempt from payment: low (cf. orig.): ca. 1828-80. Pierce Egan.—2. Hence, toss-penny; tossing of counters: low col. (— 1859). H., 1st ed.

gag. Something placed in the mouth to silence or prevent the subject's cries: mid C. 16-20. Perhaps always s.E., but ca. 1660-1800 it may have been c., then low; witness B.E. (at to gag) and Grose.—2. Boiled fat; more precisely, the fatty part of boiled beef: Christ's Hospital (— 1813); but see also section on Eton slang, § 3. Lamb. † Etymology. Cf. gag-eater.—3. A joke; invention; hoax; imposture; humbug; false rumour: from ca. 1805: low s. >, ca. 1880, coll.: ob. Bee; The Daily News, May 16, 1865. Ex susan 1. — 4. Whence, interpolated words, esp. jokes or c.p. comments: theatrical (— 1847). Pall Mall Gazette, March 5, 1890, 'Mr. Augustus Harris pointed out that ... actors and singers were continually introducing gag into their business.' In this quotation and often elsewhere, gag is collective, i.e. gaffing, 3. Cf. wherez. Ex proceeding sense, itself perhaps ex susan 1.—5. A criticism in Latin; an analysis of some historical work: Winchester College: from ca. 1850. Mansfield. Ex gahering, an alternative name for this exercise.—6. A lie: c.: ca. 1890-1920. H., 3rd ed. *ex theatrical gag.—7. An excuse; † a dodge: C. 20, mainly military. Often heard in the Army in 1914-18. Ex the 'lie' and the theatrical sense.


*gag, on the high, adj. and adv. Telling secrets; 'on the whisper': c.: ca. 1820-80. Kent, Duncombe. Cf. to gag, last sense.

*gag on the low. In extreme destitution; in lowest beggarly; with appalling bad luck; in utter despair: c.: ca. 1820-80. Cf. preceding entry.

gag, strikes the. To desist from joking or chaffing: low (? c.): ca. 1830-70. Ainsworth in Jack Sheppard. See gag, n., 3.

gag-eater. A Christ's Hospital term of reproach: from ca. 1800; ex gap, n., 2, perhaps by way of gag, v., 1. (See also Eton slang: § 3.)

gag-master. See gagger, 3.

gag-piece. (Theatrical) a play in which 'gags' are, or can effectively be, freely used (— 1864). H., 3rd ed.

gaga. Incorrectly ga-ga. Evincing senile decay; stupidly dull, fatuous; 'soft', 'dotty': 1921. Maurice Baring (O.E.D. Sup.). Adopted ex Fr. s., which may, seeing that it was orig. artistes', derive ex Gauquins: more prob., however, echo of idiotic laughter. Ex. go gaga. — 2. In The Silver Spoon, Galsworthy uses it (1926) for 'strait-laced'—


*gage. In late C. 18—mid 19 c., one of those 'cheats who by sham pretences, and wonderful stories of their sufferings, impose on the credulity of well-meaning people'. Grose, 2nd ed. Ex gav, v., 2. Cf. run gaff. Called high and low gagger: also cf. gag, on the high or low.—2. Hence, a tramp, esp. one that begs: tramps' c.: mid-C. 19-20.—3. An actor or music-hall 'artist': from late 1840's, esp. one that often employs 'gags' (gag, n., 4); theatrical (— 1823). Egan's Grose; The Fortnightly Review, April, 1887, 'Robson ... was an inveterate gagger. Variants: gytial (rarly), gag-master (occ.), and gagger (fairly often).—4. The under-lip: Pertshiire c.: C. 19-20; ob. (E.D.D.) Also gagger. Prob. ex † S.E. gag, v.i., to project.


*gagging. The persuading a stranger that he is an old acquaintance and then 'borrowing' money from him: ca. 1825-80: c.—2. Loitering about for fares: cabmen's: ca. 1850-1910 Mayhew.—3. The frequent employment of 'gags' (n., 4); theatrical (— 1880). Also as ppl. adj.—4. Cf. gages 1, 2). Begging to be tramps' c.: C. 20. W. A. Gape, see gag, v., 8.


gagist. See gagger, 3.

*gagger's coach. A hurdle: c. of ca. 1820-60. Duncombe. Ex gapper, a goose. Or is this Kent's mistake, copied by Duncombe, for goller's coach (q.v.), also = a hurdle?—gagger. See gagger, 3.

Gaiety Girl. (Gen. pl.) One of the 'dashing singing and dancing comedians in variety pieces—from their first gaining attention at the Gaiety Theatre': theatrical col.: from ca. 1890; ob. Ware. Of.
GAIETY STEP

Gallantry. the. 'The 9th (Service) Battalion of the Royal West Surrey. A Great War nickname,' F. & Gibbons.

gallant. See gallivant.

gallanty. *gallant. See gallivant.


gallery, play the. To be, make an audience; to applause: coll. (—1780); ob. Ex the theatre. The Echo, July 23, 1870, 'We were constantly called in to play the gallery to his witty remarks.' Cf.:

gallery, play to the. Orig. theatrical, then sport- ing, then gen.: to act so as to capture popular applause: from ca. 1870: coll. Hence gallery-hit, -play, -shot, -stroke, etc., one designed to please the unceritical and those who like showy display.


galley. A synonym († by 1925) of Bootham School senses of soap, n. and v. (Anon., Dict. of Bootham Slang, 1925.)

galley, build a, on which Grose expatiates, is indelible.

galley-down-haul. An imaginary fitting, for the further confusion of a youngster for the first time at sea: nautical coll. mid-C. 19-20. Bowen. Cf. key of the starboard watch, q.v.

galley down your back! put a. Such-and-such a superior wishes to see you!: printers: from ca. 1870; ob. The galley—an oblong tray—would serve as a screen.

[galley-lost and g.-halfpenny, listed by F. & H., are S.E.: see the O.E.D.]

galley-growler or stoker. An idler; malingerer: naval.: from ca. 1850, Smyth. The galley is, of course, the cook-house: cf. galley-yarn, q.v.

galley-news. g.-packet (Smyth). See galley-yarn.


galley-slave. A compositor: printers': late C. 19-20. Moxon. Ex the oblong tray whereon the type is made up for page or column.

galley-stoker. See gally-growler.

galley-wireless. News of destination, etc.: nautical: from ca. 1925. Bowen remarks that it 'reaches the men from the officers by way of the stewards'. Contrast and cf.:


gallynigger. See gallyniper.

gallikism and Gallicism are, in C. 19-20, occ. confused. (O.E.D.)

GALLIGASKINS, S.E. in C. 18–17, is in C. 18–20 (ob.) a gen. juicular coll. for any loose breeches. Grose, 3rd ed. For the etymology of the S.E. word, see esp. W.

gallimandr(y). See gallimandrey.

gallipot, n., occ. gall(e)nipper. A large mosquito: West Indians (—1847). Ex U.S. usage (1801). Perhaps one that has a 'gallows' nip or bite: see gallows, adj.


gallipot, etc. Gall(g)istern, etc. A small vessel which was conveyed in a galley (vessel). Grose, 1st ed.; Michael Scott; Thackeray in his Book of Snobs. Cf. bulla.


gallivant, etc. 'A nest of whores': Bee: London low ca. 1820–40. 'Jon Bee,' 1823. A perversion of galerry, 2, q.v. Hence, to gal(l)ivant about, 'trapes'; occ. fuss or bustle about: coll. from ca. 1825. Miss Braddon, 'His only daughter gallivanting at a theat're'. A humorous variation of (to) gallant, as in Galt's 'The witches...gallanting over field and flood' (W.). The vb.l.n. is common.

gallon distemper. Delirium tremens; the less serious after-effects of drinking: C. 19–20 (ob.) coll. or s. Cf. barrel-fever; hot-coppers.

gallop. See gallo.

galloper. A blood horse; a hunter: ca. 1810–60; low or c. Lex. Bul.—2. An aide-de-camp; an orderly officer: military; from ca. 1870; in C. 20, j.

galloper Smith. Lord Birkenhead (the Mr. Smith of the day): ca. 1913–15. Collinson. Ex his quality as a Union leader.


gallows. (As = one who deserves hanging; S.E.)—2. Gen. in pl., a pair of braces: low coll.; 1730; then U.S. (1806); re-anglicised ca. 1830; in C. 19 20, mostly dial. Mayhew; E.D.1). Gallows, adj. Enormous; 'fine'; an intensive, cf. bloody: late C. 18–20, ob. except in dial. Parker, 1789, 'They pattered flash with gallows fun.' Whence:

gallows, adv. Very; extremely: from ca. 1820; ob. except in dial. Byron, 'Then your Bowing will wax gallows haughty!' Also gallus. Gallows, a child's best guide to the. See history of the four kings.

gallows-apples of make. To hang: low (t o.): ca. 1826–80. Lyttoton. (O.E.D.)

gallows-bird. A corpse on, or from, the gallows: low coll. (—1861); ob. Ex the S.E. sense, one that deserves to be hanged.

[gallows-faced or -looking, like g-clapper, -climber, -minded, -ripe, etc., is S.E.; the same applies to George Eliot's gallowsness.]


gal(g)le. See gallipot baronet.


gamble, ooc. gal loot, rarely ge(e)loot. A man, chap, fellow; gen. a pejorative, implying stupidity or boorishness or moral vice, U.S., anglicised ca. 1880. Developed from the, nautical s. sense (—1835; t by 1900), a young or inexperienced marine. Marryat in Jacob Faithful, 'Four greater gallots were never picked up,' Ex:—3. A soldier: low or c. (—1812); t by 1890. Vaux. t ex Dutch geloot, a run. (S.O.D.; W.)

galoot, on the gay. On the spree: low, mostly Cockney (—1892). 'Baldrick's Milliken.' Gallow, gallowes, galloons, golopous; or any with —thus. Delicious; delightful; splendid; a gen. superlative: low: from ca. 1855; ob. Judy, Sept. 21, 1887, 'The galopous sum of 20,000,000 dollars.' A fanciful adj. of the catuswampus, scrumpituous type, perhaps via Norwich dial. (H., 1884). See galoopous.

galore; occ. all galoare, galloare. In abundance: from ca. 1670; coll. till ca. 1800, then S.E.—though far from literary. In C. 19, also as galore. Prob ex Irish go leor, in sufficiency. Ned Ward, Gross, Reade.

galumph (incorrectly galumph), like other humorous (esp. Lewis Carroll's) blinks, looks coll but certainly isn't. Such blinks, if adopted by the public, are, after the first few years, almost inevitably S.E. F. & H. records galumps as an Americanism: not a very shocking mistake, for the Americans adopted it warmly and used it frequently. (For blinks, see Stang at the chapter on Oddities.)

*gam. Pluck; gameness: c. (—1888).-2. With variant gamb, a leg, esp. if bow or otherwise ill shaped; nearly always in pl.: from ca. 1780: o. G. Parker, 1781; Gross, 2nd ed. In low U.S., only of a girl's legs. It is also, as gamb, the heraldic term for a leg. Ex Northern Fr. gambe or else ex It. gambe, via Lingua Frana.—3. A hammock: training-ship Britannia: late C. 19. Bowman. Perhaps ex sense 2.—4. Abbr. gamarooch: C. 20: mostly military.


Gam-better. To humling, deceive: political: ca. 1879–82. Ex Gambetta (1832–82), that Fr. statesman of Italo-Haeriste origin whose popularity began to wane in 1879. Ware.


*gam it. To walk; esp. to 'leg it', run away: C. 19 c.


gamarooch, -roche, n. and, hence, v. (Of women.) (To practise) penningam: late C. 19–20, low. Ex Fr. (t ex Arabic)


*gam(e). See gam, 2.

gamble. Anything, esp. course or procedure, involving risk: coll.: from ca. 1820.—2. An act of gambling: coll.: from ca. 1790's. (Only S.E.) Whence on the gamble, engaged on a course or spell of gambling: coll.: from ca. 1880.

gamble on that l, you can or may. Certainly! Assuredly! Coll.: from ca. 1870 in England; ex U.S. (1866, Artemus Ward).
GAMBLER

GAMMONING

gambler. A mid-C. 18–early 19 class of sharper: low c., or whence mod. S.E.
gambolous. Of, like to, gambling: Society coll. coined by Joseph Chamberlain on April 29, 1885, in a speech made at a dinner given by the Eighty Club; ob. Ware. Ex gambling + -hazardous.
gamboler or -jer. See gambardier.
game. (Collective for) harlots, esp. a brothel: c.: late C. 17–early 19.—2. A simleton, a dupe, a 'pigeon,' gen., a collective n. c.: late C. 17–early 19. B.E., Gros. —3. The proceeds of a robbery: c. of ca. 1680–90.—4. A 'lard' or source of amusement: coll. Dickens, 1838 (S.O.D.).—5. Preceded by the, the game refers to some occupation and, except among thieves (where it is c.), to be demarcated as coll.: among thieves it means thieving (1812, Vaux); among sailors, slave-trading (1860); among C. 17–early 18 lovers of sport, cock-fighting; in general, a connivance, coition (C. 17–20); among harlots, prostitution (C. 17–29).—6. As plan, trick or dodge (esp. in pl.), the term—despite F. & H.—is gen. considered to be S.E.; nevertheless, I consider that what is yours (his, etc.) game or little game, mid-C. 19–20 ('Ducange Anglicus', 1877), is definitely coll. —game, v. To jeer at; pretend to expose; make a game of: c.: late C. 17–18. B.E. (N.b. make (f) a game of is S.E.)
game, cock of the, a champion, like game, die, to die resolute, game, play the, to behave like a man and a gentleman, and (the, his, etc.) game is up, all is lost, are all metaphors from sport: and all, despite F. & H., are S.E., though die game may have been coll.]
game!, its a. It's absurd, or senseless: military coll. c.p. of 1910–19. 'Applied to the war and to the military machine,' B. & P.
game, dashed up the. See dash up.

game cove. An associate of thieves: C. 19 c.

Ex game, n. 5.
game publican. A publican dealing in stolen goods or winking at his customers' offences: C. 19: c. >, ca. 1830, low.
game pullet. 'A young whore, or forward girl in the way of becoming one,' Gros. 1st ed.: late C. 19–19 low (cf. orig. c.). Cf. game woman.
game ship. A ship whose captain and officers are supposed to be or overlook thefts from the cargo: nautical: ca. 1830–90.

[gameness, gam(e) (plucky; malodorous), gaminess (malodorousness), and gaming-house, all listed by F. & H. as coll., have always been S.E.]
gamester. A harlot: C. 17 coll.—2. In the sense of wench, C. 17, the term lies on the borderline of coll. and S.E.
gammer, as rustic title, C. 19–20 (ob.), is coll. > S.E.; as term of address, = 'my good woman', it is coll. Ex grandmother. Cf. goffer.
gammocks. Pranks; wild play: s. (—1823) and (in late C. 19–20, nothing but) dial. 'Jon Bee.' Ex game.
gammon. Nonsense, humbug; a ridiculous story; deceitful talk; deceit: low, prob. orig. c. (—1805); in C. 20, low coll. Ex the late C. 18–19 c. sense, talk, chatter, gen. gammon and pater, q.v. (In C. 18–early 19, often spelt gamon.) Parker; Hood, 'Behold you servitor of God and Mammon ... Blends Gospel textes with trading gammon.' Perhaps ex C. 17 sense, a legger or seller of gammons of bacon. (Fr. B. bonmanger(l)).—3. Wholly o. one who engages the attention of a man to be robbed by a confederate: C. 19. Cf. cover.

gammon, v.i. To talk, esp. plausibly (—1780).—2. (V.i. and t.) To pretend: from ca. 1810.—3. Humbug or hoax; tell deceitful or extravagant stories to; deceive merrily or with lies or fibs; flatter shamelessly: from ca. 1810. Likewise in Vaux. All senses orig. low: from ca. 1850, low coll. Hume Nabet, 1890, 'Oh, don't try to gammon me, you cunning young school-miss.' Cf. bamp, cod, flam, kid, pull one's leg, sell, self-soap, take in.—4. V.i., act as 'cover' to a thief: C. 19 (C. 18) c. n. 3. (S.O.D.).—5. To cheat (v.i.) at gaming: late C. 17–mid-18: c. B.E. Prob. the origin of sense 1–3 and of n., 1. Its own etymology is obscure: but cf. game, v., 1.
gammon! Interjection = nonsens! bosh!: from ca. 1825; low s., >, by 1860, low coll. Michael Scott, 1836, 'Gammon, tell that to the marines.' Ex n., 1, or ex that all gammon (Vaux, 1812).
gammon, give or keep in. To engage a person's attention—the former connotes by mere proinquity, the latter by conversation—while another robs him: C. 18–19 c. Capt. Alex. Smith, 1720; Haggart, 1821. Cf. gammon, n., 3.
gammon and spinach. Nonsense; humbug; deceit: low coll.: from ca. 1849; ob. Dickens, 1849. 'What a world of gammon and spinach it is.' An elaboration of gammon, n., 1, after gammon and pater.
gammon the twelve. To deceive the jury: c. (—1812); ob. Vaux, who shows that in fine twig, cleverly or thoroughly, was often added. See gammon, v., 3.
gammoner. One who talks nonsense or humbug; a specious or ulterior deceiver: from ca. 1830; slightly ob. Ex gammon, v., 1–2. (Cf. gammon, n., 1.) One who covers the action of his thieving confederate: C. 19 c. Cf. cover.
gammoning. Vbl.n. and ppl. adj. corresponding
to gammon, v., in all senses, though rarely in the last—gammoning which was by 1900, while the other gammoning's are extant though slightly ob.


*gammon*. False, apocryphal; forged: c. (— 1839). Brandon. As in gammy stuff, spurious, i.e. worthless, medicine; gammy moniker, a forged signature; gammy lour (love), counterfeit money. Perhaps ex gammy, n., 1.—2. Also c., but tramps: mean; hard (of householders): mid-C. 18–20.

Bampfylde Moor-Carew. Opp. bone. Hence gammy villain or villain, a town in which unlicensed hawking is enthusiastically discouraged by the police. Quot: theatrical: from ca. 1885; ob.: † ex next sense.—4. Halt and maimed: low coll.: from ca. 1870. Gammy leg, E.D.D., a lame leg; gammy arm, an arm injured permanently or temporarily; gammy-eyed, blind, or sore-eyed. Either a corruption of game = lame or ex gam, n., 2.—5. Hence, "disabled through injury or pain": (low) coll.: from ca. 1890. O.E.D. (Sup.).

*gammon*. See gammon, n. and v.

gamp or Gamp. A monthly or sick nurse, esp. if disreputable; a midwife: coll. (— 1864); ob.: † ex next sense.—4. Halt and maimed: low coll.: from ca. 1870. Gammy leg, E.D.D., a lame leg; gammy arm, an arm injured permanently or temporarily; gammy-eyed, blind, or sore-eyed. Either a corruption of game = lame or ex gam, n., 2.—5. Hence, "disabled through injury or pain": (low) coll.: from ca. 1890. O.E.D. (Sup.).

*gang*.

*gang*. See gammon, n. and v.

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*Gander*. A fop: London (mostly in Society): ca. 1815–40. Ware, "It is a perversion of Gandin, the Parian description of fop."


*Gander*. What's sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. Let us be consistent! Coll. (in C. 20, S.E.): from ca. 1660. Head, Swift, Byron. Apperson quotes Varro's *Idem Ascio quod Tatio jus eabo*. Cf. the proverbs 'As is the goose so is the gander,' C. 18, and 'Goose, gander, and goeling are three sounds, but one thing,' C. 17.

*Gander-faced*. Silly-faced; proletarian (mostly Cockney) coll. (— 1887); slightly ob. Bauman.

*Gander-month* or -moon. The month after childbirth, when in C. 17–early 19 it was held excusable for the husband to err. Coll.: † except in dial. Dekker, 1636 (O.E.D.).


*gang*. A troop; a company: an underworld band of men: C. 17–20. Only from ca. 1850 has it ceased to be low coll. B.E., e.g., defines: 'An ill Knot or Crew of Thieves, Pickpockets or Miscreants.' Even in C. 20, when (19C) sentimentalised; c. or political party or section, or of a social, commercial, artistic, or journalistic—informal, yet effective—association or group, it has a call, tingle, as in, e.g., Denis Mackail, *Greenery Street*, 1925, "Quite a party!" "Yes; quite a gang."


*gangway* (or gangway, make way) for a naval officer! A C. 20, esp. G.W., Army saying in reference to oneself or another, another desiring clear passage.


gail-bird. One who has been often or long in gaol: from ca. 1860. Until ca. 1860. Coll. Slo mellet, 1762, 'He is become a blackguard gail-bird."

*gailer's coach*. A hurdle: 'traitors being usually conveyed from the gaol, to the place of execution, on a hurdle or sledge', Grose, 3rd ed.: c. > low: late C. 17–early 19. Possibly the orig. of gauger's coach, q.v. (first B.E. and connab: c. of a gauger's coach; but *A New Cants Dictionary*, 1725, has correctly.)


*gap*, blow the. To inform, 'peach': a ca. 1820–90 variant of blow the gap.


gape. The female pudendum; gen. as g. over the garter: C. 19–20 low; ob. Cf. gaper.

gape-seed, gapseed. A cause of astonishment;
a marvellous event, extraordinary or unusual sight, etc.; coll.: late C. 16-20, ob. Esp. with seek or buy, a vbl. phrase is frequent. (Florio, 1508, has the rare gaping seed.) Nash; B.E.; Grove, 1st ed., 'I amcome abroad for a little gapseed'; C. 19-20 dial., be fond of or gather or sowe g., or have a little g. A folk-pon on gapse.—One who stares with open mouth: from ca. 1890; coll.: ob.

gape-seed, be looking for. To be lazy and inattentive to one's work; C. 19 coll., C. 20 dial. (ob.)

gaper, or g. over the garter. The pudendum muliebre: C. 19-20 low; ob.—2. (gaper.) A very easy catch: cricketers': C. 20; slightly ob. P. G. Wodehouse, A Prefect's Uncle, 1903.

gaperies (or G.), the. Gay Paris: London: ca. 1902–ca. 1912. Ware, 'The very last outcome of entertainments ending in "tes." Cf. Colinderies, Freakeries, etc. (Gay Paree.)
gapes, the. A bit of yawning; utter boredom: coll.: from ca. 1815. Jane Austen.
gapped, ppl. adj. Worsted; defeated: coll.: ca. 1750–1820. Ex S.E. sense, with the edges notched or cut about.
gapes with one bush, stop two. To accomplish two purposes at one time: C. 16–17; coll. till C. 17, then S.E. Cf. kill two birds with one stone.
gar in oaths (begar i, by gar i, gar i) is a corruption of God (cf. guz): late C. 16–20. (O.E.D.) Rather Anglo-French than purely English: cf., however, the U.S. pronunciation of God as Gard.

Gar and Starter, the. The Star and Garter Inn at Richmond: jocular Spoonerism (—1874). H., 5th ed.

Garamity. See Goramity.

garbage. Clothes and personal effects: naval (—1908); ob. Ware, 'Probably from the appearance of a box of clothes waiting the wash'—and perhaps suggested by dunnage.—2. 'The goods gotten in the lifting law' (criminal 'dodge'): c.: late C. 10–early 17. Greene, Second Conny-Catching, 1592.


garboil is, mid-C. 16–mid-18, often used incorrectly for garble. (O.E.D.)

gard. The female pudendum: C. 16–20. When a euphemism, S.E.: when used in jocular or amatory reference, without euphemistic intentions, it is cultured coll. (Occ., garden of Eden, indubitably a euphemism.)


garden, v. See gardening.

garden or garden-path, lead up the. To blarney (a person), humbug, entice, mislead: from early 1920's. Ex gently susious courtship.

*gard en, put (one) in the. To defraud (a confederate), esp. of (part of) his monetary share: c.: from ca. 1810; ob. Vaux (variants...), buck, hole, etc. Cf. regular, q.v.


Garden-hedge. The female pubic hair: C. 19–20 low (ob.); rarely a euphemism.

Garden- or garden-house. A brothel: the garden-form is C. 17. coll. > literary; the Garden-, C. 18–early 19 low coll. See garden, 2, Garden goddess, and the various Covent Garden entries.


garden-path. See garden, lead up the.

garden-rake. A tooth-comb: a low and jocular coll.: from ca. 1870.

garden steereage. Additional rest 'allowed to the bluejacket the morning after he has been busy on a night job': naval: late C. 19–20. Bowen.

garden-violet. See violet.


gardener. The male member: cf. and ex garden: C. 19–20; ob.—2. An awkward coachman: coll.—(1859); † by 1918. Ex the gardener's occ. relieving the coachman. Cabbies, wishing to annoy real coachmen, used to shout, 'Get on, gardener' (H., 1864). Cf. tea-kettle coachman or groom.

gardening. Patting the pitch, picking up loose bits of turf: cricketers' jocular coll. (—1897). Lewis.


gardy-loo. Take care! Look out! A mid-C. 18–early 19 Scottish coll. Ex Fr. gardes[-tous de] l'eau (or via the supposed Fr. gares de l'eau) ex Fr. gar de l'eau, i.e. the slops thrown into the street.—2. Hence, the act of so emptying the slops: same period and status.


*gargle, v.i. To drink; drink a lot, 'celebrate': orig.—? ca. 1800—medical; gen. by 1889. The Morning Advertiser, March 2, 1891, 'It's my birthday; let's gargle.'


garlic, smell. To smell something 'fishy', to have suspicions: Cockney (—1887); slightly ob. Baumann.

Garnet, Sir. See Sir Garnet.

garnish, in late C. 17–19 occ. garnish money. A fee exacted by gauriers and 'old hands' from a new-comer to prison: late C. 16–19: s. until ca. 1790; then coll. >, by 1830. S.E. Greene, B.E. (Abolished by George IV.)—2. Among workmen, mid-C. 18–19. an 'entrance fee'—wholly informal:
garnish. Not quite in Northern—mainly Yorkshire—dial.—3. In C. 18–19 c., fetters, handcuffs. But, as the O.E.D. points out, this may well be a ghost-word due to a misapprehension by Johnson, copied by F. & H. Cf.:

* garnish, v. To fit with fetters; handcuff: o. (-1755); † by 1900. Ex garnish, n., 1. But see garnish, n., last sense.

garret. See garridge.—garotte. See garrotte.


garret, queer or wrong in one’s. Crazy : a. when not dial. (—1869). O.E.D. Ex garret, 1.

garreteation. A ludicrous, low popular ceremony practised at Warrington with, or by, a dozen, when a new parliament opens, the ‘voting’ -qualification being open-air coition in or near Garret, a mean hamlet : C. 18–early 19. Coll. : or perhaps rather a legitimate folk-lore term. See Grose, 1785.

garret empty or unfurnished, have one’s (occ. the). To have no brains; to be a fool, somewhat crazy: from ca. 1790. Cf. Kentish (be) not rightly garretted.

garret-mast. A cabinet-maker that, working on his own account, sells direct to the dealers in cabinet trade: from ca. 1820: in C. 20, S.E. and ob. Mayhew.


*gar'net. To cheat with the aid of cards concealed at the back of the neck : card-sharpening c. : from ca. 1860.

*gar'net tip (one) the. To rob during or after throttling the victim : c. : from ca. 1850; † by 1900. The and the y. rob with or by throttling, with their natural derivatives, are S.E. ex the S.E. sense, execution by strangulation ; see, however, back-stall, front-stall, and ugly or nasty-man. Ex Sp. garrode, a stick : cf. garrot, a surgical tourniquet.

*garrett. Vbl.n. corresponding with garre't(e), v., above.


garter, get over her or the. To take manual liberties with a woman : C. 19–20 (ob.) low coll.

garter, in the catching up of a. In a moment; quickly: coll. : from ca. 1690; ob. O.E.D.

garter-hole or eye-hole. Fillet-hole : bell-ringers (—1901), resp. s. and coll. (Rev. H. Earle Bulwer.)

garters, have one’s guts for. See guts for garnet.
gas, v. To supply with gas; to light with gas: coll. : from ca. 1865: ob. by 1920; † by 1930. (O.E.D.)—Talk idly or for talking’s sake. Cf. Ca. 1800. ob. Probably used by such talk, is or, and mainly U.S.
gas, give a person. To sell him; give a thrashing; ca. 1860–90. See (give one) jessie, by which it was perhaps suggested. (H., 2nd ed.)
gas, step on, occ. tread on the. To put on speed: U.S., anglicised ca. 1926. Ex motor-driving, gas being gasolene.

gas, turn off the. To cease, cause to cease, from overmuch talk or from occasioning; from ca. 1880. Ex gas, n., 1. Cf.:

gas, turn on the. To begin talking hard or boasting: from ca. 1880.

gas and gaiters. Nonsense; mere verbiage, utter redundancy; exaggerated rubbish: from ca. 1828. An elaboration of gas, n., 1, after gammon and spinarch (or g. and patter).


gas out of one, take the. To take down a peg, the conceit out of one; from ca. 1886. See gas, n., 1.

gas round, to. Seek information slyly: from ca. 1890; † by 1921. The gen. post-1018 phrase is gasp (a)round, g.v.

gascrom, gascromb. Incorrect for casscrum.

C. 19–20. O.E.D.


gashion. Additional, free; often in pl. as n., ‘extra of anything’ (cf. buckheeh); naval: late C. 19–20. Bowen; F. & Gibbons. Prob. ex dial. gashen (gation), an obstacle in one’s way, perhaps via additional.
gasometer. A volatile talker; a boaster: from ca. 1890; ob. Cf. gas-bag.
Ex its frequent effect.
gasp, v.i. To drink a dram of spirits: from ca. 1880: ↑.
gaspipe, ooc. gas-pipe. A steamer whose length, instead of five, is nine or ten times that of her beam: nautical: ca. 1880–1910.—2. An inferior or damaged roller: printers: from ca. 1860; ob.—3. A rifle: esp. the M1903. The Daily Telegraph, July 9, 1883, "The old Snider—the . . . gas-pipe of our Volunteers—continues to be used in many of the competitions," Gen.: ca. 1880–1910; specific, ca. 1875–95.
gassed at Mons. A military c.p., of 1916–18, in reply to an inquiry concerning a person’s whereabouts. F. & Gibbons. The retreat from Mons took place in late Aug., 1914; poison-gas was not introduced till much later. Cf. on the wire at Mons.
gat, gats. A quantity: number, group: schoolboys: C. 19. See also the Shrewsbury sense of penal.—2. (gat only) a revolver: (C. 19–14) orig. U.S. (Ex gathing gat. See Irwin.) Since ca. 1924, thanks to gangster novels and the films, the word has ↑ fairly well known in Britain.
gate, v. To confine wholly or partially to college-bound: university: (1831): in C. 20, j. or S.E. Anon., The Snobbid, 1835; Bradley (‘Cuthbert Bode’), 1853; Hughes, Tom Brown at Oxford, 1861.
gate-gatehouse and gate-money are, despite F. & H., S.E.; but gate-race (— 1884) or meeting (— 1881), in the sense of a contest arranged for the sport than for the money, is sporting s. > coll. H., 3rd ed.
gate-crasher, -crashing. One who attends, attendance at, a private party or entertainment without invitation: coll.: U.S., anglicised in late 1926. The v., gate-crash, which is rare, hardly—in England, at least—antedates 1930. Ex forcing one’s way through a gate to attend an outdoor sport.
gate-race. See gate-bill.
gate of horn, of life. The female pudend: the former, low; the latter, gen. euphemistic and insensible. C. 19–20.
gates. The hour at which one must be in college; the being forbidden to leave college, either at all or, as gen., after a certain hour: university: from ca. 1865. In C. 20, j. or S.E. Bradley, Tales of College Life, 1856; Lang, XXXII Ballads, 1881.
gates, break. To return to college after the latest permissible time: university: from ca. 1860. In C. 20, j. or S.E. Ex gates.
Gath, be mighty in. "To be a Philistine of the first magnitude", F. & H. Gath, a city in Philistia, is here, as in the next two entries, employed for Philistia (the land of the Philistines) itself. Coll.: mid-C. 19–20; ob. All three entries verge on S.E.
Gath, prevail against. To deal the Philistines a rousing blow: coll.: mid-C. 19–20; ob.
Gath!, tell it not in. Fancy your doing that! Fancy your doing that! Coll.: mid-C. 19–20.
gather the taxes. To seek employment at one shop after another: tailors: ca. 1870–1920. Hence, tax-gatherer, a tailor seeking work.
gathering. See gag, n.5.
gathers, out of. In distress (cf. out at elhouse): ↑ tailors’ s. > gen. s. or coll. Ca. 1875–1915.
gations. An occ. spelling of gashions (see gashion).
gandy, an annual college dinner, hence any merry-making (↑), has always, despite F. & H., been S.E.)
gandy, adj., app. always in negative sentences. Good, esp. with chance or lot; healthy: from ca.
1890; slightly ob. Hawley Smart in his best-known horse-racing novel, From Post to Finish, 1894; Galsworthy, The Silver Spoon, 1926. 'Only got one lung, and that's not very gaudy.' Ex notion of brilliance. Hence:


gaudy, as the devil said when he painted his bottom pink and tied up his tail with pea-green, Neat but not. A c.p. that, in C. 19, was addressed (by whom?) to old ladies dressed in flaming colours. See gage.

gage. See gage.

gage of, get the. To 'size up'; discern a motive, penetrate a character: coll.: from ca. 1870; ob. Ex the S.E. take the gauge of. See gage.

gauge of, it's about the. That is a tolerably accurate or equitable description: coll.: from ca. 1875.

gauze. See maum.

gaw. Gawk is merely a written variant of Gor.


Gawd forgive (him) the prayers (he) said! (He) did curse and swear!: Cockney evasive c.p.: late C. 19-20; ob. War.

gawf. An inferior, red-skinned apple that can easily be made to look very attractive: costers' (1851). Mayhew. (They are now more highly considered.)

gawk, a simpleton, a fool, or an awkward person, is S.E. according to the O.E.D. and S.O.D.: I cannot help thinking that at first, 1817, it was coll., though admittedly it was dial. as early as C. 17 (E.D.D.), and is S.E. in C. 20. Presumably ex gawkie, n. (1724), and adj. (1724), always—it seems—S.E. The v. gawk, to gape or stare, to loiter about in a gaping manner, is orig. U.S. (1785); so far as is used in Britain, it is coll., as also is gawking, vbl.n. and p.p. adj.; gawkiness, however, is late (1873) and S.E.

gawm (or G.). See gorm.—gawn. See gorn.


C. J. Dennis. Ex slovenly pronunciation of God save (the King).


gay, all (so). 'All serene'; all correct, safe, excellent: C. 19.


*gay cat. A tramp that hangs about for women: tramps' c. (1932). Ex U.S.

Gay Gordon, the. 'The Gordon Highlanders.' In particular, the 2nd Battalion, the 92nd Highlanders: late C. 19-20: rather sobriquet than nickname; coll. verging on S.E. F. & Gibbons.


gay in the arse or groin or legs. (Of women) loose: coll.: C. 19-20 low. Cf. Fr. avoir la cuisse gâte.

gay it. (Of both sexes) to have sexual connexion: C. 19-20; ob. coll.

gay life, lead a. To live immorally: live by prostitution: coll. or s.: from ca. 1860.

gay old. An occ. variant of high old, q.v.: ca. 1885-1910.

gay type boy. A dog-fancier: ca. 1840-80 low.

Duncombe.

gaying instrument, the. The male member: C. 19; low coll. Lew. Bal. Cf.:

gaying h. vbl.n. Sexual intercourse: C. 19-20 (ob.); low coll.


Like Turco (q.v.), coll. rather than s.

[gazebo, despite F. & H., is ineligible; nor, prob., is it dog-Latin.]

gaser. 'A pedlar who walks about a fair or market selling as he goes': grafters': C. 20. Philip Allingham, Cheapjack, 1934.

gazob. A silly fool; a (foul) blunderer; a 'softy': low (19 Australian): late C. 19-20; Perhaps a corruption of galoot, q.v., or a blend of galoot + blob: cf. the U.S. gazebo, which, dating from ca. 1890, prob. derives ex S.E. gazebo, and may well represent the origin of gazob.

g'bye! Good-bye!: slovenly coll.: C. 20.

(D. Mackail, Greenery Street, 1925.)

*geach. A thief: c. (1821); ob. by 1900; † by 1920. † thief disguised. Cf.: *geach, v.t. To steal: c. (1821); † by 1920.

Haggart, 1821. † thieves perverted.

gear. The genitals, male and, more gen., female: late C. 19-10; S.E. until ca. 19, then coll. >, very soon, s.—2. As affair, business—even in here's goodly gear, here's a pretty kettle of fish—it is S.E. gear †, that's the. That's right: military: 1915. B. & P. Lit., that's the correct instrument or equipment.

gear or gears, warm in one's. Settled down to work: C. 17-18 coll. Cf.:

gears, in his. Ready dressed: late C. 17-18; coll. B.E., who notes also out of his gears, out of sorts, indisposed: perhaps, orig., a. Ex earlier in his gears, ready for work.

ged! A coll. variant of god = God / Late C. 17-19. Cf. vow in dem(me)! W.

Geddesburg, Montcriull in 1916. Army officers' jocular coll. On Gettysburg (U.S.A.) ex Sir Eric Geddes, who, in that year, established there his headquarters—he was Director General of Transportation, with 1,000 (or more) clerks. F. & Gibbons.


Grafters' a. of C. 20, perhaps ex gée i., q.v.: 'A grafters' accomplice or assistant who mingles with the crowd. Note: To give a grafter a gee is to buy something off him to encourage the crowd,' Philip Allingham, Cheapjack, 1934.—3. Bluff; empty talk or 'fanny': c.: from ca. 1920. James Curtis, The Gift Kid, 1936. Cf. gee, put in the (below).


gasp, v.i. To drink a dram of spirits: from ca. 1860: ↑

gasp my last if ..., may I. A non-aristocratic asseveration: coll. (— 1887); slightly ob. Baumann.

gasper. An inferior cigarette: from ca. 1912; orig. military; popularised during G.W.; by 1930, coll. Ex its effect on one's "wind", i.e. staying powers.—2. Hence, any cigarette: from ca. 1926. Cf. Iq.


gaspipe, occ. gas-pipe. A steamer whose length, instead of five, is nine or ten times that of her beam; nautical: ca. 1880-1910.—2. An inferior or damaged roller: printers': from ca. 1850; ob. —3. A rifle; esp. the snider. The Daily Telegraph, July 9, 1883. "The old Snider—the...gas-pipe of our Volunteers—continues to be used in many of the competitions," Gen.: ca. 1880-1910; specific, ca. 1875-95.


at Mons. A military c.p., of 1916-18, in reply to an inquiry concerning a man's whereabouts. F. & Gibbons. The retreat from Mons took place in late Aug., 1914; poison-gas was not introduced till much later. Cfr. on the war at Mons.


gat, gates. A quantity; number; group: school-boys: C. 19. See also the Shrewsbury sense of penal.—2. (gas only) a revolver: Canadian (— 14). orig. U.S. (Ex gaUing gun. See Irwin.) Since ca. 1854, thanks to gangster novels and films, the word has > fairly well known in Britain.


gate, v. To confine wholly or partially to college-bounds: university (1831); in C. 20, j. or S.E. Anon., The Snoebird, 1836; Bradley ('Cuthbert Bede'), 1853; Hughes, Tom Brown at Oxford, 1861.


gate-hill and gate-money: are, despite F. & H., S.E.; but gate-race (— 1834) or meeting (— 1881), in the sense of a contest arranged less for the sport than for the money, is sporting s. > coll. H., 3rd ed.

gate-crasher, -crashing. One who attends, attendance at, a private party or entertainment without invitation: coll. : U.S., anglicised in late 1826. The v., gate-crash, which is rare, hardly—in England, at least—antedates 1830. Ex forcing one's way through a gate to attend an outdoor sport.

gate-race. See gate-hill.


gates. The hour at which one must be in college; the being forbidden to leave college, either at all or, as gen., after a certain hour: university: from ca. 1855. In C. 20, j. or S.E. Bradley, Tales of College Life, 1856; Lang, XXXII Ballad, 1881.


gates, break. To return to college after the latest permissible time: university: from ca. 1860. In C. 20, j. or S.E. Ex gates.

Gath, be mighty in. 't be a Philistine of the first magnitude: F. & H. Gath, a city in Philistia, is here, as in the next two entries, employed for Philistia (the land of the Philistines) itself. Coll.: mid-C. 19-20; ob. All three entries verge on S.E.

Gath, prevail against. To deal the Philistines a rousing blow: coll.: mid-C. 19-20; ob.

gath! tell it not in. Fancy your doing that! Fancy your doing that! Coll.: mid-C. 19-20.

gather the taxes. To seek employment at one shop after another: tailors': ca. 1870-1920. Hence, tax-gatherer, a tailor seeking work.

gathering. See gag, n., 5.

gathers, out of. In distress (cf. out at elbows): ↑ tailors': s. > gen. s. or coll. Ca. 1875-1915.

gathions. An occ. spelling of gashions (see gashion).


1934. Ex frequently shunt of gator, a pot of beer: 1818. ↑ orig. c. : low s. > ca. 1860, low coll.; ob. Maginn in Vidocq Venerable; Punch, 1841; H., 1859. ↑ etymology: perhaps ex Lingua Franca; perhaps ex Lingua Franca agua + water.


[gandy, an annual college dinner, hence any merry-making (?) has always, despite F. & H., been S.E.]

gandy, adj., app. always in negative sentences. Good, eep. with chace or lot; healthy: from ca.
**Gaudy**

1880; slightly obs. Hawkey Smart in his best-known horse-racing novel, From Post to Finish, 1884; Galsworthy, The Silver Spoon, 1926, 'Only got one lunger that's not very gay.' Ex notion of brilliance. Hence:


*gaudy, as the devil said when he painted his bottom pink and tied up his tail with pea-green. Neat but not. A p.p. that, in C. 19, was addressed (by whom?) to old ladies dressed in flowing colours.

&. See gage.

&. To 'size up'; discern a motive, penetrate a character: coll.: from ca. 1870; ob. Ex. the S.E. take the gauge of.

*gage, of, get the. To 'size up'; discern a motive, penetrate a character: coll.: from ca. 1870; ob. Ex. the S.E. take the gauge of.

*gage of, that's about the. That is a tolerably accurate or equivocal description: coll.: from ca. 1875.

*gage, See maum.

Gaw- As a written variant of Gor.


&. A variant of God forbid, q.v.

&. (gaw) The prayers (he) said! (He) did curse and swear!: Cockney evasive p.p.: late C. 19–20; ob. Ware.

&. An inferior, red-skinned apple that can easily be made to look very attractive: costers' (–1851). Mayhew. (They are now more highly considered.)

&. A simpleton, a fool, or an awkward person, is S.E. according to the O.E.D. and S.O.D.: I cannot help thinking that at first, 1837, it was coll., though admittedly it was dial. as early as C. 17 (E.D.), and is S.E. in C. 20. Presumably ex gauky, n. (1724), and adj. (1724), always—it seems—S.E. The v. gawk, to gawk or stare, to loiter about in a gaping manner, is orig. U.S. (1785); so far as it is used in Britain, it is coll., as also is gawking, vbl.n. and ppl.adj.; gawkins, however, is late (1873) and S.E.

&. (or G.). See gorm.—gawen. See gorm.

&. gawney, goney. A fool: coll. whom not dial.: from ca. 1770. (E.D.)

&. A quixey out of gawk.

&. An idle seaman: nautical coll.: from ca. 1870. Bowen. Ex dial. gaups (gaupus), a simpleton.


*gage, all (so). 'All serene'; all correct, safe, excellent: C. 19


*gage cat. A tramp that hangs about for women: tramps' c. (–1931). Ex U.S.
gee. To fit, suit, be convenient or practical: only in negative phrases: late C. 17-20; ob. B.E.—2. (Of persons) to behave as is expected or desired; agree, get on well together: C. 18-20; ob. V.t. with with. Either ex next entry or a corruption of go.—3. To encourage, incite; delude: c. (—1932). Anon., Dartmoor From Within, 1932. Perhaps ex gee up! gee! A command to a horse; gen. to turn to the right: coll.; 1828 (S.O.D.).—2. See Joe! *gee, get at the. See get at the gee. gee! a. See gee, n. 2. gee, on the. Annoyed, irritated: lower classes' (—1923). Manchon. Perhaps ex gee-up! *gee, put in the. To blarney; tell a plausible tale: c. from ca. 1920. James Curtis, The Gilt Kid, 1930. Cf. gee, v. 3. *gee, put on the. To 'swank': act or talk pretentiously: c. from ca. 1925. J. Curtis, The Gilt Kid, 1930. gee-gee, a. A horse: s. (1869) >, ca. 1900, coll. Reduplication of gee! Mostly among sportsmen and 'turfties.' The Pall Mall Gazette, April 14, 1889. (O.E.D.)—2. 'The nickname among journalists of Mr. G(eorge) G(rossmith), better known, perhaps, as the Society Clown,' F. & H., 1893.—3. A jocular perversion (—1923) of geezer. 1. gee-gee-dodge. The selling of horsethief for beef: trade (—1844); ob. Greenwood, in Veiled Mysteries, 'The gee-gee dodge ... was seldom ... practised ... it was impossible ... to bargain for a regular supply.' Gee-Gees, the. The Cavalry: infantrymen's: late C. 19-20; ob. Ware. gee ho! or ho, gee ho! Equivalent to gee!: from ca. 1650: coll. Contrast gee whoa! Also, same period, v.l and t., say gee-ho (to). gee up, occ. hup! (To a horse) move forward! Move faster: C. 18-20 coll.—2. To say 'gee up!': C. 19-20 coll. Blackwood's Magazine, Oct., 1824, 'Mr. Babb ge-hupped in vain.' The (h)up is not adv. but interjection. gee whiskers! See see whiskers!—gee whiz! See Joe! gee whom! (To a horse) stop! Rarer than whom!: Coll. : C. 18-20. *gee-sick. A police-station: Scottish c. (—1893). ex gee-sick, now, gee-sick, gee(sick), the form given by H., 3rd ed. see galoot. Gee-sees, the. The Portuguese (soldiers in especial): military: 1917. B. & P. gee-sees, the old woman's picking her. Applied to a snowstorm: C. 19-20 proverbial coll., very gen. among school-children, who often add: and selling the feathers a penny apiece. gee-sees, the old woman's picking her, and his. He exaggerates in his praise, esp. of his own family or property: coll. (—1529); in C. 20, rather S.E. Skelton; Burton; Newman in his Apologia, 'To use the common phrase ...' gee-sees go bare-legged! I, flee upon pride. A proverbial ex. repent to undue pride in the lowly: late C. 17-28; B.E. gee-sees go on a common, like. Wandering, somewhat aggressively: a late entry: C. 19-20 coll. gee-sees when the gander is gone, he'll be a man among the. A C. 17-20 ob. coll. variation (ironical and = He'll be a man before his mother) of the C. 17-20 proverb You're a man among the gee-sees when the gander's away. Apperson.
gentleman. A certain Turkish gun at the D.U.N.

gentleman commiser. An empty bottle: Oxford University — (1785); ↑ by 1900. Grosjean, 1st ed. Cf. fellow commiser, q.v., dead man, dead marine. Such a student was, in general repute, deficient in intelligence.

gentleman in black, the (old). The devil: from ca. 1660; s. >, in C. 10, coll. Dryden.

gentleman in black velvet, the (little). A mole. This was a Jacobite phrase after the death of William III, whose horse was said to have stumbled over a mole-hill. C. 18–19. Scott. (F. & H., erroneously give broun and the phrase, or toast, as Tory.)


gentleman in brown. A bed bug: coll. — (1886); ob. G. A. Sala.

gentleman in red. A soldier: 1774; either s. or jocular coll.; ob.


Gentleman Lewis. W. T. Lewis (1748–ca. 1811), actor. Ibid.


Gentleman of four outs. See Gentleman of the three outs.


Gentleman of the first. A boxer: boxers' — (1810); ob. by 1900, ↑ by 1910.

Gentleman of the first head or house: gentleman of the five outs. See Gentleman of the three outs.


Gentleman of the (the) three ins. (But the lie rare and does not appear before ca. 1830.) 'In debt, in gloom, and in danger of remaining there for life; or, in god, indicted, and in danger of being hanged in chains', Grosjean, 1788; H., 1864, 'In debt, in danger, and in poverty'. A. e. p. that > ob. ca. 1890, ↑ ca. 1920. Prob. suggested by the contrasted:

Gentleman of (rarely, and not before ca. 1830, the three) outs. 'Without money, without wit, and without mourners', Grosjean, 1785; ↑ is the earlier

Gentle Annie. A certain Turkish gun at the D.U.N.
phrase. In 1788, he added, 'Some add another out, i.e. without credit.' Variants four, flea; II., 1884, has four and refers to Ireland, where, he says, the return to a vulgar fellow blustering of gentlemanliness was 'Yes, a gentleman of four outs—that is, without wit, without money, without credit, and without manners.' F. & II., 1893, cites 'Out of money, and out of clothes; | Out at heels, and out at the toes; | Out of credit, and in debt.' Ob. by 1893, but not yet†. Cf. the C. 16–17 dandhill gentleman and gentleman of the first head or house, which may themselves (see the O.E.D.) be coll. or even a gentleman of three ins and outs. See gentleman of the three ins and outs.

gentleman ranker. A broken gentleman serving in the ranks: military s. (—1892) >, ca. 1900, gen. coll. >, ca. 1914, S.E. >, ca. 1919, somewhat ob. See Kipling's famous poem, Gentleman Rankers.


gentleman who pays the rent, the. A pig: Anglo-Irish: mid-C. 10–20; ob. Ware.

gentleman's companion. A house: coll. (—1785); ob. by 1914, † by 1918. (In four years' active service, I never heard the term.) Grose, 1st ed. Cf. bosom friend. — 2. Possibly, in late C. 17–18, it also was a flea. Ned Ward, 1709 (Matthews).

gentleman's (or gent's) gent. A 'gentleman's gent' or valet: C. 20. Both forms occur in that exciting and amusing novel, Th' Big City, by John G. Brandon, 1931.

gentleman's master. A highwayman: ca. 1750–1840. Grose, 1st ed. Ex gentlemen's obedience to his 'stand and deliver!'

gentleman's, occ. lady's, piece. A tit-bit: (mostly children's) coll.: ca. 1890–1910. Bauman. (If used by adults to-day, it would hint at abortive nations.)

gentleman's pleasure-garden. The gentilatia muliebria: low or jocular coll.: C. 19–20; ob.— Followed by padlock, it = a sanitary towel.


*gentry coke, mid-C. 16–17; gentry cove, mid-C. 16–early 18. A gentleman: o. (Cf. C. 19 Devon gentry man. — 2. Whence gentry cafe'(s) or cove'(s) ken, a gentleman's house; likewise o.; † by 1850. B.E.

*gentry ken. A († C. 18) C. 19 o. abbr. of gentry cove's ken (preceding entry).

*gentry mort. A lady: o. mid-C. 16–early 19. This and the preceding two terms are in Harman.

gent's gent. See gentleman's gent.

genuine, n. and v. Praise: from ca. 1840, 1860 resp.: Winchester College. Wrench, 'Possibly from calling a thing "genuine."'


géo-cian (C. 16), geoce (C. 16), geotick (C. 18), geoticall (C. 16). Incorrect for geotican, poetly, poetick, poetical. O.E.D.


Geoëide, geordie. A pitman; any Northumbrian: North Country coll.: from ca. 1760. Prob. ex the Christian name there so pronounced.—


George I, by. (Occ. in late C. 19–20, simply George!) A mild oath: coll. abbr. by St. George: 1731, Fielding (O.E.D.); earlier by St. George, for George, both in Ben Jonson, 1593; before George, 1678.

George I, let's join: where's George? These two e.p. phrases arose in 1935; they were burlesqued by the music-halls at least as early as Sept., 1935. Ex advertisements by Messra. Lyons, who supplied the key and the answer: at Lyanch and gone to Lyanch (lunch at Lyons')s. See George, 7.

George, riding (or the dragon upon) St. See riding St. George.

George Horne! Queen Anne's dead! Occ. G.H. Printers': ca. 1880–1910. Ex a romancing composer so named.


(georgie or —y; georgie. A quartern loaf: o. (—1812); † by 1890. Vaux. Cf. brown George, 4.

Georgie-Porgie or Georgy-Porgy. A coll. pet form of George; any plump male child. (In 1883, R. L. Stevenson employed it as a v. = to fondle, but this use has not caught on.) From ca. 1870. Ex, as well as suggestive of, the nursery rhyme, 'Georgy-Porgy, pudding and (or, loosely, puddingly) pie,' Kissed the girls and made 'em cry.

Georgium Sidus. The Surrey side of the Thames: London Society (—1800); † by 1920. Ware.

geostick. See geocian.

geranium. A red nose: Cookeyns': from ca. 1882; ob. Ware.

Geraniums, the. The 13th Hussars: military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons, 'From the former green facings of their predecessors, the 13th Dragoons.'

gerdi (e.g. gerdi-aftemoon in J. B. Priestley's Par- casey, 1932). Good; an affected sol. characteristic of half-wits among the would-be superior: C. 20.


germ-pep. See gin-pep.

German, in late 1914–18, was generically an offensive term, sometimes coll., sometimes S.E. See Words at 'Offensive Nationality.' —2. See German.—3. A German sausage: coll. (—1883); ob. (O.E.D.)


German duck. 'Half a sheep's head boiled with onions,' Grose, 2nd ed.: late C. 19–19 († by 1893) coll. Because 'a favourite dish among the Ger-
GERMAN EAST


German East, German East Africa: coll.: C. 20. F. E. Brett Young, in The Cage Bird, 1933, 'When George and I were prisoners in German East we had something in common with a vengeance, and that was one shirt.' (Also in the same author's Jim Redlake, 1930.)

German flutes. (No singular.) Boots: rhyming s. (— 1857); by 1914, when daisy roots, q.v., was in full possession of the field. 'Dussang Anglica.'

German gospel Vain boasting; megalomania; Nov., 1897-ca. 99. Ware. 'From a phrase addressed in this month by Prince Henry of Prussia to his brother of Germany at a dinner: 'The gospel that emanates from your Majesty's sacred person',' etc.

German Legion, the. The 100th Foot, now the Leinster Regiment: military: from ca. 1860; ob. E. & F. The battalion was at that date, 'brought up to strength with men of the disbanded German Legion...raised for the Crimean War'.

German. A German (soldier): soldiers' (East African campaign): 1915-17. E.g. in F. E. Brett Young, Jim Redlake, 1930. On the analogy of certain Swahili words (e.g. americani).

gerrup I get up!: slovenly coll. or, perhaps rather, outright sol.: late C. 19-20. Cf. siddown, q.v.

Gerry. A German; esp. a German soldier: late 1914—.: but not gen. till 1916, when it almost superseded Fritz, q.v. Usual spelling: Jerry. Ex German. Occ. used as an adj.: 1915. B. & P.


*gerry gan. (See gann and gerry.) Lit., shut [in your] mouth: a brutal C. 16-early 17 c. way of saying 'shut up!'

[gerrymander and gerrymerand, orig. U.S. (resp. 1812, 1813), were S.E., not unconventional, when, ca. 1880, they gained a firm footing in Britain.]


Gertrude. See 'Moving-Picture Slang', § 4.

[Gerund, incorrect uses of—See Fowler.]

gerund-grinder. A schoolmaster; esp. a pedantic one: coll.: from ca. 1710; ob. Sterne, 'Tutors, governors, gerund-grinders, and bear-leaders.' Also, C. 19-20, gerund-grinding.

gesture. An action for the sake of show, good or bad: when used trivially, it is coll.: from ca. 1925. (As S.E.: 1916, says the O.E.D. Sup.)

get. A trick, swindle; a cheating contrivance: posited by F. & H.; † by 1890.—2. A child, esp. in one of his get, one of his offspring, of his begetting: C. 14—20: S.E. till ca. 1750, then coll. (Grose, 2nd ed.); after ca. 1870, only of animals—unless pejorative.—3. A variant (— 1923) of get-up, q.v.; not very gen. Manchon.—4. A retrieving: the return of a difficult ball: lawn tennis coll.: heard in 1928; recorded by O.E.D. (Sup.) for March 22, 1927.

[If we consider get as a v. of all work, we find that its rise and its increasing popularity are mainly owing to U.S. influence (see W.'s Adjectives and Other Words, my Sleng, and Fowler's Dict. of Modern English Usage). 'Its sense-development is extraordinary, the intransitive sense springing chiefly from reflexive, e.g. . . . get (oneself) disliked,' W. Except in the S.E. sense, to acquire, obtain, receive, it is comparatively rare before 1870: Grose gives no examples; in H., 1859, there is none, while H., 1860, contains only get-up, n., and H., 1874, the same. See also got.]

get v. To become; feel, e.g. 'He gets ill every winter,' 'He gets moody after drinking': late C. 16-20; nominally S.E., but in C. 19-20 more properly considered coll.—2. V.i., with intransitive past ppl.: to complete an action: C. 18—20; S.E. till ca. 1880, then coll. E.g. 'I'd be glad to get gone from this town.' A rare construction. (O.E.D.)—3. V.i., get as an auxiliary (from ca. 1650) is held by the O.E.D. to be S.E., but there is a coll. taint in such locations as 'I got caught in the storm,' 1887 (O.E.D.)—4. V.t., have, take, etc., coll. (— 1888), perhaps ex dial. (O.E.D.)—5. V.t., understand (rarely a thing), gen. as 'To you get me?': ex U.S.; Anglicised ca. 1910.—6. To corner (a person); get hold of, find and bring him, there being an implication of subject’s difficulty and/or object’s reluctance: coll.: 1879.—7. To depart: mostly in the imperative. See get!—8. In c., to steal: ca. 1820—60. Bee. Cf. makes.—9. To annoy or worry: coll., orig. (ca. 1880) U.S., Anglicised ca. 1920. O.E.D. (Sup.)—10. To render, succeed in rendering: coll., orig. (ca. 1890) U.S., Anglicised ca. 1910. E.g. 'He gets me wild,’ he makes me angry. (O.E.D. Sup.)—11. To impress, move, attract: coll.: from ca. 1915. E.g. 'That play, Romance, got me properly.' (O.E.D. Sup.) Prob. ex sense 9 influenced by sense 10.—12. get climbing, thinking, etc., is simply a coll. form of climb, etc., etc., or of go climbing, etc.: mid C. 19-20. It often expresses exasperation.—13. See get to in the Adzondia.

get! Abbr. get out!, go away! or clear out! Orig. (1844) U.S., where usually g'd! Anglicised ca. 1900, but found in Australia ca. 1890. Hume Nisbet in The Bushranger’s Sweetheart, 1892, 'None of your damned impertinences. Get it!' Cf.: get, do a. To depart, retreat, hastily: Australian (— 1916). C. J. Dennis, Excavating. Iget A, in Festedeo (revised F. & H.), is not a, but j.

get a bit. To obtain money—or a woman: low: late C. 19-20. Ware.

get a name. See name, get a.

get a pick on (a person). To pick on, ill-temperedly mark out, quarrel with: Canadian: C. 20. John Beames

get about, v.t. with her, to effect intromission: low coll. (amorous venery): from ca. 1890. Also, absolutely, get about it.—2. V.i., (of news, gossip) to spread, either (e.g.) 'The story got about,' often with a that clause, or (e.g.) 'It got about that the firm was bankrupt': coll.: from ca. 1848; since ca. 1850, S.E.—3. V.i., to move about or round, to travel, gen. with implication of frequency, though this may be defined, as in 'He gets about a lot, or a great deal': coll.: from ca. 1890's. get above oneself. To be very, or too, satisfied, or pleased with oneself: coll.—(1923). Manchon.

get across; get it across. To succeed; esp. to make oneself fully understood or suitably appreciated: resp. ca. 1916 and in 1913: coll. >, by
1933, familiar S.E. Ex U.S. get it across the footlights. (O.E.D. Sup.)

get all over. To handle and examine (a person)—not necessarily for theft, but in all probability feloniously: low: mid-C. 19-20; slightly ob. Ware.

get along with you! Go away! Be quiet! Have done! Coll.: 1837, Dickens (O.E.D.).

get anything. To be infected, e.g. venereally; get replacing catch. Coll.: from ca. 1850. Morally a col. ab. for S.E. get = catch. C. 17-20. — 2. (Wireless) hear; establish contact with a station; coll.: from ca. 1924.

get at. To assail; strike, as in ‘Let me get at the foul-mouthed b—r’: — from ca. 1890.—2. To banter, chaff, annoy, take (or try to take) a rise out of: from ca. 1890. Ally Sloper’s Half Holiday, Jan. 3, 1891, ‘‘Your family don’t seem to get on, missie ... ’’ ‘‘On/who’re yo gettin’ at?’’ See also get back at. To influence, bribe, corrupt a person; a group of persons: to ‘‘noble’’ (q.v.) a horse: orig. a. (1865), then, ca. 1880, coll. J. S. Mill (O.E.D.); The Graphic, March 17, 1883, ‘‘Without any suspicion of being got at’’: — 4. To mean; intend to be understood: gen. as ‘‘What are you getting at?’’ Coll.: from ca. 1905: ? ex sense 2.

*get at the gee.* To ‘‘spoo’’ (v.i.): c. (— 1933). Charles E. Beach.

get away, get-away, getaway. An escape: 1890. — 2. A means of escape; hence an exit: from ca. 1895; ex U.S., where in late C. 19-20 it means, a train or a locomotive.—3. An excuse, esp. forethought: from ca. 1925. All orig. coll.; but in C. 20, senses 1 and 2 are S.E.

get away! As = go away, S.E., but as = don’t talk nonsense, don’t flatter, it is coll.: from ca. 1830. The form get away with you is prob. to be considered S.E. Cf. get along with you / get away closer! An ‘invitation to yet more pronounced devotion’’: costers, hence gen. Cockneys’ c.p.: late C. 19-20; slightly ob. Ware.

get away with it. To succeed beyond expectation and/or contrary to the full rights of the case: coll.: from 1918; ex U.S. (— 1912). F. & Gibbons; O.E.D. (Sup.).—2. Hence, ‘just to scrape through a difficulty’: coll. (— 1931). Lyell.

get back at. To chaff, banter; satirize, criticize; call to account; coll.: from ca. 1885. Cf. get at, q.v.

get back into your box! Be quiet! That’s enough from you! Orig. (— 1893), U.S.; anglicised ca. 1900; slightly ob. Ex the stables.

get before oneself. To boast, threaten, be angry, unduly: low coll.: late C. 19-20; ob. Ware. Contrast get behind oneself.

get behind, v.t. An occ. variant of get up behind, q.v. — 2. See:

get behind oneself. To forget an appointment, the date of an event, etc.: lower classes’ coll.: mid-C. 19-20. Ware.

get busy. See busy, get.

get by, v.i. To escape notice, esp. when that notice is feared or inopportune. V.t., get by with, gen. followed by if. C. 20: coll., ex U.S. Cf. get past, q.v.


get cracking. To begin work: Royal Air Force: from ca. 1925. l.e. cracking on speed.

get dizzy. To get angry: naval: from ca. 1920 Bowen.

get down on. To appropriate illicitly; to steal:

get down to brass tacks. See brass tacks.

get down to it. To begin to work seriously: C. 20 coll.: ? ex U.S.—2. To go to sleep; military coll.: from ca. 1910. (F. & Gibbons.)

get ‘em. See get them.

get encorced. To have a garment returned for alterations: tailors: from ca. 1875.

get even (with), v.i., t. To give tit for tat, have one’s revenge (on): coll.: from ca. 1880; in C. 20, S.E. Ex S.E. be even with, on a par (or even terms) with.

get fits. To be impatient under defeat: lower classes’ (— 1900); ob. Ware.

get forrader. See forrader.

get going. The v.t., set going, start, prepare, is S.E., but the v.i., to begin doing something (work or play) vigorously or very well, ‘get into one’s stride’, is coll.: from ca. 1895. Esp. in ‘Wait till I (he, etc.) get(a) going’.

get in; v.i.; get into, v.t. To effect intromission; low coll.: C. 18-20. Cf. get up.—2. (get in.) To strike victoriously; e.g. ‘Get in with both fists’; coll. (— 1897). Ex get a blow in. (Ware.)

get in bad. To make (a person) disliked; v.i., to cause oneself to become disliked: 1928 (O.E.D. Sup.). Ex U.S.


get in with (a person). In S.E., to become familiar with: hence, as coll., to become a trusted and active associate with; from ca. 1910.

get in wrong; put in wrong with. To incur—cause another to incur—the dislike of (a person): U.S. coll., anglicised ca. 1932. C.O.D. (1934 Sup.).


get into full swing; hot water. See swing and hot water.

get inside and pull the blinds down! A c.p. addressed to a poor horseman: Cookneys’: mid-C. 19-20; ob. Ware.

get it. To be punished, physically or morally; to be reprimanded: coll.: from ca. 1870. Cf. catch it.—2. To be venereally infected: low coll.: from ca. 1875.

get it down fine. To have all details worked out: coll.: from ca. 1900. Ex the U.S. sense, to know all about a man’s antecedents.

get it down one’s the neck. To swallow it: low coll. (— 1909). Ware.

get it every way. To profit, whatever happens: coll.: ex U.S.; anglicised ca. 1920.

get it hot. An elaboration, from ca. 1872, of get it, l. q.v.

get it in the neck. To be defeated, thrashed (lit. or fig.), to receive a shock, to be grievously disappointed, severely reprimanded: from ca. 1916. Elaboration of get it, l. Cf. get it where ... , q.v. get it off one’s chest, to relieve oneself, get it off one’s. get it where the chicken got the axe. A lighter, more jocular formal of get it in the neck: from ca. 1917.

get left. See left, be or get—get (or do you get) me, Steve? See get me, (Steve)?

get off, v.t. Deliver oneself of, utter, esp. a witticism: orig. (1849), U.S.; anglicised ca. 1875; coll. slightly ob.—2. To let off; excuse: esp. from punishment: mid C. 19–20.—3. To succeed in marrying one's daughters: coll. from ca. 1860. (O.E.D.)—4. Hence, v.i., to get engaged or married: coll. from ca. 1910. (Rarely of the man; then, jocularly.)—5. Hence, to 'click' with a member of the opposite sex: coll. from ca. 1913.—6. V.i., to be left off a punishment, an irksome duty: escape: from ca. 1640: in C. 17–early 18, S.E., then either coll. or near-coll.—7. (get off it). To stop talking, befouling or chaffing a person, playing the fool, exaggerating, etc.: mostly in imperative: coll. (—1923). Manchon.—8. To cease being obnoxious, presumptuous, or meddlesome: anglicised (ex U.S. coll.) ca. 1929: verging on collog. Tell a person where he gets off. Ex a conductor's or ticket-collector's guard's telling a person where he gets off the tram, etc. get off it! See get off, 7.

get off my neck! Stop trying to bluff or befoul me! mostly military: 1915. F. & Gibbons. Cf. preceding.

get off with. To make friends with one of the opposite sex, esp. with a view to 'a good time': coll. orig. (1914 or early 1915) military >, by 1918, gen. F. & Gibbons.

get (money, 'a bit') on. To back a horse: racing s. (from ca. 1860) >, ca. 1880, gen. coll.—2. To have connexion with (a woman): low coll. from ca. 1870. Ex the lit. sense, to mount.—3. V.i., to succeed, prosper: coll. from ca. 1750; in C. 20, S.E. The Pall Mall Gazette, Dec. 29, 1871, 'That great Anglo-Saxon passion of rising in the world, or getting on.'—4. (i) hence to fare; feel (in health): coll. from ca. 1880.—5. Hence, also v.i., agree—or disagree—with a person, with modifying adv.: also, occ. absolutely, to agree well (with a person). Coll. from ca. 1815. Never of things. 'We got on like a house on fire': 'Oh, we get on, you know!' The S.E. form is get along.—6. To become elderly, or, esp., old: coll. from ca. 1886. Abr. getting on in years.—7. To depart: coll. C. 20. Cf. the S.E. get along.

get on one's nerves. To affect morbidly, e.g. 'The clock gets on his nerves': coll. (from ca. 1870) —, by 1900, S.E. Cf.: (a person, a thing) on the brain, or (more gen. have) on one's mind. To be obsessed by, crazy about: coll. from ca. 1870. Cf. get on one's nerves, q.v.

get on the home stretch. To be in sight of one's goal: coll.: late C. 19–20. Ex cabbages.

get on to. To suspect: find out about: coll.: late C. 19–20. (James Spencer, 1934.)

get one on, v.t. and absolute. To land a punch (on): pugilista: from ca. 1880; ob.

get one's or another's back up. See back up.—

get one's books (or cards). See books, get one's.—

get one's goat. See goat, get someone's.

get one's own back. To have one's revenge (on): get even with: coll. from ca. 1908. (O.E.D. Sup.) Ex the recovery of property.

get one's skates on. See skates, put on one's.

get one's tail up. Gen. in pl. and 'said of a crew which is getting out of hand and impudent to the officers': nautical: late C. 19–20. Bowen.

get out. An evasion: coll.: C. 20. (James Sponsor, Limney Breaks In, 1934.)

get out, v. To depart; go away: gen. in imperative: coll.: from ca. 1710; cf. get, q.v.—2. 'To back a horse against which one has previously laid', F. & H.: racing (—1844). Also get round (—1893).—3. On the Stock Exchange (—1887), to sell one's shares, esp. in a risky venture. (O.E.D.)—4. See round the corner, get.—5. V.i. (of things), to thicken: coll., mostly Cockney's; from ca. 1880. Edwin Pugh, Harry the Cockney, 1912, 'Evenings are getting out, aren't they?'

get out! Toll that to the marines! Don't flatter! Coll.: from ca. 1840. Dickens, 'Kit only replied by bashfully bidding his mother "get out",' (O.E.D.)

get out (of bed) on the wrong side. To be irritable, testy: coll.: from ca. 1885. Ex the S.E. to rise on the right side is accounted lucky, C. 17–19. The Globe, May 15, 1890, 'If we may employ such a vulgar expression—get out of bed on the wrong side.'

get out of, e.g. it, the scrape. To escape the consequences of one's folly or mistake: be excused punishment or duty: coll.: from ca. 1880; in C. 20, S.E. Cf. get off, v.t.

get outside, or outside of. To eat or drink, gen. a considerable and specified amount: low coll.: from ca. 1800. S. Watson, in Wops the Wolf, 1892.—2. (Of women only) to receive a man sexually: low coll.: from ca. 1870.


get past, v.i.: get past with (gen. it). To escape detection; hence to succeed against odds or justified (moral) expectation: coll.: from ca. 1915: ? orig. military. Cf. get by, q.v.

get religion. To be converted; become (very) religious: orig. (1826) U.S., anglicised ca. 1880; in C. 19, s.; low coll. in C. 20; now almost, though—thank God!—not quite S.E. Nevertheless, it is an expressive phrase that, for all its insensitive vulgarity, will prob. achieve linguistic sanctity.

get round. To circumvent, trick: coll.: from ca. 1855, ex U.S. (1849).—2. To persuade, cajole; hence, seduce (lit. or fig.): dupe: coll.: from ca. 1800. Cf. get over, 3.—3. To evade; arrange, to one's own satisfaction, concerning: coll.: from ca. 1895.—4. In racing, same as get out, 2.

get round the corner. See round the corner, get.

get round (of) someone. (The favoured or the second favourite) to lose the race: turf c.: C. 20.

get set. To warm to one's work; become thoroughly used to or skilful at it: coll.: from ca. 1895. Ex the cricket sense: (of a batsman) to get one's eye in, itself s. in the 1880's, coll. in the 90's, and j. in C. 20.

get shut of. See shut of.

get straight, v.t. (the v.t. being S.E.). To free oneself of debt; have a complication straightened out, one's home tidy, etc., etc.: coll.: from ca. 1875.

get that way. (Gen. how do or did you get that way?) 'To get into the condition implied': coll. orig. (?—1922) U.S., anglicised by 1930. (O.E.D. Sup.)
get the ambulance! (Gen. git...). A c.p. addressed to a drunk person: urban: 1897; ob. Ware.

get the bag or sack. See bag.—get the berry. See berry.—get the empty. See empty, get the.—get the go-by. See go-by.—get the jacket. See jacket, get the.—get the lead. See lead.—get the middleman. See Sentinel.

get the board. See board, get the.

*get the papers. To be indicted as an habitual criminal: c. (—1935). David Hume. Mostly as a vbl.n.

get the poke. See poke, get the.—get the rasp or raspberry. See berry, get the, and raspberry.

get the sads. To become melancholy: lower classes’ coll. (—1909). Ware.

get the shilling ready! Prepare to subscribe!: a c.p. of 1807—8. With ex. reference to The Daily Telegraph’s shilling fund for the London hospitals—part of the charity characterising the 60th year of Queen Victoria’s reign. Ware.

get the shoot. To be dismissed: lower classes' (—1906). Ware derives ex a flour-mill’s shoots.

get the spike. To lose one’s temper: low London from ca. 1890; Ware. Cf. skew, q.v.

get the staggerers. See staggerers, get the.—get the stick. See stick, get the.

get (th)em. To trouble with fear: G.W.+; ob.: mainly soldiers’.—2. Also, but always in form has, or have, got ‘em, to have the ‘d.t.’s’ from ca. 1900. See got’em bad.

get there. To succeed in one’s object or ambition; with both feet, notably, completely. Coll.: orig. (—1883). U.S.; anglicised ca. 1893.—2. To become intoxicated: ca. 1890—1914.—3. Of the man) to have sexual connexion: low coll.: from ca. 1890.

get through, v.i. To pass an examination; succeed: coll.: from ca. 1890; in C. 20, S.E. 'Cuthbert Bede', 1853, 'So you see, Giglamps, I'm safe to get through.'—2. V.t., to spend: late C. 19—20; cf. till ca. 1920, then S.E.—3. V.t., to complete: do; coll.: late C. 17—20; then, in C. 19—20, S.E. 'He gets through an astounding amount of work—largely because he loves work.'

get together, v.i. To help each other, one another: coll.: from ca. 1920. Ex S.E. sense, to meet, assemble (late C. 17—20): cf. the U.S. sense, to meet in amicable conference, to come to terms.

get-up. Dress; general appearance, so far as it is prepared or artificial; coll.: from ca. 1847. Whyte-Molville, George Eliot.—2. Hence, a masquerade dress; a disguise: coll.: from ca. 1860. G. A. Sala. All these nuances are in C. 20 to be considered S.E.—3. 'Style of production or finish, esp. of a book, 1865, S.O.D.: publishers' coll. that, in C. 20, is S.E.

to make, esp. as regards appearance or embellishment; always with adv. or adv. phrase: coll.: from ca. 1780; in C. 20, S.E. Leigh Hunt, 'The pocket books that now contain any literature are got up, as the phrase is, in the most unambitious style.—2. V. reflexive, to dress: coll.: from ca. 1855; in C. 20, S.E. Albert Chevalier, 1892, in The Little Nipper, 'I'd got 'imself to disguise oneself': coll. from ca. 1860: in C. 20, S.E. Also (though less gen.), from ca. 1860, v.i., as is the anon. Etun School Days, 1844, 'He felt confident in his power of getting up so that no one would recognise him.'—

get up, v.i., to rise in the morning: from ca. 1850; S.E. till ca. 1880, then increasingly coll.—4. V.t., prepare (a case, role, subject, paper); arrange (e.g.) a concert: from ca. 1770, though anticipated in late C. 16—17; in C. 19, coll.; but from ca. 1905, again S.E.—5. V.t., to have carnal knowledge of a woman: C. 19—20. (Rarely v.i.: C. 17—18: prob. S.E.)

get up! (To a horse) go! get a move on! Coll.: from ca. 1897 (O.E.D.). Occ. jocularly to persons: C. 20.

get up and look at you. (Of the ball') to rise very slowly after pitching': cricketers’ jocular coll. (—1888). Lewis.

get up behind. (V.t., with personal object) to endorse or back a man’s bill or I.O.U. Vbl.n., getting up behind. Coll., mainly commercial: from ca. 1870.

get up early. See early.

*get up the mail. To provide money for a prisoner’s defence: c. (—1889). Cf. mail in S.E. blackmail.

get wet. See wet, get.

get (a person) wrong, gen. in form have got (him) wrong. To misunderstand; have a wholly or mainly wrong opinion or impression of him. C. 20; ex U.S. Cf. get in wrong, q.v.

get your eye in a s!ng! This proletarian c.p. of late C. 19—20 (ob.) constitutes a ‘warning that you may receive a sudden and early black eye, calling for a bandage—the s!ng in question’, Ware.

get your hair cut! A non-aristocratic c.p. of ca. 1855—1912. ‘Quotations’ Benham; B. & P. Ex a popular song.


getting a big boy now. Of age: a c.p. ‘applied satirically to strong lusty young fellows’: late C. 19—20; slightly ob. Ex the ‘leading phrase of the refrain of a song made popular by Iberth Campbell’ Ware. In C. 20, also getting a big girl now, applied to the other sex.

getting ox-tail soup. The maiming of cattle by cutting off their tails: Anglo-Irish: ca. 1867—83. Ware.

gayser. Incorrect for geesser, q.v.: late C. 19—20.

gendheid! See geluk.


ghastly. A swindler: id.: id. Ibid. See preceding.

gharry. See garry.


ghostly. A pejorative or merely intensive adj. E.g. 'ghastly early in the morning'. Coll.: from ca. 1870. Cf. shocking(ly).


ghost. One who, unknown to the public, does literary or artistic work for which another gets all
the credit and most of the cash: from ca. 1884; orig. journalistic or artistic a., then—ca. 1890—gen. coll., then—ca. 1910—S.E.—2. Meat: Regular Army's: late C. 19–20. B. & P. Ex Hindustanis. —3. Salary; but rare outside of the ghost walks, q.v.

ghost, v.i. To do unrecognised, and prob. ill-paid, work for another in art or literature: from ca. 1885: ex, and of the same 'social' ascent as ghost, n., i.—2. To shadow, spy upon; coll.: from ca. 1880: ob. in airy v.i. Ex S.E. sense, haunt as an apparition.


ghost of, not the. Not the slightest idea: 1934. E. M. Delafield, in *Time and Tide*, Sept. 21, 1935, "Who's that marvellous woman?" "Darling, don't you know?" "Darling, I haven't the ghost of." Cf.:

ghost of a chance, not the. No chance whatsoever: coll.: 1857 (O.E.D.).


ghost walks, the; . . . does not walk. There is, not any money for salaries and wages: theatrical: 1853, in *Household Words*, No. 193. Ex *Hamlet*, l. i.

[Ghost words—Only a few are noted in these pages. The *locus classicus* is in the O.E.D. Sup. at 'List of Spurious Words'.]

ghosty. A ghost, esp. if small or friendly: coll.: from ca. 1900. Ex the jocular but S.E. adj.

ghoul. A newspaperman chronicling even the pettiest public and private gossip or slander (cf. Oscar Wilde's witty differentiation; journalists): ca. 1880–1915. Ex Arabic ghul, a body-snatching demon.

giant. (Gen. pl.) A very large 'stick' of asparagus: restaurants' coll.: from ca. 1880. Ware.


gib or jib, hang one's. To paint: nautical a. (ca. 1860) †, ca. 1890, gen. coll.

gib cat, melancholy as. Excessively depressed, dispirited: coll.: C. 18–19. Gib — male (ex Gibberish), not in itself, eligible. See Grose, P.

gib-face. A heavy jaw, an ugly face: coll.: mid-C. 19–20; ob. H., 2nd ed. Ex gib, the lower lip of a horse.


gibberish, gib (b)ish, gibber, gibridge, gibrige, gibridge. In C. 19–early 19, in the sense of underworld slang: early C. 19, the word seems to have had a col. even a s., taint. Prob. not ex gibber, than which it is earlier recorded, but from Egyptian, which, until recently, was gen. associated with Gypsy. (For modern gibberish, in technical sense, see Slang, p. 278.)

[gibble-gabble, senseless chatter, is not coll. nor a., although it sounds like it and F. & H. class it as coll.]


giblet pie (or G.P.), the. 'The American extreme clipper *Spindrift*, a particularly lofty ship said to be "all legs and wings"' (Bowen): nautical: late C. 19–early 20.


Gibson or Sir John Gibson. 'A two-legged stool, used to support the body of a coach whilst finishing', Grose, 2nd ed.: coach-builders': late C. 18–early 19.

giddy, in coll. speech, emphasises the word it precedes: late C. 19–20. Manchon cites 'Up to the giddy hilt'; see also the next two entries.

giddy aunt, my. A trivial, senseless exclamation: coll.: 1919, W. N. F. Barbellion (O.E.D. Sup.). An elaboration of my aunt? (see aunt, my).—2. Giddy, goat, play the. To play the fool; to be extremely happy-go-lucky; live a fast life: coll.: from ca. 1890. *Ally Sloper*, March 10, 1892, has giddy oz. There is also the vbl.n., giddy-goating, 1891. (O.E.D.)

Giddy kipper—whelk—whelp. A youth about town: London: ca. 1894–1914. Ware derives the first from giddy skipper, the second from the first, the third from the second.—2. (g.k. only.) 'A term of reproach at the Cheltenham Grammar School,' E.D.D.), 1900.

[gil(t)-gaft(t),—cf. the odd proverbial saying, giff-gaff was or is a good fellow, C. 16–18, the C. 19–20 form (mainly dial.) being giff-gaff, i.e. fair exchange, makes good friends, —is good Scottish; giff-gaff—cf. gibble-gabble—dial: both are inelligible, pace F. & H., who further err in including gibus, an opera has.]


gift, not to have as a; or in form would not have as a. Not to want at any price, even for nothing: coll.: 1857, Thomas Hughes in *Tom Brown's School Days*.

gift-house, ooc. abbr. gift. A benefit club; printers': from ca. 1870; ob.

gift of the gab. See gift, gift of the. gifts as a brazen horse of tarts, as full of Misery; mean with money: low coll.: ca. 1787–1870. Grose, 2nd ed. Cf. costive and to part.

gig, in C. 17–18 often gigg. Of the ten Eng. senses listed by F. & H., those of a wanton (or a flighty girl)—a jest or piece of nonsense—Gig, a spree—and a vehicle has always been S.E.: The nose: later C. 17–early 19 c, as is the sense, *gudenda muliebria*. Coles, 1676; B.E.—3. A door: prob. c.: late C. 18–early 19. Abbr. *gigger* = *giggar*, q.v.—4. (Esp. of a person.*) An oddity: Eton, 1777 (S.O.D.); † by 1870. Colman.—5. A farthing: mid-C. 19–20; ob. H., 1890. † ex *grig*.—6. The
mouth: low (—1871); ↑ by 1900. Perhaps cf. *gib-face*; H. considers it to derive ex *gig*.

gig, v. To hamstring. ‘To gig a Smithfield hank; to hamstring an overdrew ox’, Grove, 1785; late C. 18—early 19: lower or less, prob. c. Origin obscure, unless ex *gig*, to throw out, give rise to (see the O.E.D.‘s v. 1).


gig. See gig, n. and v.


giggle, no. No fun; no joke; (very) unpleasant: low coll.: from ca. 1920. James Curtis, The Gilt Kid, 1936, ‘It’s a noggling being in the nick [in gaol], I can tell you.’

giggle-mug. ‘An habitually smiling face’: Cockley’s (—1900). Ware.

*giggle-nest*? have you found a. Asked of one tittering, or laughing senselessly or excessively: low coll. c.p.: C. 19.

gigler, gigler, giglet, giglet, soglet, soglet. A wanton woman; a giddy, romping girl (not in gigler or giglet form). The -er term may be c., C. 17-18; the other is S.E., the same applying to the adj. and to the adv. giglet-wise.


Gibert, over the. See over the Gilbert.

*Gild, v., has been somewhat misapprehended by F. & H.: gild over is to intoxicate slightly, and even that is S.E.: cf. S.O.D. and O.E.D.—2. Likewise, gild the pill has prob. been always S.E.]*
gilden. Incorrect for gilded (adj.): C. 18—20. O.E.D.

Gildency’s kite, to be hanged (or hung) higher than. To be punished with excessive severity; hence and gen. out of sight, gone: mid-C. 19—20; prob. of Scottish origin: see Notes and Queries, 7th Series, V, 367, and Thornton.

*gile hather. See glye hather.*


[Giles’s (or St. Giles’s) bread, as applied to the ‘fat, rugged, and saucy’ (Grove, 2nd ed.), is perhaps to be considered rather coll. than S.E.: C. 18—early 19.]

gilguy. Anything whose name has slipped the memory: nautical: from ca. 1880; ob. R. Brown, Spunyarn and Spindrift, ‘Sailors . . . if the exact name of anything they want happens to slip from their memory . . . call it a chicken-fixing, or a gadget, or a gigl-guy’ (O.E.D. Sup.). Ex gilguy, ‘often applied to inefficient guys’ (for bearing boom or derriek), Smyth. Cf. jigger, gadget (q.v.), thingummy, what’s-his-name.

*gil or gilke. A skeleton key: early C. 17 c. Rowlands. ↑ gill corrupted.

gil (or Jill), a wench, and gill flirt have always, pece F. & H., been S.E.; but gill, a fellow, a chap, is low s. or e.: Vaux, 1812; extremely ob. Gen. with another term, says Vaux, who aligns glick and gory.

*gil-guy. See gilguy.*

gilliflower. One wearing ‘a canary or belcher fogle round his twist [neck]’, Bee: low London: ca. 1820–50. If he wears many more colours he is a tulip.

gills. The flesh under the ears and jaws: since Francis Bacon’s ‘Redness about the checks and gills’; in C. 19–20, pace the O.E.D., the term has a very coll. hue, esp. in rosy about the gills, cheerful.—blue, green, yellow, or queer about . . . , dejected, indisposed,—and white . . . , frightened.—2. The corners of a stand-up collar: 1826 (S.O.D.); hence, 1830 (H., 1st ed.), a stand-up collar.

*gills, a cant or dig in the. A punch in the face: pugilists: C. 19–20; ob.

gill, grease the. To eat a very good meal: coll.: C. 19–20.

gilly. One of the audience: (circus) Pearlyee (-1933). E. Seago. Perhaps (I greatly doubt it) derivative of the Scottish gillie.


*gill-dubber. A C. 18–19 form of gill. Grove, 1st ed. Also rum dubber, q.v.

*gill-edged. (Of paper, i.e. shares, bills, etc.) exceptionally easy to negotiate: ex U.S. (ca. 1888); anglicised ca. 1895. Ex gill-edged note-paper.—2. Hence, first-class: coll.: from ca. 1898 in England.


Gilt Gabbar, the. Greenock: Port-Glaswegians: late C. 19–20. Ex ‘a ship used as a vane on the Customs House Quay’ (Bowen).

gilter. (Pick-lock) thief: c.: late C. 17–18 c. Warning for Housekeepers, 1767.


gimmercrack. Showy simpleton or trifler, gow-gaw, and handy-man, is S.E.: as ‘a spruce Wench’, B.E., it is perhaps s. (late C. 17–early 19 low): as the female pudend; low or low coll.: C. 19—2. The adj., like the derivative gimcrackery, is also S.E., despite F. & H., who, further, wrongly make gimlet-eye(d) other than S.E.


gin. A native woman (—1830; anticipated in 1798): Australian. Hence, 1830, the wife of an Aborigine. Orig. coll., but by 1860 standard Australian. Ex Aborigine. (Morris).—2. Hence, from ca. 1880, occ. facetious of any woman or wife; also, an old woman (—1893); ob.
gin and fog. Hoarseness caused by alcohol; theatrical: from ca. 1880. Ware.

gin and it. Gin and Italian vermouth; C. 29.

Gin and Gospel Gazette. The Morning Advertiser: journalists; later C. 19. Also known as The Tap-Tub and The Beer-and-Bible Gazette: the first and second terms by 1860; witness H., who further notes 'Tizer.'


gin-bottle. A 'dirty, abandoned, . . . debased woman,' the victim of alcoholic abuse, within an ace of inevitable death: low urban (— 1909); slightly ob. Ware.


gin-cyan. The throat: low: from ca. 1830. Cf. ginh-trap. — 2. The habitation of drunkenness, esp. on gin: from ca. 1835. Ainsworth, 'Gin Lane's the nearest road to the churchyard.'


gingambob, gingumbob; jiggambob. A toy; bauble: late C. 17–20 (ob.): coll. B.E. has the second, Grose the first spelling, the third being C. 19–20.— 2. (Gen. in pl.) The testicles: mid-C. 18–20; ob. Grose (1st ed.), who adds: 'See thingambobs.'


ginger, adj. Ginger-coloured; red- or sandy-haired (applied to persons and cocks): from ca. 1825: also dial.


'Politicians actively impatient with their own party' (Allan M. Leing): political: 1934.


Both forms are recorded by Grose, 1st ed.


ginger-up. To enliven: put mettle or spirit into: coll.: from ca. 1848: from ca. 1890. S.E. Diresar, 1848. Ex 'figging' a horse (1823) or putting ginger in drinks (1829). O.E.D. Whence vbl.n. gingering-up.


Ginger, you're barmy! An early C. 20, lower classes' c.p. B. & P.

gingerbread. Money: from ca. 1890; ob. Esp. in have the gingerbread, to be rich. B.E.— 2. Showy but inferior goods: coll.: mid-C. 18–20; ob. Rare. Ex:

gingerbread, adj. Showyly worthless: coll.: 1748. (The O.E.D. considers it S.E.) Nautically, gingerbread hatches or quarters, luxurious accommodation or living (mid-C. 19–20): coll.; g. work, carved and gilt decorations (coll. >, by 1800. S.E.: Smollett, 1767; g. rigging, wire-rigging (C. 19: coll.).— 2. gift off the gingerbread, see gilt.


gingerly, adj. and adv., is considered by F. & H. to have orig. been coll.


gingham. An umbrella (rightly, one made of gingham): coll.: 1861.


ginger or jinger. A coin: C. 19–20; ob. Ex the preceding.

gingambob. See gingambob.


gink. A fellow: always pejorative: U.S. (ca. 1910), partly anglicised by P. G. Wodehouse in 1920 (O.E.D. Sup.) and (in New Zealand as a stupid fellow) thoroughly naturalised, owing to the talkies, by 1934. Possibly derived ex gink, a trick, whence Scots ginkie, a term of reproach applied to a woman: Godfrey Irwin, American Tramp and Underwood Skag, 1931; this seems more prob. than derivation ex ginz's (or G-) baby, an unwanted child, as in an extremely sentimental novel of the 1890's.

ginned-up. Tipsy: from ca. 1920. (D. Sayers, Murder Must Advertise, 1933.) Cf.:

ginned. Stupefied with liquor, esp. and orig. with gin: coll.: late C. 19–20; ob.

ginnums. An old woman, esp. if fond of liquor, e.g. gin: low coll. (— 1893); ob.

ginny. 'An Instrument to lift up a Grate, the better to Steal what is in the window,' B.E.: c.: ca. 1670–1839. Head. ↑ ex dial. grinny, a (primitive) crane.

ginny. Affected by gin, applied esp. to the liver or the kidneys: coll.: 1888. (O.E.D.) Cf. beery.


gip. To cheat (a person): U.S., anglicised by 1890. (O.E.D. Sup.) Ex gip, n. 2.

gip ! (To horses, S.E.) Indicative of surprise or contempt: also = go away! C. 16–17 coll. L. see up.

gip', quoth Gilbert when his mare farts (Howell, 1859); 'Gip with an ill rubbing,' quoth Badger when his mare kicked (Ray, 1878). A o.p.
addressed to one who is ‘pertish and forward’; 
† by 1800. Apperson.

2. Same as Gippy, 1: military: C. 20.—3. (Also gypoo.) Grasse; gravy; butter: military: from ca. 1912. Ex dial. giper or jiper, meat juice, gravy. (O.E.D. Sup.)


gipsy. A playful term of address to a woman, esp. if she is dark: 1868, George Eliot, but prob. in use some years earlier: coll. Ex sense, a hussy (C. 18–19); ex C. 17–18 term of contempt.

girde, n. tim am Yr. Have you no manners? Eap., haven't you the politeness to say ‘Master’? Coll.: ca. 1650–1850. Udall in Roister Doister; Swift; Scott. (Apperson.)

girdle, under one's. In subjection; under one's control: ca. 1540–1880: coll. until C. 18, then S.E.

girdle behind you, if you are angry you may turn the buckle of your. ‘To one Angry for a small Matter, and whose Anger is as little valued,’ B.E.: late C. 16–early 18 coll.


girl, v.1. To consort with women; make love to a woman: Oxford University coll.: from ca. 1919. Dorothy Sayers, Gaudy Night, 1936, ‘She remembered . . . an expression in use among the irreverent: “to catch a Senior girling”’—Ex go girling (see girling).

girl, old. A woman of any age whatsoever: pet or pejorative term, in reference or in address: from ca. 1845.—A term of address to a mare: a pet name: 1837, Dickens. O.E.D.

girl, one's best. The girl to whom one is engaged, or wishful to be; the fancy of the moment: coll.: anglicised ca. 1890; orig. U.S. Coll. girl, 1, q.v.

girl and boy. A saveloy; rhyming s. (—1859). H., 1st ed. One of the comparatively few rhyming s. terms that—unless here an indelicate innuendo is meant—lack adequate reason or picturesqueness.

girdle-catcher. See girdlometer.


girl-shop. A brothel: low coll.: from ca. 1870; ob. Cf. girilery, q.v.

girl-show. A ballet or a revue, esp. one that in the 1890's was called a tep-piece and in C. 20 is known as a revue; low coll.: from ca. 1890.

Girl Street. See Hair Court.

girl-trap. An habitual seducer: low coll.: from ca. 1870; ob.

girilery. A brothel (cf. girl-shop); a musical-comedy and revue theatre: the former from ca. 1870, the latter from ca. 1880: coll. Exc Lamb's girilery, girls collectively.


girling, go. To go looking for loose women, professional or amateur: low coll.: ca. 1860–1915. Cf. go on the loose and girl, v.

girdlometer, occ. girl-catcher. The male member: low jocular coll.: from ca. 1870; ob. Perhaps on foolometer, q.v.

girls, the. Harlots in the mass; lechery: coll.: from ca. 1850. Cf.: girls, to have been after the. To have syphilis or gonorrhoea: low coll.: from ca. 1860.

girls are (hauling) on the tow-rop, the. A coll. naval c.p. = ‘homeward bound’. Late C. 19–20; ob. F. & Gibbons: Bowen.


gis, g'is! Give us (or give me)!: sol.: mid-C. 19–20.

git. Illiterate pronunciation of get: 1887, Baum- man, but obviously very much older.

git! See get! (Only occ. British.)—giv. See stuff to give the troops. Also, in illiterate speech, giv = gave, given.

give, v. For phrases (e.g. give the go-by, the office, the tip) not listed here, see the resp. nn.—2. Gave; given: sol.: C. 18–20.

give (a person) a double broad. 'To hit with a piece of marginal wood-furniture 8 picus wide' : printers’ (—1933). Slang. p. 184.

give (a person) a piece of one's mind. Frankly to impart one's ill opinion of him in gen. or in particular: coll.: 1865, Dickens.

give a pop. See pop, give a.

give a rolling. See give him a rolling.


give and take. A race in which a horse is weighted according to its height: turf (—1823); ob. Bee.

give away, give-away. The betrayal, whether deliberate or inadvertent, of a secret: from ca. 1880.

give away, v. To betray; expose to punishment or ridicule: from ca. 1878. In C. 20 mainly—but not (?) orig.—U.S. Occ. give dead away.—2. V. reflexive, to let slip a secret: (—1883)—3. Incorrectly for give way: C. 17–20. ‘t = give a way’, O.E.D.

give-away gun. An underhand betrayal of a secret: low: from ca. 1885.

give (a ship) beans; gen. give her beans. ‘To crack on sail in a strong wind': nautical: late C. 19–20; slightly ob. Bowen.

give (one) best. To acknowledge a person's superiority; admit defeat: orig. (—1883), in Australia, where also, as soon after in England, it = to give up trying at anything. Kogihley, 1883, ‘I went to work and gave the schooling best’; ‘Rolf Boldwood’. Morris. Prob. ex:—2. In c. to leave (a person), avoid or abandon him (—1877). Horsley, Jottings from Goal.

give gip or gyp. See gip, give—give her the gun. See give the gun.
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**GIVE HER THE GUN**

*give her the gun.* To go to extremes: aircraft engineers: from ca. 1932. *The Daily Herald,* Aug. 1, 1936.

*give her the rush.* 'To run out of one's ground to hit the ball': cricketers' coll. (— 1888); slightly ob.—as is the practice. (Lewis.)

*give him a rolling for his all-over!* Give him a Roland for his Oliver! low Cockney (—1909). Ware.

[give in, to yield, and give out, to fail, to cease, are, pace F. & H., S.E.] give in. . . that! To admit, when close-pressed in argument, that . . . . coll. (—1877). O.E.D.

give it a drink! A c.p. hurled at a bad play or performance: theatrical and musical-halls' (1897) >, by 1914, fairly gen. Ware. Cf.:

give it a rest! Oh, stop talking! C. 20 coll. ex U.S. give us a rest!

give it hot (with dative). To beat (soundly), scold (severely): coll.: from ca. 1870.

give it mouth. Speak up! Low coll.: ca. 1866-1910. Orig. and mainly to actors. H., 5th ed., cites 'He's the cove to give it mouth' as a 'low-folk' encomium. Perhaps on to give tongue.

*give it to (a person) for (something).* To rob or defraud one of: c.: ca. 1810-50. Vaux.—2. As to thrash or to scold, it may orig. have been coll., but it soon > S.E.—3. To pull a person's leg: low (—1812); † by 1890. Vaux.

give it to the Belgians! See Belgians.

give it (upon) ?, what suit did you. How did you effect your purpose?: low (—1812); † by 1890. Vaux.

give jessie. See jessie.

give lip to. To speak insolently to: from ca. 1820: nautical >, ca. 1860, gen. Haggart, 1821; Egan's Grose.

give (a ship) muslin. To make sail: nautical: late C. 19-20; ob. Bowen.

give nature a filip. To indulge in wine and/or women: late C. 17-19; coll. R.F.

give (a person) one. To give him a blow, a kiss, etc.: coll.: C. 19-20.

give (e.g. him) one in the eye. To thrash; occ. to scold; from ca. 1860. Cf. give it hot, something for oneself, what for, what's what.

give one's head for naught (late C. 14-15) or for the washing (late C. 16-mid-19). 'To submit to be imposed on'; Halliwell. (Apperson.)

give out calendars. See calendars, give out.

*give some stick.* To encourage punters to bet freely on (a certain horse, esp. the favourite) racing c. (—1933). Ex use of the jockey's whip.

give (a ship) something else to do. Constantly to work the helm in order to check rolling or pitching: nautical: late C. 19-20. Bowen.

give (a person) something for himself. To thrash; reprimand: coll.: late C. 19-20.

give (a person) the air. To dismiss: U.S., partly anglicised by 1934. C.O.D. (1934 Sup.).

give the bag, bullet, kick-out, pike, road, sack. To dismiss from one's employ: coll.: see the separate nns. Bag is the early form of sack, but see esp. bag. Pike and sack are rare, the former †, the latter ob. Get is commoner than give the kick-out.

give the ball air. 'To bowl the (slow) ball with a high trajectory': cricketers' coll. 1919. Lewis cites E. R. Wilson, that nigh the most wonderful of all slow bowlers, as using the phrase in 1920.

give the belt. See belt, give the.

give the crock. To yield victory: lower classes': from ca. 1880; very ob. Ware.

*give the gooner. See gooner.

give the gun to one's plane; gen. give her the gun. To open the throttle: Royal Air Force: from ca. 1920.

give the miss in baulk. See miss in baulk.

give (a person) the ram's challenge. To nod to: tailors' (—1928). 'Locus' as in give the roset'y.

give (a person) the road. To avoid (him): Canadian: from ca. 1910. John Beame.

give (a person) the rose(s)!. To blush at chaff: tailors' 1928, *The Tailor and Cutter,* Nov. 29. From ca. 1890.

give way. (Of women) to permit the sexual embrace (—1870). Perhaps orig. euphemistic and S.E., as often it still is; but it also is a humorous colt.

give what for; occ. what's what. (With dative.) To beat, thrash; scold, reprimand; coll., the former C. 19-20, the latter C. 20 and gen. jocular.

give your arse a chance! ; often preceded by shut up (or stop talking) and. A low, C. 20 c.p.: esp. in the Australian Forces, 1914-18.

give yourself a bit of an overhauling! Go and have a wash and/or a clean-up: c.p.: from ca. 1912. Ex cleaning a motor-car.


given the deep six, be. To be hoaved overboard; to be buried at sea: nautical: late C. 19-20. Bowen. Prob. six refers to the length (in feet) of the coffin.

giver. A good boxer, esp. one with a hard punch; pugilistic: ca. 1820-1900. 'Peter Corcoran' Reynolds in *The Furry.*

gixe. An affected, mincing woman; late C. 16-early 17.—2. A wanton wench: C. 17. Both senses coll. on verge of respectability, the former being in Florio, the latter in Cotgrave, who remarks: 'A fained word.' Perhaps ex gig after trickey (trizy in an old spelling).


gizzard, fret one's. To worry oneself: low coll. (—1755); ob. Johnson. Cf. fret, q.v., and gizzard.

gizzard, grumble in the. To be secretly annoyed: coll. (—1765): anticipated in C. 17 (ex Yorkshire dial.). Whence grumble-gizzard, with which cf. grumble-guts.

gizzard, stick in one's. To continue to displease or render indignant: coll.: from ca. 1660. Pepys; Swift. 'Don't let that stick in your gizzard'; in late C. 19-20, almost S.E. Ex the lit. sense, to prove indigestible.


glad eye, the. A come-hither look (gen. from female to male). Esp. in give the g. e. C. 20: s. >, by 1930, coll. Ex † sense of glad (bright): W.

glad rags, one's. One's best clothes: coll.: C. 20; U.S., anglicised ca. 1906; slightly ob (O.E.D. Sup.)

Gladiolus, a light travelling-bag, is S.E., but as an abbr. of the already jocular *Gladiolus clarum* (e.g. in Augustine Birrell's *Obiter Dicta*, 1888) it is coll.: 1894, H., 3rd ed.; oh. Gladiolus in 1860 reduced the impression on French wines.

Gladiolize. To say a lot and mean little: coll.: ca. 1886–1900.


Glasgow Grey. The 70th Foot Regiment, from ca. 1881 the 2nd Battalion of the East Surreys; military: from soon after 1756; oh. At first, this regiment was recruited largely from Glasgow, and its faces were grey. F. & Gibbons.


*glasiers.* See glazier, 2.

glass. (to have) been looking through a. (To be) drunk: coll.: from ca. 1860; oh. glass? who is to pay for the broken? Who is to pay for the damages? Coll.: C. 19–20; oh. glass about, there's a deal of. It is a fine (though vulgar) display: low coll.—2. A c.p. retort to the boast of an achievement: low coll. Both ca. 1880–1914.


*glass house.* A guard-room: esp. detention-barracks or cells for long-term prisoners: Regular Army: from ca. 1805. B. & P. Ex.—2. the Glass House. The military prison at North Camp, Aldershott: C. 20. So called 'presumably because it has a glass roof. It is known to, and dreaded for its severity by, every soldier... just as the Naval Prisons at Chatham and Portsmouth are known and dreaded by every sailor in the Navy,' says 'Stuart Wood', who 'served' there in 1902, in *Shades of the Prison House*, 1932.

glass-house, live in a. To lay oneself open to criticism: coll.: from ca. 1845; now virtually S.E. Prob. suggested by the C. 17–20 proverb, those who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones.


*glasyers.* See glazier, 2.

*glass.* A window: o.: of ca. 1690–1890. B.E., Grose (2nd ed.), Snowden.—2. Eye; eyesight: c. (1788); † by 1900. Grose, 2nd ed. See glass, mail a.

*glass, v.* (Of the dealer) to cheat, with a mirror, at cards: low or ca.: ca. 1820–80. (See glass-work.) Pierce Egan.

*glass, mail or star a or the.* To break a window: c.: ca. 1785–1890. Grose, 2nd ed. (at star the glass).—2. Grose, 2nd ed. (1788), at mail, has: 'I'll mail your glass; I'll beat out your eye,' † by 1900.

*glaze, on the, adj. and adv. (By robbing jewellers' windows after smashing them: c.: from ca. 1719. Johnson's *Pirates and Highwaymen*.

*glaze, spank a or the.* To break a window with the fist: c. (—1839). Brandon.

*glazier.* One that creeps i. at Casements, or uprisings Glass-windows to Fitch and Steal': B.E.: c.: mid-C. 17–early 19. Head, 1673.—2. Pl. only (in C. 16–17 often spelt glaisiers or glasyers), the eyes: o.: of ca. 1560–1830. Harman. Cf.: glazier? is, rarely was, your father a. A c.p. addressed to one who stands in the light—esp. in front of a window, a fire, a candle, or a lamp. Grose (2nd ed.), who adds: 'If it is answered in the negative, the rejinder is—I wish he was, that he might make a window through your body, to enable us to see the fire or light.' From ca. 1786.

*glaziers.* See glazier, 2.


gleaner. A thief of 'unconsidered trifles': low or ca.: ca. 1860–1900. F. & H. Ex the preceding.

Glesca Kulties, the. The 71st Foot Regiment: military in the Peninsular War. F. & Gibbons. Lit., the Glasgow pickpockets or street-Arabas.

*glib*; in C. 18, occ. glibb. A ribbon: c.: mid-C. 18–early 19. † ex its smoothness.—2. The tongue: mid-C. 19–20; oh. H., 3rd ed. Esp. in slacken your glib /, don't talk so much! † ex glib(-tongued), which F. & H. wrongly include.


*glim,* v. To burn, i.e. brand, in the hand: c.: late C. 17–early 19. B.E. Ex preceding.

*glim, douse the.* To put out the light, gen. in imperative: orig.: C. 18; c.: ca. 1846, it is a., mainly nautical. Ex gim, n., i–4. See douse.

*glim-fender.* An andiron: c. of ca. 1697–1820. Coles; B.E. A rum g.-f. was of silver: see rum. Ex gim, n.—2. A handcuff (but rare in singular): c.: ca. 1820–70. 'Jon Bee.' Punning sense 1.

*glim-flash(e)y; in C. 17, occ. glimflashy.* Angry: c.: late C. 17–mid-19. Coles; B.E. Lytton, 'No, Captain, don't be glimflashy.

*glim-gibber.* A jargon; applied esp. to under-world cant: low or person: c. (1844); † by 1910. If gibber perverts gibber(s), then, lit., the term = a 'dark-lantern' gibberish or lingo. O.E.D.

*glim-jack.* A link-boy; occ. a thief operating at night: c.: mid-C. 17–early 19. Coles, 1876.
GLUE-POT


*glum-stick, gitamick. A candlestick: c. of ca. 1670–1830. Coles; B.E.; Gross. A rum q.e.d. is of silver, a queer g.e. is of brass, pewter, or iron. Cf. glint-stick and queer.


Glimmer, not a. Not (or none) at all; coll.: from ca. 1925. Only in answer to some such question as ‘Have (had) you any idea how to do this, or that this would happen?’ ‘Abbr. not the glimmer of an idea.

*glimmerer. A beggar alleging loss by fire: ca. 1860–1890: c. Dekker & Wilkins; B.E. (O.E.D.) Cf. glimmer and:


Glimmers. The eyes (pl. only): from ca. 1814: low s.: ob. Ex glimmer, q.v.

Glimmery. (Of an actor) having no clear conception: theatrical: 1852: ob. The Athenæum, April 9, 1892. (O.E.D.)


Glims, put the. ‘To fill the hollow over the eyes of old horses by pricking and blowing air into the loose tissues underneath, thus giving the full effect of youth’, F. & H.: shady horse-dealing and veterinary surgery: from ca. 1870.


Glist(e)ner. A foreign: c. >, ca. 1830, low: from ca. 1815 T. Moore; Frank Jennings, 1932. Cf. shinier and yellow boy.

Glister. A glass or tumbler: c. (— 1889). ‘Ex the S.E. n. and v., glister.

Gloaf; gen., gloak. A man: c. (— 1795), Scottish according to Pierce Egan (1823); † by 1875. Potter’s Dict. of Cant. ‘By block. Cf. gill and gory.


Globe-trotting is the vb.ln. to both senses of globe-trotter, q.v.

Globes. The female breasts: coll.: from ca. 1860; ob.


Glorious. Divinely or ecstatically drunk: coll.: 1790; Burns (O.E.D.); Thackeray, ‘I was taken up glorious, as the phrase is, and put to bed.’


Glory! is a low coll. exclamation of delight (— 1803). Quiller-Couch. Also great glory! and how the glory! Abbr. glory be to God!


Glimmerly, in one’s. (At one’s best: S.E.) Extremely gratified: coll.: 1895. (O.E.D.)—2. Exp. leave one in his glory, to depart, so that now he is (or sits) alone: 1877. Baumann.


Glory-oh, the. The warship Glory glory: naval (— 1909). Ware.


Glove, fit like a. See fit like a glove.


Gloves, win a pair of. To kiss a sleeping man: a kindly act meriting this reward: coll.: from ca. 1710; ob. Gay, Gross.


Gloves, (all) of a. Coll. for in a glove: 1865. Dickons. O.E.D.

Gloves, got the. See got the glove.


Gloves did not hold the, ‘You were baffled . . . you missed your aim,’ Ray, 1813: coll.: C. 19. (Apperson.)

Gloves. A parson: mid-C. 18–20. ob. Gross, 1st ed. He joins couples together.—2. ‘Part of the road so bad that the coach or buggy’—or motor-car—’sticks in it’, Morris: Australian coll.: recorded in 1892, but prob. dating from the 1870’s or even ’60’s: ob.—3. (Glove Pot, the) London: showmen’s: C. 20. P. Allingham, in The Evening News, July 9, 1934.

Glove-put has come unstuck, a or the. He gives off the odour of a genital exudation or of a seminal emission: a low o.p.: from ca. 1890.
[glum is—despite F. & H.—ineligible because B.E.; glump, glumpy, because dial.]


gluman. A rush-time extra hand in the Customs; coll. verging on S.E.; ca. 1790–1850. See that interesting book, Colquhoun’s The Police of the Metropolis, 1796.

glutton. A boxer that takes a lot of punishment before he is ‘satisfied’: pugilism: 1869. Cf. the S.E. gludon for work.—2. A horse that stays well; racing. s. > gen.; from ca. 1850.
glybe. A writing. c. (–1785); † by 1800.

groes, lit. ed. A perversion of gybe.

glym and its derivatives are defined at the preferable glim, etc.


gnarling. See gnarly upon.

gnash. Incorrect for nash, tender, physically soft: C. 18. O.E.D.


gnoff. See gnoon.

nomenico. (!) Incorrect for gonomic: C. 18–20. O.E.D.


gnostic. A knowing person, a ‘downy cove’ (q.v.): ca. 1815–1900, but already ob. in 1860. Moore, in Tom Crick, ‘Many of the words used by the Canting Beggars in Beaumont and Fletcher’s masque are still to be heard among the gnostics of Dyot Street and Tothill Fields.’—2. Also as adj. (†).

gnostically. Artfully; knowingly; flashily: ca. 1820–95. Scott.

go. For the phrases not listed here, see the significant n. or adj. (F. & H.’s go-between, a pimp, is S.E.)

go. A three-halfpenny bowl of gin and water, esp. in coal orig.—if sold at the Go Shop’, q.v.; ca. 1767–1820.—2. Whence (?) a draught, a drink: from ca. 1800. Punch, 1841, ‘Walter, a go of Brett’s best alcohol.’ Specifically, a quarter of brandy: same period. Thackeray in The Hilgroarty Diamond, ‘Two more chairs...and two more go of gin!’ Synonyms of the former are bender, coffin-nail, drain, face, gar-gle, loation, nollier, peg, reviver, slug, something, awg, tot, warmer, voit, etc., etc.—2a. Hence, of food, as in ‘We’ve had a good go of cherries (of these)’, Baumann, 1887.—3. The fashion, esp. in all the go (q.v.) and, late C. 19–20, quite the go,—the go having ‡ ca. 1840; the correct thing: from ca. 1878 (Grose’s annotations to 1st ed. copy in the British Museum); s. > coll. G. R. Sims, 1880, ‘And all day long there’s a big crowd stops to look at the lady who’s all the go.’—4. Hence, in the 1820’s, a dandy, a notable swell. Egans, 1821, ‘In the parks, Tom was the go among the goes.’—5. A street incident, occurrence: coll. or low coll.: 1796 (O.E.D.). Kenney, 1893, ‘Capital go, isn’t it?’ (this stock phrase = a pleasant business); Dickens, ‘A pretty go!’ (stock = a startling or awkward unanswerable or situation, etc.); G. Eliot, ‘A rum go’ (stock, with variant rummey = a queer start, a strange affair).—6. Hence (—1877), an occasion, a time; e.g. ‘I’ve twelve this go’ = I have [received] twelve [years] this time.—7. Hence, a bout, an attack, of sickness or illness: coll.: C. 20. (O.E.D. Sup.)—8. High spirits; mettle, spirit; energy, enterprise: coll.: 1825, Westmacott, in The English Spy. —9. A turn, an attempt: coll.: U.S. (1825), anglicised ca. 1835. Dickens, ‘Would you do this thing for a go?’—Gen. in have a go at, the object being anything from an abstruse subject to a woman.—10. A success, esp. in make a go of it, (C. 20) make it a go: orig. (—1877), U.S.; anglicised ca. 1895.—11. An agreement, a settled thing; a certainty. Esp. in it’s a go, occ. is it a go?: mostly Australia and New Zealand (—1914).—12. A chance; esp. give a person a fair go: id.: from ca. 1910.—13. Working condition of the bells: bell-ringers’ (—1901) >, by 1930, coll. H. Earle Bulwer, Glossary of Bell-Ringing.

go, v. The sense, to be pregnant, as in Bacon, ‘Women go commonly nine months’, is S.E.—2. Abbr. go down, v., 1, q.v.: from ca. 1740; coll. Fielding.—3. Gen. with for, as to go to for (to do something), to be so foolish, brave, strict, etc., as to... coll. or low coll.: from ca. 1750.—4. V.t.: to wager, risk: 1768. Goldsmith: coll. Hence, to afford from ca. 1870. Also to stand treat: from ca. 1875.—5. (Of things) to succeed: coll.: from ca. 1866 London Opinion, Jan. 13, 1866, ‘His London-street railway scheme didn’t go’; H. D. Traill, 1870.—6. Hence, to be accepted or acceptable; to be valid or acceptable: coll.; orig. (ca. 1890) U.S., anglicised ca. 1910. E.g. ‘That goes for (or with) me.’ O.E.D. (Sup.)—7. (Of a politician or a constituency, with adj., as in ‘Chelsea went red,’ Mr. Maxton went conservative’) to become: coll.: from ca. 1893; ex U.S.—8. To ride to bounds: from ca. 1840; sporting. s.s.: ca. 1895, j.—9. V.t.: to eat: nautical: late C. 19–20. Bowen. Prob. ex sense 4,nuance 1.—10. Hence, to digest: mostly Canadian: late C. 19–20. (John Beames, O Royalty, 1932, ‘Your poor pu—he couldn’t ever go pork an’ onions.’)—11. Abbr. go for, to attack: Australian: from ca. 1912.

go, a little bit on the. Slightly drunk: ca. 1820–80.

go, n. See the word. From the start: coll.; orig. (—1838) U.S.; anglicised ca. 1890.

go, great and little. See great go, little go.

go, high. See high go.

go, near. A narrow escape: coll.: from ca. 1825.

go, no. Either with to be or as an exclamation: 1825, Westmacott. (O.E.D.); Dickens, ‘I know something about this here family, and my opinion is, it’s no go.’ Occ. abbr. n. g. (cbl.)

go, on the. On the verge of ruin or destruction: late C. 17–18; coll.—2. In a (state of) decline: coll.: ca. 1725–1880. Fitz(Gerald), 1842 (in a letter), ‘As to poor old England, I never see a paper, but I think with you that you is on the go’ (O.E.D.)—3. Slightly drunk: 1821, Egans (O.E.D.); very ob. —4. On the move; busy; restless active: coll.: from ca. 1840.

go-ahead, adj. Progressive; anxious to succeed—and usually succeeding; ex U.S. (like going-ahead, it occurs in 1840); anglicised ca. 1865. In C. 20, coll.
go all out on. To trust completely; to make the most of (a person): coll.: 1933, Compton Mackenzie. Ex athletics.

got-lo. A fool; an easy dupe: c. of resp., ca. 1854–1896 (Mayhew) and ca. 1810–90 (Vaux). Because he goes along when bid.—2. A thief: c. (—1857). 'Ducange Anglicus'; H., 2nd ed. (This sense: only in the form go-along.)

go along, Bob! come along, Bob! These two c.p.p., of ca. 1800–30, are of problematic and dubious meaning. 'Jon Bee'.

go-along. See go along.

go and (do something). Where the go and repre-
sentment pleonasm, the usage is coll.: from C. 15 or C. 16.—2. If = to be so silly, foolish, or unlucky as to do something, it is also coll.: from ca. 1875. Cf. been and gone and . (O.E.D.)

go and boil your head! See at head.


go and take a running jump at yourself! (Rare in other moods.) Go to blasés!: a c.p. (C. 20) expressive of scorn. E.g. in John G. Brandon, The One-Minute Murder, 1934. Cf. go and play trains! See play trains.


go-ashore. 'An iron pot or cauldron, with three iron feet, and two ears, from which it was suspended by a wire handle over the fire.' Morris: New Zealand coll. (—1840) — by H. (1890). S.E. Ex Maori kohu by 'Hobson-Jobson'.

go-ashores: 'The seaman's best dress', Smyth, 1867; nautical coll.: from ca. 1850: obs. (O.E.D.)

go at, have a. See go, n., 9.


go ba-ba (black sheep). See ba-ba.

go be of. See go back on.—2 See go behind.

go back on, v.t. To desert, turn against, or to fail, a person; break a promise: ex U.S. (1868); Anglicised ca. 1895. Variant go back of (not with persons): 1888. O.E.D.

go bail, I will or I'll. I'll be bound! I'm sure! Assurably! (Coll.: from ca. 1890. Rider Haggard, in Huon, 'He won't marry her now, I'll go bail'. O.E. Damon.)

go behind, v.t. To disregard the writing for the sake of ascertaining the fact, Thornton: orig. (1839); popularised in 1876), U.S.; Anglicised as a coll. ca. 1890. In C. 20, S.E. The variant go back of (late C. 19–20) is rare in Britain, frequent in U.S.

Go-Between, the. St. Alban's Church, Holborn: London: 1897-ca. 1912. Ware. Because 'High Church'.

go big; go over big. (Of a play, a book) to be very successful: both U.S. and both Anglicised in 1928. The latter was, in U.S., the earlier; go big derives from it. (O.E.D. Sup.)

go blath. See blath, adj. Prob. ex —2. To have one's mind go blank: from ca. 1907: Parliamentary >, by 1930, gen. A. E. W. Mason, The Dean's Elbow, 1930, in reference to the year 1908 and to a prospective speaker in Parliament, 'If only he had mind didn't go blank. Minds often did, even the best minds. Darkness descends on them, inextricable ... These seizures ... always chose ruinous moments. There was a slang phrase which described them—horribly graphic, too, like most

slang phrases. To go blath. Well, there it was! He, Mark Twain, would go blath this afternoon.' Perhaps blath represents a perversion of blank.

go-by. The act of passing without recognising (a person), dealing with or taking (a thing); an evasion or a deception. Esp. in give (e.g. him or it) the go-by, to ignore; to abandon; to refuse to recognise: from ca. 1655: in C. 17–18, and indeed until ca. 1860, S.E.; then coll. Stevenson, 'A French ship ... gave us the go-by in the fog.' Also common in get the go-by, the corresponding passive.


go close. Abbr. go close to the winning-post: sporting coll. (—1800). Ware.

go crook. To speak angrily: Australian: from ca. 1910. See crook, adj.

go dis. See dis (disconnected) and cf. gone dis, q.v.


go down one. To be vanquished: Cockneys' coll. (—1900). Ware. Ex going down one place in school.


go'er on! A Stock Exchange exclamatory c.p. made when a broker or a jobber wishes to continue buying or selling the same shares: C. 20. A commercial attaboy!

go fanti. To return to primitive life: scientific: from ca. 1880; ob. Ware.

go for. To attempt (to do); undertake: coll.: from ca. 1880; ob. Ware (—1871). U.S.,—of that U.S. sense, to be in favour of, support, vote for, which is occ. found in coll. English ca. 1880–1910.—2. To attack, physically, linguistically, or in writing (hence, esp. in the theatre, to criticise adversely): ex U.S. (1838); Anglicised ca. 1870. Baumann, 1877; The Polytechnic Magazine, Oct. 24, 1889, 'He went for the jam tarts unmercifully.'

go for the gloves. See gloves, go for.

go get for (do, etc.). 'Go and': col. (—1887). Baumann. Cf. go to do, q.v. See also go, v., 3.

go-getter. A very active enterprising person; a pusher: coll.: U.S. (—1922), Anglicised by 1925. (O.E.D. Sup.) Ex go and get what one wants.

go home. To die: military: 1915. B. & P. Cf. go out and go west.

go hostile. See hostile.

go-in. gen. followed by at. A lit. or fig. attack: 1858–2. A turn of work (—1890). Both coll. O.E.D.

go in, v.i. To enter oneself; set about it; try: from ca. 1835: from ca. 1890, S.E. Dickens, 'Go in and win', advice offered to the weaker in a con-
test, esp.asticus. —2. To die: military in the Boer War, J. Milne, The Epistles of Alps, 1902. Ex dial. sense, to come to an end. E.D.D. go in at. To assai vigorosly: coll. : from ca. 1810. In 1849, Dickens, 'Sometimes I go in at the butcher madly, and cut my knuckles open against his face.' Ob. go in for. To seek; attempt to obtain; make one's object: coll. : from ca. 1860. Dickens, 'Go in for money—money's the article,' 1864.—2. Hence, apply oneself to, take up (e.g. as a hobby); to begin to do, to adopt as a profession, study as a subject: coll. : from ca. 1870.—3. To enter oneself as a candidate for: coll. : from ca. 1879 (O.E.D.).—4. To venture on obtaining or on wearing: coll. : from ca. 1890.—5. To court (a woman: Society s. of ca. 1865-1900. Whyte-Melville in M. or N. Cf. go in and go for, 1. go (in) off the deep end. See end, go, go into. Attack vigorously; punch fast and hard: boxing: 1811: ob. by 1810, † by 1930. (O.E.D.) go into a flat spin. (Gen. going ...) To become muddled: aircraft engineers: from ca. 1929. The Daily Herald, Aug. 1, 1936. go it; often go it strong, in C. 20 occ. go it thick. To act vigorous and/or daringly; speak very strongly or frankly: coll. : C. 19-20. Bee. Dickens, 'I say, young Copperfield, you're going it.'—2. Hence, to live expensively and/or disiptately: coll. : (—1821), Egan, in Tom and Jerry, 'To go it, where's a place like London? (the answer being, Any cosmopolitan capital).—3. To bombard heavily, make an artillery demonstration: military coll. : 1914. B. & P. Ex senso 1. go it! Keep at it! Play, fight, etc., hard! Coll. : from ca. 1820. Bee. ? ex go it, ye cripples, (crutches are cheap): see cripples. go it blind. To act without considering the consequences; esp. to speed, physically or morally, thus: from ca. 1840. go it strong (or thick). See go it. go native. See native. For the subject, see The Fortnightly Review, Dec., 1933. go-off. (Time of) commencement: coll. : 1851 (O.E.D.). Esp. in the ob. at one go-off (1856) and in as (the) first go-off, at the very beginning: from ca. 1879.—2. In banking a, from ca. 1890, the amount of loans falling due ( ... going off the amount in the books) in a certain period, O.E.D. go off, v. To die: C. 17-20 (ob.): coll. Shakespeare; Dickens, 'She ... was seized with a fit and went off.'—2. To be disposed of: goods by sale, women in marriage. Dickens, of the latter, in Box. —3. To take place, occur; occ. it almost † to succeed. Coll. : from ca. 1804. Maria Edgeworth, Mrs. Gaskell, 'The wedding went off much as much affairs do.'—4. To deteriorate in freshness or (e.g. a horse) in form: coll. : (—1883).—5. (Contrast sense 3.) Not to take place: Society: ca. 1885-1915. Ware. (Esp. of an appointment or an engagement).—6. 'To go on board ship': naval coll. : C. 20. F. & Gibbons. go off on. To blame, reprimand, abuse: nautical: C. 20. H. Maclaren, The Private Opinion of a British Blue-Jacket, 1879. go off the deep end. See end, go (in) off the, go off the handle. A C. 20 variant of fly off the handle, q.v. go off the hooks. To die: from ca. 1830; ob. Cf. go aloft (see aloft), go on. To talk volubly: coll. : from ca. 1860. With at, to rail at: coll. : 1873. (O.E.D.) go on ! An exclamation of surprise, incredulity, or derision: coll. : from ca. 1875. go ... on ... the first dot is any coll. or idiomatic or 'Saxon' adj. (a literary adj. is very rare); the second dot being a pronoun or a n. representing a person; the subject is gen. a person or else a thing endowed with personal qualities; the object of on is shown at a consequent disadvantage—In fact, this construction is a coll. variation of the ethic dative. E.g., 'Just when I had saved enough money to retire, my bank went broke on me'; 'The servant went ill on him'; 'The egg went bad on the cook.' (From ca. 1895.) *go on, orig. upon, the dub. To go housebreaking: late C. 17-early 19 e. See dub. *go on the sharp. To rob from buildings: tramps' c. (—1932). F. Jennings. *go out, v.i. To rob in the streets: c. (—1823); ob. Bee, 'I don't go out, now,' said by a reformed rogue'. Cf. next entry.—2. To fall into disuse or into social disrepute: coll. : 1840 (O.E.D.). Punch, 1841, 'Pockets ... to use the flippant idiom of the day, are going out.' Abbrev. go out of fashion or use.—3. To die: military: 1915. B. & P. After pass out and go west. *go out foreign. To emigrate under shady circumstances: e. (—1909). Ware. go out the back door. See out the back door. *go out together. To go, habitually, theieving in company: e. of ca. 1810-90. Vaux. Cf. go out, 1. q.v. go out with the ebb. To die: nautical coll. : late C. 19-20. Bowen. Cf. military go west. go over, to desert, is C. 17-20 S.E.; but it is clerical s. when it = to join the Church of Rome (—1861). Cf. vert.—2. To die: coll. : from ca. 1845. Abbrev. go over to join the majority. Cf. go off, —3. In c., to search and rob a person (—1889). Cf. go through. go over big. See go big.—go over the top. See top, go over the.—go phut. See phut, go. go round, v.i. To pay an informal visit: coll. : 1873, W. Black. (O.E.D.) go round the buoy. To have a second helping of any food: nautical: late C. 19-20. Bowen. Go-Shop, the. The Queen's Head tavern in Duke's Court, Bow Street (London, London, W.C.2) : late C. 18-early 19. 'Frequented by the under players', Grose, 2nd ed. Ex go n., 1, q.v. go sick. To malinger: military coll. : 1915. Collinson. I.e. go on the sick-parade. *go the jump. To enter a house by the window: o. : C. 19. go the pace. See pace, go, the. go the whole hog. To go thorough-goingly: ex U.S. (1829) ; anglicised ca. 1880. See esp. Thornton and W. Cf. whole-hogger, q.v. go through. To rob: ex U.S. (1877) ; anglicised ca. 1895.—2. To possess a woman: low coll. : from ca. 1870. go through the Chapter House. (Of the ball) to pass through the stumps, in the days when there were only two cricketers: mid-C. 18-early 19. Lewis. go through with. To complete (a difficult or distasteful task or duty): mid-C. 18-20 : S.E. until ca. 1890, then of a coll. tendency. go to do. To go and do; to do: proletarian coll. : late C. 19-20. Cf. go for to, q.v. (E.g. Dorothy
go while the going's good. See going's good.
go with. (Of things) to harmonise or suit: 1710: S.E. until ca. 1880, then of a coll. hue.—2. To 'walk out with'; to affect in friendship or, gen., passion or love: low coll.: from ca. 1880.—3. To share the sexual congress with: low coll.: from ca. 1870.
good. A decay at auctions or horse-sales: c. C. 17–mid-18. Dekker; B.E. Contrast:
goal. In Winchester football of ca. 1840–1900, the referee.—2. (With derivative goaler, a goaler.) A C. 19–20 sol. for goal: in C. 17–18, a variant, S.E. but not literary: B.E., for instance, has goaler's coach. In late C. 19–20, much commoner in writing than in speech.
goaler. See preveling.
goalee; gen. goalee. A goal-keeper: Association football coll. (ca. 1920) now voring on S.E. (O.E.D. Sup.)
goanna; gohanna; guana; guano. An iguana: Australian coll. resp.: — 1891; 1896 (Henry Lawson), but ob.: 1830 († by 1910); and 1892 (Barrington)—but † by 1900. Morris.
goat, get someone's. To annoy him: U.S. (ca. 1911), anglicised by 1916: s. that, by 1937, is on the verge of coll. O.E.D. (Sup.). Perhaps ex Fr. prendre la chèvre, to take the milch-goat, often the poor man's sole source of milk.
goat, play the. To play the fool: 1879: coll. In late C. 19–20, giddy is often added before goat. See also giddy goat.—By 1920, both forms were S.E.—2. To lead a dissipated life, esp. sexually: low: from ca. 1885.
goat, ride the. To be initiated into a secret society, esp. the Masons: low coll.: from ca. 1870. Ex the superstition that a goat, for candidates to ride, is kept by every Masonic lodge.
goat-house. A brothel: C. 19 coll. Ex goat, a lascivious man.
goat Major, the. The lance-corporal who has charge of the Regimental Goat’ (Frank Richards): Royal Welch Fusiliers’: C. 20.

goatee. 'A tufted beard on the point of a shaven chin': from ca. 1855: in C. 19, coll.; in C. 20, S.E. Ex the tuft on a he-goat's chin.
goats and monkeys (at) look. To gaze lecherously (at): coll.: 1749, Cleland; † by 1890 at the latest.
goat's rig(g) or jig. Gen. or specific copulation: mid-C. 18–early 19: low coll. Grose, 1st ed., 'making the beast with two backs'.


GODS

Gob. have the gift of the
To be wide-mouthed: late C. 17-18.-2 To speak fluently, sing well: late C. 17-early 19. Cf. gob. gift of the, q.v.


Gobbie. See gobby.


Gobble-gut. A glutton: from ca. 1630: S.E. until ca. 1790, then low coll.

Gobble-pr**k. 'A rampant, lustful woman,' Grose, 1st ed.: low coll.: mid-C. 18-19.

Gobble up. To seize; appropriate; use rapidly: coll.: ex U.S. (1861), where earlier gobble; anglicised ca. 1820.


Goggling. Gorging: from ca. 1630: S.E. until ca. 1840, then coll. Thackeray, in Vanity Fair, 'The delightful exercis of goggling'.


Gobby loot, according to Bown, is the orig. form of gobby, 1.

Goblin. A sovereign: low: from ca. 1880. Henley in Villon's Straight Tip, 'Your merits goblins soon stravag': Roose and the blowers cop the lot.' Suggested by sorvin, the low coll. pronunciation of sovereign, as the fuller Jimmy o' Goblin (or p.), shows.

God. 'Often oddly disguised in caws, e.g. snop me bob, for so help me God!': W. As an oath, it occurs in many forms, but these are hardly eligible here.—2. A block pattern: sailors: from ca. 1870:—3. A boy in the sixth form: Etow (—1811): ob. Pascoe's Life in our Public Schools.


Godbless you! A c.p. addressed to one who sneezes: C. 18-20. Cf. The 18, proverbial 'He's a friend at a meet, the poorest you can get out of him is a God bless you.' Proverbs, Fuller, 1732.

God bless the Duke of Argyle! A Scottish c.p. addressed to a person shrugging his shoulders, the insinuation being—loos. C. 19-20: ob. H., 3rd ed. Ex certain posts erected in Glasgow by his grace; thus common (Southern) report !


God have mercy (or, more gen., Godamercy), horse! 'An almost meaningless proverbial exclamation that is also a coll. c.p.: coll.: ca. 1630-1730. Heywood's Proverbs; 1611, in Tarlton's Jest, 'a by word thorow London.' (Apperson.)


God knows—and He won't split. A C. 20 variant of the preceding.

God-mamma. Godmother: coll. verging on S.E.: 1828, Miss Mitford. O.E.D.


God pays! A c.p. of soldiers and sailors, who assumed a right to public charity: C. 17-18. The C. 19-20 form is, If I don't pay you, God Almighty will. Ben Jonson, in Epigrams, 'To every cause he meets, this voice he brays, | His only answer is to all, God pays.'

God permit. A stage coach: late C. 18-early 19. Grose, 1st ed. Stage coaches were advertised to start 'If God permit' or 'Deo volente'.


God save. (Pl. God saves.) The national anthem: from ca. 1910. Cf. the golders and lawyers immortalised by 'Q' (see Sleng, p. 208).

Godamercy, horse! See God have mercy, horse.

Godamercy me! God have mercy on me!: low (—1887). Baumann.

Godlimay. See gollimhay, the much more gen. pronunciation.


godfather; in C. 17, occ. godfather-in-law. A juryman: late C. 18-early 19: coll. Shakespeare: Jonson, 'I will leave you to your godfathers in law'; Grose.—2. He who pays the bill or who guarantees the rest of the company: esp. in 'Will you stand godfather? and we will take care of the brat,' i.e. repay you at some other time: late C. 18-19 c.p. Grose, 2nd ed.


godpa. Godfather: a childish or familiar coll.: from ca. 1825.

gods. In such oaths as God me, a corruption of God save.—2. Those occupying the gallery at a theatre: from ca. 1750: a. that, ca. 1840, > coll. and is, in C. 20, considered as virtually S.E. Oec.
but not since ca. 1850, in the singular. The _Globe_, April 7, 1890, 'The gods, or a portion of them, hooded and hissed while the National Anthem was being performed.' F. & H.: 'Said to have been first used by Garrick because they were seated on high, and close to the sky-painted ceiling'. Cf. _Fr. poudr(e)er_ and _poudl_e.—3. Among printers, the quadrats employed in 'jelling', q.v.: from ca. 1800.

H. 2nd ed. Perhaps rhyming on abbr. _quads_.

_God's (god's) occurs in numerous oaths: which do not concern us here. Cf. _gods_._

_gods, sight for the._ A cause of wonderment; coll. only when ironic; from ca. 1890. Hume Nisbet. Cf. the literary enough to make the gods weep.

_God's mercy._ Ham (or bacon) and eggs: country inn: ca. 1890 80. (Cf. _three-sixty-five_, q.v.) Ex a pious expression of thanks.

_God's own._ A great . . . ; esp. _God's own fuss, a 'terrible fuss': expletive coll. (—1923.) Manchon. 

_Cf._


_Godspeed._ In the. In the nick of time: coll.: ca. 1890 1900. (O.E.D.)

_goe._ (Orig. of a horse.) An adept or expert; one well grounded in a subject. Gen. with an adj., _e.g._ a _fast_ (or _a hell of a_ goe). Coll.: from ca. 1850. G. A. Lawrence in _Guy Livingstone_. When applied to other than persons, it is _S.E._

_goes for my money._ He. He's the man for me: coll.: ca. 1540-1600. Lattimer, R. Harvey. (O.E.D.) Cf. _he's the man for my money, which, however, can be varied according to persons and even animals or things—and is _S.E._


_goff._ A Scottish variant of _golf_: in _C. 20_ jocular use. _n._ and _v._, it is coll.

_goffer._ (Gen. pl.) A mineral water: _nautical_, esp. _naval_: _C. 20_. Bowen. Because they are 'trills'—2. Hence, 'a man selling mineral water or lemonade on board ship': _naval: from ca. 1910._ F. & Gibbons.

_goffer._ v. To 'bommet' a _man_: low _London_: from ca. 1890; ob. E.D.D.

_goffer I, I'll draw you out a._ A naval _c.p._ challenge to an angry _man_: from ca. 1912. F. & Gibbons. Ex _goffers_, _n._, 1.

_gog._ In _oaths, a corrupt form of God: mostly C. 16-early 17: coll.

_gog._ v. Gen. _as vb._, _gogging_, 'the old sea punishment of scraping a man's tongue with hoopiron for profanity' (Bowen): _nautical_: _C. 19._ Either ex or cognate with _Lancashire goy_, a _gag for the mouth._

_gogge._ v. To stare; roll the eyes: mid-C. 16-20: _S.E._ till late C. 18, then somewhat coll.: in _C. 20_, rare except in dial. or in faceless coll. 


_gohanna._ See _goanna._

_going._ The condition of the ground for traffic, walking, hunting, etc.: _orig._ _U.S._ (1859); anglicised ca. 1870; coll. till ca. 1895, then _S.E._ _The Daily Telegraph_, Nov. 23, 1883. 'Going . . . wonderfully clean for the time of year'.—2. See _a-going._

_going (home)._ A-dying: _proletarian_ (—1909); slightly ob. _Ware._

_going to buy anything?_ An 'evasive request for a drink': _urban_: 1896; ob. _Ware._

_going to Calabar._ A-dying: _naval_ (—1909); ob. _Ware._ Calabar is 'a white man's grave'.

_going to keep a pimper-shop._ Prosperous; smartly dressed: _Cookney_ (—1909); ob. _Ware._

_going to see a daw._ I.e. a harlot or a kept woman: sporting: late C. 19-20. _Ware._ Cf.

_going to see a man._ Going to get a drink: 1886, _The Referee_, Sept. 6. ( _Ware._)

_going's good (1, go) while the._ _The English version of the U.S. (but it) while the beating's good and the scrape go while the play is good: coll.: in _England: from ca. 1912_: slightly earlier in Australia. _Lyell._

_goings-on._ Behaviour or proceedings, with a pejorative implication and gen. with a pejorative adj.: from ca. 1770; coll. until C. 20, then un dignified S.E. Douglas Jerrold, 'Pretty place it must be where they don't admit women. Nice goings-on. I daresay, Mr. Gaudle.'

_gol._ (n.) A noisome smell or commotion: Anglo-Indian (—1864). _H._, 3rd ed.

_gold-backed one or _un._ A _louse_: mid-C. 19-20; ob.: low coll. _H._, 5th ed. Cf. _grey-backed._

_"gold braid._ (Collective n.) The principal warders: prisoners' _c._: from ca. 1920. George Ingram, _Stir_, 1933.

_gold brick._ A fraud, a _swindle_: a _sham_: an _app._ chance of making a _lot of money_: _U.S._ (ca. 1888), partly anglicised by Wodhouse in 1915; James Spenser, _Limey Breaks In_, 1934. Ex the U.S. gold-brick _swindle_, a particular form of fraud. _O.E.D._ (Sup.)

_gold-digger._ A female attaching herself to a man for (her) self and _pelf_: _U.S._ (ca. 1925); anglicised by 1930. Ex the lit. _S.E._ sense.—2. Also gold digging, the corresponding (not too) abstract _n._


_gold-dropper._ A sharper that works the confidence trick by dropping money: see _fawney_._

_rig._ _Ca. 1860-1830_: _c._ _B.E._, _Dyche_, _Grose_ (1st ed.).

_gold-dust._ Tobacco, when supplies are short: _nautical: late C. 19-20._ Bowen.

_gold-end._ A buyer of old gold and _silver_: an _itinerant jeweller: _C. 17_ coll. _Jonsen_. ? a _variation on goldsmith's apprentice._


_gold-husband._ An undergraduate _aristocrat_: _university: ca. 1620-1780_. Earle's _Microcosmography_. Superseded by _tuft, _q.v._; see also has. 1.

_gold-mine._ A profitable investment: from ca. 1850: coll. till ca. 1885, then _S.E._ _The Saturday Review_, April 28, 1883, 'A gold mine to the . . . bookmakers'.

—an._
gold-washer. A 'sweater' of gold: C. 16 low or late coll.


golden grease. A fee; a bribe; coll.: late C. 18–19. Cf. palm oil.


Dekker, B.E. Ex the colour of gold.—2. A guinea: C. 17–early 19; a sovereign: ca. 1820–1910. Both are either low or c. Same semantics. Cf. golder, and yellow boy.

goldfinch's nest. The female pudom: low (— 1827); ob.

goldfish. A charister that opens her mouth but does not sing: theatrical (— 1935).

goldsmith's window. A rich working that shows gold freely: from ca. 1890: Australian coll. >, by 1820, S.E.

goldy- or goldie-locks; goldilocks. A flaxen-haired girl or woman; mid-C. 16–20: orig. S.E.; in late C. 19–20, archaic except when coll. and applied to a child, often as a pet name.—2. Goldy, Oliver Goldsmith.

Goles !, by. A variant of by gole!: 1734, Fielding; in C. 19, lower classes; in late C. 19–20, mostly dial. E.D.D.

Golgotha. Part of the Theatre at Oxford where the heads of houses sit’, Grose, 1st ed: Amherst, 1726.—2. The Dons' gallery at St. Mary’s, Cambridge: from ca. 1800, Gradus ad Cantabrigiam, 1803. Both † by 1890. The pun is on head (skull and important person) and Golgotha, 'the Place of Skulls' (see New Testament).—3. Whence, a hat (— 1860); † by 1910. H., 2nd ed. All three senses are university a.


Goliath. 'A man of mark among the Philistines': literary: ca. 1890–1910.


golore. See golore.


golopahus, golopitious. See galopious. The best form is golopious, for the term is a 'facetious per- variation ... of galopious'; cf. rustic boldacious'. W., delicious being the 'suggester'. The S.O.D. records it at 1856.

golore. See golore.

goloshes. India-rubber over-shoes: a coll. spelling of galoshes: late C. 18–20. Galoshes itself—witness Grose, 3rd ed.—had a coll. air at first. Ex Fr. galoche; Grose's derivation ex Goliah's shoes is one of his poorly jests.


gon. A large pewter dish. † ex the † S.E. sense, a Hebrew measure.—2. Whence, a new hat. Both, Winchester College s. of ca. 1850–1915.


mann. Cf. gormed, be.


Gonmorah to you! Good morning to you!: a low c.p. of ca. 1900–14. Ware. Punning good morrow and (to-)morrow.


gone coon. See coon, gone.


gone on. Infatuated with: low coll.; from ca. 1885. Baumann, 1887; Illustrated Bita, March 29, 1890, 'He must have been terribly gone on this woman.' S.E. has the absolute phrase for gone.

gone over a goodish piece of grass. (Of meat, esp. mutton) tough; lower classes': (— 1900); ob. Ware.

gone phut. See phut.

gone through the sieve. Bankrupt: commercial (— 1900); ob. Ware.

gone to Rome. (Of bells) become silent: Roman Catholic: from the 1890's. Ware.

gone to the pack. A New Zealand coll. variant (C. 20) of gone to the dogs.

gone up, one's number has. (He) has been killed: military: 1915. Ex turf j. (Manchon.)

gone west. Dead. See go west.

goner. One who is undone, ruined, or dead; that which is (almost or quite) finished, extinguished, or destroyed: orig. (1847). U.S.; anglicised ca. 1880. Nat Gould, 1891, 'Make a noise, or follow me, and you're a goneer.'

goney. See gawney.


[gong or gong-house, a privy (the former in Chaucer’s Parson’s Tale), and gong-farmer or man (the former in Florio, 1598), are, despite F. & H., all ineligible. All were † by 1800.]


goniv. An illicit diamond-bayer: South African diamond fields: from ca. 1890; ob. Pettman. Also gonoph and therefore a variant of gonoff. —2. Whence (via Hebrew genash, a theft, a thing stolen) goniva(a), ‘a diamond known to have been stolen or come by illicitly’, Pettman: South African o.: 1887, Matthews, Incwadi Yami.
gonna, (E.g., I'm) going to (do something): dial. and, esp. in U.S., low coll.: C. 19–20.

"gon(n)of, gonoph, gonov, gno[f](f). (See also gun.) A thief; esp. a skilful pickpocket: c. from ca. 1835. Ex Hebrew gannabh via Jewish Dutch gannof (W.). Brandon, Mayhew, Dickens, Hindley, Clarkson and Richardson ('gunniffs or gunphasis'). Cf. the C. 14–20 gnof, a bumpkin, a simpleton, as in Chaucer: this, however, is a different word.

"gon(n)of, etc., v. To steal; cheat; wheedle: c. from ca. 1850; ob. Whence gonophing, etc., vbl.: Dickens in The Detective Police, reprinted 1857.


googoo eyes. Loving glances: Australian mostly: from ca. 1895. Neil Munro, 1906; C. J. Dennis. Prob. first in the baby-talk of lovers. Hence, occ. goo-goo, such a glance. (O.E.D. Sup.)

goowlahs, the. A sanitary squad: military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Ex low goo, an excremental 'button' (prob. abbr. gooseberry, with reference to sphericity), + wallah, q.v.

"good. Easily robbed (e.g. upon the crack or the star): c. of ca. 1810–1910. Vaux.—2. Solvent; esp. good for, able to pay: coll.: from ca. 1890. Ex the (—1860), S.E. sense, 'safe to live or last so long, well able to accomplish so much'. O.E.D. But Vaux, 1812, says that 'A man who declares himself good for any favour or thing, means, that he has sufficient influence, or possesses the certain means to obtain it,'—which puts back the S.E. sense some fifty years and perhaps indicates that this S.E. sense was orig. s. or coll.—3. The omission of good before afternoon, day, morning, etc., in greetings is a mostly Colonial coll. of late C. 19–20.

good, adv., when modifying a v. and = well: in C. 19–20, low coll.; earlier, S.E.

good! Good night!: printers': from ca. 1870. good; b. A parting c.p. exhortatory to good behaviour: coll. C. 20. (O.E.D. Sup.)

good, be any or some or, gen., no. To be to some extent useful; wholly useless: coll.: from ca. 1870.—2. When predicative with gerund following, coll. from ca. 1840. J. H. Newman, 1842, 'There is no good telling you all this,' O.E.D.—3. In what good is it?, are they?, etc., it is coll. from ca. 1865, Desant using it in 1865. (O.E.D.—4. (Of persons) be no good, to be worthless: coll. from early 1890's (O.E.D.)

good, feel. To be jolly or 'in form': ex U.S. (1804; Thornton); anglicised ca. 1890; coll.

good, for. Completely; permanently; coll.: from ca. 1880. Abbr. for good and all.

(good or good to me), it looks. It looks very promising (to me): coll., orig. (ca. 1910) U.S., anglicised ca. 1918. O.E.D. (Sup.)

good a maid as her mother, a (occ. as). A C. 17 e.p. applied to a devirginated spinster. Howell's Promesse, 1659.

good and all, for. Entirely; permanently; finally: from ca. 1615. In C. 16–early 19, S.E.; then coll. Horman in his Vulgaria, 1619; Wycherley, in The Gentleman Dancing Master, 'If I went, I would go for good and all'; Dickens. See Apperson.

good as a play, gen. preceded by as. Very entertaining; proverbial coll.: from ca. 1630. Taylor the Water Poet; Arthur Machen, 1922.

good as ... as. It is extremely difficult to determine the status of the (as) good as ... comparative phrases, many of which are either either proverbs or proverbial sayings. G. L. Apperson lists the following: as good as a Christmas play (late C. 18–20 Cornwall)—a play (C. 17–20)—ever drew sword (late C. 16–17)—ever fain in the air (C. 17)—ever struck (C. 17)—ever the ground went upon with such variants as ever stepped (late C. 16–20)—ever twanged (mid-C. 16–17)—ever water wet (C. 17–18)—ever went endways (C. 17–20)—one shall see in or upon a summer's day (late C. 16–20).—2. But Vaux's good as bread and good as cheese = thoroughly competent or able (in some specific relation): lo: ca. 1810–60. Influenced by the cheese, q.v.

good as ever pissed. Extremely good: low coll.: from ca. 1710; ob. D'Urfey. Cf. the C. 17–18 proverbial saying, good as ever went endways.

good as ever twanged (often preceded by as). Of women only: very good: coll.: ca. 1870–1870. (Apperson.) Lit., as good as ever responded to a man's sexual aggress.


good as they make 'em, (as). The best obtainable (things only): coll.: from ca. 1870.

good at it or at the game. An adopt between the sheets: amatory coll.: C. 19–20.

good blood and so does black pudding, you come of. A proverbial e.p. reply to one boasting of good birth: C. 19.

good books; bad books: be in one's. See books.

good boy. An occ. C. 19 variant of good fellow, q.v.


good cess! Good luck! Anglo-Irish (—1845). F. & H.: 'Probably an abbreviation of "success":' but see cess, bad, its opposite.

good chap. A late C. 19–20 coll. variant of good fellow, q.v.

good enough, not. (Very) bad; esp., decidedly unfair: coll.: from ca. 1890.

good fellow, goodfellow. A roisterer, a boon companion. C. 18–20: S.E. until ca. 1890, then coll. Cf. Grove, 1st ed., 'Good Man, a word of various imports, according to the place where it is spoken; in the city it means a rich man; at Hockley in the Hole, or St. Giles's, an expert boxer; at a bagnio in Covent Garden, a vigorous fornicator; at an ale-house or tavern, one who loves his pot or bottle; and sometimes, tho' but rarely, a virtuous man.'—2. In C. 17 c., a. thief. Middleton in his most famous comedy.


good for him (or you)! Excellent work! Splendid news! Coll.: from ca. 1910.
**GOOD FORM**

**GOOD FORM. See form.**

**Good Friday.** Alfred Bunn (d. 1880), theatrical manager. Dawson. Also Poet Bunn, for he was a versifier—of sorts.

**good girl or good one.** A harlot; a wanton wench: coll.: the former, C. 18–20, ob.; the latter, C. 17–18. Cf. **good at it, q.v.**


**good hunting!** Good luck!: coll.: from ca. 1890. Orig. among sportsmen.

**good in parts, (like the curate’s egg).** Now a potential proverbial saying, recently a ‘battered ornament’ (H. W. Fowler), it was in the first decade of the century a cultured colloquialism. Ex a man illustrated joke in Punch. (Collinson.)

**good joke,** that’s). *(That is) good, agreeable, pleasant: New Zealanders:* from ca. 1910. Cf. **good pup.**

**good line.** A smart or unusual remark: theatrical: from ca. 1920. (A. P. Herbert, Holy Deadlock, 1934.)

**good look round for you won’t see anything but the ceiling for a day or two !, have a.** A military c.p. of 1918–19: applied to the arduous of soldiers-on-leave towards their wives. Cf. **fet uppemost.**

**good lookout.** A pretty girl (woman) or handsome fellow: coll. orig. (ca. 1890) U.S., anglicised ca. 1920. O.E.D. Sup. Also with pyhren.

**good man, goodman.** See Grove’s definition at **good fellow,** above.—2. Gen. as one word: A gaoler: C. 18–early 19: low or coll.—3. The devil, always with the; C. 18–20 coll.; ob. Cf. the old gentleman.—4. (Cf. sense 1.) **good man turd.** A contemptible fellow: C. 16–17 low coll. Florio.

**good mark.** See **mark, bad or good.**

**good morning! have you used Pear’s soap?** A c.p. of the 1920’s. Collinson. Ex the famous old soap-firm’s advertisement. Cf. when **since when.**

**good night, McGuinness!** good night, nurse! C.p. expressive of finality: resp. New Zealand, from ca. 1910; and gen., from 1914. Both are ob.

**good night!** A c.p. retort expressive of incredulity, comical despair, delight: from ca. 1860; ob. In G.W., often good night, nurse! Cf. carry me out, let me die, that’s torn it. An extremely suggestive adumbration occurs in Gabriel Harvey’s Four Letters, 1592 (Bodley Head Quartos ed., p. 81): ‘Every pert, and cranckle witt, in one odd vein, or other, [is] the onely man of the University, of the Citie, of the Italice, for a flourishing or two: who but he, in the flux of his overweening conceit ? give him his perpetramy white rod in his hand, and Goodnight all distinction of persons, and all difference of estate.’

**good oil.** Rare for dinkum oil, q.v.

**good old ... A (— 1801) familiar, i.e. coll., term of reference or address, gen. affectionate, occ. derivative. Albert Chevalier in The Little Nipper, 1892.**

**good one.** See **good un.**

**good people, the.** Fairies: Anglo-Irish coll. >, e.g. 1884, from ca. 1800; ob. Scott; C. Griffin; R. L. Stevenson. Orig. and mainly euphemistic: cf. Eumenides; see Words at ‘Euphemism’. In C. 16–17 Scottish, the good neighbours.

**good pup.** Anything good, e.g. a successful sale, a good bargain, a comfortable dug-out: New Zealanders**: C. 20. Prob. at first a farmer’s c.p. of commendation.

**good sort, occ. g. old s.** A generous, a sympathetic, or a readily helpful person: coll. (— 1892); orig. only of men. Hume Nisbet, ‘He seems a good sort.’

**good strange!** A mild coll. oath: late C. 17–18. Perhaps God’s strings (Ware).

**good thing.** As a bon mot, as something worth having, and as a successful speculation, it is hardly eligible, but as a presumed certainty it is racing s. (— 1884), whence, in C. 20, a gen. coll. applied to a business, an investment, etc.

**good time.** A carouse; amusement and entertainment; a sexually enjoyable occasion. Gen as have a good time. In C. 17, S.E.—Pepys has it; ob. till ca. 1840, when it appeared in the U.S. re-anglicised ca. 1870 as a coll.; by 1930, virtually S.E. Trollope, 1863, ‘Having ... it what our American friends call a good time of it ’; H., 5th ed.

**good to me, it looks.** See good, it looks.

**good tune played on an old fiddle, there’s many a.** An oldish woman may make an excellent bedfellow: late C. 19–20: a c.p. >, by 1930, virtually a pro verb.

**good un.** A person or thing of great merit: coll.: from ca. 1830.

**good un (or one) !, that’s a.** What a fib (occ. good story)! Coll.: C. 19–20.

**good woman.** ‘A non descript, represented on a famous sign in St. Giles’s, in the form of a common woman, but without a head’, Grove, 1785; hence, ‘a not uncommon public-house sign’, H., 1864: the same authority adding that the honest lawyer, similarly represented, is another. The phrase is relevant because it was often employed allusively.† by 1920.

**good-wool(l)ed.** Plucky and energetic: s. when not, as prob. orig., dial.: from ca. 1845. Halliwell. Ex sheep with a good fleece.

**good work!** Well done: C. 20: coll. >, by 1930, S.E.

**good young man.** A hypocrite: proletarian c.p. of 1881–ca. 1914. Sponsored by Arthur Roberts in a song, says Ware, who notes that its opposite is bad young man.

**gooder; goodest.** Deliberately used, it is coll.: late C. 19–20.—2. Unintentionally: C. 18–20 sol.

**goodish.** Goodish: low coll. (— 1887). Baumann. Prob. a confusion of **goodly + goodish.**

**goodman; goodman turd.** See **good man.**

**goodness in mild expeditious is coll. ; mostly mid- C. 19–20.**


**goods, the.** (Precisely) what is needed, esp. if of considerable worth or high merit. Gen. in have the goods, to be a very able person, and deliver the goods, to fulfil one’s promise(s): coll. anglicised, ca. 1908, from U.S. (1872/4); ex the U.S. sense (1852), the thing bargained for, the prize (see Thornton).—2. the Goods. The Gordon Highlanders: military: G.W. (F. & Gibbons). Magnificent soldiers.

Goodman. A matron, but used = the figure of a jocular usage.—2. A religious hypocrite: coll. (- 1836); ob. -3. Gen. in pl., sweetmeats; buns, cakes and pastry: from ca. 1760; occurring as *goody-goody* in 1745 (S.O.D.); until ca. 1850, S.E.; then col.


**goody**, i, mi. My goodness! lower classes'(esp. women's) coll. (- 1887). Baumann.

**goody**, talk. To talk in a weakly or sentimentally good way: from ca. 1865. Coll.

**goody-goody**, Occ. a n. (ca. 1872) but gen. an. (ad.). Both coll. in sense of a weakly or sentimentally good person.—2. See goody, n., last sense.

**goody-la!** Good! military: 1916; ob. B. & P. 

Ex the Chinese Labour Corps's 'pudgin'.

**goodyear**, i, what or the. A (now) meaningless expletive: ca. 1550-1720. Cf.: *gooday* (?), *Syphilis*: C. 17 coll. Perhaps (!) ex *gouger* ex *gouge*, a soldier's drab. But this may be deducing too much from the imprecise uses of *goodyear*, as in a *goodyear take ye/ as and as in the preceding entry, in which the word = the deuce, the devil, a sense that may be operative in *goody pig*, q.v.

**Goodyer's pig**, like. Explained by the oce. accompanying tag, never well but when in—or he is doing—misschief: mid-C. 17-20. Mainly Cheshire. Who was Goodyer? Cf.: *Goodyear's pigs did they come again as*. Never: proverbial coll.: ca. 1670-1760. Goodyer was prob. a notable farmer; cf. preceding entry (likewise in Apperson). But Goodyer may be only a personification of Scotch goody, a grandfather. *goof*. A person, goofy: 1923, P. G. Wodehouse (O.E.D. Sup.), but certainly in use in 1922. Ex dial. *goof, goff, a fool—2. Hence, a man ever running after women: Royal Air Force: from ca. 1925. Also a v.t., to run after (a woman).

**googie**, -y. See boop.

**googie** (-y) merchant. A bowler of 'goollbies': cricketers: 1924, H. C. Maclaren. (Lewis.)

**googy**, adj. Sentimental: C. 20, Charles Williams, *The Greater Trumbers*, 1932, 'Henry and I would loan off the side of our honeymoon liner and hear your voice coming to us over the sea in the evening, and have . . . heimlich, and be all googy.' Perhaps ex *gooy-gooy* eyes.


**goose**. (As a simpleton, S.E.) A tailor's smoothing iron, the handle being shaped like a goose's neck: 1605, Shakespeare: in C. 17-18 coll.: in C. 19-20, S.E. Whence the C. 17-19 proverbial saying, 'A tailor, be he ever so poor, is always sure to have a goose on his fire.'—2. Abrb. *Winchester goose* a venereal disease; a harlot: low coll. (- 1778); † by 1870.—(Theatrical) a hissing: 1805 (S.O.D.), but not gen. before ca. 1850: cf. goose, get the.—4. Abbr. *wag(e)goose*, q.v.: printers: from ca. 1800—5. A squealing or a reprimand: coll. (- 1855); ob. by 1910, † by 1930. Prob. ex the theatrical sense.—6. A woman; hence, the sexual favour: low: from ca. 1870.—7. See goose, goosen; also Greenwich goose and guines to a goose, a.


**goose, find fault with a fat.** To grumble without cause: late C. 17-19: coll. B.E.

**goose, get the.** To be hissed: theatrical: ca. 1850-1900. See goose, v., 1.

**goose**, (go !) shoo the. A derisive or inculcative retort: late C. 16-18. B.E. Cf. the late C. 19 equivalent, *go to hell and pump thunder* !

**goose, guines to a.** See guinea to a gooseberry.

**goose, hot and heavy like a tailor's.** A late C. 17-18 c.p. 'applied to a Passionate Corzem'; B.E. See goose, n., 1, and cf. goose roasted . . .

**goose, not able or unable to say *boll* to a.** Very bashful or timid: coll.: late C. 16-20.

**goose, Paddy's.** See Paddy's Goose.

**goose a duck**. A copulation: rhyming a., from ca. 1870, on *f*.*k*.

**goose-cap, goosecap.** A dolt; a silly person: late C. 16-early 19: S.E. until ca. 18, then coll., then, ca. 1900, dial. G. Harvey; B.E.; Grose.

[goose-flesh (rather skin), like goose-riding (by F. H. unexplained) and goose-stop, is, despite F. H., ineligib.]

**goose for, or that laid, the golden eggs, kill the.** The proverbial forms: C. 15-20. The coll. form is *kill the goose with the golden eggs*: C. 19-20.


**goose-grease.** A woman's vaginal emission: low: from ca. 1875.

**goose hangs high, everything is lovely and the.** Ali goos: coll. C. 19-20: ob. Ex a plucked goose hanging out of its fox's reach.

**goose is in the house, the.** A tense-variable expression for the hissing of a play, etc.: ca. 1800-50. Cf. goose, n., 3, the v., 1, and goose, get the.

GOOSE-PERSUADER

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GOGER


goose without gravy. A severe blow that does not draw blood: nautical: ca. 1850-1914. Cf. gooseberry.

gooseberries. The human testicles: low: from ca. 1860; ob.

gooseberry. A fool: coll. (ob.): ca. 1820-95. Ex gooseberry fool.—2. Hence (?), chaperon, or a save-appearances third person: 1837 (S.O.D.): dial. until ca. 1860, then coll. —3. A (too) marvellous tale: journalistic a. (—1870) >, ca. 1880, gen. coll. ; ob. by 1900, ↑ by 1920. Occ. giant or gigantic gooseberry. See also gooseberry season.—4. See gooseberry, play old; and for old gooseberry, see gooseberry, like old, and, more fully, old gooseberry itself.—5. A wire-entanglement device for blocking gaps; an unused reel of barbed wire: military coll.: 1916; slightly ob. F. & Gibbons, 'From their prickly resemblance to the fruit.'

gooseberry, do or play. To act as propitious-third or chaperon: the former, 1877, in Hawley Smart's Play or Pay, and ↑ by 1900; the latter, ca. 1837, and e.g. in G. R. Sims, 1880, and slightly ob. App. Devonshire dial. until ca. 1860. Cf. gooseberry, 2.

*gooseberry, play old. (V.t. with with.) To play the deuce: coll. (—1791); ob. Grose, 3rd ed. The v.t. form (with variant play up) also = to silence, or defeat, summarily; quell promptly: coll.: ca. 1810-90. Cf. preceding entry, q.v.—2. See gooseberry, do.

*gooseberry, like old. Like the devil: coll. (—1865). Ex next entry, old gooseberry being an ↑ term for the devil. See 'The Devil and his Nicknames' in Words /


gooseberry-grinder, gen. preceded by Boggy the. The behind: late C. 18-mid-19 low. Esp. in ask Boggy the q-q. (Grose, 1st ed.): see ask and boogy.

*gooseberry lay. The stealing of linen hanging on the line: C. 19 e. ↑ from the notion, 'as easy as picking gooseberries'.


*gooseberry season. The silly season: journalists: ca. 1870-1900. Occ. (see The Illustrated London News, 1870) or giani gooseberry season, or big g. Cf. gooseberry, 3.

gooseberry wig. 'A large frizzled wig', Grose, 3rd ed.: coll. : ca. 1788-1850. Perhaps, as Grose suggests, ex a vague resemblance to a gooseberry bush.

goosog. See goosog.


goose(e)y-gander. A gander: coll. : from ca. 1815. Baby language has both goose(e)y-goos(e)y, a goose, and goosey-goosey gander, a gander; the latter occurs, e.g., in the well-known nursery rhyme recorded as early as 1842 by Halliwell in his Nursery Rhymes.—2. A fool: from ca. 1880.

Goosey Goderich. See Prosperity Robinson.


Gorblimers, the. Seven Dials, London: policemen's (—1899); ob. Ware. Ex: gorblimey/gawlim(e)y! A corruption of God blind me! : orig. and mainly Cockneys': 1870, says Ware for the latter form; 1890, for the former.—2. Hence, 'an unwired, floppy, field-service cap worn by a certain type of subaltern in defiance of the Dress Regulations: military: 1915. F. & Gibbons.

gorblimey, here come(s) the —. A Cockney soldiers' derisive c.p. addressed to, or within the hearing of, another battalion or a section thereof: from late 1890's. B. & P. gordelpus. A person frequenting casual wards: low (—1890); ob. Ware. Ex Gord (Help us); See also godelpus.

Gore. An occ. spelling (chiefly dial.) of Gor. E.D.D.


gorgeous as a loose adj. expressing approbation is coll.: 1883 (S.O.D.).


GORGONZOLA. Stock Exchange 'formerly the New Hall: now [from ca. 1855] the corporation generally,' F. & H. Ex the colour of the marble. Ob.


gorm, v. To gormanize: from ca. 1890; virtually †. Ex U.S.A.


gormón. ('Meaningless: pseudo-Chinese', O.E.D.): but it may be a confused blend of Gorgon + maons. A hypothetical monster of ca. 1750–1830: coll. Gorse, 1786, 'a monster with six eyes, three mouths, four arms, eight legs, five on one side and three on the other, three arses, two tarse[s] [penises], and a *** [prudendium mulicbre] upon its back; a man on horseback, with a woman [riding 'sidi-sidelle'] behind him.' Relevant is the Gormogons, properly Hormanogs, an English secret society—a lay offshoot from the Masons—of ca. 1725–50: evidently there was some ridiculous rite (cf. goat, ride the), for, in 1791, 'G. Gambaudo in his Horsemanship, speaks of the art of riding before a lady on a double horse, vulgarly termed a la gormona.n'.


gosoon. See gosson.


gossoon, gosson. See gosson.

[gospel = 'Gospel truth': (anything) absolutely true, n. and adj., is S.E. and in forms all R. is not, gossip, and take for gospel, it dates from M.E.]

gospel, do. To go to church: low coll.: from ca. 1860: ob.


gospel-grinder, -postilion, -shark or -sharp, are more gen. in U.S. than in England: coll.: from ca. 1855. Besant & Rice speak of 'a Connecticut gospel-grinder', Mark Twain of a 'gospel-sharp' in Innocents at Home. But in U.S. they merely are a parson; in England they are a city missionary or a tract-distributor (H., 1st ed.) or a Sunday-School teacher (‘Ducange Anglicus’, 1857).

gospel of gloom, the. Gloomy house-decoration and dressers: Society: ca. 1890–1900. Ware. Satirising the aesthetes.

Gospel of St. James, the. Snobbery: Society: 1847; ob. Ware. Ex Thackeray's Jeames de la Pluche in The Yellowplush Papers.

gospel of the tub, the. The mania for cold baths: Society coll.: ca. 1845–1910. Ware.

gospel-postilion or -shark. See gospel-grinder.

gospel-shop. A church or chapel; gen. Method- ist: coll.: from ca. 1780; after 1860, chiefly nautical. (Gospel-mill is a U.S. variation.) J. Lackington, 'Mr. Wedley's gospel-shops', 1791.

gospelser. An Evangelist preacher: pejorative coll.: from ca. 1880. Ex the † sense, one of the four evangelists, and the rare one, a missionary. Cf. hot gospelser, q.v.

goss. A hat; at first a 'four-and-nine': coll.: 1848 (O.E.D). Ex gosser hat, a light felt fashionable in the late 1830's. Cf.:

gossamer. A hat (~1859); esp. and orig. a very light one: ca. 1837–1900. Both Dickens and James Grant, in the late 1830's, mention 'ventilation' gossamers; Andrew Lang, in 1884, 'the gosser of July.' Cf. goss, q.v.

gose. See gos and gosh—gossip, up to one's.

See up to the cackle.


gossoon, gosson. earliest as gosson: occ. C. 19–20,

gossoon, gosson (O.E.D.). A boy: Anglo-Irish: 1684: S.E. until ca. 1850, then increasing coll. Ex Fr. gargon via M.E. garon.2. Hence, 'a silly awkward lout'; nautical (~1867); ob. Smyth. got with preceding has or have omitted: coll.; esp. in U.S.; mid-C. 19–20. E.g. 'Got any money with you?' O.E.D. (Sup.).

got. For gen. remarks, see get, v.—2. A C. 20 variant of next, sense 2. John Brooky, Water front, 1934, 'They got to do it, or else they'd never make money.'

got, has or have. I, you, we or they have or possess; he has, etc. coll. got being pleonastic (as also in next sense): 1607, Shakespeare (S.O.D.)—2. Am., etc., bound (to . . . ); low coll.: 1888, J. Greenwood (see quotation & hander); the S.O.D quotes: 'The thing has got to be fought out,' 1889.

got, what has. What has happened to, become of? Coll.: from ca. 1820; ob. a century later. Scoresby, in Whale Fishery, 1823, 'They all at once . . . enquired what had got Carr.' (O.E.D.)
gown. Wretched. (O.E.D.)


God-strainer. See strafe, v. 1.


goujers, prob. a “made” word: see goodyear.

gourd. (Rare in singular.) A hollowed-out false dice: low, or c., > j.: ca. 1540–1600. Ascham in Trozophius, Shakespeare in Merry Wives. *ex the fruit influenced by Old Fr. gourd, a swindle.

Gourou ham. A salted herring; mostly Scott.

Gourock ham. A salted herring; mostly Scott.

Gourock was, before 1870, a well-known Clyde fishing village. Cf. Glasgow magistrat, q.v.

gout = venereal disease: e.g. in Covent Garden, or Spanish, gout: late C. 17–18.

gov. See guv.

government house. The house of the owner or manager of an estate: a Dominions’ jocular coll.: from ca. 1880; ob. Ex Government House.


Government rejects. See gorgeous wrecks.

Government securities. Handcuffs; fetters: from ca. 1850; ob.

Government signpost. The gallows; mid-C. 19.

H., 1860.


Governor. A father: 1837: s. >, ca. 1895. coll. Dickens in Pickwick: Answers, April 20, 1889, *To call your father “The Governor” is, of course, slang, and is as bad as referring to him as “The Boss” [*]. “The Old Man”, or “The Relieving Officer”. * (The last is never used as a term of address, old man practically never.) Occ. abbr. (gov. or guv. q.v. *Ex the third sense, whereas the second follows from the first.—2. A term of address to a strange man: s. > low coll.: from ca. 1855.

H., 1860.—3. A superior; an employer: coll. (occ. in address): 1802 (S.O.D.), thus the earliest sense.


gov’nor. See guvner.


gowk, hunt the. To go on (esp. an April) fool’s errand: Scottish coll.: C. 18–20. See ‘All Fools’ Day’ in Words.

*gowl. A dog, esp. one given to howling and crowing: North-Country c. (—1884). H., 2nd ed. Prob. gowler perverted or ex dial. gowl, to howl.

gown, coll. for the undergraduates of Oxford or Cambridge, is, like governman (and even its abbr. govern), S.E.—2. Coarse brown paper: Winchester College: C. 19, but + by 1890. * suggested by the rhyme and the coarseness of gown-material.
telecopying.
gorger, esp. sense 3.
grab. A professional resurrectionist: medical s.
(1823) > coll.: almost †. S. Warren's Diary of a, L. Physician, 1830.—2. A policeman:
1849; coll.: †. By 1900. Albert Smith. (O.E.D.)—3. F. & H.'s other senses are S.E.
grab, v. To steal; to arrest: 1812, Vaux,
therefore from a few years earlier: resp. low coll. and o. >, ca. 1870, a. >, ca. 1880, low coll.: so I believe, despite the O.E.D. Dickens in Oliver Twist, 'Do you want to be grabbed, stupid?'
grab-all. A greedy or an avaricious person: coll. from ca. 1870.—2. A bag wherein to carry odds and ends: ca. 1890.
grab-coup. The snatching, by a losing gambler, of all the available money and then fighting a way out: o. of ca. 1820-80. Bee. The variant 'game
arose, prob. in U.S., ca. 1850; 'rocket is certainly U.S. (— 1892), as in Stevenson & Osborne's The Wrecker.
grab for altitude. See altitude, grabbing for.
grab-gains. The snatching of a purse and then running away: o. of ca. 1840—1900. Cf. the C. 20 smash-and-grab (raid).
grab on, v.i. To 'hold on', manage to live: low: from ca. 1850; ob. Mayhew.
grabber. The hand, but gen. in pl.: from ca. 1810 (ob.): c. >, by 1860, low. Cf. pickers and
grabble, to seize, also to handle roughly or with rude intimacy, seems, in late C. 18-mid-19, to have been 'felt' to be coll.: the O.E.D., however, considers it S.E. Cf.
grabbling irons. A mid-C. 19 variant of grappling irons: fingers.
grabby. An infantryman: military (mostly in contempt by cavalrymen) and hence naval: ca.
1844-1912. (F. & Gibbons, 'From before the Crimean War'; I did not hear it in the G.W.)
Whyte-Melville; Bowen, ' Borrowed from the Hindustani'. Perhaps rather ex dial. grabby,
greedily, inclined to cheat.
grace card. The six of hearts: Anglo-Irish: C. 18-20; ob. The proposed etymology—see F. & H., or. is too 'accidental' for inclusion here.
grace o' God. 'The copy of a writ issued upon a bill of exchange': commercial (— 1909). Ware.
graces, the Three. The brothers Grace: cricketers' coll. nickname (— 1887). Baumann.
Punning mythology.
gracile. Gracefully slender: catastrophic: from ca. 1870. (Properly, lean, slender.) O.E.D.
gracing; occ. greying: A telescoping of grey-bound; orig. sporting: 1827. O.E.D. (Sup.).
gracious, as H. shows in his Introduction, was, in mid-Victorian ecclesiastical s., made to = pleasant or 'nice' or excellent.
gracious I (C. 18-20), gracious me I (C. 19-20), gracious alive! (mid-C. 19-20), good gracious! (C. 18-20) are euphemisms > coll.
grade, make the. (Gen. in negative or interrogative.) To be able to do a thing; to 'come up to
scratch': U.S. (— 1900), partly anglicised ca. 1930. Ex railway j.
graduate. An artful fellow: coll.: from ca.
1875; ob.—2. A spinner skilled in sexual practice: low coll.: from ca. 1885.—3. A horse that has proved itself good: the turf: from ca. 1870.—All ex the ob. S.E. sense, a proficient in, or endorser of.
gradaute, to. V. Obtain a sound practical knowledge of life, love, society, a livelihood, etc.: coll.: from ca. 1875; ob.
graspid. In card-sharpening, the making of a card to project beyond the rest: o. of ca. 1820-1910. Also known as the step. Cf.
gradaus ad Parnassum. (Lit., step to Parnassus; properly, a dictionary of proverbs.) A treadmill:
literary: ca. 1780-1870. Ex the ascent of Parnassus and of the mill.
graf. Work, labour: coll.: from ca. 1870.
—2. Hence, any kind of work, esp. if illicit: low coll.: (— 1874). H., 5th ed. Esp. in what graf are
you at?, what is your line?—your lay?: Cf. the U.S. (orig. s.) sense, illicit profit or commission
(mainly in politics), which, adopted into S.E. ca. 1900, prob. derives ex the Eng. term, as, ultimately,
does its corresponding v.—3. Hence, the line one takes in a crime; one's role therein: o. : C. 20.
graf, v. To cuckold, 'plant horns' on: low coll.: late C. 17-18. B.E.—2. To work; esp. to
work hard: coll., mostly Australia and New Zealand: from ca. 1870. Earlier (ca. 1855-80), to go to
work: English only (H., 1st ed.). Esp. in where are you grafing? Prob. ex † graft, to dig, perhaps
influenced by the gardening graft and even by craft (as in arts and craft) —3. To be actually a
criminal: o.: from ca. 1910. Edgar Wallace, Room 13—.4. To be or work as a grafter (see grafter, 4; graffers' coll.: C. 20. Philip Allingham, Cheapskake, 1934.
grafier. 'One who toils hard or willingly'; C. J.
Dennis: from late 1890's; mostly Australian. Ex graf, v., 2.—2. A swindler: coll., orig. (— 1900)
1912. Ex graf, v., 3.—4. 'One who works a line in a fair or market: as fortune-teller, quack doctor,
mock-auctioneer, etc.': late C. 19-20. P. Allingham, Cheapskake, 1934. (Senses 3 and 4 follow
naturally from sense 1.)
[Graver's] slang is the as used by those who work a line in a fair or market, e.g. as fortune-teller or quack
doctor. Some of it is Parleyaree, some Romany, some Yiddish, some rhyming as; some of it, too,
verges on the. The authority on the subject is Mr. Philip Allingham: see his fascinating Cheapskake, 1934.)
gram, when used loosely, has a coll. hue, as in pistiolgram, an instantaneous photograph.
gram-fed. 'Getting, or being given, the best of everything': Anglo-Indian: esp. prob. (O.E.D.) o. >, by 1910, coll. Ex gram, chick-pea.
graphophone; even gram(m)aphone. Incorrect 
—the error is frequent—for graphophone: C. 20.

grandpapa. A fat man; esp. one who puffs freely; from ca. 1836: coll. until ca. 1895, then S.E. Dickens.—2. A greedy, stupid person: Roxburghshire s.: C. 19–20; ob. E.D.D.

grandmas, blow the. To drench a person: nautical: ca. 1850–1910.—2. To play about in the water: nautical s. > gen. coll.: ca. 1860–1915.


*grand. A late C. 16 form of grannam, 2.


grand do the. To put on airs: coll.: from ca. 1860; ob. Baumann. Cf. lardy-dah.

[Grand Old Man, the, the Gladstone, is on the border-line between coll. and S.E. In 1885, Joseph Chamberlain was named the Grand Young Man (Ware).

grand slam. Complete or spectacular success: coll.: from ca. 1910. Ex the game of bridge.—2. See slam (n.).

grand strut. The Grand Walk, Hyde Park: ca. 1830–50. Moncrieff, 1823, We'll... promenaded it down the grand strut.


grandad, grand-dad. A coll. childish and/or affectionate variation of grandfather: 1819, Byron.

Cf. granny, grangy, grandma, and:


[grandmaternal, like grandpaternal, has been jocularised to the verge of coll.]

grandmother. (Gen. pl.) Any one of the big howitzers operated in France by the Royal Marine Artillery in G.W.: naval, hence military. 1915. Bowen. Also grannum, or, more gen., Granny (F. & Gibbons).

grandmother, all my eye and my. See all my eye and my grandmother.

grandmother, see one’s. To have a nightmare: coll.: from ca. 1850; ob.

grandmother, shoot one’s. To be mistaken or disappointed. Often as you’ve shot your granny.

Coll.: from ca. 1860.

grandmother, I, so’s your. See all my eye and my grandmother.

[grant the favour (v.i.; v.t. with to), to ‘tak’ a man, is euphemistic not unconventional: this is a frequent error of F. & H.’s; they, like 999.9% of people, fail to perceive that 90% of the world’s obscene terms and locations are the result of euphemism: neither the frank nor the mealy-mouthed realises that to call, e.g., the genitals by the one name and to eschew all others would soon lead to a lack of both obscene and euphemistic words and perhaps even minimise both euphemism and obscenity.]


gram. An occ. C. 18 form of grannam.

O.E.D.)

grape-monger. A tippler of wine: C. 17 coll Dekker.
grape-shot, adj. Tipsy: ca. 1875-1900. Whence the C. 20 shot.


graph. Ex chromograph, hectograph, etc., for a copy-producing apparatus: coll.: ca. 1880-1912. Whence:

graph, v. To take a number of copies of, by means of a 'graph'; q.v.: coll.: ca. 1880-1920. (O.E.D.)

-graph, -grapher, and -graphy are occ. employed in a word so jocular, e.g. hurrigraph, a hasty sketch, as to be almost coll.

graphyure. Incorrect for graphiure: mid-C. 19-20. O.E.D.

grapple. (Gen. in pl.) The hand: low (ca. 1877).

See grapple, more common.

grapple-the-rails. Whiskey: Anglo-Irish c. > coll. (ca. 1785); ob. Grose, 1st ed. Because, after drinking it, one cannot trust to this to remain upright.

grapper. (Gen. in pl.) The hand: from ca. 1850: ↑ orig. nautical. Cf. grapple and:


Lex. Bal. Presumably ex nautical S.E.


Charles E. Teach.

grass, v. To bring to the ground: orig. (ca. 1814), pugilistic: in C. 20, mostly of Rugby football and gen. considered S.E. Egan, Moore, Dickens.—2. Hence, to defeat, ca. 1880-1910, and to kill, ca. 1875-1914—3. To discharge temporarily from one's employment: trade (ca. 1881); ob. Ex a horse's going out to grass.—4. To do jobbing or casual work: printers' (ca. 1894). O.E.D.—5. V.t., to inform on: c.: from ca. 1890. James Curtis, The Gift Kid, 1936. 'Anyhow it was a dirty trick grassing his pals.' Ex grass, n., 6.

grass, be sent to. To be rusticated: Cambridge: ca. 1790-1880. Punning 'rustication'.

*grass, come. See come grass.—grass, cut one's own. See cut one's own grass.

grass, give. Listed by F. & H. as coll., it is actually late C. 16-17 S.E.: a translation of L. dare homberam.

grass, go to. (Of limbs) to waste away: coll.: ca. 1840-1910.—2. For other senses, and for go to grass, see go to grass.

grass, hunt. To be knocked down: s. or coll.: ca. 1870-1914.—2. At cricket, to field: ca. 1880-1910. A variation of to hunt leather.

grass, on the. (Of a horse that has) fallen: turf coll. (ca. 1923). Manchon.

grass, send one's calves out to. See calves.

grass, search for. To knock down: from ca. 1875; ob. Hindley. ↑ ex hunt grass.

grass, take Nebuchadnezzar out to. To 'take a man: low: from ca. 1870. Take = lead; Nebuchadnezzar = the male member (why?).

grass before breakfast. A duel: Anglo-Irish r mid-C. 18-19-20. Lover, in Handy Andy. (Ware.)


grass-cutter. (Gen. pl.) A small bomb that, aeroplane-dropped, bursts on impact and scatters shrapnel pellets at a low level, i.e. to kill persons rather than destroy inanimates: military: 1917. B. & P. Cf. daisy-cutter, q.v.

grass grow under one's feet, let no. To lose no time or chance: C. 17-20; coll. in C. 17, then S.E. A † variant is on one's heel (or under one's heels): C. 16-early 19. Apperson.


grass-widow. An unmarried mother: a discredited mistress: C. 16-early 19 coll. More: B.E. The former nuance is extant in dialect.—2. A married woman temporarily away from her husband: coll.: from ca. 1858; orig. mainly Anglo-Indian. The second follows from the first sense, which prob. contains an allusion to a bed of straw or grass—cf. the etymology of bastard (W.).—3. Occ. as a v.: coll.: from ca. 1890.


grasser. A fall, esp. one caused by a punch: sporting (ca. 1887). Baumann.

grasses! 'A cry directed at any one particularly polite': printers' (ca. 1909). Ware. Perhaps ex Fr. gracez! = cf. Scots gracie, well-behaved.


grasing. 'Casual work away from the office', F. & H.: printers' (ca. 1889).


*grassy. A variant (ca. 1935) of grass, n., 5.

David Hume.


grammie. See grannie.—gram. See graves.

grave-digger, like a. 'Up to the arse in business, and don't know which way to turn', Grose, 2nd ed.: ca. 1790-1860.


gravel. A rapidly diminishing supply of money in the market: Stock Exchange: 1884. (S.O.D.)

Semantics: as the tide recedes, it leaves the gravel bare.
GRAVEL

gravel, v. To confound, or puzzle greatly; 'floor' q.v.; mid-C. 1820; coll. for a century, then S.E. Shakespeare: 'When you were gravelled for lack of matter.' Orig. nautical: cf. stranded (W.).


gravel-rash. Abrasions resulting from a fall: coll. from ca. 1855. ‘Ducange Anglicus.' Perhaps jocular on barber's rash.—2. have the g.-r., to be extremely drunk: from ca. 1860; ob. Ex the poor fellow's numerous falls.


grauvity. The adj. to gravel, n. (q.v.): 1887, Atkins, House Surveys. O.E.D.


Graveend twins. Solid pieces of sewage: low — (1874); ob. H., 5th ed. Our sewage system!

graveyard. The mouth: from ca. 1875; ob. Contrast tombstone.—2. A berth made over the counter of a coasting steamer: nautical: from ca. 1880. Bowen.—3. the graveyard (or G.): a portion of the Duotipsan Diamond Mine... because so much money and labour was buried in it by the over-sanguine’, Pettman: South African miners: late C. 19.—4. (the g.—) The Inscriptions Hall of the British Museum: late C. 10-20. The Daily Telegraph, April 17, 1935.

gravitation, for gravitation, is incorrect: C. 18. O.E.D.

gravy. The sexual discharge, male or female: low coll. mid-C. 18-20; ob. Whence give one's g., to 'sprend' ; gravy-giver, penis or pudend: g.-maker, pudend only: all, C. 19-20 (ob.) low, the first coll., the other.


gray as a dragon's (or -um) cat. To look very or quite hairless from age: coll: resp. C. 18-20 (ob.), C. 18-19.

gray-back, grey-back, grey. A house: mid-C. 19-20, ob.: when not dial. it is coll.—and even then, chiefly U.S., though often used by British

GRAVEYARD


grey-backed un. The same as sense 1 of gray-back. [gray(-) or grey-beard, whether old man or jug, jar, is, despite F. & H., S.E.]

grey-cloak. An alderman above the chair: C. 16-17 coll. Ex his grey-furred cloak.


grey parson; grey-coat(ed) parson. A lay impro prior of tithes: coll.: the first, late C. 18-early 19 (Grose, 1st ed.); the second, C. 19; the third, ca. 1850 (Cobbett) 1910.

greyhound. A hammock with so little bedding as to be unfit for stowing in the nettings, Smyth; nautical — (1887). Ex thinness.—2. Abbr. Atlantic or ocean greyhound, a fast ocean —esp. Atlantic—liner: from ca. 1887, the first being the S.S. Alaska, as W. reminds us: ob.: journalists.—3. A member of Clare College: Cambridge: ca. 1830-80.

grays. A fit of yawning; listlessness: coll.: from ca. 1860; ob. Cf. blues.

graze, send to. To dismiss, turn out: ca. 1730-60. Swift, 1733, 'In your faction's phrase, send the clergy all'...

graze on the plain. To be dismissed; coll. — (1869); ob. Cf. preceding.


graze, melt one's. To exhaust oneself or itself by violent action: coll. from ca. 1830: ob. Southey. (O.E.D.)

grease a fat sow in the nare. To (try to) brio, to give money to, a rich man: coll.: C. 18-mid-19. Heywood; Grose, 1st ed. Cf. the proverb, every man bastet the fat hog (and the lean one gets burnt).


grease one's boots. To flatter; fawn upon: late C. 16-mid-19 coll. Florio: Ray, 1813. Cf. grease, x. 3. (Apperson.)

grease one's gills. To make a very good meal: C. 19-20 (ob.), low coll. Cf. greasy chin, q.v.

Grease-Pot or Greasepot. Grispot, a small village near Bois Grenier in the Armentières sector;

grease-spot. The figurative condition to which one is reduced by great heat: coll.: mainly Colonial: from ca. 1800. † ex the U.S. (1836) sense, adopted in England ca. 1860 (H., 2nd ed., ‘a minute remnant’) as ‘an infinitesimally small quantity’ (Thornton), without reference to heat and gen. in negative sentences.

grease the fat pig or sow. A C. 17-20 variant (ob.) of grease a fat sow. The original phrase. ‘To make preparations in advance to secure influence to get an appointment or the like’: naval coll.: from ca. 1880. Bowen. A variation of S.E. grease the wheels.

grease to. To make up to; to flatter: Public Schools’: late C. 19-20. Desmond Coke, *The School across the Road*, 1910, ‘You don’t really mean you’ve chuckled Warner’s just because old Anson greased to you by making you a prefect.’ Cf. greaser, etc., greasing, greased.

greased lighting, gen. preceded by this. This coll. ‘emblem of’ high speed is orig. (1833) and mainly U.S.; anglicised ca. 1850. It appears in cricket as early as 1871 (Lewin).


greaser, give (one). To rub the back of another’s hand with one’s knuckles: Winchester College: from ca. 1860: ob.


greasimg. Flattery; ingratiating manners; pretentiousness: Public Schools’, esp. Shrewsbury School’s: late C. 19-20. Desmond Coke, *The House Prefect*, 1908; his *The School across the Road*, 1910. ‘Out in the studies’ (the headmaster’s) suggestion of the new name, Winton, was labelled variously as ‘a beastly greasing’ and ‘a nasty oil’.’ Cf. grease to and greaser, 5.


great; great-great. An ancestor or a descendent in the ‘great-great’ degree: coll.: C. 20. O.E.D. (Sup.).

great, adj. Splendid; extremely pleasant; a gen. superlativise: orig. (1809), U.S.; anglicised ca. 1860: coll. Cf. immense, q.v.—2. In run a great dog, filly, etc., the sense is: the dog, etc., runs splendidly, by a great margin, in sporting: from ca. 1897.


great Caesar! An almost meaningless substitute for great God! : from ca. 1890. *Tied Bits*, March 19, 1892, ‘Great Caesar! There you go again!’ Here may be noted great *Jehovah* (Prose’s) in *Resent & Rice’s* *Golden Butterfly* (1876), which contains also the (by 1914) † great sun! See also great Scott!

great dog or filly. See great, adj., 2.

great go, or Great Go. The final examination for the B.A. degree: Cambridge (hence: Oxford): from ca. 1820: s. >, by 1860, coll. and, by 1870, ob.; by 1900, †. Cf. little go and greater, greater, qq.v., and see also go, n.

great-grandmother. See Mother.

great-great. See great, n.

great gun. A person, oce. a thing, of importance: coll.: from ca. 1815. Whyte-Melville, ‘The great guns of the party’. Variant big gun (cf. big noise): from ca. 1865; ob.—2. A favourite or gen. successful ‘whoose’ or practice; peddlers, mostly London: from ca. 1860. Mayhew, ‘The street-seller’s great gun, as he called it, was to ...’ Ex the S.E. sense: ‘a fire-arm of the larger kind which requires to be mounted for firing’, S.O.D.—3. See gun, great.

great guns! An expletive: 1805; ob. Ex blow great guns, q.v.

great guns, blow. See blow—great house. See big house.

great I am, the. Used jocularly of oneself, pejoratively of others, it connotes excessive self-importance: coll.: from ca. 1905. Ex I am, the Self-Existing, God, as in Exodus iii. 14 (O.E.D.).

great intimate. This sense of great—such a phrase is app. independent of great friend—is † S.E., but we may quote Grose’s (3rd ed.) low coll. equivalent of ‘very intimate’: as great as shirt and shitten a*ec. For other synonyms, see thick.

great Joseph. ‘A surtout. Cant,’ says, in 1788, Grosse, 2nd ed. † by 1860. By surtout he prob. means overcoat, the gen. definition; and low s. is perhaps the more accurate classification. Ex Joseph’s coat of many colours.

great life if you don’t weaken, it’s a. A G.W. c.p. carried on into civilian life, as, e.g. in G. D. H. & M. Cole, *Burglars in Bucks*, 1930.

great on. Knowing much about; very skilled in: coll.: from ca. 1875. Jeffries, 1878, ‘He is very great ’on dogs’ (S.O.D.). The S.E. form is great at; † great in: from late C. 18,—2. Very fond of: C. 20. Ultimately ex preceding, though perhaps imp., ex U.S., where the sense ‘famous for’ dates from 1844 (Thornton).

great Scott! An exclamation of surprise; also a very mild oath: orig. U.S. but soon anglicised, F. Anstey used it in *The Tinted Venus* in 1885 (O.E.D.). † ex General Winiford Scott, a notoriously fussy candidate for the presidency. Cf. dickens / the.

great shakes, no. See shakes.


great stuff. Excellent, whatever it may be; also as n.: coll.: C. 20. E.g. *The Evening News*, Sept. 11, 1934, ‘Great stuff, sweeps—that is, when you find one, see one, and speak to one!’

great sun! See great Caesar! 

great unwashed, the. The proletarian: at first (late C. 19), deservingly jocular S.E.; but since Scott popularised it, (non-proletarian) coll.—and rather snobbish.

great whipper-in. Death: coll. († orig. hunting a.): from ca. 1880; slightly ob.

greater. The B.A. finals examination: Oxford (—1892). Ex greats, q.v. An example of
the Oxford -er, q.v.; never very gen., and ob. by 1913, † by 1922.

Greater London, belong to. To be a well-known person: Society (— 1906); virtually †. Ware.

greats or Greats. That Oxford variation of great go (q.v.) which was first recorded and presumably popularised by ‘Cuthbert Bede’ when, in *Verdant Green*, 1883, he wrote: ‘The little gentleman was going in for his Degree, alias Great-go, alias Greats’; used again by T. Hughes in *Tom Brown at Oxford*, 1865. a.; since, coll. and applied (as abbr. Classical Greats) esp. to the examination for honours in Litera Humaniora. Cf. smalls (and little go).

greaser. See greaser, 5.

Grecian. As roisterer, esp. ca. 1818–30, it is gen. considered S.E., though prob. it was orig. Society s. (Cf. Corinthian.) Ob. by 1840, † by 1860.—2. An Irishman, esp. a newly arrived Irish immigrant: (low) coll.: from ca. 1820; ob. a variation of Greek, 3. Cf. next entry.—3. A senior boy: Christ’s Hospital: from ca. 1820.


Grecian bend. A stump affected in walking by many women ca. 1860–90. The Daily Telegraph, Sept. 1, 1809, ‘... What is called the “Grecian bend”’. The phrase was anticipated by *The Elows’* in 1821 (of a scholarly stump) and is rarely used after ca. 1885. Cf. Alexandra temp and Roman fall.—2. H., 1874, defines it as ‘modern milliner slang for an exaggerated bustle’ (dress-improver): a derivative sense soon †.

*greedy. Money: o. of ca. 1850–1900. ‘Dunsage Anglicus.’

greedy-gut or -guts. A glutton: (from ca. 1840, low) coll.: the former, mid-C. 16–early 18; the latter, C. 18–20. Florio; Grose, 2nd ed. Cf. the old schoolboys’ rhyme (ob. by 1900; † † by 1920), ‘Guy-hi, greedy-gut, | Eat all the pudding up, the † singular being retained for the rhyme.

greedy scene. One in which a ‘star’ has the stage to him-or herself: theatrical (— 1909). Ware.

Greek. A comparatively rare abbr. of St. Giles Greek, cant; cf. the C. 17–20 it is Greek to me, halfway between S.E. and coll. Prob. orig. s., but soon merely allusive and therefore S.E.: C. 17–early 19. —2. A card-player, a cheat, it is C. 16–19 S.E., as also is the C. 17 natty Greek, a roisterer.—3. An Irishman (‘the low Irish’, H., 1850): Anglo-Irish a. or coll., from ca. 1820; ob.: Bee. Also in Australian a. before 1872.—4. A gambler; a high-wayman: o.: early C. 19.—5. V., only as implied in Greeking, q.v.

*Greek fire. Bad whiskey: o. (— 1859); ob. Ex the S.E. sense. Cf. rot-gut.

[Greek Kalends, at the.] Never. Despite F. & H., it has always been S.E.; for coll. synonyms, see blue moon, pigs fly, Queen Dick.


green. Stage: theatrical (— 1935). Abbr. greens, the same, prob. with allusion to the green cloth.

green, v. To make to appear simple; to hoax: from ca. 1884 (Eton has the (— 1893) variant green up); slightly ob. T. C. Buckland in 1888, ‘Green... as boys call it’. i.e. to treat as a green hand.

—2. To swindle, take in: (low) coll. or a.: 1884 (S.O.D.).

green, adj. Inexperienced, is—deepite F. & H.—S.E.—2. (Gen. be green.) Cautions: railwaymen’s: C. 20. Ware, ‘Green through the railway world being the colour signal for caution’.

Green, send to Doctor or Dr. To put (a horse) to grass: late C. 18–19. Grose, 2nd ed. A punning coll.

*Green, sleep with Mrs. See sleep with Mrs Green.


green as duckweed (as). Extremely simple or foolish: low coll. (— 1887). Baumann.

green as I’m (or you are, etc.) cabbage-looking, (I’m, etc.) not so. (I’m., etc.) not such a fool as I (etc.) appear to be: lower- and lower-middle-class c.p.: late C. 19–20. (Ernest Raymond, Mary Leith, 1931.)


green-bag. A lawyer: late C. 17–early 10. B.E. Ex (the †) colour of brief-bag. Grose, 1st ed., is amusing on the subject. Cf. black box, q.v., and; green bag, what’s in the. ‘What is the charge to be preferred against me?’, Barrère & Leland: from ca. 1890; ob. Cf. preceding entry.

green bonnet, have or wear a. To go bankrupt: coll.: ca. 1800–1910. Ex the green cap formerly worn by bankrupts.

green cheese. See cheese.

green cloth. Abbr. board of green cloth, a billiard table: from ca. 1890; coll.—2. Coll., too, is the sense, the green baize covering the table: from ca. 1870.

Green Dragoons. The 13th Hussars: military coll.: ca. 1860–1914. Ex their green facings when they were dragoons. F. & Gibbons.

green-envelope wallah. A soldier that sold green envelopes, which were not opened by one’s own officers and were censored only at the Base: military coll.: 1915–18. F. & Gibbons.

green eye. A green marble: children’s (— 1923). Manchon. † ex (a) greeny (one).


green gown, give a, either absolute or with dative. To tumble a woman on the grass: late C. 16–18: coll. > S.E.—2. Hence, to have sexual sport, esp. (somewhat euphemistically) deflower a girl. C. 17–early 19 coll. ‘Highwaymen Smith, 1719, ‘Our gallant being disposed to give his lady a green gown’. green-grocery. The female panduc: low: from ca. 1850; ob. † ex garden.


green-hand(ed) rake. See Peter Collins.

Green Horse, the. The 6th Dragoon Guards: military coll.: late C. 18–20; ob. F. & Gibbons. Ex their green facings.
Green Howards. The 19th Foot Regiment: military; mid-C. 18-20: coll. until late C. 19, then the official name, F. & Gibbons. Ex the name of its 1738–48 colonel (the Hon. Charles Howard) and its green facings; partly to distinguish it from the 3rd Foot, also at one time commanded by a Colonel Howard. Sometimes (not, I think, in C. 20) called Howard’s Garbage.

green, in late C. 19–20, occ. green stuff in my eye, do you see any. The most gen. form of see (any) green in a person’s eye, to consider him a greenhorn or a fool: 1840; coll., mostly low. ‘Quotations’ Benham; Mayhew; Ally Sloper, March 19, 1892 ‘Ally Sloper, the cove with no green in his eye’. Ex green as indicative of inexperience or, esp. gullibility.

green jacket; Green Jackets, the. (A member of) the Riffle Brigade: military coll.: from ca. 1820; ob. (O.E.D. Sup.) Ex the dark green of their superseded uniform.


Green Linnets. The 39th Foot, from ca. 1881 the 1st Battalion of the Dorsetshire Regiment: military coll.: from ca. 1820–29. Ex the colour of their facings (F. & Gibbons.)


green meadow. The female pudend: low; more coll. than euphemistic: from ca. 1850. Cf. green grove and see remarks at grant the favour.

green nail. The curtain: theatrical: from ca. 1840; † by 1900. Cf. green nail, talk. To gossip about the theatre: 1830; Lever in Harry Lorrequer: coll. until ca. 1880, then S.E. (O.E.D.)

green sickness, despite F. & H., is ineligible. See greens, 1.

green stuff. See green in my eye.

Green Tigers, the. A C. 19 variant of the Tigers, q.v. (F. & Gibbons.)

green up. The gen. Etonian variation of green, v. 1.

greenacre. ‘The falling of a set of goods out of the sling’: dockers: mid-C. 19–20. O.E.D. (Sup.) Perhaps ex Greenacre, a murderer (who buried the victim in sections in various parts of London) hanged at Newgate in 1837: the rope broke.

greenier. A new hand; esp. one replacing a striker; also a foreign worker now arrived: ca. 1888–1930 (O.E.D. ; Manchon).

greenery-yallery. Characteristic of the Aesthetic movement in the art and literature of the 1880’s. Coined in 1880 by W. S. Gilbert in Patience, which was first performed on April 23, 1881. Orig. s., it > coll. by 1890 and had, by 1910 > S.E. (as, e.g., it is in Hugh Walpole’s Vanessa). This colour-scheme was a favourite with the Aesthetes.

greenfinch. ‘One of the Pope’s Irish guard’: 1865, The Daily Telegraph, Nov. 1,—but prob. from a decade earlier. O.E.D.

greengage. See green, n. (In actors’ rhyming a., from ca. 1860 : stage (n.). The Evening Standard, Aug. 19, 1931.)


greenhead. A new hand, esp. if inexperienced: late C. 16–early 19: coll. until ca. 1820 (see B.E. and Grose), then S.E.

D.U.M.
Grego. A rough greatcoat: mostly nautical: ca. 1820-80. Westmacott (O.E.D.); Marryat; Bowen, 'Borrowed from the Levant'.

gregorian, Gregorian. A kind of wig: late C. 16-20: a coll. that by 1690 was S.E.; now historical. Ex one Gregory, the Strand barber that 'invented' it, acc. to Blount, 1670.


[gregorine]. A louse, esp. in the head: C. 19: ex It. : thus F. & H. But the spelling is gregarine, ex L. gregarius, and the term is scientific for a parasitic protozoan.


grey: see gray at all entries.—graying. See gracing.


greens. Grey flannel trousers and other-coloured coat: mostly undergraduates': from ca. 1925.

Greys, the. The Scots Greys: mid-C. 18-20: coll. till late C. 19, then familiar S.E. Orig. they were mounted on grey horses and in 1781 they began to be uniformed in grey. F. & Gibbons.

gribble. Socks, gloves, mufflers, chocolate, etc.: Northamptonshire soldiers' coll.: 1915-18. F. & Gibbons. Ex Mr. Gribble, a Northampton citizen, who maintained a fund for that purpose.

*grick. See grig, 1.

grid. A bicycle: 1924, D. H. Lawrence. O.E.D. (Sup.). Ex grid, a grid-iron. —2. Hence (1), the steam train that takes boys to and from school is known as the grid at: Hampton Grammar School: from ca. 1926.

gridle. To sing in the streets (whence vbln. griddling): low or c. (—1861). Mayhow, 'Got a month for griddling in the main drag.' Ex grizzle or perhaps ex Romany ghiss, to sing.

gridder. A street-singer, esp. without printed words or music: low or c. from ca. 1855. Ex gridle. 'Seven Dials', says H., 1864, alluding to the former criminal centre of London (now part of W.C.1).

gridiron. A county court summons (—1859): ob. Sales. Ha... takes out the abhorred grid-iron.' Ex, and orig., those of the Westminster Court, for its arms resemble a gridiron.—2. (the g—) 'The Honourable East India Company's striped ensign': nautical coll.: C. 19. Bowen.—3. The Gridiron (is —1874) the Grafton Club, which had a notable grill.


gridiron grumbles at the frying-pan, the. 'The pot calls the kettle black': coll.: C. 19.

gridironing. The practice of taking a gridiron-shaped piece of land, knowing that nobody else would buy the intermediate strips, which one could acquire at leisure: Canterbury Province, New Zealand: ca. 1850-80: coll. Morris.

*gridrons. The bars on a prison-cell window: c.: from ca. 1870.

grief. Trouble: coll. (—1891); ob. The Sportsman, Feb. 28, 1881, 'The flag had scarcely fallen than [sic] the grief commenced.' Ex come to grief.—2. See 'Mother, Where is Slang', § 6.

grief, bring to. To involve in great trouble; cause to fail: from ca. 1870: coll.

grief, come to. To get into serious trouble; fail: coll. (—1857).—2. To fall from a horse or a carriage: coll. (—1855), mainly sporting. Thackeray in The Newcomes, 'We drove on to the downs, and we were nearly coming to grief.'

griff. Abbr. griffin, 2, q.v.: 1829 (O.E.D.). Also of griffin, 3, 8.

griff. v. To deceive, take in (a person): Anglo-Indian, from ca. 1830; ob. Ex the n.

griffin. A greenhorn: from the 1850's. Ex next sense.—2. A new arrival from Europe: Anglo-Indian: 1793. Perhaps ex the unfortunate Admiral Griffin commanding in the Indian seas in 1746-8. See Yule & Burnell, who quote, for 1794, from Hugh Boyd, 'Griffin [capital letter], ... the fashionable phrase hero' (Madras).—3. A young subaltern: military: ca. from 1866-4. An unbroken horse: Anglo-Chinese: from ca. 1875. Occ., esp. in senses 2 and 3, abbr. to griff, as, for the former in 1829, and for the latter in Besant & Rice's By Celia's Arbour, 1878.—5. A woman forbidding in appearance or manners: coll.: 1824: very ob. Cf. gorgon in S.E.—6. Hence, a chaperon; a caretaker: coll.: ca. 1830-1900.—7. An umbrella: fast male society, ca. 1859-70. H., 1860.—8. In c. (—1888), a signal or warning: in G.W. + , s., esp. in give (ex tip) the griffin, v., or. t. with dative, to give a warning, and in the straight griffin, the straight tip: in C. 20, (low s. Occ. griff, as in Nat Gould's Double Event, 1871; rare in C. 20.—9. A 'grinning booby, who hath lost a tooth or two at top, and the same at bottom': app. ca. 1729-1850. 'Jon Bee.'—10. The derivatives griffinage, griffinism, are ♩: these refer mostly to senses 1-3.


grisham, adj. of or like a newcomer to India, hence of any greenhorn: Anglo-Indian > gen.: 1836; ob. Ex griff, n. Yule & Burnell.

griffmetoll, griff-metoll. A sixpence: c.: ca. 1790-1800. ♩ metal + a device on the coin.


grig, merry as. Very active and lively: C. 18-20 (ob.) coll. Goldsmith, 'I grew as merry as a grig.' An extension of a merry grig, a jocose and lively person: C. 16-18 coll. > S.E. ca. 1829, when also it > archaic. Cotgrave, Wycherley, Grose. Ex the cricket or possibly the young eel.

grigs. See grig, 2.

grillatipa. Incorrect for grilotalpa: C. 18. O.E.D.

"Absolutely grim." Cf. awful and ghastly, and contract nice.

*grim. To swindle: c.: late C. 16—early 17. Greene, 1591, 'The Cheater, when he has no cosin to grime with his stop dice.' ? cognate with Fr. grimer.

Grin, Mr. See old Mr. Grin.


grin on the (e.g. broad), adj. Grinning, e.g. broody; coll.: from ca. 1800. In C. 18, on the *high grin*, as in Swift.

grin, stand the. To be ridiculed and laughed at:
ca. 1820—50. Egan's Grose.

grin at the daisy-roots. To be dead and buried:
Anglo-Indian (esp. Calcutta): from ca. 1880; ob. Ware. Cf. (the possibly derivative) military push up daisies, q.v.


grin like a Cheshire cat. See cat, grin like a Cheshire.


grincom, grincomus. Syphilis: a C. 17 variant of trinkums. q.v. Jones, in Adrasta, 1635, 'In [a nobleman] the serpigo, in a knight the grincomes, in a gentleman the Neapolitan scabb, and in a serving man or artiller the plaine pox'.

grind. Hard work; routine: coll.: from ca. 1850.

grind, v. To study (hard); read a text; prepare for examination: all with with a 'coach' understood and all v.i. (v.t. with at); school and university: from ca. 1835.—2. To work at a hard or a distasteful task, or at the daily routine; v.i., variants with on or and away; v.t. with at or through; coll.: from ca. 1855.—3. V.t., to teach (a subject) in a plodding way, cf. gerund-grinder; to coach (a student); university: 1815 (S.O.D.): ob.—4. To ride in a steetplechase: 1857, G. A. Lawrence, in Guy Livingstone (O.E.D.); slightly ob.—5. V.i., to have sexual intercourse; low coll. (—1811). Lex. Bal. Less gen. than do a grind.—6. To exhaust; be (like) hard work: v.t.; coll.: 1837; ob. Talbot Baines Reed (O.E.D.):—7. grind mustard with one's knees. To be knock-kneed: C. 18—early 19. See Durham man.

grind-off. See grindo.—grind the coffee-mill.

grind water for the captain's ducks. On a sailing-ship, to take the wheel at 6—8 a.m.: nautical: mid-C. 19—20; ob. Bowen.

*grind wind. To work the treadmills: c. of ca. 1880—1910.

gripper, a. To apply the left thumb to the nose, and rotate the right hand round it, as if to work a... coffee-mill'. F. & H. A Cockney retort to an attempt on his credulity or good faith. Cf. take a sight and work the coffee-mill. The term was ob. in 1900, † in 1919; already in Pickwick we hear that this 'very graceful piece of pantomime is 'unhappily, almost obsolete'. A variation, presumably, upon 'cocking a snook'.

grinders. Teeth: coll.: C. 17—20. Ex S.E. sense (molars), as in Horace Walpole's 'A set of gnashing teeth, the grinders very entire'.

grindery. Shoemaking-material: shoemakers' (1887). Baumann.

grinding. V.t. of to grind, q.v. at all senses.


grinding-tool. The male member: low: C. 19—20; ob.


grindstone, hold or keep one's nose to the. To treat harshly: coll.: hold in C. 17—18; keep in C. 19—20. Variants in C. 19, bring or put. Ex C. 16—17 S.E. sense, to torture.—2. In C. 19—20, to study hard or toil unremittingly; to cause another to do so.

grindstone on his back, have the. To (go to) fetch the monthly nurse for one's wife's confinement: C. 18—19.

grinkome, grinkum. See grincomes.

Grinning Dears, the. The Grenadiers: other infantry battalions (—1909); slightly ob. Ware.

grinning stitches. Careless sewing; milliners': from ca. 1870; ob. Because the stitches are wide apart.


gripes. Colic. When, in late C. 19–20, it is used of persons, it is coll.—either low or jurorical (Earl, S.E.; as still of animals)—2. See *gripe.*

gripes in a tangle. See *tip a daddle.*


Grist. The *grief* metaphors are, despite F. & H., ineligitable.—2. Sol. for *gistr*; noted by Manchon in 1923.

grizzle. The male member: lower; from ca. 1850. Grist; *spirit.* stamina; courage, esp. if endur-ing origin (1825, as *clear grit*), U.S.; anglicised as a col.: ca. 1860. Thackeray. (*Clear grit* was, in U.S., not a mere synonym but an intensive.) Ex its hardness. Cf. U.S. *sand.*—2. A member of the Liberal or Radical Party: Canada; 1887; ca. 1884–7, a *clear grit*. The adj. *grippy* (U.S., 1847) has never caught on in England.

grizzle. One who frets: coll.: 1703, E. Ward (Matthews). Cf.:


grizzle-guts, occ. — A tearfully or whimsically ill-tempered or melancholy person: low col.: from ca. 1875. Cf. *sulkington.*


*grizzlin*; street grizzling. Vbln. of *grizzle*, v., 2.


*groaner* and sigher. A watch hired by methodists and others to attend their meetings for the purposes of fraud*, Potter, 1795. Cf. *grooner.*


groceries sundries. Wine and spirits sold fortuitively on credit to women: *grocers* (—1609). Ware. ‘Because so *tended*.

groceries, the. See *grocery*, 2.

grocer's Express, the. A G.W.R. train running four days a week from London to Aberdeen with margarine, tea, coffee, cocoa: railwaymen's: C. 20.

*grocery*. Small change in copper; copper coins collectively: C. 18–early 19; a. or, more prob., a. Bailey.—2. (With the, occ. in the pl.) sugar: ca. 1838–1910. Lytton, 1841. 'A pint of brandy . . . Hot water and lots of the grocery.' According to the E.D.D., however, the *groceries* is Anglo-Irish for a decaenter of whiskey and a bowl of sugar: Anglo-Irish: 1839, Lever.


Grog, Old. See Old *Grog* and *grog*, n. 3.


grog on board, have. To be drunk: C. 19–20 (ob.) nautical. Egan's *Grose.*

*grog-blossoms*. The mouth: pugilistic: from ca. 1840; ob. Thackeray.


*grogified*. A late C. 18–19 variant (Grose, 2nd ed.), laterly nautical, of the first sense of:


*grogham*. A horse, esp. if old: c. in late C. 18–19, then low; ob. Grose, 1st ed. Origin † Cf. *grad*.

groin. A (race-course) betting ring: c.: C. 20. Esp. among pickpockets and race-course thieves, who frequently refer to the betting rings as the bob (shilling) *groin* and the dollar (five-shilling) *groin*. David Hume. Perhaps suggested, anatomically, by *join*, 5.


groo. Sinister: from ca. 1920; now almost coll. Ronald Knox, *Still Dead*, 1934, ‘Dashed cowardly of me, but . . . It's just the tiniest bit groo, isn't it?’ A blend of *grouse* and *grisly.*


groovy. Of settled habits or rutty mind: coll.: only from ca. 1880, although *grooviness*, likewise coll., is recorded by the O.E.D. as early as 1867.

[grope, to feel a woman, and *grotto*, the pudend, are, despite *F. & H.*, S.E.]

**groperess.** A blind woman: low: ca. 1820—60. 'Jon Bee'. Ex groper, 1.

Groperland; occ., sole, Groperland. Western Australia: from ca. 1925. See groper, 5.

gropping for Jesus. Public prayer: lower classes': 1882. Ware. Ex Salvationist's cry, grope for Jesus—grope for Jesus!

group. 'The coat-pocket—from the manner of groping for its lesser contents', says 'Jon Bee', 1823: ca. 1820—50.


grottoes. An incorrect pl. of grotto: C. 17. O.E.D.

grouch. See grouch, n. and v.


grounded, go down to the. To defecate: C. 17 coll. Middleton in his *Family of Love*, 'Do you go well to ground?'. Cf. C. 19 medical j., get to the ground.

ground, suit down to the. To be thoroughly acceptable or becoming: coll.: from ca. 1875. Miss Bradton, 'Some sea coast cities... would suit me down to the ground.' But down to the ground is occ. used with other v.v. Cf. the M.E. all to ground (W.).

ground floor. (Always the g. 1.) The inside of a bus, i.e. the lower deck: busmen's: from ca. 1921. The Daily Herald, Aug. 5, 1936.

ground floor, let in on the. (Of the promoters) to allow to share in a financial or commercial speculation on equal terms: orig. U.S.; anglicised ca. 1900: mainly Stock Exchange and commerce. From the opp. angle, get, or be let, in on the g.-f. deal.

ground-parrot. A small farmer: Australian (— 1898): ob. Suggested by cockatoo, n. 1, and ex the ground-porred or pollicatus pulchellus, Morris.


ground-sweat. A grave: o.c. or low: late C. 17—mid-19. B.E. Esp. in have, or take, a ground-sweat, to be buried. Cf. dial. take a g.-s about anything, to worry oneself greatly, and the C. 19 dial. proverb: 'a ground-sweat cures all disorders.' (E.D.D.): Apperson.)


ground (or floor) with one, mop (or wipe) up the. To thrash soundly; fig., to prove oneself vastly superior to: coll.: from ca. 1880. Henley & Stevenson, 1887. 'I'll mop the floor up with him any day.'


grouse. A grumble: orig. (ca. 1890) soldiers' a. ; since G.W., gen. coll. Ex: grouse; occ., but not after 1914, grouce, v. To grumble: dial. from ca. 1850 (see W.), >, by ca. 1880, soldiers' that, ca. 1919, > gen. coll. Kipling, 1892, 'If you're cast for fatigue by a sergeant unkind, [—Don't grouse like a woman, nor crack on, nor blind.' > cognate with Old Fr. groucer; and ? cf. U.S. grout, to grumble (1836: Thornton).—2. To cuss with a woman: dial. and a.: mid-C. 19—20. Ex dial. grousse, to pry, search.

grouse, do a. To look for, or successfully follow, a woman: low: from ca. 1850: ob. Either ex the 'running down' of the bird or ex grousse, to shoot grousse.


grou(2)te. To work or study hard: Marlborough and Cheltenham Colleges: from ca. 1870. Ex the S.E. sense, dig with the snout.

grouther, on a or the. Out of one's turn, interferingly; unfairly: Australian military (1916); by 1919, gen. low s. Esp. come in on a grouther, e.g. to obtain an issue to which one is not entitled. Ultimately, perhaps, of the same origin as the preceding term; imm. ex the j. of the game of two-up, where it is applied to one who enters the game only when it seems likely that the spinner will 'spin out' or fail to 'head them'. Prob. a corruption of go-outer.


*grow. v.i. To be allowed to let one's hair and beard grow: prison c.: ca. 1870—1915. Also to grow one's feathers.


growl you may—but go you must! A nautical c.p. uttered 'when the watch below have to turn out of their bunks to shorten sail in bad weather': late C. 19—20. Bowen. The moderation of the language indicates the gravity of the need.


growing. Subject, temperamentally or incidentally, to moroseness or ill temper expressed in growls: coll.: from ca. 1920.

grown-man's dose. A very large drink; much liquor: coll.: from ca. 1860.

grown-jup. An adult: coll.: from ca. 1810. (In C. 20, S.E.) Dickens, in Our Mutual Friend, 'I always did like grown up.'

groze. To spit: Conway cadets' (— 1891); ob. John Masfield, The Conway, 1933. Perhaps cf. dial. grooze (etc.), to have a chill before a cold.


grub, like. Greatly: enthusiastically. 'I am on like grub,' Baumann, 1887. Low; ob.
grub. ride. To be sullen; ill-tempered: coll. (— 1785); ob. by 1880, by 1890. Grose, 1st ed. — ex dial., which has the grubs bite (a person) hard in the same sense.
grub along. To get along, fig., as best one can: low (— 1888).
grub-crib. See grub-shop.
grub-hamper. A 'consignment of sweet edibles from home': Public Schools': late C. 19-20. Ware.
grub-hunting, vl.n. Begging for food: tramps': from ca. 1845.
grub. it. A variant of grub, v.i.: 1: C. 19-20; very ob.
grub-white. To befoul; hence, make very dirty: low: ca. 1780-1860. Grose, 1st ed. Lit., to befoul as a grub befouls.
grub-shop, crib, trap. The first and second, an eating-house: low: from ca. 1840. Also, a workhouse: from ca. 1850. — 2. The first and third, the mouth: low: from ca. 1860.
grub-stake. One's share of the rations: military coll.: 1914. F. & Gibbons. Ex the S.E. mining sense.
grub-stake, v.t. To give (an author) money to keep him going while he writes a book; publishers', hence also authors', coll.: from ca. 1920. Cf. the n.
grub. Street, as the ill-fed corpus of literary hacks, is S.E., but Grub Street news, 'lying intelligence' (Grose, 1st ed.) or 'news, false, forg'd' (B.E.S.) is, in late 17-18, coll. Ex that C. 17 hack, i.e. 'grub,' is a corruption of Moorfield which has, since 1830, been known as Fore Street. See Grose, P., and Beresford Chancellor's Annals of Fleet Street.
grub-trap. See grub-shop. Baumann.

grubby, a. A diminutive of grub, food: ca. 1820-60. Cf. bubbly.
gruel. Punishment; a beating: coll.: from ca. 1795. Scott in Guy Mannering: 'Great indignation against some individual. 'He shall have his gruel,' said one.' Gen. in phrases. Give one his, or get one's, gruel, to punish, to be punished; in boxing, knock out or be knocked out; in c., to kill, be killed. Also, gruelled, floored; gruelling, a beating; heavy punishment: also adj. (Occ. take one's gruel, to endure a beating like a man, as in Sporting Life, Dec. 15, 1888.) Cf. settle one's hash and cook one's goose and consider serve one out; paglistic ext nautical serve out grog.
gruel, v. To punish; to exhaust: coll.: ca. 1850, Kingsley (O.E.D.). Ex the n.
gruelleing, vbl.n. and ppl. adj.: see gruel, n. (1889; O.E.D.)
grufite. To speak gruffly in a muffled way; dial. (— 1825), by 1900, coll. Echoic. O.E.D. (Sup.)
grumbles, be all on the. To be cross or discontented: low coll.: from ca. 1865. The O.E.D. records the grumbles, locular coll. for ill humour, at 1861.
grumbletonian. A (constant) grumbler: coll.: from ca. 1710; ob. Orig.—ca. 1890-1730—the nickname of the Count(r) Party, in the opposi-
grumbl


grumpish, grumpy. Surly; peevish; coll.: in C. 20, S.E. resp. 1797, 1778 (O.E.D.), Sala, 'Calling you a "cross, grumpy, old thing"; when you mildly suggest ... grundy. A short fat person, rarely of a woman: rare coll.: C. 16. Foxe in Acts and Monuments, 1670. Mrs. Grundy: see at Mrs.

*grunt. Anon., Street Robberies Consider'd, 1728. defines it as a hog: if this is correct, the term is c.; but prob. it is an error for sense 1 of:


Grunts, Bridge of. See Isthmus of Suez.


gaecho. A sol. spelling of gaucho, one of a South American half-bred race of mounted herdsmen: from ca. 1830. Gaucho is Sp. (O.E.D.; W.)

guana, guano. See goanna.


guard. To see that horses or hounds from one stable are separated in a race: sporting s. > coll. > j.: 1893 (O.E.D.).


guard-mount. An article kept solely for guard-duty: military: from ca. 1925. The best-dressed man is excused guard.

guard the ace. To form 'a destroyer screen round big warships at sea': naval: 1914. Bowen. Ex bridge.

guard, ensign. A soldier of the household Guards: from ca. 1905.—2. Hence, gardee (or guardman's) wriggle, also tickling his ear, an exaggerated salute affected by the Guards: military: from ca. 1910. B. & F.


Guards of the Line, the. The 29th Foot, in late C. 19-20 the Worcestershire, Regiment: military nickname: from before 1877. F. & Gibbons.

guardsmen's wiggle. See gardee, 2.

gardy, -ie. An affectionate abbr. of gardeian: coll.: from ca. 1890.


gubbins as fish-offal is S.E., but as the name given to the primitive inhabitants of a Dartmoor district near Brent Tor, it is coll.: from ca. 1660; ob. by 1850, † by 1900.—2. Hence (†), a fool: military and schools': late C. 19–20. F. & Gibbons.—3. Rubbish, trash: coll.: late C. 19–20. Ex S.E. sense. Ibid.


[gudgeon, a bait, an easy dupe, is, like the v.i. and v.t., S.E., though gudgeon, to be gullible, admittedly has a coll. tang.]

guerilla, properly employed in guer(r)illa (warfare), is a catachresis when, as in C. 19–20, it is used for guer(g)illero, a guerrilla fighter. W.

guess l. I'm pretty sure: coll.: orig. (1798) U.S., Anglicised ca. 1885 but still recognised as from abroad. (Baumann.) Ex the ME.—early Mod. Eng. guess, (rather) think, suppose, estimate. Cf. Thornton.

guess and by God (or, euphemistically, Godfrey), by, (Of steering) at hazard: naval (—1909). O.E.D. (Sup.).

guessing, keep (a person). To keep one uncertain or in the dark: coll., orig. (—1905) U.S., Anglicised by 1910. O.E.D. (Sup.).


guffy. A person both clumsy and stupid: from ca. 1880: a. when not dial. (after 1920, the latter only). Miss Braddon. (O.E.D.)

gufoon. The Anglo-Irish form of the preceding. Ex It., says Ware.


guffy, adj. See guff, n. 2.


gugusse. 'An effeminate youth who frequents the private company of priestes': Roman Catholics': from the early 1880's; ob. Ware, noting its Fr. origin, adds: 'In Paris (1880) the word was taken from the name of one of the novels specially directed about this time at the French priesthood.' L. Guggusse, a s. form of Auguste.


guilotine, v.t. To place (a delinquent) with his head jammed under the shutter in the hammock netting and then shoot him with a semi-automatic rifle at the exposed portion of his anatomy: Conway cadet — (1801). John Masefield, The Conway, 1933.

guilt. Sense of guilt: a catastrophe: † only in Tillotson, 1690. (O.E.D.)
guinea-gold. Sincere; utterly dependable: coll. verging on S.E.: C. 18–early 19. Semantics: stereiling. Moreover, Guinea gold, from which the guinea was coined in C. 18, was of a magnificent yellow (Ware).

guinea-pigging. Acting as a company-director for the sake of the fee: 1890.—2. As a clerical deputy: 1887. Both coll. (O.E.D.)
guinea to a gooseberry, (it's) a. (It is) long odds: sporting: ca. 1880–1910. Hawley Smart, 1884. 'Why, it's a guinea to a gooseberry on Sam!' A ca. 1865–90 variant: a guinea to a goose (Bumann). Cf. the City Lombard Street to a China orange.
guinea-trade. Professional services of the deputy, stop-gap, or the nominal kind: 1808 (S.O.D.); ob. Perhaps rather jocular than s. Punning Guinea trade.

Guinness is good for you! A c.p. of 1930—Du Pont's slogan in her Strong Poison, 1930; Stang, p. 173. Ex the great brewery's slogan.


guth. (New Eng.) Artillery: theatrical: from ca. 1890. —2. Whence, in Australia, C. 20, it is gen. a., with additional sense of fooling, nonsense, esp. if plausible; make-believe. C. J. Dennis. This odd word is an extension of guiser, adj.—3. 'The . . . sweep of hair worn down on the forehead, lower and lower as the 1890's proceeded: among Cockney boy-swells': from ca. 1890; virtually %. Ware. Perhaps ex guiser lad or ex guiser, adj.
guiver, v.i. To humbug; fool about; show off: sporting (1801); ob. Ex preceding.—2. Hence, to make-believe: Australian; C. 20.
guider, adj. Smart; fashionable: low (1866).

Vance in The Chickaleary Cove. † ex the Northern dial. givour, glutinous; cf.: guiver lad. A low-class dandy; an artful fellow: ca. 1870–1900. Mainly Cockney. Cf. gweeo and artful member, q.v.
gulf. (The group or position of) those who barely get their degree, 'degrees allowed': Cambridge University: 1827 (O.E.D.); Bristed, Five Years in an English University. † by 1920.—2. One who, trying for honours, obtains only a pass: Oxford University: from ca. 1830: † by 1921. See gulled in:
gulf, v. To place in the 'gulf', sense 1 (occ. sense 2): university: from ca. 1831, Cambridge; 1853, Oxford (O.E.D.). † by 1920. According to H., 1860, gulf denoted a man 'unable to enter for the classical examination from having failed in the mathematical . . . The term is now obsolete.'
gulf, shoot the. To achieve a very difficult task; ironically, to achieve the impossible: coll.: ca. 1640–1700. Howell; Defoe, 'That famous old wives' saying'. Perhaps, as Defoe asserts, from Drake's 'shooting the gulf' of Magellan. O.E.D.
gulf it. To be content with, or obtain, a place in the 'gulf': Cambridge University, 1827. Anon., Seven Years at Cambridge, 1827 (O.E.D.). Ob. by 1890, † by 1920. Ex gulf, n., 1; rarely sense 2.
gull, as a simpleton, fool, or dupe,—as a trick, fraud, or false report: is S.E., but as a trickster or swindler, late C. 17–19, it is s. S.E. also is the v. in its various senses, though it may possibly have been orig. coll. in that of dupe. Almost certainly S.E. are gullage and gullery,—gullable, gullible, and gullish,—and guller; perhaps too, gull-catcher.
gull-finch. A simpleton; a fool: C. 17 coll. 'Water Poet' Taylor.

*—gull-groper. One who (gen. professionally) lends money to gamblers: c. C. 17–early 19. Dekker, 'The gull-groper is commonly an old mony-monger.' Ex the S.E. groe a gull, to 'pluck a pigeon on.'
gullet. The throat: always loose Eng., it was coll. in late C. 17–mid-18: B.E., 'a Derisory Term for the Throat, from Gula'. In C. 20, almost coll.
gullfinch. See gull-finch.
gully, the throat, is low coll.: C. 19–20 (ob.). Ex C. 16–17 S.E. sense (gullet).—2. As a large knife, it is, despite F. & H., ineligible, for it is dial.—3. The female pudend: low (f. s. or coll.): from ca. 1850; ob.—4. the gully. The fielding-position between point and slip: cricketers' coll. (1890) >, by 1934; J. Lewis.—5. In c. of C. 19–20 (now virtually †), a person given to telling lies. Vaux, 1812.
gully-fluff. 'Boggar's velvet'; orig. the fluff that forms in pockets: low coll.: from ca. 1820; ob. Cf. S.E. flue.
gully-hole. The gullet, the throat; the female pudend. C. 19–20 (ob.); low.

**gully-making.** Cattle thieving: Australian from: ca. 1845; ob.


gulp. A simpleton: a person (ignorantly) credulous: C. (1850); H., arch. ed. Besant, 1886, "Go then, for a brace of gulpins!" Because he will gulp down anything; imm. ex the next sense.—2. A marine: nautical: from ca. 1800; ob. Cf. *tell that to the marines*.


**gulsh,** hold one's. To keep quiet, refrain from talking: from ca. 1840: more dial. than (provincial) coll. Ex Northamptonshire *gulsh*; silly talk; ribaldry.

gum. Chatter: coll.: ca. 1750-1860. Smollett.—2. Abusive talk: coll. or s.: ca. 1780-1840. Grose, 1st ed., *Come, let us have no more of your gum.* Ex *the gums* of the mouth.—3. Abrb. chewing-gum: orig. U.S.; anglicised ca. 1900 as a coll., now verging on S.E. Gum l. A mild oath: low coll., and dial.: from ca. 1825. Pierce Egan in *The Life of an Actor*. God corrupted; or, as Ware says, a telescoping and slowneing of *gum almighty*. In C. 20, esp. in Australia and New Zealand, often *gum!*

**gum, old mother.** Pejoratively, an old woman: low coll.: from ca. 1850; ob.

**gum-smasher or -tickler.** A dentist: from ca. 1860; ob. Cf. *snag-catcher*.

gum-sucker. A native of Tasmania, inaccuracy says F. & H.; properly, a person Victorian-born,—loosely, a native of other States, inclusive of—and esp.—Tasmania. Coll.: from ca. 1820; slightly ob. Ex the habit, among boys, of eating gum from eucalyptus or acacia trees, as in P. Cunningham's *Two Years in New South Wales*. Morris.—Hence 2, a fool: also Australian, but not very gen.: ca. 1880-1900.


**gum-ticker.** A drink; esp., a dram: ca. 1814-1915.Dickens, *I prefer to take it in the form of a gum-ticker*, 1864.—2. See *gum-smasher*.

gum-tree, be up a. To be in a predicament; be cornered: Australian: from ca. 1896. Cf. the much earlier U.S. sense, be on one's last legs, whence prob. the Australian. I ex an opossum being shot at. Cf.:

gum-tree, have seen one's last. To be done for: Australian (— 1893): s. > coll.; ob. F. & H. But Baumann, 1887, classifies the phrase as nautical: prob. both lexicographers are correct.

gum-tree l., strike me up a. Variant, up a blue gum-tree. An Australian coll. explicative: from ca. 1906. The gum-tree has very hard wood and is difficult to climb.

gum-burst querier.

gumgamy. Given to scolding or snarling: low coll.: C. 19-20 (ob.). Ex *gum, 2, q.v.*

gumm. (Of a ball) close to the cushion; billiards: from ca. 1870.

gummy. Grose's 1st ed. spelling of *gummy, adj.*


**gummy!** A late C. 19-20 low variant of by *gum* / Manchon.

**gummy, feel.** To perspire: university: ca. 1880-1914.

**gummy composer.** An old and insipid composer: musical coll. (— 1900). Ware. Ex *gummy*, n. 1, [gump, a dot, given by F. & H., is dial. and U.S. coll.]

gumption. Common sense; shrewdness; practical intelligence: coll.: 1719 (S.O.D.). Grose, in his *Provincial Glossary*, *Gauem, to understand*: hence, possibly, *gumination*, or *gumption, understanding*. Orig. Scottish. A C. 18-raid-19 variant is *rum gumption*, latterly one word, where *rum* = first-class.


guns, bless her, his, its, your, etc. A facetious form of *bless your soul!* From ca. 1860; ob.

gun. A flagon of ale: s. and—in C. 20 wholly—dial. : 1645 (S.O.D.). Cf. the Anglo-Irish sense (a toddy glass) and *gun* in the.—2. A tobacco pipe: jovial coll.: from ca. 1705; ob.—3. A lie: e.g.: ca. 1680-1770. Perhaps ex the loud voice characterising a liar or a lie. But there may be some error: the Knole Park vocabulary (see note at *ganna*) defines it as 'lip': but I suspect that vocabulary of being very careless and inaccurate: *gannam* is well attested (not *ganna*); so is *gentry mort, not gentry more* (as in the *Knole*): *a bough, not (as at Knole) hace a look*, half-berd, not (as there) half-berd,—lurries, not (as there) lurries; margery, not (as there) margery.—4. A thief; a pickpocket: e.g.: (1846 in *No 767*); "Durango Anglicus", 1887), > ca. 1880, low s. Cf. *gunner* and *gunsmith*. Abbr. *gum* (n) (n) (n) or *off* (f).—5. Hence, a 'rascal', 'beggar', as a vaguely pejorativ term of reference: from ca. 1860; ob: more Australian than English. 'Roff Boldrewood.—6. A revolver: orig. (— 1889) and mainly U.S.; anglicised ca. 1900 and, with the influx of U.S. gangster novels and films, > gen. ca. 1925; heard occ. in the Army in 1914-18.—7. In e. of ca. 1810-50, a look, inspection, observation. Vaux, 'There is a strong gun at us, we are strictly observed.' Cf. the v.—8. Gorenorres: low; late C. 19-20.

gum, v. To look at, examine: e.g.: ca. 1810-95. Vaux; Baumann. Perhaps ex sighting an object before shooting at it. (Extant in Sussex dial.)

gun, give her the: See give her the gun.

gun, give the: See give the gun.

gun, great. A joyous scamp; from before 1923 Manchon.—2. See great gun.
**GUN, IN THE**

G. A. Coll.


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**GUSSET OF THE ARSE**

G. A. Coll.


guns, gas and gaiters. A naval c.p. (C. 20) 'applied to the gunnery officers, who were the first to introduce the polished gaiters for work in the mud at Whale Island', Bowen.

gunter. 'A Cracker, or bouncing Fellow', a harmless liar (contrast gusser, 2): ca. 1700–60. Steelie in The Times, No. 88. (S.O.T.D.)

gunyah(-): occ. guniah, guiniar, gun(n)eah, gunnya(h), gunyer, gunyio. 'A black-fellow's hut, roughly constructed of boughs and bark': this sense, late C. 18–20, is S.E. But when applied to a white man's hut or, derivatively, house, it is coll.: late C. 19–20. Ex Aborigine. Morris. Cf. gunyah(e), q.v.

gup. Gossip, scandal: coll.: Anglo-Indian, with stress on its idleness: gun-gup is recorded for 1809; gun doubtless soon followed. Familiarised in Britain in 1868 by Florence Marryat's C. & B., a rather catty account of society in South India. Ex Hindi gap,attle. See Yule & Burnell.—2. From ca. 1920, however, the sense of the term has, in England, been much influenced by gush and tosh, tush; and even by 1883 (O.E.D. Sup.) it represented, also, silly talk.

gup! Go up! (to a horse) get up! A.C. 18–17 coll. corruption of go up. G. Harvey. Followed by drab, queer, or where, it is a c.p. form of address.


gurrowan, A coachman: Anglo-Indian (— 1864); ob. A native corruption of coachman.


gush. A smell, a whiff (e.g. of tobacco): coll.: 1838, Dickens: ob. (O.E.D.)—2. Talk too effusive and objectionably sentimental: coll.: from ca. 1865. The Church Times, Sept. 17, 1886, 'Not mere gush or oratirical flip-flap'.—3. Ca. 1870–80, 'the newspaper work necessary for a continuance of the largest circulation': the C. 20 has other names for this, 'slush'.—4. Hence, in late C. 19–20, a newspaper article designed to this end. Manchon.

gush, v. To talk (gen. v.i.) too effusively and sentimentally; often, also insincerely: coll.: from early 1860's; Webster records it in 1864. Miss Broughton, Miss Braddon. Ex the burbling spring and the garrulous brook.

gusher. An over-effusive and (gen. insincerely) sentimental talker: coll.: 1864, Edmund Yates in Broken to Harness.

gushing, adj. (The n., also coll., is rare.) Excessively sentimental and effusive, either innately or insincerely: coll.: 1864, Fraser's Magazine, p. 627, 'What, in the slang of translated Cockneys, is called the Gushing School'.—2. Coll. adv. in -ly: 1865. (O.E.D.)

gushi, n. (Adj.) The same as preceding adj.: coll. (— 1889). O.E.D.


gusset of the arse. The inner side of the buttocks late C. 18–19 low col. Burns.

gus. An affected and/or effeminate man: Australian; from ca. 1905. Ex Gus, the Christian name. Cf. Nancy, which, however, connotes sexual perversion.

gust. A guest: jocular; from ca. 1905; ob. (See Slang, p. 17.) Cf. finance, q.v.

gut. Vi., to cram the guts: low coll.: ca. 1890. This accounts for F. & H.'s 'to eat hard, fast, and badly' (schools)!' now ob.—2. As to remove or destroy the contents or inside of (v.t.), it is, despite F. & H., good Eng., but gut a house, to rob it. is C. 17-19.—gut an oyster, to eat it, low s. of late C. 17-20 (ob.).—gut a quart pot, empty it, is C. 18-20 low s.—gut a job (Moore in Tom Cobb's Memorial), to render it valueless, is C. 19 low s.

 guts to a bear, not fit to carry. Worthless; very uncouth: coll.: from ca. 1890. Howell, Wolcot, Scott. See Apperson.

guts for garters; gen. I'll have your, though other persons and tenses occur. A race-course (and other low) e.p. : from before 1932. Slang, p. 242.—2. It also means, to defeat utterly, to damage severely.

guts in one's brain(s), have. To have a solid understanding; be genuinely intelligent: coll.: ca. 1890-1905. Butler, 1663; Swift, 'The follow's well enough if he had any guts in his brain.' (Apperson.) Cf. more guts than brains, below.

guts into it, put one's. Do your best, esp. physically; perhaps orig. aquatic. How you the best you can. Coll.: from ca. 1890.

 guts of brains, more. Adj., silly; brainless: late C. 18-20. Grose, 1st ed. Also have more . . . Cf. the G.W. soldiers' more ball(ock)s than brains, more brawny than brains. Cf. guts in one's brain(s), above.

 guts of brains, more. Adj., silly; brainless: late C. 18-20. Grose, 1st ed. Also have more . . . Cf. the G.W. soldiers' more ball(ock)s than brains, more brawny than brains. Cf. guts in one's brain(s), above.

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 guts to a bear, not fit to carry. Worthless; very uncouth: coll.: from ca. 1890. Howell, Wolcot, Scott. See Apperson.

guts, ward-room officers have stomachs, and flag-officers palates,—midshipmen have a naval e.p.: mid-C. 19-20; ob. Bowen. (Cf. horses eatw, men pereire, and women feel the heat.)

gutsy. To worry oneself greatly: low (? s. or coll.) : from ca. 1840.


 guts begin to think my throat's cut; my guts curse my teeth; my guts chime twelve. I'm very hungry: coll. (the first, low): resp. late C. 18-mid-19; late C. 18-20; late C. 18-19; mid-C. 19-20; ob. The first three are (?) recorded by Grose, 1785, 1785, 1788, resp., the fourth by F. & H. Not 'cast-iron', but adaptable to other than the first person singular.

 guts but no bowels, have plenty of. To be unfeeling; even hard, merciless: coll.: late C. 18-20; ob. Grose, 3rd ed. Cf. dial, have neither gut nor gall in one, to be heartless and lazy.


 guts are ready to eat my little ones, my great; my
GUTTER-CHAUNTER  364  GYNIE


gutter-hotel. The open air: tramp's c.: from ca. 1870; ob. Cf. hedge-square and daiseyville, q.v. v


gutter-lane. See gutter-alley. 'Throat' synonyms are: beer street, Holloway, gin and red lane, peck alley. Ex L. gutter, the throat, fig. gluttony: indeed Bailey, 1721, spells it 'Gutter Lane'. (Cf. next entry.)

gutter-lane (or 'capitalled'), all goeth (C. 17)—or goes (C. 18—20)—down. He spends all his money on his stomach. A proverbial coll.: C. 17–20; ob. Prob. suggested by Gutter Lane, London, with pun on L. gutter. Cf. preceding entry.

(gutter-literature, like g. journalism and g. press, is S.E.: but see awful, blood and thunder, shocker.)

gutter-master, a C. 17 term of reproach, is on the verge of eligibility.)

gutter-merchant. An itinerant vendor: coll. (—1923). Manchon. He walks in, or almost in, the gutter.


gutter-slush, -snipe. A street arab: resp. s., ca. 1886–1910, and coll., from ca. 1880 (in C. 20, S.E.). With the latter, which follows from the S.E. sense, a gatherer of refuse from the gutter, cf. Fr. sauterreux, an errand-boy (W.).


gut'tle, to eat (or drink) greedily; gut'tler, a gormandiser; gut'tling, given to coarse eating and/or over-drinking.—all, despite F. & H., are S.E.

guttie-shop. A tuck-shop: Rugby School: from ca. 1890.

guty. See guttie.—gutter. See guther.

guy or gov. Abbr. governor, q.v.: low: from ca. 1880.

guyner, or = governor, q.v. Occ. gov'nor.


gyme. To hiss: theatrical: from ca. 1870; ob. 'If orig. U.S., may be... from Dutch de guig aanscken, to make fun', W.—2. Whence, to quiz, make an object of ridicule: coll.: from ca. 1880. Cf. U.S. sense (e.g. in Thornton). Also as v.i., to


guy, great. A post-G.W. derivative of guy, n., 6. For sense, see the quotation at sound egg.

guy on, clap a. Put a stop to: cease (v.t.): nautical: ca. 1814: ob. by 1910, † by 1930. Ex guy- rope. O.E.D.

guy to give the. To run away from; give (someone) the slip (—1899). Ex guy, n., 4, 5.


guyver. See guiver.


Gu. See Guzzle.

[guzzle, n. and v.; guzzler; guzzling, n. and v.: all are S.E. Prob. the sound is responsible for the frequent imputation of coll., esp. for guzzle, liquid.]


guzzle-guts. A guttler or a heavy drinker: low (—1788); ob. Grose, 2nd ed.

Guzzle-Pawnee. The inevitable military nickname (—1835), on Egyptian or Indian service, of men surnamed Drinkwater. A pun on Hindustani pawnee, water.

gwennie (-y), or G. A high-angle, anti-aircraft gun on board ship (cf. archie): naval: C. 20. F. & Gibbons; Bowen. Ex Gwendolen, an aristocratic name.

g.y., all a. All on one side or askew; crooked: North Country coll. (and dial.). From ca. 1860. Cf. all (q.v.) of a hugh.


*gybe, v. To whip; castigate, esp. in past ppl. passive: late C. 17–18 c. B.E. Ex the S.E.

gybing (i.e. gibbing), occ. gybery or ghibry, n. Mockery; jerking. In late C. 17–18 (witness B.E. and Grose) it seems to have been coll. gybe. Prayers: Charterhouse: late C. 19–20. Why? gyger. See jigger.

Gyle, the. 'Shortened familiar, and secretive title for Argyle Rooms, Windmill Street': London fast life: ca. 1850–78. Ware.

Gylies. See hopping Giles.


gymmy. See -y, 2.

gymnastic. The female pudend: low jocular s.: from ca. 1860.

gynie(-)ocracy, gynoe( or -e)ocracy. Catachrestic for gynascocracy or gynocracy: C. 17–20. O.E.D.

A college servant: Cambridge University:
from ca. 1760. In C. 19-20, also Durham University:
Cf. the Oxford scout and the Dublin slip.
Etyymology proposed: Gr. γύπη, a vulture (sym-
bolic of rapacity), by Cantalls, popularly: Gipsy
Joe, by The Saturday Review; gipsy, by the S.O.D.;
and, I think the most convincing, the C. 17 gipp
(Fr. jupeau), a garment, hence a varlet—cf. the
gypsohilia: coll.: C. 20. O.E.D. (Sup.).
Gyp. To cheat (v.t.), swindle: Canadian:
C. 20. From T.S.; ex S.E. Gypsy. (John Beames.)
Gyp! See gip.
gyp, give (a person). See gip, give.
gyp-room. 'A room where the gyps keep table
furniture, etc.:' from ca. 1870: Cambridge coll. >,
by 1900, S.E. (O.E.D.).

GYP

Gypse. adj. Looking like a boxer or a boxer’s
clothes, etc.; tailors’: late C. 19-20. Origin ?
gyposo, Gypso. See Gipo.
Gypsy. See Gippy. But note that Gypies (not
Gi-) = Egyptian cigarettes: coll.: C. 20. E.g. in
F. Brett Young, Jim Redlake, 1930.
gyro. A gyroscope: coll.: from mid-1890’s.—
2. A gyro-compass: coll.: 1914 (O.E.D. Sup.).
Gypsies of Science. The British Association
for the Advancement of Science: coll.: 1845-
1890.
gyp. A child: pejorative low: from ca. 1820:
Scots. Ex goat.—2. A first-year pupil at the Edin-
burgh High School: Scots: from ca. 1880. Ex
Scots gyte, a foolish fellow.
gyvel. The female pudend: Scots low coll.: 
C. 18-20 (ob.). Burns.

H

h. ‘As an unsatisfactory variant (‘invented’ by
Swift, ca. 1708) of ha, q.v. (Slang, p. 60.)
h-. ‘As a term of educated speech from 19
cent. only. “The h and other points of etiquette”
(Thackeray, 1848), ’ W. The intrusive h-, however,
have always been a sol.
h. I .c. Hole-in-corner paper: Bootham School
h.o.p., on the. A jocular elaboration of on the
hap (a.v.). q.v.: ob. a.
hs. ’Hot stuff’, esp. in the sexual sense: from
ca. 1930. Compton Mackenzie, Water on the Brain,
1933, ‘She’s h.s. all right.’
ha’d, ha’d, ha-dee. A halfpenny: Charter-
house: from ca. 1870. Obviously ha’d; half; d is the
sign for pence. Also, rarely, habe.
ha or ha’. Have: a worn-down form: in C. 19-
20, low coll. when not dial. Occ. it > ‘u’ or a.
hab. A Negro (and dial.) pronunciation of havo:
C. 18-20.
hab or nab, hab-nab, hab-nabs; hob-nob, adv.
At random, by hook or by crook, hit or miss: coll.:
from ca. 1540: the a forms ob. by 1760, † (except in
dial.) by 1800; the o, ob. by 1810, † (except in dial.)
by 1860. ’Hob-nob is his word; give’t or take’t,’
Shakespeare, whereas Udall revealingly spells hab
or habber. Cf. hab or nabh (= ne habe), havo or have
not. Variant: at, or by, hab or nab. See also hob
and, or nob.
Moncrieff. Because he sells tape, q.v.
haberdasher of (nouns and) pronouns. A school-
master: late C. 17-19; now archalo. The longer
and older form, not after C. 18. B.E.
As the exact meaning is obscure, Bee is quoted in
full: ‘A sham pleas in (on) to save appearances.
Worn by the ladies; but gentlemen should ”look
well to’t”, as Hamlet says, or it will be all Dicey.’
See dickey, n., and cf. belly-plea.
habitual, n. A confirmed drunkard, criminal,
drug-taker, etc.: coll.: 1884. (S.O.D.) Contrast
chronic, q.v.
haby. A haberdashery department (in a store):
trade: C. 20. (E. R. Punshon, Information
Received, 1933.)
back, for a sorry horse or a sorrier writer, is S.E.,
as also for a gasp caused by a kick: as a harlot or a
bawd, however, it is a: from ca. 1730; almost †.
Ex hackster or hackney (woman or wench or whore),
which are rather S.E. than coll.—2. See garrison
back.—3. As used in Public Schools for a kick,
blow, punch, it verges on: C. 20. E. F. Benson,
David Blaize, 1916, has ‘A Juicy Hack’. Also as
v.: C. 20; e.g. in A. Waugh, The Loom of Youth,
1917.
habit and manger, at. (Gen. with live.) In
clover: coll.: ca. 1660-1890. Ex hack, the rack
that holds fodder for cattle. (Extant in dial.)
habit a of dress, make a. To wear it daily:
(—1887); ob. Baumann.
hackery. A bullock-cart: late C. 17-20 Anglo-
Indian. (Before 1880, at least) rarely used among
natives: W., however, suggests ex Hindi chakra,
a two-wheeled cart.
hackle. Pluck, spirit. Whence to show hackle,
for to be willing to fight: coll. (—1890). H., 2nd ed.
Ex hackle, a long shining feather on a cock’s neck.
Cf. hackles up.
hackle as a variant of heckle in political sense is
hackle, cock of a different. An opponent of a
different, gen. better, character: coll. (—1865).
See heckle and cf.:
hackles. Whiskers: jocular coll.: from ca.
1880; ob. Cf.:
hackles up, with the. Very angry; at fighting-
point: coll. when, from ca. 1880, applied to men.
Ex cock-fighting.
hackles, hackles. As a variant of heckle in political sense is
hack, cock of a different. An opponent of a
different, gen. better, character: coll. (—1865).
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different, gen. better, character: coll. (—1865).
See heckle and cf.:
hackles. Whiskers: jocular coll.: from ca.
1880; ob. Cf.:
at Haddums, late C. 17–18 (B.E.), or in the mid-C. 18–early 19 c.p. (Grose, 1st ed.) to have been at Had‘em and come home by Clapham, punning Hadham and clap: properly, to have caught clap or gonorrhœa; loosely, syphilis. (These topographical and coll. puns were much commoner before ca. 1830 than after.)

bad enough, (have). (To be) tipsy: coll.: C. 19–20. I.e. more than enough.

bad on! 'Sucks!'; a term of triumph or defiance at certain schools: from the 1880's. See esp. Ernest Raymond, Once in England, 1932, at p. 12.

bad and one (or but) the wheel came off, (we). A lower-class and military c.p. directed at an unintelligible speaker or speech: (C. 20. B. & P.)

dead-up. An examination of (a person) by the police: ca. 1820–70. 'Jon Doe.' Ex S.E. had up, brought before a magistrate.—2. A person 'had up': legal arrest by C. 10–19. (R. Hichens, The Partridge Case, 1932.)


baddock to paddock, bring. To lose everything: C. 16 coll. and proverbial.


Haddums. See Had‘em.
$hadee. See ha‘d. (Raro.)
$Hades. Hell: orig. euphemistic S.E.; in C. 20, esp. in go to Hades /, jocular coll.—2. See hell, as much ...-

hadland. One who has lost the land he once owned: coll.: ca. 1590–1600. Cf. lackland.

$hemaa, $hemostatic(s). Incorrect for hemm- or hemostatic(s); mid-C. 19–20. O.E.D.


$haeremai! /; occ. horomai! († by 1898). A 'Maori term of welcome, lit. come hither ... It has been' from ca. 1880—'colloquially adopted': New Zealand. Morris.

$hag, an old or ugly woman, is S.E., as is the $tag, haggard.—2. At Charterhouse (school), any female; at Winchester College, a matron, as also at Charterhouse: both ca. 1850.

$haggard. A proposed dupe that keeps aloof: c. of ca. 1592. Greene. Ex the S.E. sense: a wild, unreclaimed bird that does not return to the nest.


Haggisland. Scotland: jocular coll.: C. 19–20; ob. (Until C. 18, haggis—as is very little known—was a popular English dish.)

$haggis, despite F. & H., is S.E., as is haggler, except as, in London vegetable-markets, a middle-man (ca. 1840–1900; Mayhew).

*hagurawa(k)a is a variant of aggerwater, q.v. (Ware.)

$ha$hkip, your. A contemptuous term of address, oce. of reference, applied only to women: C. 19–20 (ob.) low coll. Ex S.E. sense, personality of a bag.


$ha$h fellow well met, be, to be on very easy or over-familiar terms, is prob. to be considered S.E. (From ca. 1580. Occ. hait-fellow.)

$hail up. To 'put up, as at an inn': Australian coll.: ca. 1880–1910. Ware. Does this represent a perversion of hale oneself up?

$hailed for the last time, be. To die: nautical, coll. rather than s. (—1891); ob. Clark Russell in An Ocean Tragedy.

$Haines! 'Intimation of sudden retreat. Heard in Liverpool, whence it arrived from New York', says Ware in 1909. But it did not spread to the rest of England, and even in Liverpool it has long been †.

$hain’t, haint. Have not; am not: a sol. contraction (—1887). Baumann. See also ain’t.

$hair. The female sex; women viewed sexually: low: ex hair, the female pubic hair. This, like the following, is C. 19–20: after hair, looking for a woman, ob.; bit of hair, the sexual favour; plenty of hair, an abundance of sex; hair-monger, a womaniser; hair to sell, a woman prepared—at a price—to grant the favour.

$hair phrases. The following, despite F. & H., are S.E., though it is arguable that the third and fourth have at first been coll.: against the hair, of a (or † one) hair, to a hair; split hairs (earlier cut the hair), S.E. also are put up one's hair, (of women) to become grown-up, and not to turn a hair, orig. of horses.

$hair, comb one's. See comb.

$hair, lose one's. To lose one's temper: s. (—1931) verging on coll. Lyell. Opp. hair on, keep one's.

$hair, not worth a. Worthless: coll.: C. 19–20 (ob.).

$hair about the heels. Underbred: coll. when, from ca. 1880, applied to persons. Orig. of horses. Cf. hairy about the fetlocks.


$Hair Court. Sexual connexion, esp. in take a turn in Hair Court, occ. amplified take ... Court, Girl Street: C. 19–20 (ob.) low.

$hair curl, make one's. See curl, make one’s hair.

$hair cut, get one's. To visit a woman: low: late C. 19–20. Cf. see a man about a dog, s.v. dog.—2. For hair cut 1, get your, see get.

$hair-divider or -splitter. The male member: low coll.: from ca. 1850, 1810 (Lex. Bal.) resp.; ob. Cf. beard-splitter.

$hair grows through his hood, his. 'He is on the road to ruin': coll.: mid-C. 15–early 18. Skelton, Deloney, Moteux. Apperson.

$hair-lip. Incorrect for hare-lip: C. 18. O.E.D.

$hair of, within a. Almost: coll. (—1933). Lyell. 'He was within a hair of being dismissed.'

$hair of the dog that bit you, a. See at dog.

$hair on, hold or, more gen., keep one's. To keep one's temper: from late 1860's ('Quotations' Benham). Gen. in imperative. Variant, wool. 'App. playful advice not to tear one's hair', W.


$hair-restorer. A made-up story; humbug: mostly lower classes': 1914, A. Neil Lyons in Arthur's, cited by Manchon; slightly ob. Ex the (mainly reputed) virtues of hair-restorers.

$hair-splitter. See hair-divider.

$hair stand on end, make one's. To astound; frighten: orig. (C. 17) coll., soon S.E.
hair than wit, having more. Often preceded by bush natural. (Rather) stupid, silly: C. 16–19 coll. > proverbial. Apperson.
hairs, get or hairs by the short. So to hold (lit. and fig.) that escape is painful or difficult; (low) coll., esp. among soldiers: from mid-1890's. Ex the hair on one's nape or that around the genitals. P. G. Wodehouse, The Head of Kay's, 1905, 'We have got them where the hair's short. Yea. Even on toast'; Galsworthy, The Silver Spoon, 1926, 'If [she] is not taken by the short hairs, she'll put it across everybody.'


hairy about (or at or in) the feltlocks (or heel). See hairy, adj. 4. From late 1890's. Ex the stables. O.E.D. Sup.


hairy-handed. Same as hairy, adj., 4, and of same origin: 1890, A. E. W. Mason (O.E.D. Sup.).

hairy Jock. See Jock, hairy.

hairy oracle or ring. The female pudend. Wherein work the hairy oracle, to go wenching. Low: from ca. 1870.


hakim. A medical man—Anglo-Indian' H., 1884; 17. A dandy: 'Vuile armor, 'the authority'; a governor. Anglo-Indian coll.: late 17–20. Both ex Hindi; the former ex hakim, wise, the latter ex hakim, a master.

halbert. Whereas get the halbert, to be promoted serjeant, and be brought to the halberts, i.e. flogged, are † j. or S.E., carry the halbert in one's face, (of officers) to show that one rose from the ranks, is C. 18 military s. > coll.: cf. the G.W. temporary gentility and the C. 18 old halbert.

half, when used as elliptical n. with the orig. n. omitted, is gen. to be considered coll.: e.g. = a half-year at school, a half-back at football, a half-pint or gill of liquor. Rare before 1820 and not common before 1865.—2. See one, 6. —3. See half seven.


half, not. See not half!

half a bean or couter. Half a guinea (Vaux) or sovereign: C. 19 c., C. 19–20 c. > low. See bean and couter; cf. half a quid.

half-cock. Go off at. (Variant half-cocked.) 'To ejaculate before completing erection', F. & H.: low: from ca. 1850. Ex a gun.


crown ball. Generic for: 'a respectable, commonplace hop': middle-classes' coll.: ca. 1880-1914. Ware.


crown word. A rare or, esp. a difficult word: low coll.: from ca. 1860; ob. Cf. jow-breaker and sleeve-board, q.v.

crown rumer. A publication priced at 2s. 6d.: booksellers' coll.: from ca. 1880; ob. Baumann. half-cut. Half-drunk: lower classes': from ca. 1860; ob. See cut.


*fly flat. A criminal's rough-worker: o.: from ca. 1830.

half-go. 'Three pennyworth of spirits, for mixing with water': public-houses': ca. 1890-1914. Ware.


half-hour gentleman. A man whose breeding is superficial: society coll.: ca. 1870-1914. Ware. Cf. temporary gentleman, q.v.


half jack. Half a sovereign: c. or low: mid-C. 19-20; ob.: Somewhat of a incompetent sailor: a scamp that, having served his time, is not yet rated as A.B.: (mainly Northern and Scots) nautical: ca. 1850-1930. Cf. mining A.-m., a partner.

half-joe. Eight dollars: see joe. 4.


half-man. A landman or a youth rated as an A.B. but not with his pay: nautical coll.: ca. 1860-1910. Bowen. Cf.:

half-mariner. An inexperienced salt: a seaman that, having served his time, is not yet rated as A.B.: (mainly Northern and Scots) nautical: ca. 1850-1930. Cf. mining A.-m., a partner.


half-nab or -nap. At a venture: bit or miss: a C. 18-early 19 low corruption or perversion of hab-nab, q.v.


half-off or -on. (Often without hyphens) Half-drunk: low: from ca. 1870. See on.

half-past kissing time and time to kiss again, it's). A low o. reply to a female asking a man the time: mostly London: ca. 1870-1910. Ex a popular ballad. Cf. an hour past hanging time in Swift's Polite Conversation and see also kissing-time.

half-past nines. Very large feminine foot-ware: Cockneys (—1809). Ware. Nines being a large size for women.


half-rat. Partially intoxicated: low: 1897; ob. Ware, who notes the equally low variant, half up the pole, dating from a decade or so earlier.

half-rem. See 'Winchester College slang', § 6.

half-rimmed. Slightly drunk: New Zealanders: from ca. 1912.

half-rocked. Half-witted; silly: dial., >, ca. 1860, coll. Ex a West Country saying that fools have been cradle-rocked bottom upwards. A West Country synonym (wrongly, I think, included by F. & H.) is half-saved: see Mortimer Collins's Frances, ob. xiii. Cf. rocked in a stone kitchen.

half round the bend. Not mad, but often doing very silly things: naval: late C. 19-20. Bowen.

*half-scrag. (Collective n.) Half-castes: c.: from ca. 1890. The reference in 'No 717' at p. 16 is to ca. 1805.

half-screwed. Half-drunk: from ca. 1835.

Lever, 'He was, in Kilrush phrase, half-screwed ... more than half tipsy.' See screwed.

half sea. Mid-Channel: nautical coll.: from ca. 1860. Bowen.

halves over. Half or almost drunk: late C. 17-20: nautical > gen.; in C. 19-20, coll. B.E., Smollett, Thackeray. Either half sea's over or a corruption, as Gifford maintained, of op-zee zoler, 'over sea beer', a locally drunk imported from Holland; but, in C. 16, the phrase = halfway across the sea, which rather rebuts Gifford. Cf. the nautical sloop, sprung, three sheets in the wind, and water-logged.

half seven (eight, nine, etc.), at. At half-past seven (etc.): military (other ranks): from ca. 1920. Ex. 'We move off at half eight, sir.'

*half-slewed. Half-drunk: nautical > gen. See awlved; half-slewed may, however, have been prompted by half-screwed, q.v.


half-timer. A scholar working half the day and going to school the other half: primary schools' coll. (from 1870) >, by 1900, S.E.—2. A kipper: nautical: C. 20. Bowen. Because so small on a dish.

*half tusheroon. Half-a-crown: o. (—1857). 'Duchange Anglois.'

half-on. A half-glass of spirits and water: low coll.: from ca. 1865; ob.

half up the pole. See half-rats.

halfpenny good silver, think one's. To think extremely well of one's abilities: coll.: ca. 1570-1700. Gascoigne.

halfpenny howling swell. A pretender to fashion: ca. 1870-80. Ware.

halfpennyworth of tar, lose the ship for a. To lose or spoil by foolish economy: a C. 19-20 coll. perversion of C. 17-18 sheep, often—-in dial.—pronounced ship.

halfpenny howling swell. A pretender to fashion: ca. 1870-80. Ware.
HALL
ca. 1870, esp. in dial. (See Apperson.) Euphemising hell but ultimately ex the C. 16–20 Hell, Hall, and Hallfax, q.v. Cf. Bath, Jericho, Putney, qq.v.; see also Hull.

ball. (Gen. pl.) A music-ball: coll. (- 1887).
Baumann.


Hall by the Sea, the. The Examination Hall of the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons: medical: ca. 1880–1915. Situated on the London Embankment, i.e. near the Thames!

hall of delight. A music-ball: Australian: ca. 1890–1910. Hume Nisbet. (I myself did not hear it; never, I believe, very gen.)

hallabalo. An early form of hullabaloo.

hallan(d), or hall-en, -shaker. A vagabond; esp. a shrewd or ready: Scot. coll. C. 16–20; ob. Hallan, a partition wall in a cottage.

halleljah call(1)op. A hymn in a quick, lively measure, 'invented by General Booth to attract the multitude': Salvationists' coll. from the 1890's. Ware. Cf.:

halleljah hall-smite of a(n). A truly 'awful' (something or other): Canadian (- 1923). John Beam.

halleljah-less. A female member—esp. if young —of the Salvation Army: coll. from ca. 1899.


hallion, hallyon; hellion; hullion. 'A rogue; a scoundrel; a gentleman's servant out of livery; also a shrew': F. & H. : Scots coll. and Northern dial.: late C. 18–19. Scott, 1817, 'This is a decentish hallion': Crockett, 1895, 'I can manage the hullions fine.'? Ex Fr. hallion, a rag, a tatter.

hallo, baby! how's your nurse? A military c.p. addressed to a girl pushing a 'pram': from ca. 1908. B. & P.

hal(l)mote, when defined—as, ca. 1650–1800, it often is by writers on Church (e.g. Fuller) and Law (e.g. Blount and Jacob)—a holy or an ecclesiastical court; a decided esthacker. (O.E.D.)

*halo. See work the halls.

hallo-baloo; halo-baloo; hally-baloo. Early forms of hullabaloo. (O.E.D.)

halo racket, work the. To groove, be discontented: low: from ca. 1860. Ex the Heaven-placed saint dissatisfied with his halo. See racket.

halpernath, halpworth(e)n. Early forms of ha'p'orth, q.v.

halter-sack. A gallows-bird; also as a gen. pejor. mid-late C. 16–17; mid-C. Beamont & Fletcher, in A King and No King, 'Away, you halter-sack, you.'

halvera! An exclamatory claim to something found: coll. and dial. (- 1816): ob. except in dial. Scott.


halves, hey or go. To claim, or to take, a half share or chance: coll. from ca. 1850. Mayhew, 'He'll then again ask if anybody will go him halves.'


*ham-cases, hama. Trousers: c. ca. 1770–1860, ca. 1720–1830 resp., though ham-cases may be the earlier: those things which encase the hama. Cf. Romany hanyas, knucke-breeches.

ham diet, be for. To be 'crimed': Scottish military: G.W. F. & Gibbons.

ham-match. A stand-up lunch: low (- 1890); ob.: mostly London.

ham pilet. A clumsy pilot and/or one rough on his machine: Royal Air Force: 1932. From U.S.A.


hamburg. A 'bazaar': i.e. false, rumour: Anglo-Indian: late C. 19–20; very ob. Ware. Semantics: made in Germany.

*hamlet. A high constable: c. ca. 1890–1830; it survived in U.S. till ca. 1900. B.E. Cf. Yorkshire play Hamlet, or hamlet, with, to play the devil with, to scold.—(2. (Hamlet.) An omelette: theatrical: 1885. Ware, 'Started on Ash Wednesday [of that year] by the actors of the Princess's Theatre, where Mr. Wilson Barrett was then playing Hamlet. These gay souls dined and supped at the Swiss Hotel, Compton Street, and necessarily therefore found themselves before omelettes.'

hammer. A vigorous puncher, esp. with the stronger arm: pugilistic: as, from ca. 1830; ob. Also hammerer, as in Moore's Tom Crich, 1819, and hammerman, as in Bee's Diet.—2. Hence, a boxer; a stalwart bodyguard: late C. 19–20. E.g., John G. Brandon, 2M. Big City, 1931.—3. An impudent lie: from ca. 1840; ob. Cf. whopper.

hammer, v. To punish; beat: pugilistic s. (- 1887) and then gen. coll. Baumann.—2. To declare (a member) a defaulter: Stock Exchange (- 1885). Ex the hammer-taps preceding the head porter’s formal proclamation. Frequently as a ppl. adj., hammered: see esp. A. J. Wilson, Stock Exchange Glossary, 1895, for the procedure. In the printing and allied trades a youth is said to be hammered out when he completes his apprenticeship and leaves the shop, at which point all those who are working in the shop seize a hammer and hang on a bench: this is a coll. jargon, and belongs to late C. 19–20.—3. To depress (a market, stocks, etc.) Stock Exchange: 1865 (S.O.D.) Vbl.n., hammering.

hammer, at or under the. For sale: auctioneers': from ca. 1855, but subbracket 140 years earlier: at being. In C. 20, under the hammer has > coll. and, before 1920, S.E. Cf. L. sub hasts. (W.)

*hammer, down as a. Wide-awake, 'fly': c.: ca. 1810–1905. Vaux; Moore. See also down as a hammer.—2. (Variant, down like a hammer) very prompt to act; peremptory, merciless: coll. from ca. 1860. The as a form is t.


hammer, that's the. That's all right; that's excellent: (low) coll. from ca. 1860; ob. Cf. hammer, up to the. First-rate; excellent: from early 1880's: s. >, ca. 1900, coll.; ob. Lit., up to the standard. (O.E.D.)

hammer and tongs. Occ., as in Marryat's Stanley-Yowell, an expletive (!); gen. an adv. violently, and preceded by at, as in G. Parker’s ‘His minister and mistress were at it hammer and tongs.’ Coll.: from ca. 1780; with h. and t., ca. 1708–80. Ex a vigorous smith’s blows on the iron taken with the tongs from the fire.

hammer-headed. Stupid; oafish; coll., perhaps: the O.E.D. considers it S.E. Mid-C. 16–20; ob.
**HAMMER INTO**


**hammer into.** To succeed, finally, in teaching (a person something) or convincing (a person of something): coll.: mid-C. 17–20; S.E. until ca. 1830, then coll.—2. To fight and defeat: coll. (—1931). Lyell, ‘One of the boys lost his temper and fairly hammered into him.’ Cf. pitch into.

**hammer-man.** See hammer, n., 1.

**hammer on, v.i.** To reiterate again and again: coll. (—1868) ob. by 1900, † by 1929. Mooro, ‘The other... made, express, by Nature for the hammering trade.’

**hammered, **ppl. adj. See hammer, v., 2—

**hammered out.** See hammer, v., 2—

**hammerer.** See hammer, n., 1.

**hammering.** Heavy punishment: a defeat: pugilistic n. > gen. coll.: from ca. 1830.—2. Overcharging for time-work, e.g. corrections (which are from author’s and publisher’s stand-point, always over-charged): printers: from ca. 1860; ob.—3. See hammer, v., 3—

**hammers.** 3.—4. The transmission of wireless messages: nautical: from ca. 1924. Bowen.

**hammering-trade.** Boxing: boxers: (—1819); ob. by 1860, † by 1929. Mooro, ‘The other... made, express, by Nature for the hammering trade.’

**hammerish.** Same as, and ex, down as a hammer: ca. 1810–50. Vaux.

**Hammers.** The West Ham ‘soccer’ team: sporting: C. 20. (The Sunday Referee, Oct. 15, 1933.)

**hawks to one, be.** ‘To know what one means’, F. & H.: (low) coll.: ca. 1860–1910.

**Hammersmith.** Have been at or gone to. To be soundly drubbed: boxing coll.: from ca. 1820; ob. Egan’s Grove. Punning the London suburb, part of which is ‘tough’, and hammer, n., 1.

**hammock, the moon’s steppin out of her.** The moon is rising: nautical coll. (—1887); ob. Baumann.


**hampered.** Entangled: ca. 1630–90, S.E.; late C. 17—18 coll.: then S.E. again. Ex hamper, a fetter, as in Browne’s Britannia’s Pastoral, ‘Shackles, shacklockses, hampers, gives and chains.’


**Hampstead donkey.** A house: low: ca. 1865–1900.


**Hampsteads.** Teeth: a late C. 19–20 abbr. of Hampstead Heath, q.v. (The Daily Express, Jan. 25, 1932.)


**hand.** Orig. (C. 17), nautical for a sailor, a sense it has retained; but as early as 1792 it had > gen. coll. for one skilful at anything: in C. 20, it verges on S.E.—2. Of a person in reference to character (e.g. a loose hand): coll.: 1798; ob. O.E.D.—3. A skilful touch with horses: coachman’s and sporting: from ca. 1855, j. > s. or coll.: ob. Whyte-Melville.—4. See hands, all.


**hand, bring down, or off, by.** To masturbate (v.t.): low coll.: from ca. 1800; down is †. (Of men.)

**hand, bring up by.** Manually to induce a pria-pism: low: from ca. 1850.

**hand, cool or fine or good or neat or old or rare.** An expert: coll.: resp. 1845—1880, —1748,—1892,—1861, (? —) 1797. In cool, and occ. for the others, the stress is on character, not skill: this gen. coll. tendency dates from ca. 1798 (S.E.D.—). 2. See hand, old, below.

**hand, get or give a.** To be applauded or to applaud: theatrical: from ca. 1870. Ex the S.E. give one’s hand, as in Shakespeare.

**hand, get or have the upper.** To gain or have an advantage (v.t. with of): coll. (—1886); in C. 20, S.E.: † always S.E. Stevenson, in Kidnapped.

**hand, green.** An inexperienced person, esp. workmen: C. 18–20: orig. coll.; but since ca. 1860, S.E. See green, adj.


**hand, long.** See long hand.


**hand, stand one’s.** To pay for a round of drinks: Australian: ca. 1860–1915. Hume Nisbet in The Bushranger’s Sweetheart, 1892.

**hand, such a thing fell into his.** He has improved another’s notion, invention, etc.: coll.: ca. 1660–1800. B.E.

**hand and pocket shop.** The first three words being often hyphenated. An eating-house where cash is paid for what one orders: coll.: ca. 1795–1850. Grose, 2nd ed.

**hand-curt cavalry.** Stokes trench-mortar brigades: military: 1916–18. F. & Gibbons. The mortar was transported in a hand-cart.


**hand in, get one’s, v.i.** To practise so as to become proficient: coll.: from ca. 1875. Ex much earlier cognate S.E. phrases.

**hand in one’s checks or chips.** See cash one’s checks. Mostly U.S.

**hand is (or was) out, his or her.** He is or was ‘ready to take all and everything at all times’: non-aristocratic c.p. (—1909); ob. Ware.

**hand it to.** To admit the superiority of: coll., orig. (—1916) U.S., anglicised ca. 1930. (O.E.D. Sup.)

**hand-me-downs.** Second-hand clothes: low coll (—1874). H., 6th ed.—2. In C. 20, also = ‘ready-mades’: cf. reach-me-downs. A C. 19 variant, in the former sense, is hand-em-downs.—3. Whence hand-me-down shop, a shop where such clothes may
be bought; also (1809), an illegal pawnbroker’s: low coll. Ware.

*hand like a fist. A handful of trumps; an unbeatable hand: gamblers’ (at cards): from ca. 1870.

hand like a foot. A large, rough hand; vulgar, clumsy handwriting: coll.: from ca. 1705; ob. Swift.

hand of it, make a. To turn something to account; profit by it: coll.: C. 17—early 19. Ex C. 10 S.E. make a hand, v.

hand on, get a. To suspect; be distrustful of: tailors: from ca. 1870; ob.

hand (or heart) on, e.g. his halfpenny, have his. ‘To have an eye on the main chance, or on any particular object’: Apperson: C. 16—20: coll. till C. 19, then dial.

hand on it, get one’s. To care for a woman generally: low coll.: from ca. 1850.

hand-out. A meal handed out to the indigent: U.S. excogitated ca. 1920. (M. Harrison, Spring in Tartarus, 1935.)

hand over fist. Hand over hand; very quickly: coll.: from ca. 1880.

hand over head. Hurriedly; without method or reason; thoughtlessly: coll.: from ca. 1440: ob. except in dial. Latimer.

hand-running. Straight on; in due succession; coll. when not, as gen., dial.: from ca. 1825; †except in dial. (O.E.D.)

hand-saw. Same as chin(s) - fencer, q.v.: Cockney (1850). H., 1st ed. prob. the correct term (which is ob.) should be hand-saw fencer: H. is here ambiguous.

hand to fist. Cheek by jowl; intimate (ly): mid-C. 17—19 coll. Grose. Ex tho † S.E. hand to hand.

hand up. To betray; sneak on: Winchester College: ca. 1860—1910.

handbasket portion. A woman whose husband receives numerous presents from her parents and/or relatives: late C. 18—mid-19: coll. Grose, 2nd ed. hansbinders, manacles, may (see F. & H.) possibly be C. 17—early 18 coll.

handed. See ‘Westminster School slang’.

hander. A second or assistant in a prize fight: sporting (early 1860); †by 1921. —A cane-stroke on the hand: schoolboys (1868). J. Greenwood, ‘You’ve been playing the wag, and you’ve got to take your handers.’

handfast, -ing. Incorrect for handfast, -ing: C. 18—20. O.E.D.


handicap, n. and v., has, whether lit. or fig., always, pace F. & H., been S.E.; ob. S.E. handie-dandy, handy-dandy. Social connexion; (mainly Scots) coll.: C. 16—18. Ex the child’s game.


handky. A rare servant of handke (—), q.v.

handkerchief of handkerchief. A nose: low: ca. 1810—1921, but ob. by 1900. Lex. Bal. Modern Society, Aug. 27, 1887, ‘Al [n] . . . intriguing . . . old lady, with an immense handle to her face’. Ex the C. 18 jocular handle of the face, as in Motteux: —2. A title: nearly always in form handle to one’s name: coll.: 1833, Marryat; Thackeray, 1855. In C. 20, occ. loosely used to include Dr. and even Mr.

handle, v. As = to use, e.g. handle one’s fists, it is S.E., but as = to palm (cards) it is cardsharper’s c.: from ca. 1860.

handle, fly off the. See fly off the handle.

handle the ribbons. To drive a coach or a carriage: coll. (1827): ob. Moncrieff; Milliken, He ‘andled the ribbings to rights,’ 1892 in his lively ‘Army Ballads.’

handle to one’s name. See handle, n. 2.

hands, all. ‘All the members of a party, esp. when collectively engaged in work’, O.E.D.: coll.: from ca. 1700. Farquhar, Dickens. Ex all hands, the complete (ship’s) crew.

hands off! Keep off or away! Coll.: from ca. 1580.

hand’s turn. A stroke of work: coll. (— 1881) ex dial. (1829). O.E.D.

hands up! Ob. stop talking! : (low) coll. (— 1888). Ex police command to surrender.


handsel, n. and v., should not have been included by F. & H.

handsome as an adj. is, despite F. & H., ineligible. As an adv., esp. in handsome is that handsome does (‘a proverb frequently cited by ugly women’, Grose), it was, in C. 15—mid-18, S.E.: then coll.; then, after ca. 1850, low coll. As n.: see handsome thing.

handsome-bodied in the face. Ugly: derivatively coll. (— 1678): †by 1803, ob. by 1890.


handsome (thing), do the. To behave extremely well: esp. to be very generous: coll. (— 1887). Manville Fenn, in This Man’s Wife.

handsomely over the bricks! Go cautiously! Be careful: an ob. (— 1893), mainly nautical coll. elaboration of the nautical handsomely, carefully!, not so fast! F. & H.; Bowen.


hand springs, chuck. To turn somersaults: low coll.: from ca. 1860.

handstaff. The male member: from ca. 1850: coll. (mainly rural). Ex the handling of a flail.

handy, play at. An English form of play at handies (see handies): C. 20. Manchun.

handy blown. Fisticuffs: late C. 16—19. The O.E.D. considers it S.E.; F. & H., coll., as do B.E. and the editor of A New Century Dict. Prob. coll. ca. 1690—1740.—handy man, occ. handy-man, a man of all work, is certainly S.E., for handy, dextrous, like handy, convenient or near, is S.E.; and handy man, a sailor—dating from Kipling’s early work—is a special application thereof. But handy for, conveniently situated for, is coll.: late C. 19—20."

handy billy (or B.). ‘A small tackle used for a variety of purposes’: naval coll.: late C. 19—20. F. & Gibbons.

handy-dandy. See handie-dandy.—handy for. See handy blows, at end.


hang. The general drift or tendency, gen. in get
the hang of: coll. (—1841): perhaps orig. U.S., where recorded—see Thornton— in 1845 as acquire the hang of. Darley; The Daily Chronicle, April 4, 1800, 'He gets what some call the hang of the place.'—2. (Always in a negative sentence.) A (little) bit: pejorative coll. (—1861); ob. H. Kingsley, 'She can't ride a hang.'

hang, v. In explicative locations, as hang him! (and be hanged!; go and) hang yourself, hang it! and hang! it, indicates disgust, annoyance, or disappointment, and sometimes hang (it) != damn (it)! Coll.: late C. 16–20, though anticipated in C. 14, as in Chaucer's 'Jelousie be hanged be [by] a cable!' Shakespeare, 'He a good wit? Hang him, baboon!'; Grant Allen, 'Hang it all ...':—a common form of the exclamation. Cf. the † proverbial hang yourself for a pastime (—1768). See esp. the O.E.D.


hang about or around. To haunt, v.,t., loaf, v.i.: coll.: orig. U.S.; anglicised ca. 1805.

hang an arse. To hold (oneself) back; hesitate: late C. 10–20, ob.: S.E. in C. 17, then coll., then in C. 19–20 low coll. Marston, Smellett, Tomlinson in his valuable Slang Pastoral. Cf. S.E. hang a leg or † the groin.

hang-bluff. Snuff: rhyming s. (—1857); †, 'Ducange Anglicus.' Displaced, ca. 1870, by Harry Bluff.

hang-by. A hanger-on, a parasite: coll.: late C. 16–17; then dial. Jonson.

hang-dog. A pitiful rascal: C. 18 coll. Fielding. (The adj. is S.E., as, indeed, the O.E.D. considers the n.) Lit., fit only to hang a dog.

hang-gallows look. A villainous appearance: coll. on verge of S.E.: late C. 18–19. Grose, 1st ed. (The n. hang-gallows, a gallows-bird, is wholly S.E.)

hang in. To set to work; do one's best: low coll.: C. 19–20, ob.


hang in the bellropes. To postpone marriage after being 'banned' in church: coll.: from ca. 1750; ob. by 1900, † by 1930, except in dial. Apperson.

hang it! See hang, v.

hang it on. See hang on, eligible sense, and cf.: hang it on with (a woman). To make her one's mistress: low (—1812); † by 1900. Vaux.

hang it out. To delay a matter: († low) coll.: Australian (—1800); slightly ob. 'Rolf Boldrewood.' Ex hang about, q.v. Cf. hang on and hang out, v.2

hang it up. See hang up, v.—hang of, get the. See hang, n.1.

hang off. v.t. To fight shy of: printers': from ca. 1860. A slight deviation from C. 17–20 S.E. sense, to hesitate, hang back, raise objections.


hang on, v. To sponge on; pursue a person or a design, is, despite F. & H., ineligible. But (gen. as hang low) in sense, to delay a matter, it is low: from ca. 1810. Vaux. Cf. hang it out, q.v.

hang on by one's eyelashes (in C. 20 eyebrows). To persist obstinately or most courageously: from ca. 1860: coll.—2. Also, in C. 20, to be near to ruin, death, or defeat, eyebrow being much pre-

ferred in this sense. A variant of both senses is hang on by the skin of one's teeth, likewise coll.

hang on by the splashboard. To catch a bus, tram, etc., as it moves; hence, barely to succeed: from ca. 1880: coll.

hang one's bat out to dry. To place one's bat in an impotent position: cricketers': 1885, C. B. Fry. (Lewis.)

hang one's hat up. To become engaged to a girl; hanging one's hat up, thus engaged: non-aristocratic: late C. 19–20.

hang one's latchpan. To look and/or be dejected; to put: low coll. when not dial.: C. 19–20, ob. Ex latchpan, a pan to catch the drippings from a roast.

hang-out. A residence or lodging: low s. > coll.: from ca. 1820; ob. by 1910, virtually † by 1894. 'Ducange Anglicus' has hang-out. Ex:

hang-out, v. To reside, live, lodge; be temporarily at (e.g. a dug-out in the trenches): orig. low or prob. c. (—1811); by 1835 gen. s.; in C. 20, coll. Lex. Bal., 'The traps [police] scaveny where we hang out'; Dickens. Ex the ancient custom of hanging out signs. Cf. (—1871) U.S. hang out a shingle, to carry on a business.—2. Hence (of inanimates), to be, to exist, be located: coll.: from ca. 1910. Lyell, 'I hear you've got a job in Foster's factory. Where does it actually hang out?' —3. To last, to endure: Australian (—1916). C. J. Dennis. Cf. (perhaps ex) hang it out, q.v.


hang-over. A 'morning after the night before' feeling: from ca. 1910.


hang-up. A gallows-bird: coll.: ca. 1560–1600. (Hang-ropes and -string are S.E.)

hang up, v. (Gen. as hang it up.) To give credit, lit. chalk it up; prob. orig. (—1725) c.; by 1785, low; ob. by 1890, † by 1921.—2. V.t., to rob, with assault, on the street; to garotte: c. ca. 1870–1915. Cf. S.E. hold up.—3. V.t., to postpone, leave unsotted: coll.: G. Rose, 1803 (O.E.D., which considers the phrase S.E., as it certainly is in C. 20). The Cornhill Magazine, June, 1887.—4. V.i., to be in dire straits, physical or monetary; e.g. a man hanging is one 'to whom any change must be for the better,' F. & H.: low coll.: ca. 1860–1910.—5. V.t., to tie up a horse: Australian (—1800); coll. W. Kolly, Life in Victoria, 1860. Ex securing horses to posts.

hang up one's hat. To die: († low) s. > coll.: ca. 1850–1914.—2. To make oneself very much at home: coll.: from ca. 1855. Occ. with an implication of 'honest' courting and often of a married man living in the wife's house, as in Trollope's The Warden.

hang up the hatchet. See bury the hatchet.

hang up the lade. To marry: society: mid-C. 18–early 19. Ware.

hanged. Confounded, gen. as in 'Oh that be
hanged!" Coll.: from the middle 1880's. (O.E.D.). Ex dial. where recorded in 1864: B. E. (esp. Cf. hang, v. (I'll be hanged if is familiar S.E.)

[hanger-on, considered by Grose as coll., is S.E.]
hangers. Gloves; esp. gloves held in the hand: ca. 1875-1910.—2. (Gen. in pot-hooks and hangers and very rare in the singular.) Strokes with a double curve, as: a nursery coll. from ca. 1703. Swift.
hanging. Fit to be hanged: coll.: C. 19-20, ob. See hang up, v. 4.


hanging Johnny. The male member; esp. if impotent or diseased: low: C. 19-20 (? ob.).

Hanging Judge, the. This nickname on the verge of being mere sobriquet has been given to various judges apt to give the capital sentence; e.g. Toler (early C. 19), Hawkins (late C. 19), Avory (1920's and early 30's).

(hanging) on the barbed wire. A military c.p. reply to an inquiry as to a man's whereabouts: 1916-18. F. & Gibbons; B. & P. Ex men left dead on the wire after an attack. Cf. up in Annie's room.

hanger. A pejorative term: a jocular endearment: mid-C. 16-20, but rare after 1650. By the O.E.D. considered S.E.; the latter use is, I believe, coll.
hanger's day. Monday in U.S. (hanging day, Friday): low coll.: ca. 1830-1890.
hanger's wages. Thirteen-pence-halfpenny: 1678. Butler; ob. by 1820, † by 1880: coll. Dekker, 1602, has "Why should I eat hampseed at the hanger's thirteenth-pence-half-penny ordinary?"; and thirteen-pence-half-penny wages occurs in 1659. The C. 17 execution foo was a Scottish mark, fixed by James I at 13jd.
hangs-out. See hang-out, n.
hank. A spell of rest or comparative (physical) ease: coll.: from ca. 1810; ob. Vaux; Egan's Grose; Sporting Life, Dec. 7, 1888, concerning a boy named, "The company . . . called out, "No hank!"

hank, v. To tease, bait, worry; persecute: coll.: from ca. 1820; ob.
hank, in (a). In trouble; in difficulty: coll.: C. 18-19.
hank (upon one, have a. To have a profitable, e.g. a blackmailling, hold on a person: coll.: ca. 1800-1840 (extant in dial. and in U.S.). In Vaux it takes the form, have (a person) at good. Ex hank, a coll. of rope.
hanker, v.i. To long. V.t. with after. From ca. 1640: it seems to have, ca. 1680-1825, been considered coll.,—witness B.E., and Grose (edid of. 1765-1825). The same applies to the vbl.n. hankering.
hankercher; hank(ey)cher (Baumann). See handkercher. Cf.


hankin, n. Passing off bad work for good; commercial: from ca. 1870; ob.


hanktelo. 'A silly Fellow, a mere Cods-head', B.E.; late C. 16-early 19: coll. verging on S.E. In Nasho as hanglelow: Grose, 1st ed.
hanky-panky. Legerdemain: hence, almost imm. tricksy, double or underhand work: 1841, Punch. Also adj., as in hanky-panky business, conjuring or 'dirty work', and hanky-panky tricks or work, double-dealing. An arbitrary word—cf. hoky-poky—perhaps ex (have a) hank (on one), q.v. above; or perhaps, as W. suggests, ex 'hoky-poky by association with steals of hand': Cf. jigger-pokery, q.v.


hanky-panky. Dashing (of persons); esp., well-dressed, stylish (of clothes): low: from ca. 1890. Prob. ex spanking, q.v., by hanky-panky, q.v.

Hannah, that's the man as married (see, that's what's the matter with the man . . ."). Excellent! Good for you! Must certainly! Orig. to designate a good or happy happening. A rather low c.p., mostly Shropshire, then London: ca. 1860-1905. H., 1864.

Hanover! go to. Go to hell: Jacobites': ca. 1725-30. Ware. Cf. Hailfax, Jericho, Bath, etc. E.D.D. notes also the dial. what the Hanover! and, concerning the Suffolk go to Hanover and how turnips, remarks: 'Said to date from the time of the [first two] Georges, who were very unpopular in the east [of England].'

Hanover (or to Hanover) jack. An imitation sovereign: low (? orig. c.): ca. 1880-1914. Ware, who cites a police report of 1888, offers an unconvincing derivation.


hansel. See handel.


hansom. A coach: costermongers': ca. 1870-1825. 'Punning the notions 'goes quickly' and 'good to look at,' or ex the normal shapes. ha'n't, ha'n't. Have not: sol.: C. 18-20. Cf. am (and (for am not) aren't).

Hants. Hampshire. Such abbr., when written, are S.E.; but if spoken as genuine equivalents of the original names they are coll. This notice is to serve as genero for all the British counties that are
HAP-HARLOT

so abbr. in coll. speech: e.g. Bucks, Lancs, Wilt, but not, e.g. Som. or Cand. Rare before ca. 1890.


hap worth a cop'feras. See ha'porth o' coppers.

ha'penny. A coll. form of (C. 16-20 of) halfpenny.

(h.E.D.)

ha'penny harder, a. (Of the money-market) slightly better in tendency: Stock Exchange coll.: C. 20. Ex the lit. sense as applied to a specific 'security.'

ha'p'orth. A coll. contraction of halfpennyworth: 1728, Swift (O.E.D.). Earlier contractions, also to be rated as coll., are—see the O.E.D. at halfpennyworth—halfpurothe, ca. 1490.—halfporth, 1533.—halfporthand, 1692.—halfp'worth, 1719. Swift also has halfporth, but this is rare. A late († before 1873, Browning) contraction is ha'p'worth.

ha'porth o' coppers. Habeas corpus: legal; from ca. 1840; ob. Ex the C. 18 sol. pronunciation hap worth a coperas quoted by Grose (3rd ed.).


happen. Adv. (orig. a subjunctive: cf. maybe), perhaps, perchance: at first (—1790) and still mainly Northern dial., but from ca. 1845 it has been increasingly used as a coll., esp. in the non-committal happen it does, happen it (he, etc.) will.

happen in. v. To pay a casual visit: coll.: ex U.S. (—1855); anglicised ca. 1890.


Happy and Chatty, the. H.M. Cruiser Immortalité: naval: when, in 1860-8, she was on the China Station under Sir Edward Chichester. Bow. Partly rhyming, partly allusive to her condition.

happy days. Strong ale and beer mixed: public-houses: (esp. at Glasgow); from ca. 1920.

[happy despatch, better dispatch, death, cited by F. & H., is rather euphemistic than coll. An extremely 'approximate' rendering of the Japanese hara-ki, see hari-ki, itself a solecism.]

happy dossier. See dossier.

happy Eliza. A female Salvationist: 1887-ca. 1910. Ex a broadside ballad that points to 'Happy Eliza' and 'Converted Jane' as 'hot 'uns in our time'.

happy family. A number of different animals living quietly in one cage: coll.: ca. 1850-1915. Mayhew.

[happy-go-lucky, despite F. & H., is S.E. So, too, is happy land, Heaven.]


happy landings! (Esp. over a drink) good luck!: Air Force members': 1915-18. (The Evening News, July 26, 1934.) It is extant among aircraft engineers: witness The Daily Herald, Aug. 1, 1936.


hap'worth. See ha'p'orth.


harbezoon. A sol. spelling and pronunciation of hobzeen: C. 15-20. (Even the correct form, however, has been merely historical since C. 16.) O.E.D.

[harbour (of hope), the female pudend, is salaciously euphemistic S.E.]

*hard. Hard labour: c. (—1890) in C. 20, low.: —2. Third class, on e.g. a train. 'Do you go hard or soft? ', i.e. third or first; late C. 19-20. Abbr. hard seat or hard area.—3. Preceded by the, the whiskey: from ca. 1850; ob.—4. See hard up, have a.—5. Plug tobacco: from mid-1890's; coll. >, by 1890, S.E. Bowen; O.E.D. (Sup.).

hard, adj. (Of beer or cider) stale or sour: late C. 16-20; S.E. till ca. 1690; then coll. till mid-C. 19, then a. when not dial. 'Hard drink, that is very Stale, or beginning to Sover', B.E.—2. Intoxicating, spirituous: coll.: orig. (ca. 1874) U.S., anglicised in mid-1880's. (O.E.D.)—3. See tired.

hard, die. To die fighting bravely: coll.: C. 19-20; ob. Cf. the Dye-Hards, q.v., and the S.E. sense, to die impotent.

hard, in the. In hard cash; cash down: coll.: (—1820); ob.

hard-a-Gilbert. Hard-a-port: naval officers': late C. 19-early 20. Bow. 'Gilbert being an old-time wine merchant whose port was supplied to ward-rooms'.


hard as a bone; as nails. Very hard: unyielding; physically or morally tough: coll.: resp. ca. 1890-1930 and from 1838 (Dickens in Oliver Twist).

hard at it. Very busy, esp. on some particular work: coll.: from ca. 1870.

hard-bake. A sweetmeat of boiled brown sugar (or treacle) and blanched almonds: schoolboys: (—1825): in C. 20, gen. considered S.E. Hone, 'Hardbake, brandy-balls, and bull's-eyes'.


hard bit or mouthful. An unpleasant experience: coll.: ca. 1860-1910.—2. (Variant, bit of hard) the male member in priapism; hence (for women) the coitus.

[hard-bitten is S.E., not—as in F. & H.—coll.; and hard-boiled, despite popular opinion, is also S.E.—though a quite unnecessary Americanism and despite its having, in the U.S., been orig. coll.] hard case. An incorrigible: orig. (1842) U.S.; anglicised ca. 1860.—2. In Australia and New Zealand, a person morally tough but not necessarily incorrigible; also a witty or amusing dare-devil,—one who loves fun and adventure; a girl ready for sexual escapades: all coll. from ca. 1890.—3. A defaulting debtor: trade: from ca. 1865. Cf.
HARD CHEDDAR


hard cheddar. See hard cheese.—hard cheek. See hard lines.

hard cheese. Bad luck; orig., esp. at billiards: Royal Military Academy (—1893); in C. 20, gen. in sense and in distribution. A humorous variant is hard cheddar (e.g. Neil Bell, Andrew O'Tway, 1931).


hard-drinking. Vbl.n., drinking to excess: C. 17–20: coll. till ca. 1750, then S.E.

hard for soft, give. (Of men) to have sexual intercourse; low coll.: from ca. 1860.

hard f. got any. See got any hard f.

hard hat. To have had a heavy loss, esp. of money: coll.: 1854–2. To be very much in love: coll. (—1888). Miss Braddon, in Gerard. Occ. hit hard.


hard horse. A brutal or tyrannical officer: nautical: (—1895); virtually f. & h.: Bowen.

hard in a clinch—and no knife to cut the seizing. In a very difficult position—and no app. way out: a nautical r.p.: late C. 19–20. Bowen. Here, seizing is cordage.

hard lines. Hardship: orig. nautical: (—1855); ob. f. ex ropes unmanageable from wet or frost; lines, however, was in C. 17 lot. Difficulty: an unfortunate occurrence, severe action: coll.: from ca. 1838. W. Black, 'I think it's deuced hard lines to lock a fellow up.' In South Africa, also hard cheek (Pettman): late C. 19–20.

hard-lying money. The extra allowance granted to officers and men for service in destroyers and torpedo boats . . . compensation for wear and tear of uniform and clothing, etc. Extended in the War to crews of motor launches and other auxiliary small craft. (Abolished in 1923.): naval coll.: C. 20; ob. f. & Gibbons.

hard-mouthed, wilful, is S.E., but as = coarse-spoken is coll. of ca. 1860–1910. Ex the stables.

hard neck. Extreme impudence: tailors': from ca. 1870; ob.—2. Hence, a very impudent or brazen person; occ. as adj.: C. 20, esp. in Glasgow.


hard-on, adj. With the membro virile in erection: freq.: from ca. 1890–2. Also as a n.: from ca. 1890 (? U.S.): Cf. here.

hard on the setting sun. A journalistic coll. phrase indicative of scorn for the Red Indian: in 1897, The People (on June 13) refers to it as 'a characteristic bye-word'; virtually and happily f. Ware.


hard row to hoe. A difficult task: coll.:

HARDY ANNUAL

(1839), U.S.; anglicised ca. 1860. Gen. as he, e.g., has a hard ...


hard-skin. 'A rough, wild-living man': coll., esp. military: 1915. B. & P. After rough-neck (?).


hard-up, adj. In want, gen. of money: s. >, ca. 1880, coll.: 1821 (S.O.D.). Hence hard up for, sorely needing. Haggart, Hook; The London Figaro, Jan. 25, 1871. 'For years, England has been a refuge for hard-up German princeenels.' Ex nautical j. (steering). Cf. hard-pushed—put it—run, q.v.; dead-broke; stony.—2. Intoxicated: low coll.: ca. 1870–1900.—3. Out of countenance, exhausted, esp. in swimming: Winchester College: from ca. 1850; ob.

hard up, have a. To have a priapism: low: late C. 19–20.


hard-ness, -anness, -ness. Poverty, habitual or incidental: coll.: resp. 1876, 1870, ca. 1905.

hard word on, put the. To ask (a person) for something, esp. a loan: Australian (—1914). Jee Doone. Cf. put the nips in and sting.

hardening squad. 'Men being trained before returning to France after convalescence': military coll.: 1910. B. & P.


hardly with superfluous negative, as in 'I couldn't hardly tell what he meant': sol.: C. 19–20; earlier, S.E. (O.E.D.)

hardware. 'Ammunition in general, and shells in particular. Jocular', Ware; military and naval: from ca. 1880. Very gen. in G.W.


**Telegraph** are once more filling [its] columns . . . with "Is Marriage a Failure?" The hardy annual is called "English Wives" this time.


[hare, to hare, scarse, is, despite F. & H., ineligible.]

**hare, swallow a.** To get exceedingly drunk: coll.: late C. 17 mid-19. B.E.; Grose, 1st ed., prov. *hair*, 'which requires washing down', but the phrase was perhaps suggested by the old proverbial to have devoured a hare, to look amiable.

**hare and hunt with the hounds, hold or run with.** To play a double game: C. 15–20: orig. coll.; then, in C. 16, proverbial; then, in C. 18–20, S.E.

[**hare-brained**, like hair-brained, is, despite F. & H., to be considered S.E.]

**hare in a hen's nest, seek a.** To try to do something (almost) impossible: late C. 16–17 coll. *Hare* synonyms, all (I think) S.E. rather than coll. and all certainly proverbial, are catch, or hunt for, a hare with a talor, C. 14–20,—take hares with fozes, C. 16–17,—and set the tortoise to catch the hare, C. 18–20, ob. (O.E.D. and Apperson.)

**hare of, make a.** To render ridiculous: expose the ignorance of: coll., mostly and orig. Anglo-Irish: from ca. 1830. Carleton; Lover, 'it was Mister Curran made a hare of your Honor that day.'

**hare-sleep.** Fugued sleep: C. 17–18: coll. > S.E.

**hare's foot, kiss the.** To be (too) late: coll.: C. 17–18. Cf.:

**hare's foot to lick, get the.** To obtain very little—or nothing. Coll.: C. 19–20; ob. Scott, 'The poor clergyman [got] nothing whatever, or, as we say, the hare's foot to lick.'

**hari-kari.** A corrupt, almost sol. form of *harakiri*: from ca. 1860. Ex low col., for belly-cut, long and often Englished as happy dispatch. Still more corrupt is hury-curry. (The practice is mentioned as early as in Cock's *Diary*, 1610.)

**haricot beans.** Bullets: military, not very gen.: 1915–18. (G.H. McKnight, *English Words*, 1923.)

**haricot veins.** Varicose veins: sol.: late C. 19–20. (Ware.)

**hark-ye-ing.** 'Whispering on one side to borrow money', Grose, 1st ed.: mid-C. 18–early 19. The late C. 17–early 18 preferred harking, as in B.E.

**hark.** A man on listening-patrol: military coll.: 1914–18. F. & Gibbons. Ex Scottish harker, a listener.


**harlequin Jack.** 'A man who shows off equally in manner and in dress': lower classes': late C. 19–20; ob. Ware.

**[harlotry, a harlot, and, as adj., disreputable: despite F. & H., ineligible.]**

*harms.** A late C. 17–19 abbr. (as in B.E.; Lytton, *The Disowned*) of:

**harman- beck.** A constable: c. of ca. 1860–1850. Harman: B.E.; Scott; Borrow. Prob. not (*harman*) Beck (q.v.), but perhaps ex hard man, a severe one; or even ex postulated har-man, he who cries har(r), stop!;—cf. ↑ harr, to snarl.

*harman.** The stocks: c.: ca. 1600–1820, though ob. by 1785. Harman, B.E.; Grose. If the man is the c. suffix (q.v.) found in darkman, lightman, etc., then the har- is prob. hard, for the notion, hardiness = the gallows, is characteristic of c.

**har.** To yell: coll.: C. 19. Ware. Ex cry har.

**harness,** the routine of one's work, as in in harness, at work, and die in harness, i.e. at one's post or still working, is held by the O.E.D. to be S.E. But I think that at first (say 1840–80) it was coll.: in C. 20 it is certainly S.E. ↑ suggested by Shakespeare's 'At least we rail with harness on our back', *Macbeth*, V, v (W.).—2. An infantryman's equipment: jocular military coll.: 1914–18. B. & P.

**harp.** The tail of a coin, esp. as a call in tosh-halfpenny: Anglo-Irish (— 1785); ob. by 1860. Grose, 1st ed. The tail of a coin bore Hibernia with a harp. Cf. music and womanhood.

**harp, playing the.** See playing the harp.

**[harp on, to repeat or return to sickeningly, i.e. pace B.E., Grose, and F. & H., ineligible here.]**

**harpeian, harpyian.** Erroneous forms and pronunciation of harpyian, of or like a harpy: C. 17–19. O.E.D.

**harper.** A brass coin, value one penny, current in Ireland in late C. 10–early 17: coll. Ben Jonson. (S.E.: harp-shilling): Ex the harp thereon represented.

**harpers, have among or at you (my blind).** A c.p. 'used in throwing or shooting at random among a crowd', Grose: ca. 1540–1830. Considered proverbial as early as 1642 (Heywood).

**harquebus of crock.** A sol. for harquebuses à croc late C. 16–17 (O.E.D.).

**harra, harrass.** In C. 19–20, incorrect for harass. Influenced by embarrass.


**Harriet Lane.** 'Australian canned meat—because it had the appearance of chopped-up meat; and Harriet Lane was chopped up by one Wainwright': lower classes': ca. 1875–1900. Ware. Cf. Fanny Adams, q.v.

**Harrington.** A brass farthing: ca. 1615–40 coll. Jonson, 1616, 'I will not hate a Harrington o' the sum.' Ex Lord Harrington, who, in 1613, obtained the patent of coined them. Just as Bradbury will doubtless come to be considered S.E., so, because of its historical associations, has Harrington been listed by the O.E.D. as S.E.

**Harrow slang.—J. Fischer Williams, *Harrow*, 1901, writes thus pertinently:—As to language, the inhabitants of Harrow speak, generally, the English tongue. But . . . they cut short certain words of their last syllable or syllables and substitute the letters "er". [See the *Oxford* -er.] Thus Duck Puddle becomes "Ducker", football "footer", and Speech-Room "speecher", blue coat "bluer". . . . Some years ago the number of these changes was strictly limited, but latterly the custom has been spreading. Harrow has often been made responsible for a variation of this final "er" into either "agger" (q.v.) or "agger" but these seem to have arisen at a famous Oxford college . . ., and Harrow is guiltless of this invention. Perhaps the only other word of the Harrow language worth noticing is "Bill" for "name-
calling" or "call-over" [roll-call is the usual S.E. term]. Some have suggested that this is a corruption of "Bell", the School bell being rung to call the boys together, but probably "Bill" is the truer word, and is used in the older English sense of list. Orig. coll., bill is in C. 20 to be considered as j. — Cf. *Eton slang.*

Harry. A rustic: late C. 18—early 19 c., then dial. (ob.), Grosé, 2nd ed.—2. The "literary" shape of *Arry, q.v.: 1874; coll. > S.E.

Harry, by the Lord. Perhaps jocular ex app. late old Harry, the devil: late C. 17—20; ob. Congreve, Byron, Bosanet. (O.E.D.)

Harry, old. For this and play old Harry, see old Harry.

Har在里面, Dick, and. As generic for the mob, any and everybody, it was orig. coll., and in C. 20 it is S.E. See "Representative Names" in *Words!*

Harry Bluff. Snuff: rhyming s. (— 1874); ob. (Cf. hang, q.v.) H., 5th ed.


Harry Freeman's. See *Freeman's.* : cf.

Harry Freez (or f.). Fruit and vegetables given by the public: Grand Fleet bluejackets: C. 20. Bowen. Ex the preceding.


Harry-Soph. One who, having kept the necessary terms, ranks, by courtesy, as a bachelor: Cambridge University (— 1720, as in Stukeley's *Memoirs*); > ↑ before 1893 but after 1873. Earlier (— 1661), Henry Sophister. ↑ ex Henry VIII—see Fuller's *Worthies,* p. 151—and *Sophista,* in the form *sophista Henricanus.* A University joke refers to Gr. ἐνδοκός, very wise. (O.E.D.)


Har宜居pace; hearthpace. A C. 17 error for halfpace, a platform, a stair-landing. (O.E.D.)


Baumann. A variant of harmans, q.v.


Perhaps, as W. suggests, hare'em, scare'em ex ↑ hare, to harass: cf. Smollett's hare'um scare'um and Mme D'Arlay's hare'm-scarem. Cf. Westcott's famous novel, *David Harum,* 1899. (Harum-scaramusness, though coll., is comparatively rare.)


harvest for, of, or about a little corn. Make a long. To be tedious about a trifle: coll. proverbial: C. 16—20; since ca. 1820, mainly dial.—indeed, in C. 20, otherwise: Greens; Richardson in *Clarissa.*

Harry. An occ. abbr. of the next. (P. P., 1932.)

Harvey Nichol. A pickle: C. 20. P. P., *Rhyming Slang,* 1932. Ex those well-known West End linen-drapers and furnishers who have, since 1905, been one of the combine known as Debennahs, Ltd. Pl.: *Harvey Nichols,* the orig. form.


has, I. I have: sol. (— 1887; prob. centuries old). Baumann.

has(-)been. Any antiquated thing or, more gen., person: coll. from ca. 1825; orig. Scots (C. 17—10) as in Burns. In C. 20, S.E. Rare as adj. Cf. never(-)was.


*hash, flash the.* To vomit: mid-C. 18—mid-19 c. Grosé, 2nd ed.


hash, settle one's. To subdue, silence, defeat; kill: 1825, but recorded in 1807 in U.S., where perhaps learnt by the English in the war of 1812, in C. 20, coll. Browning, in *Youth and Art,* "You've to settle yet Gibson's hash." Cf. *cook one's goose.*

hash-up. A 'mess', a bungling; fit: coll: from ca. 1805. Ex:

hash up, v. To spoil, ruin (a chance, an entertainment, etc.): coll.: C. 20. E.g. James Spenser, *Liney Breaks In,* 1924—2. To re-serve; mingle and re-present: coll. (in C. 20, S.E.): from ca. 1740.


Haslar bag. A nurse at the Haslar Hospital: nautical: from ca. 1880; ↑.

Hastings sort, be none of the. To be too slow; slothful: esp. of one who loses a good chance by being dilatory: mid-C. 16—mid-19: proverbial coll. Grosé, 3rd ed., explains by 'the Hastings pes, which is the first in season'; but is not the phrase merely a pun? The personal is recorded before the
vegetable sense; the capital H is folk-etymology. Cf. hotspurs, q.v.

hasty, precipitate: 'very Hot on a sudden' (B. E.): — which dates from early C. 16, — seems to have, ca. 1860–1810, been coll.: witness B. E. and Grose.

hasty g. A hasty generalisation: Cambridge University: ca. 1880–1900.


hat. A gentleman commoner; a 'tuft', q.v. Cambridge University (— 1830); ob. by 1900, † by 1920. In the Gradus ad Cantabrigiam, 1803, he is a hat commoner; in Earle's Microcosmography, 1628, a gold hatband: — 2. An occ. abbr. of old hat, the female pudend: ca. 1760–1830. See old hat — 3. Hence, an old-hand harlot: Scots: ca. 1820–1910. Ex preceding sense: — 4. In such assertions as this hat (Shakespeare), my hat to a halfpenny (ibid.), and I'll bet a hat († C. 18–19 early): 1910. O. E. D. — 5. See bad hat. — 6. A condition or state, thus be in a deuce of a hat = to be in a 'nice mess'; get into a hat, to get into a difficulty: low: late C. 19–20; ob.


hat, bad. See bad hat. — hat, black. See black hat.

hat, eat one's. Gen. as I'll eat my hat, if ... A strong asseveration: coll.: seemingly originated or, at the least, recorded first by Dickens in Pickwick, who also sponsors the much rarer eat one's head; there is, however, another form, ... old Bowley's (Charles 11's) hat.

hat, get a. To do the 'hat-trick', q.v.: cricketers: ca. 1890–1914.

hat, get (occ. be) in(to) a or the. See hat, 6.

hat, hang up one's. See at hang. — hat, ! I'll have your. See hat !, shoot that. — hat, keep under one's. See keep under one's hat.


hat, old. See old hat.

hat, pass (or send) round the. To make a collection: from ca. 1857: coll. till C. 20, when, by the G.W. at latest, it > S.E., as go round with the hat seems to have always been.


hat, talk through one's. To talk nonsense: coll., orig. (— 1888) U.S., where at first it meant to bluster; anglicised ca. 1900.


covers (e.g. his) family, (his). He is alone in the world: coll.: ca. 1860.

hat off, with his. Charged with a 'crime': military: from ca. 1920. A soldier removes his hat when he is being tried for an offence.


hat(-)trick. Three wickets with successive balls: cricket: 1882. Orig. s.: in C. 20, j. > S.E. The Sportsman, Nov. 28, 1888, 'Mr. Abelson has performed the hat trick twice.' In the good old days, this feat entitled its possessor to a collection or to a new hat from his club.

hat up, hang one's. See hang one's hat up.

hat-work. Hack-work; inferior writing: journalists: (— 1888); † by 1921. Rider Haggard in Mr. Meeson's Will. Perhaps work that could be done with one's hat almost as well as with one's head.

hatband, (as) queer (occ. odd, tight, etc.) as Dick's or occ. Nick's. Very queer, etc.: late C. 18–20, ob. Prob. ex some local half-wit. Grose, 3rd ed. (as Dick).

hatch, be hatching. To be confined in childbed: low: from ca. 1860: ob.

hatch, match, and dispatch column; or matches, matches, despatches; or the hatched, matched, dispatched column. Births, marriages, and deaths announcements: journalistic: ca. 1885–1914. Occ., also †, cradle, altar, and tomb column.

Hatch-Thoke. A Founder's Commemoration day: Winchester College: C. 19–20. Wrench, 'Said to be from the old custom of staying in bed [see thoke] till breakfast, which was provided at Hatch'.

hatches, tight under. Henpecked: lower classes' (— 1923). Manchon. Imm. ex:

hatches, under (the). In (gen. serious) trouble of any kind: coll.: mid-C. 16–20; ob. by 1890, † by 1925.— 2. Dead: nautical: late C. 18–early 20. Dibdin in Tom Bowling. In C. 17, often (be)slow under hatches, to silence (as in Marston), distress; bestowed under hatches = the shorter phrase, C. 17– early 18; be under (the) hatches dates from early C. 17 and occurs in Locke. Ex the lit. nautical sense, below deck.


hatchet, bury (and dig up) the. See at bury.

hatchet, sling or throw the. To exaggerate greatly; tell yarns; lie: low: the former — 1789 and ob., the latter — 1821.— 2. (Gen. with sling.) To subtle; skulk; sham: nautical: from ca. 1850. Whence the vbl.nn. hatchet-slinging and -throwing; the former in G. Parker, 1780. 'App. a variant on draw the longbow.' W.— 3. (slung ...) To make off; escape: c. (— 1923). Manchon. By prob. deliberate confusion with sling one's hook, q.v. at hook, sling one's, 1.

Hatchet-Back. See Chop-Back.

hatchet-face(d), applied in S.E. to a long, thin face, was, ca. 1860–1750, coll. and = very plain or even ugly: B. E., 'Hatchet-fac'd. Hard-favor'd, Homely'—whence, by the way, the U.S. as distinct from the mod. Eng. sense of homely.


hate. A bombardment: 1915: military. In 1916–18, the usual German night or morning bombardment. 'An allusion '—furthered, I believe, by Frank Reynolds's famous cartoon in Punch, in Feb.,
late 1830
ob. Bootham coll. instead of Anglo-Indian
1894, late anglicised occ.
or a 1915-18. See ca.
A
or a 1916 ex a coll.
has working hats his
Attercop, English anglicised
By coals
Lewis hatter. 
haul.
hatty, haulable,
havage, havledge.
'An assemblage or family of dishonest or doubtful characters', Bee: low: ca. 1820-50. Ex dial. hargre, lineage, family stock, + (William) Habberfield, a criminal whose family was such.
have. (Gen. in pl.) One who has, esp. money and/or property; gen. contrasted with have-not, a needy person: coll.: 1836 (S.O.D.)—2. A trick or imposture; a swindle: from ca. 1880. Cf. a catch or a have. Ex:
have, v. To cheat (~1805): perhaps orig. e. G. Harrington, in The New London Spy, 'Had, a cant word ... instead of ... cheated':—2. Hence, to trick, deceive (1821): low. Egan.—3. Hence, to humbug, fool (~1893; prob. as early as 1825), low > gen.—4. To possess carnally: a vulgarism of C. 16-20. In C. 20, gen. of women by men, but previously said 'indifferently of, and by, both sexes', F. & H.—5. (Gen. have it.) To receive, or to have received, punishment, a thrashing, a reprimand: coll.: late C. 16–20. Shakespeare.—6. To have caught (someone) in discussion, argument, or put into a fix: coll.: 1820 (O.R.D.)—7. To represent as doing or saying something: coll. The O.E.D. states that it is U.S. and cites a passage, written in 1928; but surely it has been used in England since at least as early as 1921?—8. Redundant use was frequent in C. 15–16—and has not, among the uneducated, been uncommon since—in the compound tense: sol. The most gen. C. 19–20 form is if I (you, he, etc.) had have, or had've, done it, gone, seen it, etc., etc. Cf. of, have used in same way.
have, p., is that a catch or a. A low c.p. acknowledgment that the speaker has been 'had' or fooled. Should the other essay a definition, the victim turns the tables with then you catch—or, as the case may be, have—your nose up my a**. Ca. 1885–1900
have a banana! A c.p. of ca. 1905–15, esp. among the lower classes. B. & P.
have a cab. To be drunk: London: late C. 19–early 20. Ware.
have a cob on. See cob on, have a.
have a down. See down n.
have a go. To hit the bowling, esp. if rashly: cricketers' coll.: 1894, Norman Gale. (Lewis.)
have a good look round. See good look .
have a heart! See heart!, have a.
have a heat. See heat, have a.
have any, not. See any—have a binge. See bingo, have a.
have by the short hairs. See hairs, got .
have for breakfast; occ. before breakfast (as a rare appetiser). A humorous way of implying that a thing is easy to do, (gen.) a man easy to beat. E.g. 'Why! I have one like him every day before breakfast; or 'I could have or do with six like him for breakfast.' For task or feat, the before breakfast, often with do or have, is preferred. C. 20 coll.: mostly Australia and New Zealand.
have had it. To have been seduced: C. 19–20 low coll.—2. In C. 20, however, usually (of a girl) to have had sexual experience,—there having arisen a (mostly subconscious) opinion that no woman but a half-wit, or in sheer ignorance, is ever, in the strict sense, seduced against her will.
have got = have: see got, have.—have it. See have, v.—5.
have it, let one. To strike hard; punish (lit. or fig.) severely: coll.: ? orig. U.S., where it is recorded as early as 1848; anglicised in the 1880's. Cf.
HAWKER'S GAG

have it off. To engage successfully in a criminal undertaking, esp. by oneself: c.: from ca. 1925. James Curtis, The Gilt Kid, 1936. "Prob. ex Yorkshire dial. have off, as in "I've got a good deal off," he knows a lot about it or is well acquainted with the matter (J. L. W.)

have (or take) it out of one. To punish; exact a compensation from: coll.: from ca. 1870. * ex preceding phrase. Cf. have, v., 5.

have it out with one, (v.i., have it out). To reprovingly come to a necessary understanding, or settle a dispute, with a person: coll.: from ca. 1800 (Ware). The Daily News, April 2, 1883; John Strange Winter, 'Instead of ... having it out, he ... flung the six days away.' * ex the S.E. have out, to cause a person to fight a duel with one.

have-not. (Gen. in pl.) See have, n., 1. 1836.

have-on. A variant (— 1931) of have, n., 2. gen. as 'a mild joke to deceive a person' (Lyell).

have on. To engage the interest or the sympathy of, esp. with a view to deceive (seldom criminally): dial. (1867) — (low) coll.: ca. 1870; slightly ob. O.E.D. (Sup.); E. & H. Cf. string on, q.v., and the S.E. lead on and (see have on toast) the S.E. have in a string.

have on the raws. To touch to the quick; tease: low coll.: from ca. 1860; ob. Lit., raw flesh, raw places.

have on toast. To deceive utterly, hence to defeat heavily in argument: from ca. 1870: (orig. low) a. > coll.—2. In C. 20, to have at one'sbeck and call or 'just where one wants him'. Cf. the C. 16–18 S.E. have in a string, i.e. at command (see Apperson, have).

have one's brains on ice. 'To be very cool-headed and collected': coll. (— 1931). Lyell.

have the edge on. See edge on.—have one's guts for garters. See guts for garters.

have the goods on. To have abundant evidence for the conviction of (a person): N.Z. c. (— 1932). have (a person) to rights. (Gen. in passive.) To defeat: lower classes' coll.: from ca. 1880. Ware.

have towards, occ. with or at. To pledge in drinking: the first and third, C. 17–18 and S.E.; the second, C. 19 and coll. Michael Scott, "'Have with you, boy—have with you," shouted half-a-dozen other voices.' [have up, to bring before the authorities, esp. in the law courts: not coll., as claimed by F. & H., but S.E.—as early as Caxton.]

have you a licence? A c.p. addressed to one clearing his throat noisily: mid-C. 18–early 19. Grose, 1st ed. Punning hawking and 'the Act of hawkers and peddlers'.


Hawes. Half-boots: Winchester College. See havahes, the better spelling.

hав(e)y-cavy(e)y. (Of persons only) uncertain, doubtful, shilly-shally: also an adv. Late C. 18—early 19: coll. ex dial. Grose, 2nd ed. A Northern and Midland anglicisation of L. habe, cave, have (and) beware!

havidge. See havage.


havoc(k). In late C. 17–mid-18, esp. in make sad havoc, this term app., had a strong coll. taint.

havy-cavy. See havy-cavity.

haw-haw, adj. Affected in speech (rarely of women); rather obviously and consciously English upper-class: (mostly Colonial) coll.: mid-C. 19–20, esp. in and since O.W. Cf. bit of haw-haw, q.v.

hawbuck. An ignorant and vulgar rustic: 1805 (S.O.D.): coll. till C. 20, then S.E. and ob. Ex haw, either the fruit of the Hawthorn or a hedge + buck, a dandy (W.).

hawcubite. A noisy, violent street roisterer, one of a band infesting London ca. 1700–1: hence a street bully or ruffian. Coll. > S.E. Except historically, used very rarely after ca. 1720. F. & H.: 'After the Restoration there was a succession of these disturbers of the peace: first came the Muna, then followed the Tityre Tu's, the Hector's, the Scourers, the Nickers, the Hawcubites, and after them the Mohawks.' * ex hawk; cf.:


haw, v. To act as a decoy (cf. button, n.) at a fair: c. (— 1851); ob.—2. The v., to spit with difficulty and noise, is, despite F. & H., ineligible.—3. V.i., to pull: Canadian: C. 20. John Boames.

hawk!, ware. A warning, esp. when balkill or constable is near: low coll.: C. 16–mid-19. Skelton has the phrase as a title; Grose, 1st ed. hawk and buzzard, between. Perplexed and undecided: proverbial coll. (— 1933): ob. by 1780; * by 1820, except in dial. L'Estrange, 'A fantastical levity that holds us off and on, betwixt hawk and buzzard, as we say, to keep us from bringing the matter in question to a final issue.' Apperson.


hawk from a handsaw (when the wind is southerly) know a. (Gen. in negative.) To be discerning; occ. lit., have good eyesight, hence to be a person of sense: proverbial coll.: C. 17–20. Shakespeare and Barbellion, the longer form; Mrs. Centlivre, the shorter in the negative. (Apperson.)

hawk one's brawn. See brawn, hawk one's.

hawk one's meat. (Of a woman) to peddle, i.e. display, one's charms, esp. of breast: low; late C. 19–20. Cf. dairy, sport one's, q.v.


hawk, vbl.n. hawking. Peddler, peddling: C. 16–20; app. coll., ca. 1680–1820, when it was applied specifically to news-vendors.—2. A severe cough: lower-class coll.: from ca. 1870. (Neil Bell, Crocus, 1938.) Ex hawking, or clearing one's throat.

hawse, or hawse, cross or come across or fall athwart one's. To obstruct or check; fall out with: nautical: ca. 1840-1910. A hawse being 'the space between the head of a vessel at anchor and the anchors, or a little beyond the anchors', O.E.D. Cf.: hawse,—I'll cut your cable if you foul my. A nautical threat: ca. 1850-1925. Smyth. Cf. preceding entry.

hawse-holes, creep (or come) in (or through) the. To rise from the forecastle: nautical; esp. the Navy: ca. 1841. Ob. Hoggart, 'A lad who creeps in at the hawse-holes ... was not likely to be favourably received in the midshipmen's mess.' Hence, hawse-pipe officer, one so rison: naval: mid-C. 19-20 (Bowen). Cf. halberd, q.v.

hawser, esp. in C. 17-18, is occ. used in error for hase (see hase, cross . . .).

hay or hey, as intendment or in address, evokes—not among the cultured—the e.p. reply, no, thanks! or not to-day or, rarely, straw! Late C. 19-20.

hay, hit the. See hit the hay.

hay, make. (Transitively with of.) To cease confusion; defeat heavily whether manually or verbally; upset; 'kick up a row': university: ca. 1817. The v.i. was ob. by 1920. H. Kingsley, the v.i.; v.t. in Maria Edgeworth and The Palm Mail Gazette, June 9, 1886, 'Sussex made hay of the Gloucestershire bowling'.


hay, lass, let's be hurried for life on Sunday! A lower classes' e.p. of late C. 19-early 20. Ware, Prob., at first, metal-workers'.

hay-seed. A countryman; esp. if very rustic; orig. (1889). U.S.; anglicised as a coll., ca. 1905 in Britain, but in Australia and New Zealand ca. 1895. Ex hay-seeds clinging to outer garments. Also hayseed.

hay while the sun shines, make. Profitably to employ one's time: proverbial coll. (1546): ca. 1800, S.E. metaphor. Anticipated by Barclay in 1509.


haymaking. Practical joking: University and Army: from ca. 1880; extremely ob. Ware. Perhaps ex making hay while the sun shines.


hayseed. See hay-seed.


haystack, unable to hit a: I, he, etc., couldn't hit a haystack. A coll. e.p. applied to a bad aimer, esp. a bad shot: mid-C. 19-20. Contrast the haystack phrase at hit, v.

hase. To harass or punish with overwork or paltry orders; constantly find fault with: nautical coll. ➔; ➔ gen. S.E.: Dana, 1840. Ex dial. Aaze, to ill-treat, frighten: W.

haze about. To loaf; roam aimlessly about: coll.: ob.: 1841, Tail's Magazine, VIII, '... Hazing about—a capital word that, and one worthy of instant adoption—among the usual sights of London' (O.E.D.).

hazel-geld. -gild. To beat with a hazel stick: v. (jocular) coll.: late C. 17 early 19; the former, perhaps an error, is in B.E.; the latter in Grose, 1st ed. (For oil of hazel, see oil.

hazy. Stupid or confused with drink: 1824, T. Hook: coll.: in C. 20, almost S.E. and slightly ob. Barnham, 'Staggering about just as if he were hazy'.


he; hee. A cake. A young he, a small cake. Charterhouse (school): from 1810; ob. Cf. she, q.v.—2. H., where personification does not hold good: coll.: C. 19. 20. Baumann cites 'Shut him up well,' close the door well.—3. Often as a sol. for him: contemporaneous with the language.


he-male. A very manly fellow indeed, all confidence and coition: middle classes: ca. 1811-1910. On she-male, q.v. (Ware.) Whence:

he-man. A virile fellow; a 'cave-man'; one who 'treats'em rough': from ca. 1900: s., ➔; ca. 1930, coll. (Collinson.) Whence he-man stuff. Cf. B.E.'s great he-rogue, 'a sturdy swinging rogue'.

he-man stuff. 'Cave-man' methods: from ca. 1908. † orig. U.S.

he never does anything wrong! An ironic e.p. applied to one who never does anything right: music-halls' (1883), then gen.; † by 1920. Ware.

he worships his creator. A Society e.p. (1900) directed at a self-made man with a high opinion of himself. Ob. Punning Creator, God. (Ware.)

head, the obverse of coin or medal, and head, a coinface, are, though cited by F. & H., clearly S.E.—2. A man-of-war's privy: nautical, but perhaps rather j. than s. or coll. ➔; ca. 1870-1910. The gen. C. 20 form—by 1930—is heads. Cf. coin.


head, v.t. To toss (a coin); head bourses, to toss pennies: Australian: late C. 19-20. C. J. Dennis. Lit., to make a coin turn up heads.

head phrases and compounds that, listed by F. & H., are S.E.—fly at one's head, give one his head, hit the right nail on the head, head (as in do on head, act rashly, and run on head, invite, act incitingly), over head and ears, take one in the head, come into one's mind, without head or tail or invite cannot make head or tail of it, have at one's head, to cuckold, and head-fruit, the result of being cuckedold.)

*head, (can) do on one's. To do easily and joyfully: c. from ca. 1880.—2. Hence, in C. 20 gen. s., to do easily.

head, eat one's. See hat, eat one's.

head, fat or soft in the. Stupid: coll.: C. 19-20.

head, get or have a big; or a swelling in the. To become or be conceited: † orig. (1888) U.S.; established in Britain, however, by 1893. Cf. hot, need a new, q.v.

head, have a. To have a headache from drink...
ing: coll. from ca. 1870. In C. 20 often have a (shocking) head on (Lyell). Cf. have a mouth and Fr. 'poule de bois'.

head, have maggots in the. To be eccentric; erotchety: low coll. from ca. 1860. Cf. bee in one's bonnet.

head, have no. To be crack-brained, irresponsible: (? low) coll. from ca. 1870. Contrast have a head on.—2. (Of drinks) to be flat: this is S.E.

head, hurt in the. To euckold: to be:

head, knock on the. To destroy: kill: put an end to:

head, off one's. Out of one's mind: crazy:

coll. from ca. 1845. Hood: Mark Pattison. (O.E.D.)

head, out of one's own. Imagined, invented, thought of by oneself: rather coll. than S.E.: 1719, Defoe. *Were not all these answers given out of his own head?*, Dowett.

head-and-gun money. 'The . . . bounty of £5 a head on the crew of an enemy armed ship captured or sunk': naval coll.: 1915–18; ob. Bowen. Prob. after S.E. blood-money.

head (or neck) and heels, bundle out. To eject forcibly: low coll. from ca. 1860. In S.E., neck and crop.

head-beetler. A foreman or ganger: († orig. Anglo-Irish) workmen's (1864); ob.—2. Hence, almost imm., a bully: workmen's: ob. by 1910, † by 1915. *Chamber's Journal*, Sept. 18, 1886, 'The "beetle" was a machine for producing figured fabrics by the pressure of a roller, and head-beetler probably means the chief director of this class of work.'

head block. See head screw.

head bully, or cully, of the pass (or the passage) bank. 'The Top Tilter of that Gang, throughout the whole Army [of criminals and vagabonds], who Demands and receives Contribution from all the Pass Banks in the Camp', B. N., who has bully, Groes (1st ed.) preferring cully. C. of ca. 1670–1820. See pass(age) bank and top.


head cull, or the pass, or the passage, bank. See head bully . . .

head (or beard) for the washing, give one's. To yield tamely: C. 17 (?–18) coll. Butler, in *Hudibras*, 'For my part it shall ne'er be said, I for the washing gave my head.' A late C. 16–early 17 variant: . . . pollin. Cf. Fr. lauer la tête à quelqu'un.

head full of bees. See bees, his head is full of.

head-guard. A hat; esp. a billy-cock: e. (—1889); †. head in a bag, get or put the. See bag.

head in chancery, get one's or the. See chancery. head is full of proclamations, one's. Or have a head full . . . To be 'much taken up to little purpose', B.E.: coll. ca. 1560–1770. Fenton's *Bantello*; Cotgrave; Berthelson's *English-Dutch Dictionary*. Apelysia.

head like a horse, have a. To be very forgetful: coll. from ca. 1880.

head-mark, know by. To recognise (a cuckold) by his horns: low: mid-C. 18–20, ob. Funnign the S.E. sense.


head off, argue or talk one's. To be excessively argumentative or talkative: coll. from ca. 1885. Milliken. (In fact, one's head off is an adv. = excessively. We can speak of a person's yawning his head off.) Cf.:

head off, beat one's. To defeat utterly: coll. from ca. 1850. Thackeray, 'He pretends to teach me billiards, and I'll give him fifteen in twenty and beat his head off.' Coll.

head off, eat one's or its. To cost, in keep, more than one's or it's worth: C. 18–20: coll. Orig., of horses: gen. from ca. 1860. Anon. *The Country Farmer's Catechism*, 1703, 'My mare has eaten her head off at the Ax in Aldermanbury.'

head on, have a. To be alert or knowing: low coll. (—1893); ob. Cf. the S.E. have a head on or on one's shoulders.

head on, put a (new). To damage a man's face: † orig. U.S. (—1870), anglicised by 1890.—2. Hence, to defeat, generally: very much; get the better of: † orig. (—1880) U.S.; anglicised by 1890. Also put a new face on.—3. To make malt liquors froth: public-house a. > gen. coll. from ca. 1860. (Head, froth on top, is itself S.E.)

head on one, have a. See head, have a.

tail. See heads or tails.

head over heels, for earlier and logical heels over head, was orig. coll.—a popular corruption: from ca. 1770. Thackeray. (O.E.D.)


head-piece, brain[s], late C. 16–20, was S.E. until C. 20, when increasingly coll.

head-rails. The teeth: nautical (—1785) >, ca. 1840, gen.; extremely ob. Grose, 1st ed.; 'Cuthbert Boile', in *Verdant Green*; Baumann, who cf.'s the Homeric ἄπειρος ἑκέντρος, the hedge or fence of the teeth; Bowen.


head screw, occ. h. bloke. A chief warder: prison c. (—1893).

head-serag, in C. 20 —serang. An overseer, master; one in authority or a 'big-wig': Bengali English coll. and nautical s. (—1864) >, ca. 1900, gen. s. Ex Persian serangh, an overseer, a commander.


headache, as much use as a; no more use than a headache. Useless: C. 20. E.g. D. Sayers, *Unnatural Death*, 1927.


header, take a. To plunge, or fall, headlong into the water: coll. implied in 1849.—2. To leap, app. dangerously: theatrical: from ca. 1860.—3. To go direct for one's object: coll. (—1863).

heading-em, vbln. The tossing of coins for bets: low: from ca. 1880.

headless, hop. To be beheaded: grimly jocular E. > coll. C. 14–16; (O.E.D.)

headquarters, often 'capitalised'. Newmarket: turf s. (—1888) >, in C. 20, j. Because the most important racing and training centre.

heads, the. Those in authority, the singular being one of the heads: coll. from ca. 1895: more
heads and tails, lie. To sleep heads to head-rail and foot-rail alternately: low coll.: from ca. 1860; ob.

heads I win, tails you lose. A mock bet; also — I cannot fail! Occ. used as an adj. Coll. orig. low (— 1846). Anticipated by Shadwell, 1762, in *Epsom Wells*: 'Worse than Cross I win, Pile you lose.' Apperson.

heads or tails; head or tail. A phrase used in tossing coins to gain a decision: coll.: late C. 17–20. Otway. (O.E.D.)

heady, intoxicating, was by B.E. considered coll., as it may well have been in his day.—2. Very ingenious (things) or shrewd (ideas, plans, actions): C. 20: coll.: mostly Australia and New Zealand.—3. Biliously heady: mostly aviators' coll.: 1934 (Nov.), *The Air Review*.


head. A variant of hefF, q.v.

heake. Incorrect for heck (lower half of a door): C. 17. O.E.D.

health, for one's. (Always in negative or interrogative.) For nothing, the implication that one is there, doing this, etc., for money, i.e. for profit: coll.: orig. (1904), U.S., Thornton citing 'I'm not in politics for my health—nor, presumably, for the body politic's.' Anglicised ca. 1912.

Healtheries, the. The Health Exhibition, London, 1884: coll.: ob. by 1900; f by 1915. Prompted by the *Fisheries*, q.v., of 1883. Cf. also Colinderies, Inventories.

healthy. Large; excellent; coll.: from ca. 1920. E.g. 'a healthy cheque'.

heap. A large number, a great deal: coll.: mid-C. 17–20. Keats. Often, mid-C. 16–20, in pl., as in Hugues, 'She will be meeting heaps of men.'

heap, adv. Much: orig. (1834), U.S.; Anglicised ca. 1850. Also, from ca. 1880, heap.

heap, in the. (Of a horse) that is losing: Glasgow racing (~ 1934). It is in the ruck.

heap, strike (from ca. 1895, often knock) all of a. To cause to collapse: coll. (~ 1818). Scott, 'Strike, to use the vulgar phrase, all of a heap.' In C. 18, the form was strike a heap, recorded for 1711, but Richardson subdued the modal form with 'He seem'd quite struck of a heap,' 1741. (O.E.D.)

*heap o'(f) coke. A fellow, man, comrade: thieves' rhyming s.: (~ 1900) on bloopke. Ware. In theatrical s., it refers to 'the guv'nor' (father; managing director): from ca. 1890. *The Evening Standard*, Aug. 19, 1931.

heap o'(f) saucepan lids. Money: rhyming s. on dubs: from ca. 1890. Ware.


heaps. See heap, n. and adv.

*heapy. Short for heap o' coke, q.v. Ware, 1909. Heart. To attend a church; v.t.: sit under the preaching of: coll.: ca. 1790–1910. Cowper, 1783, in a letter, 'There are, however, many who have left the Church, and hear among the Dissenters.' (O.E.D.)


hear say or tall, to. Hear it said, related (that . . .) in C. 20, 'considered vulgar' (W., 1920), i.e. low coll. Orig. S.E. with ellipsis of people, persons, etc., before the second v.

hearing. A scolding, a reprimand: coll. when not, as gen., dial.: from ca. 1610; ob. Scott in *Old Mortality*. Ex hear of it, q.v.


heart appears in various ejaculations, e.g. (Lord or God or Lord God) bless my heart: coll.: C. 19–20; heart alive, C. 19–20 coll. The earliest, for God's heart appears in Chaucer. (O.E.D.)

heart, I have a. Show mercy! steady! coll.: late C. 19–20; slightly ob. Often peculiar, esp. as an on cart, Ex have the heart (to do something),

heart, next the, adj. or adv. Fasting(y): mid-C. 16–17, coll.; in C. 18–19, dial. Na$h. Here, heart = the stomach: cf. S.E. heartburn and Fr. mal au cœur.

heart alive! See heart.

heart and dart. A fart: rhyming s.: from ca. 1860; ob.

heart and part. Erroneous, C. 16–20, for S.E. and part.

heart on one's halfpenny, have one's. See hand on . . .

heart in one's boots, one's. (In sentences with is or sink$: in phrases, preceded by with.) Afraid, extremely rejected: coll.: C. 19–20; anticipated by Garrick's 'soul and spirit . . . in her shoes', a form still heard. The C. 15–early (? all) 18 form is in one's hose, as in Skelton, Breton, Mottoux. (Apperson.)

heart out, slave one's. To worry oneself to death: coll. (~ 1887); ob. Baumann.

heart to grass, take. A C. 16–17 coll. form of heart of grass, a corruption of heart of grace, esp. when preceded by take.

heart up, enough to have one's. Enough to make one spew: low coll. (~ 1887). Baumann.

hearthpace. See harthpace.

heartbreaker. A love-lock; a pendent curl: coll.: 1663, Butler, who applied it to Samson: ob. by 1860; f by 1900.

heartburn. A bad cigar: ca. 1870–1925; mainly Cockney.


heartie. See hearty, my.


hearty. n. and adj. Strong drink; drunk: low: ca. 1850–1915.—2. (Gen. a heartiness.) A person enjoying boisterous health and few brains, esp. if a devotee of outdoor games and sport: from ca. 1920: coll. orig. undergraduates, >, by 1935, S.E. Partly in opp. to arty. (See also guts than brains, more, and, in Michael Harrison's *Weep for Lysidas*, 1934, a devastating description and indictment.)—3. Hence, adj., sporting; occupied
in sport or in strenuous exercise: mostly, as orig., university coll. Not, it would seem, before 1924 or 1925. E.g. 'I've just had a very hearty week-end.'

bearty (incorrectly heartie, my). A Northern dial. (1803 : E.D.D.) and hence a nautical form of address: from ca. 1835; ob. Marryat. Whence, the 'only just' S.E. sense, a sailor.

*bearty-choke* (and, or with, caper-sauce) for breakfast, have a. To be hungriest: orig. (—1785), q.v.; in C. 19, low; in C. 20, t., except in the doubly-punning a *hearty-choke* and a *heayer, a hanging-breakfast*. Grose, 1st ed.; Danvers, in *The Grantham Mystery*, 'Compelled to have a hearty-choke for breakfast some fine morning.' Punning artichoke. Cf. vegetable breakfast, q.v.

*heat*, (a preliminary bout or trial, has, despite F. & H., always been S.E.)


*heat on*, sexually excited, is low coll. when applied, C. 19–20, to women.

*heather philosopher*. One whose breech is visible through his trousers: late C. 17–18. B.E. Ex dress-pressing philosophers.

*heathenish*. Abominable, offensive, 'hearty ': coll.: from ca. 1855. (O.E.D.) Ex S.E. sense of 'barbarous', as in shakespearean.

*heathens*. The Blackheath Rugby Football Club: 1801: a journalistic jocularly >, ca. 1905, sporting s. *The Pall Mall Gazette*, Nov. 16, 1891, 'The Oxonians ... got two goals, while the Heathens were unable to score.' (O.E.D.)

*heave*. An attempt to cajole, deceive, or swindle, esp. in a dead head, a flagrant attempt to do so: C. 19, and prob. earlier: c. Bee.

*heave*. To rob, v.t. & c. ca. 1560–1830: extant, according to F. & H., in 1893 in Shropshire dial., but unrecorded by E.D.D. Esp. in heave a *bough* (for heave a book, see comment at gun, n. 3), rob a booth, mid-C. 16–18, and heave a *case*, rob a house, C. 18–early 19: occ., by confusion of these two senses (as in Head), heave a *booth* = to rob a house. Harman; Coles's and Dyche's dictionaries. Ex tho S.E. sense, to lift: cf. lift, v.—2. To throw, toss, hurl: late C. 19–20: S.E. until ca. 1830, then nautical j. and gen. coll. (O.E.D.) and do.


*heave in sight*. When not nautical j., this is gen. coll. (from ca. 1830). [heaven, heavens, occur in mild ejaculations, which are, in C. 20, almost coll.]

*heaven, feel one's way to*. To caress a woman with progressive intimacy: low coll.: C. 19–20, ob. By itself, heaven, thus used, is a euphemism.

*heaven and hell*. A shell: military rhyming a.: from 1914.


*heaven-tormentor* (Gen. pl.) A sail above the sky-sail: late C. 19–20; ob. Bowen.

heavens, adv. Very: a coll. (ob.) and dial. intensive: from ca. 1875. Esp. of rain and with hard, as in D. C. Murray's *The Weaker Vessel*, 'It was raining heavens hard.'—2. Exclamation: see heaven.


heaves, the. A Sperm whale; *proletarian* (—1909). Ware, 'Graphic description'.


*heavy, come or do the ; occ. do it heavy*. To put on airs; affect superiorly; c. or low coll.: from ca. 1880.—2. In C. 20, esp. since the G.W., abbr. do the heavy father, to be severely parental. Ex *heavy father* (1898), *heavy uncle* (ca. 1859), repressive or pompous father, pompously dignified uncle theatrical s. >, by 1925, gen. coll. (O.E.D.) Sup. Cf. heavy stuff, q.v.

*heavy, the*. Porter and stout: abbr. heavy wet q.v.: 1825; ob. (O.E.D.)


*heavy brown*. Porter: low: ca. 1820–50. Bee, who is, however, ambiguous, thus: 'Heavy—heavy wet, or brown—porter.' Cf. heavy wet, q.v.

*heavy cavalry* or *dragoons* or *horsemen* or (the) *heavy troop*. Bugs; esp. bed-bugs: ca. 1850–1910. The commonest are the first two; h. is as recorded by H., in 1864, as of Oxford University. Cf. heavies, 2, and contrast infantry, light.

*heavy father*. See heavy, come the, 2.


*heavy grubber*. A hearty eater; a glutton; low coll.: from ca. 1858; ob. Dickens in *Great Expectations*.


*heavy lurcher* A 'teller of the pitiful tale' in a large way: c.: C. 20. 'Stuart Wood', 1932.

*heavy merchant*. He who represents the villain: theatrical (—1909). Ware.


*heavy stuff*. Unsympathetic and over-paternal advice or moralising: coll.: C. 20. Ex heavy, come the, q.v.; ult. ex the theatrical sense, serious, esp. sombre or tragic (1826).—2. In G.W. military coll. verging on S.E., it signified (as it still does) heavy shelling or, preferably, big shells. F. & Gibbons.

*heavy, or howling, swell*. A man, occ. a woman, in the height of fashion: in C. 1830–1910; perhaps rather coll. than a. Anstey, 1892, 'We look such heavy swells, you see, we're all aristo-crats.' Punning heavy, having great momentum, and undoubtedly prompted by heavy swell, a sea running high.
heavy uncle. See heavy, ome the, 2. Cf. heavy father (iibid.).

heavy wet; occ. abbr. to heavy. Malt liquor; eap. porter and stout: 1821, Egan: ob. Lytton, 'I had been lashing heavy wet,' 1830.—2. An extremely 'severe' drinking-habit: ca. 1850-1925.

heavyside (or H.). Incorrect for Heavyside (layer): 1913. O.E.D. (Sup.).

hebdomadal. A weekly magazine or review: 1835 (S.O.D.): orig. jocular S.E.; in late C. 19-20, journalistic; ob.

Hobe or hebe, a 'waistess or a barmaid, is (now trite) S.E., but as pubic hair and the genitals, a sense omitted by the O.E.D. though given by Bailey, it is perhaps coll.

Hebrew. Unintelligible speech, jargon: coll.: 1705, Vanbrugh, 'Mighty obscure... All Hebrew.' Cf. Greek, a century older and S.E.

Heck!, by; what the heck! Orig. (—1802), Lancashire exclamations of surprise or indignation: by 1905, at latest, they had > gen. coll. Prob. ex dial. (heck!), indicating surprise or correcting a warning. Heck is perhaps a euphemism for hell: cf. the Lancashire eclyc, a mild oath, and go eclyck, 'go to heller!', of mid-C. 19-20, and possibly the Scottish and Irish hech (or heigh), as in hech, aye!; though this expletive hech is more prob. an element like ha or ho. (E.D.D.)

hectastic. Incorrect for hezastical: C. 1850. O.E.D.

hectic. Exciting, esp. with tendency to dissipation or to excessive activity (as in a hectic time); (of a book) sensational in theme, luridly indeleitable in language, or both: C. 20 coll., esp. since G.W.


Hector, hec. a bully, a swashbuckler, is rather S.E. than coll., though (†1700) John Hacket's 'One Hector, a phrase at that time'—ca. 1640—'for a daffing ruffian' tends to show that at this period it was, by some at least, held to be coll. The Hectors were a swashbuckling band: see hawcubite.—2. The v. is S.E., as is hectoring, adj. and n.

Hector's cloak, wear. To be rightly rewarded for treachery: coll.: C. 17-early 18. Ex Hector Armstrong who, the betrayer of Thomas Percy, Earl of Northumberland in 1609, died a beggar. But take Hector's cloak, C. 17-early 18 (then dial, now t.), is 'to deceive a friend who confides in one's fidelity,' Apperson.

hedge, a covering bet. and hedge, to bet 'opposite' for safety, are, despite F. & H., ineligible, as are the figurative senses.

hedge, as adj., is a (mainly t) pejorative prefixed to nn. to connote 'connected with, born under, plying a trade under a hedge, eap. one by the roadside; hence low, paupery, rascally, ignorant.' That many of these terms had a coll. taint appears from B.E. and Grose; yet it is more correct to regard as S.E. all hedge compounds except the few that follow.

hedge, (as) common as the: Applied to whore or strumpet: coll.: late C. 17-18. B.E. Cf. the S.E. hedge-whore, a 'low beggarly prostitute' (Grose). Cf. Highway.

hedge, hang in the. (Exp. of a law-suit) to be undecided: coll.: late C. 17-18. B.E. hedge, take a sheet off of. To steal openly: coll.: C. 17 (t 18 also).

D.U.E.

hedge-bird. 'A Soundrel or sorry Fellow,' B.E.: C. 17-mid-18 coll. († S.E. till ca. 1690).

hedge-bit. A hedge-whoore; a (gen. dirty) harlot favouring the open air: C. 19-20 low; ob.

hedge-creeper. A robber of hedges: mid-C. 16-early 19: coll. till ca. 1895, then low s. or e.


hedge or by stile, by. By hook or by crook: late C. 17-18: coll. B.E.

hedge-popper. 'A trumpery shooter,' F. & H.; hedge-popping, the shooting of small birds in and about hedges. Both sporting s. > coll.: from ca. 1860; ob.

hedge-square (occ. street), toss or snooze in. To sleep in the open air, esp. in the country: vagrants' e. (—1876); ob. J. Greenwood, in Under the Blue Blanket. Cf. starry, do a.


hee. See hee 1.


heebie. (or -y)-jeebies, the. A fit of depression or irritation: U.S. (1927) >, by 1928, anglicised. Ex a dance that, so named, resembled the Blues (O.E.D. Sup.); perhaps a reduplicated perversion of S.E. creepy or the ripples: cf. the Scottish adv., heepie-creepie, 'in a creeping, sneaking manner' (1873). (E.D.D.)

heef dry or wet. To fight, make a campaign, on dry land or on sea: military (—1923). Manchon. Ex dial. heof, to settle down, to reside or live.

heeli. Heel. (or out at) heeli(s) is S.E., not—pace F. & H.—coll. The same applies to heel-tap, liquor taken in the bottom of a glass, but heel-taps, a London dustmen's > dance, is perhaps coll.

heal, hairy about the. See hairy about. .


heelp. Heel up, v.l. To follow behind a person: Glasgow (—1934).


heels. The following phrases, cited as coll. by F. & H., are S.E.—get or have the heels of, go heels over head, lay by the heels, take to one's heels, tread upon (or be at, upon) the heels of.

heels, bless the world with one's. To be hanged: coll.: ca. 1650-1650. Painter in his Palace of Pleasure.

heels, cool or kick one's. See cool one's heels.

heels, his. The knave of trumps: cribbage s. > ; late C. 18-20. Gros, 1796. Cf. nob, g.v.; heels, kick up one's. See heels, turn up one's.

heels, lift one's. (Of a woman) to lie down for coition: low coll.: C. 18-20.

heels, turn—occ. tip, topple; kick, lay—up one's. To die: coll. The first, much the most gen., C. 16-20, e.g. Nash, in Fierce Peniess: topple, late C. 16-18; in Nash's Lenden Stuff; none of the other three 'antedated' C. 17 or 'postdated' C. 19.

hell, give. To trounce, punish severely; vituperate: coll.: from ca. 1830.

hell, gone to. See hell, all to.

hell ! I'll go (hopping) to. A coll. exploitive connoting surprise or indignation: C. 20. (Manchon.)

hell, kick up or play. To cause a (tremendous) disturbance or great trouble: coll.: from ca. 1840. See hell and tommy.

hell, lead apes in. See apes.

hell, like. With extreme vigour; desperately: coll.: from ca. 1850. Thackeray: 'I tried everything there and played like hell.'—2. Very badly: C. 20 col.—3. Not at all! Certainly not! E.g.: 'Did you go?—Like hell (I did)!' C. 20 s. > coll.


hell, put the devil into. To have sexual connexion: C. 18—20 'literary' coll.: ex Boccaccio.

hell, raise. To make a tremendous noise or disturbance: C. 19 coll. > C. 20 S.E. Variant, hell's delight.

hell, silver. A gambling house where only silver stakes are allowed. This, like dancing hell, was orig. (ca. 1840) coll. but soon > S.E.

hell, to. Intensely. Always with hope or wish: low coll. (—1891). Nat Gould, in Double Event, 'I hope to h— the horse will break his neck and his rider's too.'

hell and spots. A C. 20 variant (s. >, by 1934, coll.) of the next. Richard Blaker, Night-Shift, 1934, 'Another sort of woman could have knocked hell and spots off of you.'

hell and tommy, esp. in play h. and t. and, in C. 20, like h. and t. A picturesque intensive (s. > coll.): slightly ob. App. first printed, 1832—4, in The Curers, by De Quincey, 'Lord Bacon played Hell and Tommy when casually raised to the supreme seat in the council.' Genesius obscure; and tommy is a tag added to (play) hell, precisely as and Betty Martin is tagged to (all) my eye. Ware, who does support Hal and Tommy (Henry VIII and Thomas Cromwell playing havoc with Church property), proposes hell and torment (by corruption or perversion)—than which I have not heard, nor can I think, of a likelier origin. In Northumberland dial. (1894: E.D.D., Sup.), play hell and tommy was 'to set utterly at variance'.


hell-born babe, hell-cat, -bag, -hound, -kite. A man or a woman of a dovelish character: C. 16—20, ob. Perhaps orig. coll., but certainly soon S.E.

hell-box or -hole. A coll. variation of hell, a receptacle for (esp. stolen) remnants. Cf. cabbage, q.v.—2. (Only hell-box.) A galley-stove; nautical: late C. 19—20. Bowen, 'Most frequently in the Canadian and American ships'.

hell breaks loose, gen. hell is broke loose, describes extreme disorder; hell broke loose as a n. = anarchy, noisy topey-turvydom; coll. soon > S.E.: late C. 16—20. Byron, in Vision of Judgement, 'And realised the phrase of "Hell broke loose"'.

hell-broth. Bad liquor; (low) coll. from ca. 1850; ob. Ex S.E. sens. hell-cart. A hackney carriage; coll.: ca. 1630—1700. Perhaps orig. hell-cart coach.

hell-driver. A coachman: late C. 17—mid-18 coll. B.E.

hell-fire, adv. Extremely, 'damned', 'damnably,
HELL-FIRE DICK

'devilish': oll. (-1760); ob. C. Johnston, in Chrysal., 'The weather in summer is hell-fire hot, in winter hell-fire cold' (O.E.D.). Cf. and (?) ex hell-fired, q.v.

Hell-Fire Dick. 'The driver of the Cambridge Telegraph' (coach) and 'a favourite companion of the University's fashionables': Cambridge University nickname (-1811). Le BAL. He died in 1822 (Egan's Grose); Bee says his name was Owen.


hell-fired, adv. Extremely, 'damned': coll.: from ca. 1756 (W.). Kipling, 1892, 'When we rode hell-for-leather, [both squadrons together], not caring much whether we lived or we died'. Perhaps out of all of a lather by leather, skin as affected by riding (W.).

hell Hull and Halifax.—Good Lord deliver us, — from. A proverbial coll. - save us from evil: C. 16-20. (The most usual form is from Hull, hell, and Halifax, Good Lord deliver us!) Ex the celebrated Gibbet-Law of Halifax; thus consisted in execution of prisoners and subsequent inquiry into their demerits; as early as 1586, to have had Halifax law had been extended to the procedure of inquiry made after condemnation. (Apperson, at Halifax.) See Halifax, I. to.


hell mend (him)! Curse (him)!': coll.: late C. 19-20.

hell of a (e.g. mess). Very much of a —. A coll. intensive: 1778 (S.O.1.). Cf. devil of a —.

Hell (late C. 19); Hell Passage (C. 20). St. Helen's Passage, Oxford; undergraduates'. Collinso.

'hell!' said the duchess (when she caught her teats in the mangle). The fuller form is the original; it dates from ca. 1892 and was frequently heard in the G.W., though rarely in the ranks. In post-war days, the shorter form is much the more heard, gen. without the slightest reference to the original: cf. Michael Arlen's novel, Hell! said the Duchess, 1934. So well established is the phrase that The Times Literary Supplement, Jan. 11, 1936, could wittily head a review of Daniel George's A Peak of Troubles, with the words, ' Said the Duchess'...


hellish, adv. 'Sometimes a mere coarse intensive': Oxford coll.: from ca. 1750.

hellots. A professional gambler: coll. (-1838) >, ca. 1870, S.E.; ob. by 1900, ? by 1920. 'Ducango Anglicus.'


hell's delight. See hell, raise.

hell's like! 'Like hell!': a coll. intensive: C. 20. (John Brophy, Waterfront, 1934.)

hellum. See allum.

hellva or hellva. Hell of a: a coll. slurring, as in A. A. Milne, Two People, 1931, 'Making a hellva bad job of it'. Not merely, nor even orig., U.S. [Hell, a servant, is U.S. but, despite F. & H., ineligible.]

help, v. With can, could, often erroneously with not omitted: coll.: from ca. 1800. Whatoley, 'In colloquial language it is common to hear persons say, "I won't do so-and-so more than I can help," meaning, more than I can not help,' as when J. H. Newman, in his Apologia, wrote, 'Your name shall occur again as little as I can help, in the course of these pages.' (O.E.D.). See esp. Fowler.

help! A derisory exclamation on hearing a tall story: rare before C. 20. (So help me God (> coll. only in its corrupted forms, e.g. selp me Bob: see selp.)


helpless. (Very) drunk: coll.: from ca. 1800. Cf. gravelled and paralytic.

helch(er)wer. See helch(er)wer.


[helter-skelter, adv., is by B.E. and Grose regarded as coll.: in their time, ca. 1800-1860, it was an Etyymology unsolved: I tappu skel- keler, to put a halter on (e.g. dila. heltering, the breaking-in of colts), to hang, & kelter, order, — hence, in defiance of order (the s being euphonie); helter-kelter is, by the way, found in the Essex and Kentish diall.]

heluva. See helluva.—hemastatic. See hæmastatic.


hemp, hempy, hemp-seed or-string, like stretch-hemp, a candidate for the gallows, rarely a halter, are rather S.E. than coll. (although hempy, it seems prob., was orig. coll.). The same holds for hæmepen candle, circle, collar, cravat, crook, garter, habesha, neckie, the hangman's noose, a halter; for hæmepen fortune, bad luck, i.e. death by the gallows; and for Randolph's hæmepen squinity, hanging. The following six entries, however, were, at least orig., coll. —

hemp, young. 'An appellation for a graceless boy', Grose, 1785; coll.: late C. 18-early 10.

hemp in the wind, wag. To be hanged: coll.: ca. 1530-1620. Sir Thomas Moore. (Never, I think, very gen.)

hemp is growing for the villain, the. A c.p. applied to a rogue: C. 19. Bee. Earlier, hemp to grown for you (Ware).

hæmepen bridle. A ship's rope or rigging: coll.: C. 18.


hæmepen widow. A woman widowed by the
HERRING, but from orig. reob. Roman A Canadian in C. proverbial Cockney ' (Cf. cockie-herry, q.v.) John Beames. [hen-hearted], timorous, has, despite Grose and F. & H., always been S.E.]


hen-peck. (Of a wife) to rule, dominion over the husband: coll. : 1698 (S.O.D.). Byron. Ex: hen-pecked. Ruled, dominion over by a wife: coll. : 1680, 'Hudibras' Butler (S.O.D.); B. E. gives hen-pecked frigate (see hen-frigate) and hen-pecked husband; The Spectator, No. 479, 'Socrates ... the undoubted head of the sect of the hen-pecked'. Perhaps suggested by the C. 16-18 proverb, It is a sad house where the hen crowes louder than the cock.

hen-toed. With one's feet turned in as one walks: coll. : C. 19-20; ob.

Henri Clark. To flatter: theatrical: esp. at Drury Lane: 1883-ca. 90. Ware, 'From the flattening stage-mode of a singer of this name'.

Henry Sophister. See harry sophist.

hens. 'Gillygate end of old 3rd and 4th XI's playing pitch': Dict. of Bootham Slang, 1925.

*hen* and chickens. Pewter measures: esp. quarts and pints: c. (- 1861); ob. Mayhew.

hep! 'Left!' in military commands, as being so much easier to pronounce explosively: C. 20.

her. She: low coll. or sol. : C. 17-20; re-recorded in 1698 (O.E.D.), but only predictive, i.e. coll. Sol. only when nominally, There are extremely few records for pre-1840. E.g. 'Her and me was born here; us be great frien's.' Cf. him, me, us, &q.v.

Her Majesty's carriage. A prison van: ca. 1850-1901; then His M. c., ob. Baumann.

Her or His Majesty's naval police. See naval police.

Her Majesty's tobacco pipe. The furnace in which forfeited tobacco from the Customs is burnt: ca. 1850-90. The Echo, Jan. 27, 1871. This was changed ca. 1880 and the forfeited tobacco went to workhouses (always) herbaraceous border. A naval sloop of the Flower class: naval officer's: 1015-18. Bowen.

herbs, good or sweet ('herbs or'). Excellent 1; excellently 1: a c.p. (- 1923), mostly of postmen. Manchon.

herd. Redundant between this and its n. (cf. that there, e.g. thing): mid-C. 18-20 sol. Footie, in The Orator, 'I should be glad to know how my client can be tried in this here manner' (O.E.D.) Ex this, e.g., thing here, where here is added for emphasis: cf. Fr. ce(le) ... ci or - à.- 2. Redundant after belong, as in I'm a stranger, I don't belong here: coll. : from ca. 1890. (O.E.D.)— 3. Cf. here, as
Herring Pond, be sent across the, or cross the H.-P. at the King's expense. To be transported (-1765): coll.; perhaps orig. e.: ↑ by 1870. Grose. Ex "herring pond", the sea, or H.-P., the North Atlantic Ocean (1616), is local.
S.E. rather than coll. (In Cornish, herring-pool.)
herrings in a barrel, like. Very crowded; packed very close: coll. (—1891): ob., the post-
G.W. preference being for like sardines (in a tin).
her's is a frequent written illiteracy, i.e. sol., for her.
her's is for its, their's for theirs.
Hertfordshire Kindness. An acknowledgment—
or a cause of favours received; also and esp. a drinking twine to the same man: coll.: ca.
1690–1830. B.E., Swift, Grose. Ex a Hertford-
shire custom, says Fuller in his Worthies.
Herts Guards, the. The Hertfordshire Territorials of the Bedfordshire Regiment: military:
late 1915–18. F. & Gibbons. From October, 1914,
to August, 1915, they served with the 4th Guards
Brigade.
He's, his. His: sol. and dial.: C. 19 (or earlier)–
20.
he's saving them all for Lisa (or Liza)! A now
ob. c.p. applied, from before 1900, by the lower classes to a "good young man who will not use oaths
or strike blows", Ware. Ex the youth who wouldn't
give a beggar a penny because he was saving them
all for his girl.
Hesiod Cooke. Thomas Cooke (1703–56), trans-
lator of Horace. (Dawson.)
he's-u-ben! 'A way of asking for a copy of The
Sun newspaper', Ware, 1909: lower middle classes':
↑ by 1920. i.e. s.u.n.
hevethée. A thief: centre s.: from ca. 1860;
ob.
hexarch. Incorrect for exarch: C. 17–20
hexasperde. No exasperate.—bay! See bay
hey-gammer-cook, play at. To coll.: C. 18–
early 19. C. Johnson.
hey-glass weather, it's. It's foggy: a pro-
letarian c.p. aimed at the wearer of a monocle or
eye-glass: 1860; very ob. Ware.
Hibs, the. The Hibernian Football Club: sport-
ing: C. 20.—2. The Hibernians, an Irish
political group: Anglo-Irish: 1914; ob.
hib is a slovenly spelling (e.g. in Street-Robberies
Committed, 1728) of hick.
*hicicius-docicius, hictius-docicius, hicixius-docixius,
etc., the variants being unrecorded after ca. 1790.
A juggler; a trickster, a shifty fellow: o. : ca.
1878–1810. Butler, Wycherley. Either an arti-
ficial word of spurious L. (cf. hocus-pocus), or a corruption of hicce est docue. The term was orig.
(1676, Shadwell) and frequently used in jugglers' past-
hicicius-docicius or -docixius, etc. Slovenly: ca.
with this hicicius-docixius delivery":—2. Drunk: ca.
1780–1820. Grose, 1st ed. Perhaps ex hick, to
hiccup.
[Hicobites, s. C. 18 drinking club, is a by formation:
hiccup-ites.]
Hick. An (easy) prey to sharpers: o.: ca.
1685–1750. B.E.—2. Hence, a—gen. simple—country-
man: s. > coll.: ca. 1680–1830; now mostly U.S.: see esp. Irwin. Ex the familiar by-form of
Richard, as Bob is of Robert.
hick(a)boo. An air-raid; a warning that an air-
raid is imminent: Air Force men's: 1916. F. &
Gibbons & Manchon, 'Déformation d'un mot hindou
signifiant sigle'.
Hickenbothom, Mr. 'A ludicrous name for an
unknown person, similar to that of Mr. Things-
manbo', Grose: coll. (— 1791): ↑ by 1890. Grose's
eytymology, Ickenbaum (an oak-tree), is nonsense;
the word is perhaps a pun on hick, q.v., and bottom,
the posteriors.
hickery-pickery. Hiera piera (a purgative drug)
low coll., or sol.: C. 19–20.
hickey. (Not quite) drunk: late c. 18–19:
low (orig. e.): more U.S. than Eng. Grose, 1st
ed. Ex hiccius-docicius, adj.; or else ex dial. hick, to
hiccup.
hickisterpu. A sticker-up (esp. of skittles):
centre s.: from ca. 1860; ob.
hiera-piera. Hiera piera; sol., or low coll.
hiccius-docicius. A late c. 17 variant of hiccius-
docicius.
hide. The human skin: O.R.—mod. Eng.: S.E.
> ca. 1710, low coll. C. Coffey, in The Devil to
Pay, 1731, 'Come, and spin, you drab, or I'll tan
your hide for you.'—2. Impudence; excessive self-
(1825): ob. Ex tan one's hide, q.v.
hide and seek, he plays at. 'A saying of one who
is in fear of being arrested . . . and therefore does
not choose to appear in public' Grose, 1785: oh. by
1860, ↑ by 1890. (Hide and seek, as a game, has, in
dial. at least thirteen variants.)
*hide up. (Of police or other authorities) to
defend or shield (a wrongdoer): e.: ca. 1920.
E.g. in Edgar Wallace, The Flying Squad.
[hidebound, despite Grose and F. & H., has already
been S.E.]
1920. Denis Mackail, Greenery Street, 1925, 'It was
so hideously awkward.' Cf. fearfully.
Ware.
hiding. A thrashing; occ., from ca. 1800, a
heavy defeat. Low coll.: 1809 (S.O.D.). 'Outh
bert Bede', 1853, 'May the Gown give the Town
a jolly good hiding.'
higgledy-piggledy, adv. and adj. In a confused
jumble: coll.: late C. 16–20: from ca. 1805, S.E.
Florio; Miss Broughton, in Nancy, 'We are all
higgledy-piggledy—at sixes and sevens.' Johnson,
'corrupted from higgle . . . any confused mass',
and therefore connected with higler, a hawk—
higler being S.E., not coll.; but more prob.
a 'reduplicated jingle on pig, with reference to
huddling together', W.
high. Intoxicated: ca. 1627, May in his Lucas
(O.E.D.): from ca. 1880, mostly U.S.—2. As (of
game) tainted, it is S.E., but as (of a prostitute)
venereally infected, it is low coll.—3. Obscene: low
coll.; like preceding sense, from ca. 1860 and ob.
High, the. The High Street, Oxford: under-
graduates' a.; late C. 19-20. Collinson. Cf. the Broad, the Corn, the Turf.

high and dry, adj. = stranded, is, despite Egan and F. & H., ineligible, but the High and Dry, the High Church party, is Church s.: 1854, Conye heare, in Church Parties. Also adj. (— 1887.) The Graphic, April 10, 1886, "In the Church have we not the three schools of High and Dry, Low and Slow, and Reform and Mellow? See the other two terms, high and mighty. Arrogant; imperious; coll. (- 1825). J. W. Croker: Nat Gould, 'None of your high and mighty games with me.'

high-bellied; high in the belly. Advanced in pregnancy; low coll.: from ca. 1850. Also high-waisted.

High Church Trumpet, the. Dr. Sacheverell (1674-1724), churchman and politician. (Dawson.)

high collar and short shirts. A music-halls' (1882), hence urban c.p. directed at cheap 'swells'; ♠ by 1890. Ware.

high-day. Catachrestic for key-day; C. 17-early 18. Tom Brown, 1887. O.E.D.


high enough, you can't get. A jeering comment on failure; low coll.: from ca. 1850; ob. « Probably obscene in origin », F. & H.

high feather, in. See feather, in full.

high-flier. See high-flyer.

*high-fly, be on the. To practise the begging-letter 'game' or 'lay' (C. 16 law): c. (- 1830); ob. Brandon in Poverty, Mendicity and Crime, 1859. Collectively, the high-fly is those who carry on this trade. — To tramp as a beggar: from ca. 1850; ob.

high-flier, -flier. As a very ambitious or pretentious person, S.E.; a: as a bold adventurer, a fashionable prostitute, an impudent and dissolute woman: from ca. 1690, only the second nuance being extant. Perhaps s. is sense, 3, a fast mail-coach: Scott, 1818, in Midlothian; ♠ by 1870.—Also old s. sense 4. One who frequents the gallery of a theatre: C. 18. D'Urfe, 1719. — And, a gross exaggeration: ca. 1770-80. G. J. Pratt, in The Pupil of Pleasure. O.E.D.—6. In e. a genteeel beggar (— 1851), as in Mayhew's magnum opus: a begging-letter writer, from ca. 1839.—7. Ex the c. senses comes that of a broken-down gentleman, as in The Standard, June 20, 1887; ob. by 1915; ♠ by 1920.—8. 'A swing fixed in rows in a frame much in vogue at Paris', F. & H.: circa (— 1859). A slave-ship; nautical: late C. 19-20; ob. Ware.

*high-flying (over-ambitious, -pretentious, or -extravagant, is S.E., as is the corresponding n.; but) in c. signifies beggning, esp. by letter: from ca. 1839; ob.

*high game, high-game. A mansion: c. (— 1889); ob.

high(-)gie, in. Lively: ca. 1815-70; coll. Moore, 'Rather sprightly—the Bear in high-gig'. See gig.

high(-)go. A frolic; a drinking-bout: low coll.: from ca. 1820; ob. Cf. go, n., 2 and 6.

high-hat. To treat (a person) superciliously: an American coll. partly anglicised by 1890.

high, bonny and gay. Very slow, under-hand lob bowling: cricketers: ca. 1825-1900. Lewis.

high hook. That angler of a party who hooks the heaviest fish: anglers' coll.: from early 1890's. O.E.D. (Sup.) Prob. ex. — 2. Same as high line, 2.

high horse, be on or get on or ride the. See horse, ride the high.—high in the belly. See high-bellied.

high in the instep, be. To be (over-)proud: coll.: from ca. 1540; in C. 19-20, mostly dial. Fuller, in his Church History.

*high jinks. A gambler who, at dice, drinks to intoxicate his, gen. 'pigeon', adversary: c. ca. 1770-1820. (In S.E., a diceing game for drinks.) — 2. A frolic; a very lively, and often noisy, party or gathering or behaviour; coll. (— 1861). Hughes, in Tom Brown at Oxford, 'All sorts of high jinks go on on the grass plot.' Ex the S.E. sense.

*high jinks, be on one's. To be stiffly arrogant in manner; 'ride the high horse': low coll.: from ca. 1865; ob.

high jump(s), be for the. See jump(s), be for the high.

*high-kicker. A dancer specialising in the high kick; whence, almost imm., a wild 'spreester': coll.: from ca. 1870.—2. In C. 20, gen. 'a girl who is over fond of "a good time", somewhat fast' (Lyell): coll.

high-killed. Indecorous; obscene: Scots coll. (In C. 20, standard): C. 19—20. The same holds of Highland hail, the right of might, as in Scott's Antiquary.


*high-lawyer. A highwayman; c.: late C. 16—mid-17. Greene, 1591; John Day in The Blind Beggar, 'He wo'd be your prigger, . . . your high-lawyer.' Lit., one who practices the high (i.e. the highway') law' or 'lay' or 'game'.

high line. A good catch: Grand Banks fishermens' coll.: from ca. 1890. Bowen.—2. Hence, 'the most successful fishing boat or clipper of the season': from ca. 1895; id. Ibid. Also, occ., high hook.

*high-liver. A thief lodging in an attic: C. 190. Ex the gen. s. or jocular coll. sense, one who lodges in garret or loft, with its vbl.n., high living (— 1788), as in Grose, 2nd ed. Cf. high eating, q.v.

high- lows. Laced boots reaching up over the ankles: orig. (1801), trade s.; ca. 1860, gen. coll., and, by 1895, S.E. 'In contrast with "top" boots and "low" shoes', S.O.D.

*high(-)men or runners. Dice so loaded that they fall 'high': orig. (1892); c.: by 18, law s.; in C. 19—20, gen. considered S.E. The runners form, 1670. (Extremely rare in singular.)

high part, the. The gallery: Dublin theatrical (—1909). Ware. C.f. the god.

high-pooped. Heavily buttocked: nautical s. > low coll.: from ca. 1830; ob.

high, port, the. See at the high port.

high-priori. A burlesque coll. perversion of a priori: from ca. 1740. * coined by Pope (‘We nobly take the high Priori Road’).

high-rented. Hot: low coll.: from ca. 1850; ob.—2. Very well known to the police: e. c. from 1884; ob. C.f. hot, q.v.


high-(-)runners. See high men.

high-seasoned or highly spiced. Indelicate; obscene; coll. verging on S.E.: C. 19-20.

high-shot, the. The ground: lower classes (—1909) W. * ex high-stawed.

high, -or clouted-, shoe(s). A rustic: mid-C. 17-early 19; coll.: S.E. The occ. form, high-shoon, is often used as an adj.

high-sniffing. Superfluous; pretentious, ‘superior’: (low) coll.: from ca. 1860; ob. Cf. high-nosed, q.v.

high spots, hit the. To go to excess (of dissipation or merry-making); to attain a very high level: U.S. (—1910), anglicised ca. 1927. Likewise high spot (gen. pl.), ‘the outstanding parts or features of something’: anglicised ca. 1925. O.E.D. (Sup.)


high-(-)strikes. Hysterics: if unintentional, a sol. (—1838); if dedicate, deliberac coll.: from ca. 1850; ob.

high-tailing. Running away without looking behind; bolting: Canadian coll.: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Ex the flight of scared horses.

high tea. An ample tea with meat: coll. (1856); from ca. 1895, S.E. Sporting Life, Dec. 15, 1888. Perhaps high is here merely intensive (W.).

*high-tide or water. Temporary richness or plentifullness of cash: resp. late C. 17-20, C. 19-20: ob. B.E.; Bee. (Contrast low water.) Orig., prob. c.: by 1830, coll.

*high-toby. Highway robbery, but only by mounted men: ca. 1810-70. Vaux, Ainsworth.

*high-toby cloak. See high pad.

high-up. High; fig., of high rank or position: dial. >, in late 1800’s, coll. O.E.D. (Sup.).

high-waisted. See high-bellied.

high water. See high tide.

high-water mark, up to (the). In excellent condition; also, a gen. approbanory location: coll.: from ca. 1830; ob.

high wood, live in. To hide, esp. to lie low and keep quiet: low: from ca. 1840; ob. by 1900; + by 1920. Ex High Wood, i.e. that R.W. which was the nearest to London. Cf. hide and seek, q.v.

highball. A drink of whiskey served in a tall glass: 1899; by 1930, coll. Orig. and mostly American. O.E.D. (Sup.).

highbrow. A person affecting intellectual superiority: coll. orig. (1911), U.S.; anglicised ca. 1917. Cf. lowbrow. q.v.—2. Hence, as adj., anglicised at about the same time. (Menciken.)


highfulate. To rant; use fine words: mainly and orig. U.S.: anglicised ca. 1875 as s., but never very gen. Cf.:


highfulatin(g): gen. without g. Bombastic, absurdly pompous, whether in conversation or in behaviour: orig. (1848), U.S. s.; anglicised, as coll., ca. 1862; ‘now common in Liverpool and the East End of London’; H., II, 1864; in C. 20, S.E. a very useful word. Friswell, in Modern Men of Letters, 1870, ‘High-falutin nonsense’. (In C. 19, hyphenated very often, in C. 20 rarely.) Ex Dutch verbootten, says H.; more prob. an elaboration of high-flown, perhaps influenced by floating (W.).

highgate, sworn (in) at. Sharp, clouver: coll. (from ca. 1840, mainly dial.); mid C. 18-19. Colman, 1790, ‘I have been sworn at Highgate, Mrs. Lettice, and never take the maid instead of the mistress’; Hone’s Every Day Book (ii, 70-87); Apperson. Ex a C. 18 custom prevalent at Highgate public-houses—see Grose, P.


highly spiced. See high-seasoned.

highly-tighty; hoity-toity. A wanton, or, as B.E. phrases it, ‘a Ramp, or Rude Girl’: resp. late C. 17-18, C. 18—early 19: orig. low, then gen., coll. But hoity-toity is rare as a n.; usually it goes with wench, as in Grose.

highly-tighty; hoity-toity, adj. Peremptory, quarrelsome: C. 19—20.—2. Uppish late C. 19—20; this, the prevailing C 20 sense, comes ex dial. The -ly-form is coll., the -ty-origin, coll., in C. 20 S.E.

‘The earliest record, upon the hoity-toity (1688), suggests the high ropes [q.v.] and tight rope, or simply a jingle upon high,’ W. See esp. W.: More Words Ancient and Modern.

highway, (as) common as the. See hedge, (as) common as the.

highly-pigly. A ca. 1660-1800 variant of highflyly-piglyly, q.v.

higgy-piggy. See hickery-pickery. (Graves, in The Spiritual Quixote.)


hike, v., orig. (1800) dial., — to tramp (from 1927, for pleasure and/or exercise); hike off, orig. (—1788) c., = to run away. Grose, 2nd ed. Becoming, except in dial., disused in England, hike went to U.S., whence it returned, to gen. coll. usage in England, ca. 1926. (Like hick, q.v., it has been very gen. considered an Americanism.)—2. To

hips, walk with the. 'To make play with the posteriors in walking', F. & H.: C. 19–20 coll.; ob. A lower rather than a middle or upper class allurement to lewdery.


hiron, a harlot, is, despite F. & H., ineligible. As a sworn witness a fighting hector or bully, it is, so far as I know, unrecorded save by F. & H.: at present, it is suspect.

his. 'The use of his with familiar words, as 'he knew his Homer from beginning to end', is purified slang' (Greenough & Kittredge, 1902): coll.: mid-C. 19–20–2. The enemy's: military coll.: 1914–18. B. & P. Opp. ours.

his legs. .. See legs grew.—his nabs, nites. See nabs, nis.

hishee-hashee. See soap and bullion.

hism, his'n; occ. hissen. His, when used predicatively or, gen., absolutely: sol. when not, as mostly, dial.: C. 15–20. Prob. his influenced by mine opp. my (S.O.D.).


hissen. See him.


historical. (Of a costume or hat) seen more than three times: Society: 1882, The Daily News, Dec. 26; † by 1915. Ware.

[Historical or wrought or illustrated shirt. Not coll. but † S.E.: late C. 16–19. 'A shirt or shift worked or woven with pictures or texts', F. & H.]

history of the four kings, study the. To play at cards: col., mid-C. 18–mid 19. Cf. the mid-C. 18–early 19 coll. a child's best guide to the gallows, a pack of cards, as also is the n. part of the defined locution. Grose, 1st ed. (both).

hit, a success, like make a hit, to score an outstanding success, was orig. I think, coll., pace the O.E.D. from ca. 1815. But hit (it), to guess a secret, attain an object, is, pace F. & H., certainly S.E., as, prob. was in the teeth, to reproach (v.t., with).

hit, to go to and then travel along or work or play at or rest in, as in hit the road or trail, the high spots, the haystack, was orig. and still U.S.: these usages can hardly be said to be fully anglicised; but they prob. will be—very soon too!


hit, hard, ppl.adj. See hard hit.—hit a haystack.

See haystack and hit, v.

hit it off. To agree well with a person: coll. on verge of S.E. (in C. 20, indubitably S.E.): from ca. 1780. Trollope, in Barchester Towers. To. To describe accurately: the (from ca. 1735) coll. form of S.E. hit: in C. 20, S.E., which, acc. to the O.E.D., it always has been. Trollope, in The Duke's Children.

hit it up; orig. hit things up. 'To behave strenuously; riotously', C. J. Dennis: Australian: C. 20.


hit the hay. To go to bed: U.S. (orig. tramps') anglicised in 1929 by Conan Doyle. (O.E.D. Sup.)

hit the high spots. See high spots.—hit the road. See hit, v. An interesting parallel is the Norfolk dial. hit the road, to walk fast, as in P. H. Emerson, On English Lagoon, 1803 (E.D.D.).

hit the root. To flare up, be or become extremely angry: coll.: C. 20. Cf. and see housetop, be at the, the idea being that of S.E. fly into a rage.

hit things up. See hit it up.

hit (a person) up for (something). To ask (a person) for: Colonial and South-American-English s.: C. 20. C. W. Thurlow Craig, Paraguay Interlude, 1935, 'I . . . hit him up for a job, and here I am.'

hit where one lives. To mean much to, make a great impression on, a person: 1907, F. G. Wodehouse, Not George Washington, 'This is just the sort of thing to get right at them. It'll hit them where they live.'

hit with. (More gen. struck with, q.v.) Possessed by: coll.: ca. 1885–1915.

hitch. Temporary assistance; unimportant help through a difficulty: coll.: from ca. 1890; ob.

hitch, v. To marry: gen. in hitched, ppl. adj., married: orig. (1857) U.S., app. first as hitch horses: Anglicised ca. 1890. In C. 20, the prevailing form is hitched up, which is very gen. in the Southern-Hemisphere Dominions. Ex hitch (up), to harness.

hitchy-koo. Verminous, lousy; military: 1914; ob. B. & P. Ex a music-hall refrain's resemblance to itching, itchy.


hive. The female pudendum: low: from ca. 1860; ob. Ex honey, q.v.

hive it. To effect coition: low: from ca. 1860; ob. Ex preceding.


hiv(o)us-dox(o)us. See hicus-doccus.

ho, out of all. Beyond all bounds: coll.: late C. 14–20. Chaucer, Swift. After ca. 1870, † except in dial. Ex ho! A late C. 16–19 variant is out of all (wo)hooping, which appears in Shakespeare's As You Like It, and, as past all w., in Kingsley's Westward Ho! (Apperson.)

hoaky or hokey, by (the). An expletive: mainly nautical, but perhaps orig. Scots: from ca. 1820: ob. Barham, Lover, Manchon. † ex holy pokor.

hoax, v. and n., and its derivatives hoaxer and hoaring, were orig. (1788) coll., which they remained until ca. 1830. First recorded in Grose, 2nd ed. Orig. university wit, says Grose. Prob. ex hocus (pocus); cf., possibly, Romany (hoax) or kokano, to cheat, and hookapen, a hoax, a falsehood.


hob, be on the. To be a teetotaller: military: late C. 19–20. F. & Gibbons, 'The tea-kettle on the hob'.

hob and nob, hob or nob, hob nob. Orig. mere variants, but the only C. 19–20 forms, of hab or nab (etc.), q.v.—The only specific 'individual' senses are, I, as v.: to drink together, 1763, coll.—in
hobby-horse. v. To romp; play the fool, esp. in horse-play: coll.: ca. 1836–1890.

hobby-horse. Connected with, devoted to a hobby: whimsical: jocular coll.: 1761. Sterne.—2. In late C. 18-early 19, and perhaps orig., ‘a man who is a great keeper or rider of hobby horses’, i.e. hacks. Grose, 1st ed.

hobnail. A tramp; esp., in C. 20, one who works. Orig. (— 1891, Flynt), U.S.; anglicised ca. 1905. The v. has not ‘caught on’ in England.—2. Hence, a useless fellow: military: from ca. 1910.—3. In New Zealand and Australia, in post-G.W. days, it is often applied to a rough-and-ready fellow. The etymology remains a puzzle: see esp. Irwin, who quotes a tramp’s C. 20-21st century invention: ‘Bums loaf and sits. Tramps loaf and walks. But a hobby moves and works, and he’s clean.’

hobson-jobson. ‘A native feudal excitement: a tamāsha . . . ; but especially the Moharram ceremonies’, Yule & Burnell: Anglo-Indian, prob. orig. (ca. 1850) military; the form hosey-gossey occurs as early as 1673. Ex the Mahommcean walling-cry, Ya Haasan / Ya Hoasin. (In S.E., a certain linguistic process.)

hobson’s. See sense 2 of:

hobson’s choice. That or none: coll.: 1649. Somers Tracts, ‘I had Hobson’s choice, either be a Hobson or nothing’; B.E.; Steele, in The Spectator, No. 509; Gibber, in The Non-Juror, ‘Can any woman think herself happy that’s obliged to marry only with a Hobson’s choice?’ The etymology ex Thomas Hobson, that, Cambridge livery-stable keeper (d. 1630) who let out his horses only in strict rotation, is seriously damaged by Richard Cock’s ‘We are put to Hodgsone’s chuse to take such privilegge ass they will give us, or else goe without,’ 1617—one of W.’s happiest discoveries.—2. A voice: theatrical rhyming s.: late C. 19-20; now gen. abbr. to Hobson’s.

hock, in. Laid by the heels; swindled: low: late C. 19-20; ob.—2. In prison: s.: late C. 19-20. Prob. ex Dutch s. hok, debt, as the C.O.D. (1934 Sup.) notes, and perhaps influenced by hock, a rod, a chain, with a hook at the end. Cf. the U.S. sense, in dawn, which in C. 20, is occ. heard in England, as is hock, to dawn.

hock, old. Stale beer: late C. 18-19: (low) coll. Ex hock, the white German wine—orig. Hochheimer, that made at Hochheim, on the Main.

hock(e)ly-dockie. In C. 18, occ. hock(e)y-dockies. Shoes: s.: (— 1780); † by 1803, perhaps by 1890. Rhyming reduplication on hock, q.v.

hockey; hody. The hook or penultimate card, esp. in faro: from mid-1860’s. O.E.D. (Sup.).


hockey club, the. A, the, the venue-ral hospital: New Zealand soldiers: in G.W. Ex a hockey-club-shaped instrument used in the treatment of the disease.

hock(e)ly-dockies. See hock-dockies.

hocking. A variant of houghing, q.v.

hocks. The feet: low coll. (— 1785); in C. 19-
1595-1800; cf. hodydy-peak (the reference being to a small's horns). Cognate with hodymandod, q.v., in being prob. a rhyming perversion of dodman, a snail.

hodydoddy, adj. Dumpy; coll.: from ca. 1820; † except in dialed. Ex n.
hodypeak; in C. 16, often peke. A fool, a dolt: C. 16-early 17.—2. A cuckold: ca. 1585-1640. Both senses orig. coll., but by 1850, at latest, S.E. The hody, as in hodydoddy, may at first have been a snail; cf. hodmanandod. (Hody-poll, C. 18, same meanings, may orig. have been coll.) [Hoddy, a typical English rustic, is not, as in F. & H., coll., but S.E., and the same holds of hodgepodge, a M.E. corruption of hotch-potch.]

hodman. Oxford University s. > coll.: 1677, S.O.D., which defines thus, ‘A term of contempt applied by [those] undergraduates of Christ Church ... who were King's Scholars of Westminster School, to those who were not, and hence to other undergraduates.’ After ca. 1790, merely historical. (Cf. squill.) Ex the S.E. sense, a bricklayer's labourer: cf. hod, q.v.


hodmamandod, adj. Short and clumsy: from ca. 1820; ob.: coll. when not dial. Ex preceding: prob. suggested by hodydoddy, q.v.

hog, go the whole. See go the whole hog. —Hogian. See hog, n., 3.


hog in a squall or storm, like a. Beside oneself; out of one's senses: nautical coll. (—1887); slightly ob. Baumann.


hug it. See hog, v. 3 and 4.

hogg-rubber. (A ignorant rustic) rustic; pejorative coll.: C. 17. Jonson, Burton. (O.E.D.)


hog-yoke. Nautical, C 19, thus in Bowen: ‘The old-fashioned wooden quadrant in American ships and Grand Bankers, so-called from its likeness to the wooden yoke put over hogs to prevent them breaking through fences’.

hogs, that won’t. That won’t do! Anglo-Indian. (— 1894) ; ob. H., 3rd ed.

Hogan-Mogan; Hogen-Mogen. A Dutchman: a coll. affected by satirists, ca. 1670–1700. Ex hoogmogendhein, the Dutch for high and mighty lords, as applied to the Dutch States-General. See that fine scholar, G. Atkin’s Satires of Andrew Marvell (1892), p. 128.—2. Hence, any ‘high and mighty’ persons: coll. ca. 1640–1750.—3. Also as corresponding adj., with additional sense, potent (of drink): ca. 1650–1730. Cf.:

hogan-mogan rug. A strong drink, esp. ale: coll. ca. 1650–1720. Dryden, in The Wild Gallant, ‘I was drunk; dammably drunk with ale; great hogan-mogan bloody ale.’ Cf. the preceding entry.


hogs, a flavour, a taint, may orig.— ca. 1650— have been coll., but it very soon > S.E. Ex Fr. haut goût. Also fogo, which is a C 19 corruption.

Hogs Norton, have been born at. To be ill-mannered, uncouth: proverbial coll.: mid-C 16–mid 19. Often in orig. form, which adds: where the pigs play on the organs. The reference is to ‘the village of Hock-Norton, Leicestershire, where the organist once upon a time was named Pigg!’, so it is said (Apperson, q.v.).

hogs (or pigs) to a fair or fine market, bring one’s. To profit; do well: coll. C 17–20, ob.—2. Also, ironically: C 18–20.

hogs (or pigs) to market, drive one’s. To sneer: C 18–20; coll. Swift, ‘He sneered so loud that we thought he was driving his hogs to market’; Grose, 1st ed., has the abbr. form drive one’s hogs. Ex the notorious grunting of driven pigs.

hog’s wash of the fo’c’’le head. The deck-hands on a merchant ship: nautical: C 20.

*hoghead, couch a. To lie down and sleep: c. of ca. 1680–1840. Ex hog’s head, a person, 1615 (S.O.1.).


holick. A jerk as one’s stroke begins or ends: rowing coll. (— 1898). O.E.D. (Sup.). Ex:


*hoist. A C 19 variant of:


*hoist, v. To rob by means of the hoist, q.v.; to shop-lift: c. : ca. 1810–60.—2. Implied in hoisting, 2.—3. V.i., to drink: (low) coll.: from ca. 1860; ob. hoist, give a, v.t. To do a bad turn: tailors: from ca. 1870; ob.

*hoist, go upon the. To enter a building by an open window: c. : ca. 1787–1860. Grose, 2nd ed. Cf. heave, v., 1, q.v.

*hoist, open on the. ‘On the drunk’: (low) coll.: from ca. 1860; † by 1930.

*hoist him in! A mid-C 19–20 nautical c.p. verging on j., for it constitutes an order ‘to wel come the captain or senior officer over the side, a relic of the old way of embarking in bad weather with a whip on the yard arm’.


*hoist in, do or have a. To have sexual intercourse: low: from ca. 1850. (Rarely of women.)


*hoist one’s pennants. To grumble; to be severely critical: nautical: late C 19–20. A display of all pennants means ‘I don’t understand your signal’.


hoik. An occ. variant of hoick, esp. the v. [† hoit, hoity, to romp, be riotously inclined, is, despite F. & H., ineligible.]

hoity-toity. See highly-tighty.

hoik is incorrect for hough, q.v.


hokey 1, by (the). See hoaky. Occ. varied by the hokeye and, in late C 20, to by the hokey-pokey: hok(e)ey-pok(e)(ey). A cheat, a swindle: low coll.: from ca. 1845.—2. Nonsense: low coll.: from ca. 1875.—3. A, indeed any, cheap ice-cream sold in the streets: low coll.: from ca. 1884. A C 19 street-cry ran ‘hokey-pokey, pokey ho’; a C 19–20, ‘hokey-pokey, a penny a lump’. All these senses are ex hokus-pokus; the third is not—as some wit proposed—ex It. a che po’co; or, how little. (The form hokery-pokery is Northern dialect.)


hokum; occ. hocum. Anything designed to make a melodramatic or a sentimental appeal; bunkum: U.S. (ca. 1920), anglicised by 1926. Prob. ex hocus-pocus on bunkum. O.E.D. (Sup.).

hol. See hols.

Holborn, the. The Holborn Restaurant in London: coll. (— 1887), anglicised by S.E. Baumann, ‘ finnes Restaurant in Holborn’.

Holborn Hill, ride backwards up (Grose, 1st ed.). To go to be hanged: mid-C 18–early 19. — perhaps orig. c., but certainly soon low coll. Congreve has go up Holborn Hill; ride up Holborn occurs at least
as early as 1659 (see Nares), while Jonson, in
Bartholomew Fair, alludes to the heavy hill. . . . of
Holborn. Such was the route to Tyburn, where criminals were hanged, the criminals riding back-
wards. The last execution at Tyburn, so therefore the last procession thither, was in 1784, the execu-
tions thereafter taking place near Newgate.

hold. (To bet, wager: S.E.—V.1. To con-
ceive a child: coll.: C. 18–20. Ex the C. 17–20
S.E. sense of animal conception. Variant hold it. —
2. In billiards, to hold, v.t.: s. > j.: 1869. A
corruption of hole, by association of held and hold it,
S.O.D.—3. (V.t.) To hold one's own against, be
(clearly) a match for: sporting s. (—1883) >, in
C. 20, gen. coll. (O.E.D.)—4. To be in funds: low
coll. (T. orig. s.): at first, Cockney: from ca. 1870.
In C. 20, mostly Australian. Esp. in do you hold?,
C. 19, and, C. 20 Australia, are you holding?
hold a candle to, and hold a candle to the devil.
See candle.

hold a good wind. (Of a ship) to have 'good
weatherly qualities': nautical coll.: mid-C. 19–20;
slightly ob. Bowen.

hold down (e.g. a job). To overcome the difficul-
ties of; hence to do satisfactorily, with the con-
notation of keeping abreast of the 'snags' and
problems of a difficult job: coll., orig. (ca. 1890)
U.S., anglicised ca. 1910. Perhaps ex:
hold down (a claim). To realise long enough on a
claim to establish ownership under the homestead
law: mining s.: U.S. (1883) and Australia (ca.
1890).

hold hard! ; hold on! Wait a moment! ; stop!
Coll.: the former (orig. in S.E., of pulling
at a horse's reins) from ca. 1760; the latter from
ca. 1860 and orig., and long mostly, nautical.
Colman, 1761, 'Hold hard! hold hard! you are all
on a wrong scent'; Edmund Yates, 1864, in Broken
to Harness, 'I told Meaburn to hold on.' (Although
hold on often occurs in moods other than the
imperative, hold hard very rarely does.)

hold in hand. To amuse; vividly to interest;
have a marked ascendancy over: coll.: from ca.
1890; ob. Ex that S.E. sense, keep in expectation,
hold it! Stay in precisely that position! :
painters' s. (from ca. 1895) > coll. ca. 1910 in the
theatrical, and ca. 1925 in the cinematographic
world.

hold my hand and call me Charlie! A c.p. dating
from ca. 1930: slightly ob. (Mostly derisive)
hold on! See hold hard!
hold on by the eyebrows, or eyelashes, or eyelids.
See eyelashes.

hold on like grim death; hold on to. To be
courageously or obstinately persistent about;
apply oneself diligently to: the former, coll.; the
1850; the former was perhaps orig. U.S.

hold on the slack. To do nothing: nautical
coll.: mid-C. 19–20. Bowen. I.e. the slack of the
rope.

*hold-out. A mechanical device, esp. in poker,
for 'holding out', i.e. concealing, desirable cards
until they are useful: gamblers' c.: ca. 1860–1900,
though app. not recorded before 1903. Maekolynye,
in Shakesp. (1156) Ex Shakesp. (O.E.D.)—
hold out on. To keep something (esp. money or
important information) back from (a person):
 orig. U.S.; anglicised ca. 1924.

hold the market. 'To buy stock and hold it to so
large an extent that the price cannot decline',

F. & H.: Stock Exchange s. (ca. 1880) >, ca. 1890,
gen. coll.

hold the stage. To have the eye of an audience:
theatrical: from ca. 1875.—2. To attract most of
the attention; do all the talking: coll.: from ca.
1895.

hold tight! See tight !, hold.

hold-up. (A highwayman; a bushranger: orig.
(ca. 1888), U.S.; never properly anglicised, and
never gen.)—2. A highway robbery; any robbery
in which a person is held up at firearm-point: orig.
U.S., anglicised ca. 1905 as a col.: by ca. 1933,
S.E.

hold-up, v. Rob on the highway, hence waylay
and rob, hence to cheat: orig. (1887), U.S.;
anglicised as a coll. ca. 1895; in C. 20, S.E. Cf
Australian stick up.—2. In e., to arrest: ca. 1880–
1915.

hold up your danger hand. A C. 17 drinking c.p.
(hold up your head :) there's money bid for you.
(Don't be so modest!) for you think well of you.
C. 17–mid 19: a semi-proverbial c.p. Swift, the
longer form; Marryat, the shorter, preceded by
'as the saying is'. Apperson.

hold with. To approve of; agree with: coll.
from ca. 1895. Ex S.E. sense, to side with: cf.,
in S.E., the ™ hold on, the ob. hold, or for (S.O.D.)
your jaw! Be quiet: (low) coll.: from ca.
1760. Footes. Oec. in other moods than the
imperative. Cf. hold hard!

holding, ppl. adj. In funds: Australian: C. 20:
s. > coll. See hold, 4. Esp. how are you holding?
how much money have you ? : also New Zealand.
holding back. 'Trying to avoid being cured of
wound or sickness': military coll.: 1915. B. & P.
Merely an extension of the S.E. sense.

[holding the baby, left. ] Jocul. S.E. rather than
s. or coll.: late C. 19–20. E.g. of a person left with
stocks and shares that cannot be sold. Ex men
holding the baby outside a shop while the wives take
an unconscionable time inside.]

holding up the corner. A coll. phrase satirical of
a training idler: C. 20. Ware.

hole. The pudendum vulvae: low coll.: C. 16 (? earlier)–20. See also better 'ole.—2. Hence, like c**
(is it to come to signify coition or women viewed as sexual potentialities or actualities, as in 'He likes a, or his, bit of hole' or 'Hole means
everything to that blighter.'—3. The anus: low
coll. in C. 19–20, but in C. 14–18 a vulgarism (as in
Chaucer's ribald Miller's Tale). Abbr. arse-hole. —
4. As a prison-cell, a dungeon, it is, despite F. & H.,
perfectly good Eng., and as, in C. 17–18, a printery
specialising in unlicensed books, it is rather printers'
.j. than coll. or printers'-.—The following two senses
were S.E. previous to ca. 1870, then diffusing to
the O.E.D., they > coll.: 5, a small, dingy abode or
lodging (1619); 6, a monetary or social difficulty, a
mass, a scrape: 1760, Smollett. (Dates, S.O.D.)—
7. A place: mostly military and Society: from ca.
1915. Perhaps ex better hole, q.v.—8. (Gen. in pl.)
A shilling; tramps' c. (—1936). Also grafters' s.
(—1934). Philip Allingham, Cheopsfack.—9. A
tunnel: railwaymen's coll.: mid-C. 19–20. (The
Passing Show, April 7, 1934.)

hole. (Gen. v.t.) 'To effect intromission',
generally expressed by to hold it.

hole, better; gen. better 'ole. A better, esp. a
safer place; esp. if you know of a better 'ole, go to it,
which > in 1916 (the year of Captain Bruce Bains-
HOLE, BIT OF

father's cartoon, a c.p. not yet f; Baimsfather's play of the same title (staged in 1916) reinforced the cartoon.—2. Hence, one's wife's, or occ., one's sweetheart's pudend: mostly military: 1916–19.
hole, bit of. See hole, n., 1 and 2.
hole, put a bit of wood in the. See wood in it.
hole, put in in the. Contemporary with the synonymous garden, put in the.
hole, suck his. A low 'dovetail', or c.p. retort, on request made to the question, 'Do you know So-and-so?': from ca. 1870: ob.
hole-and-corner, underhand or secret, is S.E., as is h.-and-c. work, 'shadiness'; but h. and c. work, sexual connexion, is mid-C. 19–20 low coll.
hole in a ladder, unable (or too drunk) to see a. Excessively drunk: coll.: from ca. 1860.
hole in (anything), make a. To use up largely, esp. money or drink: coll.: from ca. 1660. In C. 19-20, S.E.—2. To interrupt, break; upsets, spoil: coll.: from ca. 1850. Only in such locutions as: make a hole in one's manners, to be impolite (ob.): ... in one's reputation, (of a man) to seduce a girl, (of a girl) to allow herself to be seduced; ... in the silence, to make a noise, esp. an excessive (and occ. continuous or continual) noise: orig., these were prob. to be considered jocular S.E., but they promptly > coll.
hole in one's coat, (pick it). (To find) a cause for censure, a moral flaw: coll.: late C. 16–19. Shakespeare, 'If I find a hole in his coat, I will tell him my mind': Burns on Groce, 'If there's a hole in a' your coats, I reed you to set it.'
hole in one's pocket, burn a. See burn ... hole in the water, make a. To commit suicide by drowning: (jocular > low) coll.: from ca. 1850. Dickens, 1853 (O.S.D.): E. Phillpotte, Yellow Sands, 1928. Cf. hole in anything, make a, 2.
hole it. See hole, v.
hole of content or of holes. The female pudend: C. 18–19: orig. euphemistic, but in C. 18–19 low coll. Also queen of holes.
hole to hide it in, give or lend a. To grant the sexual favour: low coll.: C. 19–20.
holed, ppl.adj. (Of the woman, with well-, large, etc.) having a pudend of a specified kind: C. 19–20: low coll.—2. (Of a man) in, or at, sexual connexion: C. 19–20 low coll.
holey, Incorrect for hoyel (adj.): C. 16. O.E.D.
holer. A man promiscuously and actively amorous: low coll.: C. 16–20, ob. Also holminger.—2. A whore; a light woman: C. 18–mid–19: coll. This word, not nearly so gen. as F. & H. implies, is a reminiscence of the C. 13–15 use, gen. as holour, applied only to men.
hollow, See hollow.
holiday, blind man's. See blind man's holiday.
holiday, gone for a, adj. Imperfect, incomplete, flawed: coll.: from ca. 1860; ob. Cf. holiday, n., in nautical coll. (—1785) and Cornish dial., resp. a spot left untarred or unpainted and a part left undusted, unswept, uncleaned.
holiday, take a. To be dismissed, esp. from a job: slow) coll.: C. 19–20; ob. Cf. get the bag or sack (f.v. bag).
holiday at Peckham, have a. To go without dinner: coll.: C. 19. Ex:
holiday at Peckham or with him, it is all. It is all over with it or him: coll. ca. 1790–1910. Punning on peck, food, and pickles, hungry.
holiday bowler, a bad bowler (at bowls), is cited by B.E. and Grose as coll., but holiday, suitably only for a holiday, frivolous, hence inferior, is S.E., as in the C. 17–18 proverbial she's a(n) holiday dame.
holiday cutter, a. A minor punishment, the delinquent pulling in the cutter instead of going ashore: Conway cadets': from ca. 1890. John Masfield, The Conway, 1933. Analogous is the Conway's holiday messenger, the delinquent attending on lower deck instead of going ashore: Masefield.
holla-halloo. A variant, recorded by Baumann, of hullabaloo.
Hollander. Pointed wax moustaches: South London: 1875–85. Ware. Ex W. Holland, a popular theatre-lessee owning 'the finest pair of black-waxed shonky moustaches ever beheld'.
holler. v. To shout; cry for mercy: a low coll. form of holl, hollau, hollow; app. orig. (—1899), U.S., anglicised ca. 1870. (O.E.D. Sup.)
hollis. A small pebble: Winchester College: ca. 1870–1920. ex a boy's name. (Wrench.)
hollow, adj. Complete, thorough; very easy: coll.: 1760 (S.O.D.) Esp. with thing and victory (or defeat), the former (synonymous with the latter) being a set phrase in C. 18–early 19, as hollow win is in C. 20. Ex:
hollow, adv. Completely, thoroughly, very easily: 1668 (S.O.D.) Esp. with best, as in Townley, 1759, 'Crab was beat hollow.' Skinner, in his fascinating Etymologicon, pertinently suggested that hollow = wholly corrupted. The mainly U.S. form, all hollow, occurs in Footle's The Orators, 1702.
hollow meat. 'Rabbits or hare ... unpopular when served out to a ship's company': nautical coll.: late C. 19–20. Bowen. Prob. suggested by dial. h.m., poultry as opp. to butcher's meat (E.D.D.).
Holloway. The female pudend: low punning: from ca. 1860; ob.
Holloway Castle. Holloway Prison: London lower classes' (—1890). Ware, who mentions that it is, occ. called, evasively, North Castle; it is situated in North London.
Holly. A philippin: Society: ca. 1880–90. Ex John Hollingshead, who, as lessee of the Gaiety Theatre, 'for many years issued soothing proclama-
tions signed with his name, printed in the house bills' (Ware).
hols. (Rarely hol, a single day's holiday): Holidays: orig. and mainly schools' C. 20. The O.E.D. (Sup.) dates at 1906, but the term was in use at least five years earlier. See also Addenda.
HOLUS-BOLUS

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HOME, GET

Thornton.—2. Hence, a speciality: Canadian (—1832). John Beames.

holus-bolus. The head; occ. the neck: nautical: ca. 1870-1905.

holus-bolus, adv. All together; completely; at a gulp; in confusion; holter-skelter: orig. (—1847), dial.; coll. from ca. 1860, perhaps thanks to T. Hughes (as dial.) in Tom Brown's Schooldays; Wylie Collins, in The Moonstone, 'He put [the silver] back, holus-bolus, in her pocket.' The O.E.D. suggests by facetious latinisation of the (whole) holus bolus or as through Gr. Scei Bolos.


Holy Boys. The 9th Foot, from ca. 1881 the Norfolk Regiment: from ca. 1810 (ob.): military. F. & Gibbons. In the Peninsula War, they bartered Bibles for drink and gained a reputation for seeking monasteries. Frank Richards, in Old-Style (1900) explains that: 'The Norfolk Regiment once sold the Bibles given them by a pious old lady, before going overseas, to buy beer.'


Holy Cod. Good Friday: athelists*: 1890; ob. Adopted from Fr. free-thinkers' in Sainte Maure. holy dollar. A dollar out of which a dump (q.v.) has been punched: Australia: ca. 1820-80. Elsewhere, ca. 1850-1910, also as holey d. Referred to in The Hobart Town Gazette, Aug. 10, 1822, though not so named. Punning holey. (Morris.)

holy father. 'A butcher's boy of St. Patrick's Market, Dublin, or other Irish blackguards [pl., sic], among whom the exclamation, or oath, by the holy father, (meaning the pope) is common'. Grose, 1785: Anglo-Irish: (prob.) ca. 1750-1890. Cf. holy lamb, q.v.


Holy Ghost, the. The winning post: turf rhyming s.: C. 20. (P. P. Rhyming Slang, 1932.)


ground. See holy land.—holy iron. See holy poker.


holy (jumping mother of) Moses ! See Moses and of the former of:


holy land or ground (occ. with capitals). St. Giles', London, or rather (Seven Dials) the underworld part thereof: perhaps orig. c.: the former —1821, the latter —1819; both prob. from ca. 1810. Ob. by 1890; † by 1920. A pre-1819 chant runs:

'For we are the boys of the holy ground, And we'll dance upon nothing —i.e. be hanged — and turn us round.' An early explanation has it that the name is 'in compliment to the superior purity of its Irish population' (The Fanci, vol. i: 1821), while The Licensed Victuallers' Gazette of April 3, 1891, refers to 'the Irishmen of the Holy Land'. Cf. Palestine, q.v.—2. Any neighbourhood affected by Jews: (low) coll.: from ca. 1875. Cf. New Jerusalem, q.v., and the next entry.—3. (Only holy ground.) A portion of the Conway's main deck consecrated by the Bishop of Liverpool for church services: Conway cadets*: from ca. 1885. John Masefield, The Conway, 1933.


holy poker or iron. A university bedel (rarely as h. iron): ca. 1850 1910.—2. As an oath (in C. 20, mild): the former (—1840) has variant h. pokers, without the; the latter (—1886), ob. by 1910, was † by 1920. (Cf. the next entry.) Ex the mace carried by an esquire bedel.—3. The penis: low: from ca. 1890; ob. Punning hole, n. 1; cf. poke, v. holy show !; h. lance ! A mild oath: ca. 1850—1910: the latter, not gen. Cf. holy poker, 2, q.v.

holy smokes! See holy kicker.

holy terror. A very formidable person: a person of tiresome manner or exasperating habits: coll.: from ca. 1890.

holy than righteous, more. (Of a garment) torn or holy; (of a person) wearing ragged or torn clothes: (orig. low) coll.: from ca. 1885. Baumann.

holy water, as the devil loves. Not at all: coll.: mid-C. 16-20. (Holy water having, in theology, the virtue of routing the devil.)

holy-water sprinkler. A spiked club: coll.: C. 19 (and prob. centuries earlier). The S.E. is h.-w. fepringle or sprinkle, though, in this sense, even those forms must orig. have been coll., as the sense, a fox's brush (C. 18 and prob. C. 17), was orig. sporting a. 

holy workman, he is a. An ecclesiastical c.p. of C. 16 applied to 'him that will not be saved by Christ's merits, but by the works of his own imagination' (Tyndale, 1528). Cf. a merely moral man.

honor forty. A frequent variant of hommers-forty, q.v. (B. & P.)


home, bring oneself. See home, get, 3.

home, carry or send. To bury, to kill: coll.: C. 18-20, ob. Ex late C. 18-20 coll. > S.E. send to one's last home. Cf. home, go, q.v.

home, get. To 'land' a blow effectively: boxing s.: > gen. coll.: C. 19-20. Ex S.E. pay or
HONEST MAN

1914–18. F. & Gibbons. Ex the marking, '40 hommes, 8 chevaux' (40 men or 8 horses). Cf. omues and cheveus, q.v.

homo. A man: the orig., and a C. 19 alternative (never gen.), of omue, q.v. Lingua Franca. This, as opp. adoption pedantic or jocular of L. homo, is adumbrated—perhaps even illustrated by this (ca. 1843) from Southey's Common-Place Book: 'One of those homo's had 800 head of game in his larder' (O.E.D.); also in Moncrieff, 1843. Cf. the U.S. hombre (ex Sp.). Occ. in jocular opp. to woman: men's: C. 20.—2. A homosexual: from ca. 1925. (Compton Mackenzie, Water on the Brain, 1933.)

homo genius. A genius: 1887, Baumann; virtually †. Punning homosexual and genus homo.

homolo—, in Webster, is incorrect for homol—: from ca. 1860. O.E.D.

homon(y) —. A woman: a wife; C. 18 e. The Discoveries of John Fowler, 1704, 'My homoney is in quod.' Cf. homo, with which it is cognate.


Hun., the, requires the Christian name (or initial) before the surname, its omission being a sol. Fowler.


hone. The female pudend: either euphemistic or low coll.: C. 18–19. D'Urfey, 'So I may no more pogue the home of a woman.'

honest, chaste, was always S.E., despite F. & H., whose second sense, a coll. one, immoral but within the law, arose ca. 1850 and disappeared with the C. 19. As an adv. (= honestly) it is coll. only when, exclamatory, it means 'It's true,—on my word it is.'

honest, the. The truth: non-aristocratic, non-cultural coll.: late C. 19–20. Francis E. Brett Young, White Ladies, 1935, 'Why, I'm proud to drive anyone there, miss, and that's the honest.' Abbr. the honest truth.

honest a man as (any in the cards) when all the kings are out, as. A knave: C. 17–mid-19 coll, the former form being more common till C. 19.

honest as the skin between the brows or horns, (as). As honest as may be: coll.: resp. mid-C. 16–17, C. 17. Still, Jonson, Shakespeare; Jonson. Cf. the coll. > S.E. similes as honest a man as ever broke bread, late C. 16–20 (obs.); as ever trod on shoe-leather, late C. 16–19; as the sun ever shone on, late C. 18–20; and as honest a woman as ever burnt milk: late C. 16–17. (Apperson.)

honest broker. A matrimonial agent: lower middle classes: from ca. 1880; ob. Ware.

honest fellow. See jimmy, n., 2. Cf. the C. 20 stout fellow.

honest Indian or, gen., Injun! Honour bright! Coll.: orig. (— 1884), U.S.; anglicised ca. 1895, mostly owing to Mark Twain's books; ob.

Honest Jack. Felton, the murderer of the Duke of Buckingham (1628); John Lawless, Irish agitator (d. 1837). Dawson.


honest man and a good bowler, an. A person that combines two qualities rarely found together— for, says Quaries in 1835, 'He hardly can be a good
bowl'er and an honest man,' the special combination soon being made generic and then proverbial. Coll.: late C. 16–17; Shakespeare, in Love's Labour's Lost, v. ii, r. Ray. (Apperson.)

honest-to-God or —goodness, adj. and adv. See under honest.

honesty, n. A yardstick of an upright life; a condition of being decorous, prob. from (or corrupted to) a colloquialism such as honest—n—n. (O.E.D. Sup.)

Honest Tom. Thomas Warton (1728–90), the poet and critic. He was somewhat uncouth.

honest woman (variant of), make an, v.t. To marry a mistress: low coll. (and dial.): from ca. 1650. Wycherley, in Love in a Wood, 'Daw. Why she was my wench. Gripe. I'll make her honest then.—2. From ca. 1890, often jocular and meaning simply to marry (and thus give a higher official status to), and, as such, ordinary coll. Collinson.

honey, n. An embrocation, the same to apply to compounds, e.g. honeycomb, is S.E., as the semen write it is C. 12–14 low s. and, in form poor honey, a barbarism, good-natured fellow, is it is C. 18–early 19 coll. when not dial.—2. Abb. pot o' honey, money: rhyming s. (—1923). Manchon.

honey-blob. (Gen. in pl.) A large and ripe yellow gooseberry; Scots coll. Horace Walpole, in a letter of 1744.

honey-bucket. A latrine-receptacle for excreta; Canadian military: from 1914. B. & P.

honey-fall. A piece of good fortune: ca. 1820–50. It is, however, extant in dial.: E.D.D. Bee. Perhaps by fusion—or a confusion—of honeymoon and windfall.

honey for a halfpenny, sell. To think very poorly of: coll.: late C. 16–17.

honey moon. (In C. 19–20, one word.) The first month after marriage: coll. (at first low): mid-C. 16–18.—2. In C. 19–20, the holiday spent together by a newly married couple before they settle down in their home: at first, perhaps coll., but very soon S.E. Ex sweetness = tenderness. Cf. the proverbial it is but honeymoon with them: C. 16–17.

honey or all tured with them, it is all. They are either sworn friends or bitter enemies; coll. c.p. or perhaps proverb: mid-C. 18–19. Grose, 3rd ed.


Hong-Kong, go to. Go away!: coll.: late C. 19–20. Hong-Kong is prob. a euphemism for Hell; cf. go to Bath, Halifax, Jericho, Jerusalem.


honour! ; honour bright! Upon my honour!, or as an emphatic or anxious query. Coll. orig. Anglo-Irish and somewhat late; resp. ca. 1840–80 (as in Selby's Antony and Cleopatra Married, 1843) and from ca. 1819 (e.g. Moore's Tom Crib and W. Black's Beautiful Wretch).

honour mods. Honour moderations: Oxford University coll.: C. 20. (O.E.D. Sup.)

honours (are) easy or even! We (etc.) are level: coll.: C. 20. Ex bridge.

hoo-ha. An exclamation, a "row"; an artillery demonstration; military: from ca. 1905. B. & P. Echoio.

hooch. See hoor.

hooch, hootch. Alcoholic liquor, esp. spirits; U.S. (ca. 1902), partly anglicised in G.W. Ex Alaska hoochino, a very strong drink, made by Alaskan natives. F. & Gibbons; Irwin; O.E.D. (Sup.)


hoof, put a bone in one's. To cuckold: mid-C. 16–17 coll. The anon. play, The Nice Wanton, 1560, 'I could tell you who putteth a bone in your hoof.'


hoof for this fool, a. A proverbial c.p. of ca. 1650–1620.

hood. A blind man (cf. proper, q.v.): C. 18–19: 7 orig. c.


hoodoo. Such an adverse charm as the evil eye; any person or thing causing bad luck (cf. Jonah, q.v.): orig. (—1885), 1881 resp., U.S.; anglicised, as a coll., ca. 1910, but common in Australia several years earlier. Prob. vowoo corrupted; vowoo being a Dahomey native word. (The v. has not been welcomed in Great Britain—nor in its Dominions.)—2. Hence, adj.: unlucky: anglicised ca. 1920.—3. A useless hand shanghaied by a crip as an A.B.: nautical: from ca. 1910. Bowen.

hooper. See hoor.


hoof, v.t. To kick: low coll.: from ca. 1860. Cf. toe, q.v., and hoof out.—2. V.i.: also hoof it. To dance: from mid-1920s. (O.E.D. Sup.)

hoof, bang or beat or pad the. To walk, tramp, run away: low coll.: resp. C. 17, mid-C. 17–18 (in C. 17, beat it on the hoof), and —1838 and ob.; the first in Cotton, the second in Grose and, the older form, in B.E., the third in Dickens. Also, occ., be upon the hoof, ca. 1710–78. Cf. hoof it, q.v., and Shakespeare's 'Rogues, hence, avanti ... Trudge, plod, away it hoof, ("Merry Wives", hoof, under Bell, Down-trodden: coll.: from ca. 1840. (In C. 20, S.E.)

hoof-and-mouth disease. Boasting, esp. at night to one's wife, of one's exploits at golf: jocular coll.: from ca. 1923. Also foot and mouth disease, q.v.

hoof in, recognise or see one's. To discern personal interference or influence in a matter: coll.: ca. 1860, Thackeray. Ex the devil's hoof.

hoof it. To go on foot; tramp, low coll.: late C. 17–20. B. & E. Cumberland, in The Fashionable Lover, has hoof without it—prob. for the metre, though the usage occurs from ca. 1640. Cf. hoofing, q.v.—2. See hoof, v., 2.

hoof out. To eject; dismiss, discharge: low coll.: from ca. 1850. Ex hoof, v.


hoofy. Splay- or large-footed: low coll.: C. 19-20, ob.


hook. See hoo-ha.


*hook, v. To rob, steal, esp. to steal small articles from a (gen. shop-)window by cutting a small hole in it and 'fishing' with a piece of string that has a hook attached: mid-C. 16-18 c. in specific sense; C. 17-20, low coll. in gen. sense.—2. Overreach, trick, gen. in past ppl. passive: low (? orig. c.): late C. 17-18.—3. To obtains, esp. in marriage: coll.: from ca. 1800: gen. of a woman, as in John Strange Winter's Army Society, 'I wonder if Mrs. Traff has contrived to hook him for her sweet Laura.' Ex hook a fish.—4. See hook it.—5. 'To move with a sudden twist or jerk': M.E.—Mod.E.: till C. 19, S.E.: then coll. rapidly > s. and dial. (S.O.D.)


hook, on one's own. On one's own account, at one's own risk and/or responsibility: coll.: orig. (1812), U.S., anglicised ca. 1845. Thackeray in Pendennis. Origin not yet properly determined.


hook, sling or take one's. To run away; depart, secretly or hastily, or both: low: from ca. 1860. H. (slung): Baumann, 1887 (both forms); Kipling, 1892, 'Before you sling your 'ook, at the 'ousets' take a look.' In C. 20, rarely take. Cf. hook it, q.v.—2. Nautical, and only in the take form, is the sense, to weigh anchor: from ca. 1850; ob. hook and eye, adv. Arm in arm: tailors: from ca. 1860. Ex the S.E. term, a metallic fastening, as for a dress.

*hook and snivey; hook-em (or 'em or hookem) snivey, a corruption dating from ca. 1800: (after ca. 1820, the corrupted) hookum snivey. (In C. 20, snivey often > snivey(e)y.) Abbr. hook and snivey, with snivey ol. buffer, an underworld trick for feeding a dog (buffer) and an additional man for nothing (mis); see hook, n., 2, and snivey. C.: ca. 1775-1860. G. Parker's illuminating View of Society; Grose, 2nd ed.—2. Hence (of course omitting with ass the buffer), an impostor specialising in this trick: ca. 1790-1860. (Cf. hook-em-snivey, v.)—3. Cognately, and gen., like the next sense, in form hook-em (or hookum) snivey, a crook of thick iron wire in a wooden handle, used to undo the wooden bolts of doors from without ', F. & H.: likewise c.: ca. 1800-1905.—4. A sarcastic or derisory affirmation accompanied with hand to nose, or as an irrelevant answer (="no one") to, e.g. 'Who did that?' : low, orig. and mostly Cockney: ca. 1850—1915. H.—5. Hence, adj. in senses 1 and 2: late C. 19-20: mostly dial.

hook (at the end), with a. (Often tagged with of it.) A phrase implying 'Don't you believe it!' : low, ob.: the shorter form, (—)1823; the longer, (—)1864, and resp. Bee and Traill. Accompanied by a crooking of the forefinger, or over the left for the practice, Hookey Walker for the phrase.

*hook 'em snivey. A variant of hook and snivey.

hook it. To decamp; depart hastily: (low) coll.: from ca. 1850. Mayhew, Dickens, H. Kingsley. As hook, v.i., however, it dates from much earlier and comes ex hook, v., last sense. Whence hook, slang one's, q.v.

hook-me-dingly. Anything whose right name has temporarily slipped one's memory: naval: from ca. 1890. Bowen. Cf. willow gadget and the prob. derivative ooga-ka-piin.


hook on to. To attach oneself to; follow up: (orig. low) coll.: from ca. 1800. Milliken, 1892, 'It's nuts to 'ook on to a swell.'

[hook or by crook, by. Despite F. & H., this is S.E.]

hook-pointed (Scots —pintled), Imperfectly erected: low amorous coll.: C. 19.

*hook-pole lay. To plunder a man after pulling him from his horse by means of a long, hooked pole: c.: C. 18. Smith's Highwaymen, 1720.


hook up with. To get into a quarrel with; to fight (a person): Canadian (—1932). John Beames.

hooked, ppl.adj. Duped, tricked: see hook, v. esp. in sense 2.


*hoomem snivey. See hook and snivey.


hookerman. A ship: nautical coll. (—1894). Ex preceding, last sense. (O.E.D.)

hookery, play. To play truant: from ca. 1590. (Orig. American.)

Hookey (Walker). See Hookey (Walker).

*hooks. The hands: c.: from ca. 1826. Ex hook, a finger. Also hooks and feelers, as in the
hooks.  


hooks, drop or go or pop off the. To die: low resp. 1869, 1872, and 1837. Perhaps ex a faeton’s corpse dropping, from sheer decay, off the hooks from which it has been suspended.—2. (Gen. with go) to get married, usually of women: coll. (— 1876); ob.

hooks, off the, adj. Ill-tempered, peevish: mid-C. 17–mid-19. Pepys, 1662; B.E.—2. Out of sorts or order: C. 17 († also early C. 18).—3. Slightly mad: late C. 18–mid-19. Scott, 1825. ’Everybody that has meddled in this ... business is a little off the hooks ... in plain words, a little crazy.’ S. E. Unhinged.—4. Dead; low: from ca. 1800. This sense from drop (etc.) grab the hooks; all senses except the last, which is s., are coll.

hooks, off the, adv. To excess: coll.: C. 17. D’Urfey.—2. Immediately; summarily: coll.: from ca. 1860. Trollope, in Castle Richmond, ‘Baronets with twelve thousand a year can be married off the hooks.’ (O.E.D.)

“h hook and feelers. See hooks.

*h hook or snivey. See hook and snivey and hooker.


hooky, adj. Rural Canadian coll. (mid-C. 19–20). as in John Beames, An Army without Danners, 1930, “’Hooky’”, as country folk call a cow given to using her horns’.

hooky!, by. See sense 1 of the next entry.—hooky, play. See hookey, play.

Hooky Walker! A phrase signifying that something either is not true or will not occur: (low) coll., from ca. 1910. Lex. Bal. Also Hook(e)ey, as in Bee, and by hookey / as in Manchon.—2. Be off: (low) coll.: from ca. 1830. Since ca. 1840, gen. abbr. to Walker / as in Dickena’s Christmas Carol, 1843, “’Buy it,” said Scrooge. “Walker!” said the boy.’ Acc. to Bee, ex John Walker, a pre-varicating hook-nosed spy.

hooker. A fool: centre s.: from ca. 1860; ob. Cf. hymer.


Hooley, v. ‘To pile success on success’: City of London coll.: 1894–8. (On Dec. 10, 1897, Horatio Bottomley spoke thus significantly, “But, you know when you apply, if I may use the phrase, ‘Hooleying’ finance to any good industry, there must be a certain reality about it.”)

hoogigan. A lively, rough, not necessarily nor usually criminal: from ca. 1895; s. till ca. 1910, then coll. Ex a *joie-de-vivre* Irish family (the Houlins) resident, in the middle 90’s, in the Borough (London): W. Ware derives it from *Hooley*

Gang, a name given by the police in Islington to a gang of young roughs led by one Hooley : W.’s is preferable. Cf. hoodlum, larrikin, and tough, q.v. (The derivatives, e.g. hoogiganism, do not belong to unconventional speech.)


hoop, put through the. To give a bad time, to punish: coll.: C. 20. Opp. senses 2 and 3 of the preceding.—2. Hence, to reprimand; question closely: coll.: from ca. 1912.

hoop it. See hoop, go through the. 1.—2. To run away: c. (— 1839); † by 1900. Brandon. Perhaps a perversion of hop it.


hooky, stick. The arm: low: ca. 1890–1910. hooped up, get. See hoop, go through the.


hooking, out of all; in C. 19, occ. past all hooking. See ho.

hoops-a-daisy! A variant, or possibly the origin, of hoopsa-daisy / up!: coll.: C. 19–20.—2. Occ. a joyful exclamation, as in D. Sayers, The Nine Tailors, 1934, ‘Hoops-a-daisy! ... I’ve got it,’ Wimsey speaking as he uses a fishing-line.


hooray! This coll. form of hurrah, hurray is half-way between dignity and impudence: C. 18–20.—2. Good-bye! New Zealanders: C. 20.

hooro!; hoooroosh! C. 20 variants of the preceding, sense 1. Coll.

hoos. A thick soup with plenty of body: 1905. R. F. Scott, The Voyage of the Discovery (O.E.D. Sup.). Just possibly ex dial. hoosh /, used in driving or scaring away pigs or poultry: such soup is a staple dish of explorers; its frequent appearance may well have induced a vigorous hoosh /, go away: but cf. of:

hoosh out, v.t. To force (water) out: from before 1923. Manchon. Ex Irish dial. hoosh, to heave, to raise.


hoot. Money; payment, wage; compensation: New Zealand and soon Australia (— 1896). Ex Maori iwi (money), often pronounced with clipped terminal. Morris.

hoot, care a. Care infinitesimally; always in negative or interrogative—i.e. potentially or implausibly negative—phrases or sentences: coll.: from ca. 1905. Possibly ex S.E. hoot, a cry of disapprobation, a shout expressive of obloquy; prob. an adoption of U.S. hoot, an abbr. of, and used in the same sense as, U.S. hooter, an atom, the least bit (1839), Thornton.

hooch. See hooch.

hooster. A wooden trumpet designed to make a horrible noise: C. 20 coll. >, by 1930, S.E.

hoooting pudding. A plum-pudding containing so few plums that they can be heard hooting to one
HOOTs IN HELL

another across the vast : provincial: from ca. 1860 ; ob.

hoots in hell, not to care two. A military variant (—1914) of hoot, care a, q.v. F. & Gibbons.

hoot. A ball, if informal; a dance: coll.: from ca. 1730. Jane Austen, 'At a little hop at the park, he danced from eight o'clock till four.'—2. (hop or Hopp.) A policeman: low Australian (—1938). Perhaps suggested by synonymous cop.

Hopp in Hop-Monday and Hottle is an error for Hock—C. 16. (Hob- for Hock-may, as the O.E.D. points out, be only a scribal error.)


hop-and-go-kick. A lame person: tailors': from ca. 1860; ob.

hop and hang all summer on the white spruce. A Canadian lumbermen's c.p.: from ca. 1890. John Beamce.

hop-harlot. See hop-harlot, of which it is an occ. variant.

hop in. To arrive: coll.: ca. 1820; virtually ♦. Cf. pop in.

hop it. To depart quickly: coll., orig. Cockney: from ca. 1912. Cf. hop the twig, 1. In the form 'op it', is (when not illiterate) a jocular c.p.: see esp. the leading article in John o' London's Weekly, March 23, 1935.


hop-o'-my-thumb. A dwarf: coll.: C. 16-20; slightly ob. (Fæl's grave has upon, the usual C. 16 form.) Smollett, 'You pitiful hop-o'-my-thumb coconut.' In C. 20, gen. considered S.E. Cf. Jack Sprat, q.v.

hop off. To die: 1797, Mary Robinson, ‘Must look upon in the rich old jade, before she hops off’ (O.E.D.); ob. Cf. Craven dial hop and hop the twig, 2. q.v.

Hop Out. Houp our, a suburb of Poperinge: Western Front military in G.W. F. & Gibbons.


hop-over. An attack: military coll.: 1916. Ibid. Ex hop the bag, q.v.—2. Also as v.l.: likewise mostly facetious. R. & P.

hop (or jump) over the broomstick. See broomstick.

hop-pinker. A harlot: low (?) orig. c.: from ca. 1880. Also hopping wife.

*hop-pickers. The queens of all four suits: gambling, c.: from ca. 1885.

hop-pole. A tall, slight person: (low) coll.: 1850. Smedley.

hop the bags. To attack: go over the top': military: from 1916. B. & P. Ex sandbags forming the parapet of the trench.

*hop the twig. To depart, esp. if suddenly: orig. (—1785), c.: from ca. 1860, low; slightly ob. Grose, 1st ed.; All the Year Round, June 9, 1888,

'To hop the twig... and the like are more flippant than humorous.' Ex bird-life.—Whence 2, to die: low: 1797, Mary Robinson, in Walsingham (cf. hop off, above). Punch, in its 1st volume, 'Clare pines in secret—hop the twig and goes to glory in white muslin.' Cf. and see croak, go west, kick the bucket, lose the number of one's mess, slip one's cable, snuff it.

hop the twigs. See twigs.

hop the wag. To play truant or 'Charley Wag' (q.v.): low: from ca. 1850; ob. Mayhew, 'They often persuaded me to hop the wag.'

hop-thumb. A C. 16-17 variant of hop-o'-my-thumb, q.v.

hop where, pipe thief, (hangman lead the dance)! A proverbial c.p. of ca. 1530-1680. 'Proverbs' Heywood; Davies of Hereford. (Apperson)

hope (or I hope) it keeps fine for you! A military c.p., often ironic, of the G.W. Ernest Raymond, The Festing Army, 1930.

hope (or I hope) your rabbit dies! A jocular imprecation: C. 20. E.g. in Dorothy Sayers, Have His Carcase, 1932.

hope (you've got), what a; some hope! A discouraging c.p. reply to one confident of obtaining some privilege: C. 20, esp. in G.W. Cf. hopes!, some, q.v.

hopeful: much more frequently young hopeful.

A boy, youth, young man; ironic: c.p.: from ca. 1855, ca. 1720, resp. 'Cuthbert Bide', in Tales of College Life, has the former. Occ. of a girl.

hoop, some or what. A c.p. expressive of extreme scepticism: C. 20, esp. among the Tommies in the G.W. Cf. hope you've got!, what a, above.

Hopkins; Mr. Hopkins. A lame person: jocular coll. (—1785); ob. Grose, 1st ed. Cf. hoppy and:

Hopkins I, don't hurry. In mid-C. 19-20 U.S., ironic to slow persons; but in C. 17-18 England it implied, Don't be too hasty, and took the form as well come (or hasty) as Hopkins', that came to jail over night, and was hanged the next morning. Cf. preceding term.


hopper-arsed. Large-bottomed: coll.: late C. 17-early 19. B.E.; D'Urfey, 'Hopper-arsed Nancy' Grose, 'from... resemblance to a small basket, called a hopper.'—2. Sometimes, however, it appears to = shrunken-arsed: B.E.'s definition is susceptible of this meaning; not so Grose's.


hopping to hell. See may I go hopping to hell! hopping wife. See hop-pinker. In Anon., Indoor Paupers, 1888.

hoppy. A lame person: coll.: C. 19–20; ob.—
2. A dancing-master: mid-C. 19–20.—3. A fiddler:
low coll. (— 1892); ob. S. Watson, in Wops the
Waf.

*pops in, (to have) got one’s. (To be) tipisy: o.
(— 1933). Charles E. Leach, On Top of the Under-
world.

hopthalmia. Ophthalmia medical students’
(— 1887). Baumann.

Wars.: Ex Fr. horizontale. Cf. the next entry,
& Gibbons. Cf. gutter.

horizontal refreshment. Food taken standing,
esp. a snack at a bar: jocular coll.: from ca. 1890;
ob.—2. Collotion: low pedantic coll.: from ca. 1870.
Cf.:

horizontal. To have sexual intercourse: low
pedantic: from ca. 1845; ob.

horn. The nose, esp. if noisy: C. 19–20; ob.
now. Also horn(e)y. —2. As a drink, almost
in pl., indicative of one’s having been cuckedolded:
despite F. & H., this sense and the v. horn, to
cuckold, are definitely S.E.: likewise S.E. are most
of the horn(s) = cuckolddom terms listed by F. & H.;
all that are relevant follow hereinafter.—4. The
physical sign of sexual excitement in the male; in
C. 19 often used loosely of women. Low coll.:
mid-C. 18–20. Always preceded by the. Cf. horn,
have the, q.v. —5. The male member: coll.: C. 18;
being the origin of the preceding sense.

horn, at the sign of the. In cuckolddom: late
C. 17–early 19 coll.

horn, come out of the little end of the. To get
the worst of a bargain, be reduced in circumstances;
after great efforts, to fail: coll.: the first two
tenses, C. 17–early 18; the third, from ca. 1840 and
mostly U.S. Moreover, in the C. 17–18 usages, the
form is almost always be squeezed through a horn.

horn, cure the. To have sexual intercourse:
C. 19–20, low coll.

horn, get or have the. To have a priapism: late
C. 18–20: low coll.

horn, in a. A phrase that advises disbelief or
refusal: (ex Eng. dial.) mostly U.S., where re-
corded as early as 1840; it never > very gen. in
Britain and was ? by 1910.

horn, wind one’s or the. To publish one’s having
been cuckolded: C. 17–18. Cf. the C. 17–18 pro-
verb, he had better put his horns in his pocket than
wind them.—2. To break wind: C. 18–mid-19 low. —
3. To blow one’s nose hard: from ca. 1850. In
C. 20, gen. blow one’s horn.

horn and hide, all. (Of cattle.) Nothing but
skin and bone: Australia (— 1890). In C. 20,
S.E.

horn and the boot !, by the. C. 17: ‘A Butcher
... swears by the horns and the hoof(s) (a poor
other ... )’], Day, 1840. (O.E.D.)

horn-colic. A temporary priapism: mid-C. 18–
toolbache, q.v.

(horn-fair, as described in Grose, belongs to folk-
lore, not here.)

horned-fist. With hard, callous hands: nautical

horn-grower or -merchant. A married man:
coll.: C. 18.

horn in. To interfere; v.t. with on: U.S.,
anglicised ca. 1830. Dorothy Sayers, Have His
Curse, 1932, ‘Glaisher might not like this horning
in on his province.’ Ex cattle.

horn-mad. As stark-mad, even at being
cuckolded, it is—like horn-work—S.E., but as
extremely lecherous it is a C. 19–20 (ob.) low coll.

horn-pipe or hornpipe. A cry of condemnation
by the audience: theatrical: 1885, The Daily
News, May 6; very ob. (Ware.)

dance the. To be a cuckold: C. 17–18
jocular coll.

horn-pipes in feters. A jiggling dance: Cookney
(— 1861); † by 1900. Mayhew.

horn-rimmers. Horn-rimmed spectacles: coll.:
from ca. 1927. (O.E.D. Sup.) By process of ‘the
Oxford-er’.

Jonson, ‘A child of the horn-thumb, a babe of
booty ... a cut-purse’.

Horncastle, the member for. A cuckold: C. 18–
early 19 jocular coll.

horned range(s). A fife-rail; a shot-rack:
nautical coll., the latter naval (and † by 1890):

Horner, Miss. The female pudend: C. 19–20
(ob.): low.

hornet. A cantankerous person: (low) coll.:
from ca. 1840; ob. Ex the S.E. sense, a virulent
and persistent enemy. Cf. the ironical Gloucestershire
saying, he is as mild as a hornet.

horny and homerie. See horny.

hornification. hornify. A priapism; to pro-
crue one: late C. 18–20; ob.: low coll.

hornings, vbl.n. and pll.adj. of horn, 4, q.v.

Hornington, old. The male member: C. 19 low.
Cf. horny, n.

hornpipe. See horn-pipe.—horn. See horn,
n., 3.

horns, draw or pluck or pull or shrink in one’s.
To retract, withdraw, cool down: coll.: from C. 14,
mid-C. 17 (ob.), late C. 16, and C. 15 († by C. 17),
resp. All were orig. coll., but they quickly > S.E.;
then, excepting the last, they seem to have been
coll. ca. 1760–1890, from which date they have
certainly been S.E. Cf. retire into one’s shell, also
ex a snail.


Horney, knight of. A cuckold: mid-C. 17–
early 19 punning coll. The amon. play, Lady
Alimony. Cf. Horncastle, member for.

hornswoogie. Nonsense, humbug: ca. 1890–
1905. Ex U.S. hornswoogie, to cheat, deceive
(1852). ‘Believed to be of American origin’,
H., 1864; Thornton.

horney, homerie. Scots coll. for the devil:
late C. 18–20. Gen. and Hornor.—2. A constable:
o. of ca. 1810–70. Vaux. Extant in Anglo-Irish

horney, adj. With rising membrum; disposed for
carnal woman: C. 19–20 low coll. Esp. in feel
horney.

horney, old. (Or with capitals.) The male
member: C. 19–20 low coll.—2. See horny, n., 1.

hornomal. See haermal.

horrible. Excessive; immoderate: mid-C. 15–
20: S.E. till ca. 1830, then coll. Lady Mary
Wortley Montagu, 1718, ‘This letter is of a
horrible length’. (O.E.D.) The same applies to
the adv. Cf.:
horrid. Offaivous; detested; very bad or objectionable; coll.: from ca. 1665. Esp. as a feminine term of strong aversion. (S.O.D.)

horr'd, adv. Horridly; very objectionably: 1615: coll. till ca. 1830, then low coll., and finally, in C. 20, sol.


horrors. (Gen. with the.) The first stage of delirium tremens: low coll.: from ca. 1859. H., 1860.—2. Low spirits, a fit of horror: coll.: from ca. 1765; ob. Goldsmith; Miss Ferrier; F. W. Robinson, in Mr. Stewart's Intentions, 1864, 'Sermons always gave me the horrors.'—3. (Without the) Sausages: see chamber of horrors.—4. In o. handcuffs: from ca. 1860; ob.—5. (Rare in singular.) Oro cigarettes: military: 1916—18. Occ. 'errors.'

Horrors, Chamber of. See Chamber of Horrors.

horrors, have the blue. To have delirium tremens: coll.: (—1887); slightly ob. Baumann. Ex horrors, 1. Cf.:


horse, all. (Of a jockey) very small: coll.: 1860, O. W. Holmes. (Not typically U.S.)

horse, as good as a shoulder of mutton for or to a sick. Utterly useless or worthless: coll.: mid-C. 10—mid-18. Jonson.

horse, as holy as a. Extremely holy: C. 16 coll., somewhat proverbial. Psalgrave.

horse, as strong as a. (Of a person only) very strong: coll.: from ca. 1700. Ned Ward; Douglas Jerrold, in Mrs. Caudle, 'You're not as strong as a horse.' (Apperson.)

horse, eat like a. 6. coll.: ca. 18—20. H., 1864—80.

horse, flag (occ. mount) on a dead. 'To engage in fruitless effort': coll. in C. 20, S.E.: from ca. 1840. Ex:

horse, flag (also work, or work for) the dead. See dead horse and horse, n. 3.

horse, old and one-. See resp. old horse and one-horse.

horse, put the cart before the. See cart. . . . horse, put the saddle on the right. See apposition (esp. bleaker) accurately: coll.: C. 17—18. B.E. Cf. the C. 17—mid-18 proverbial the fault of the horse is put on the saddle.

horse, ride (occ. mount) the high. To put on airs, stand on one's dignity; (haughtily) take offence: coll.: from ca. 1715. Addison has great, while in C. 19—20 one occ. finds be on or get on. Prob. ex a high hobby-horse in the nursery.

horse, salt. See salt horse.


horse, talk. To talk big or boastingly: coll.: 1801, Kipling. Ex talk horse, i.e. of the turf. (O.E.D.)

horse, the gray mare is the better. See gray mare. horse and cart. Heart: rhyming a. (—1906). Ware.

horse and foot. With all one's strength: coll.: ca. 1600—1760. (Extant in dial.) Horace Walpole.

horse and harness, come for. That is, for one's own ends: coll.: C. 15—16. Caxton. (O.E.D.)

horse and man. (Often preceded by undue.) Completely: C. 17 coll. Ex jousting.

horse!, and thou shalt have grass—live. Well, let's wait and see! Later on, we'll see! In C. 18— early 19, coll., as in Swift's Poetic Conversation; then dial., mainly Lancashire. (Apperson.)

horse away. To spend in a lottery (cf. horse, n. 1).

horse-box. The mess-room of the sergeant-major(s) of Marines: naval: late C. 19—20. Bowen.—2. See:

horse-boxes. (Rare in singular.) 'The senior military officers' cabins in the old naval troopers': naval: ca. 1850—1910. Bowen.

horse-breaker. A woman hired to ride in the park: ca. 1860—70; Society.—2. Hence, a court- esian given to riding, esp. in the park: Society (—1864); ob. by 1900, t by 1915. Public Opinion, Sept. 30, 1865, 'Those demi-monde people, anonymas, horse-breakers, hetairas... are by degrees pushing their way into society.'

horse-buss. A resounding kiss; a bite: coll. (—1785); t by 1890. Grose, 1st ed. A development from horse-kiss, q.v.

horse-capper (or -coper), -courser (or -cozer), or -chautner. A dealer in worthless or tampered horses. The last, C. 19—20 (ob.) has always been low coll.; h-capper is a corruption of h-coper, which, despite its taint of unsavouriness, was always S.E.; both -couser, low coll. after ca. 1750, and -cozer were orig. S.E.; the latter being somewhat dial.


horse-coster or -couser. See horse-capper.

horse-duffling. See duff, v., and duffing (esp. cattle-duffing).


horse-flesh. See horse, n. 3; horse it; and dead horse. (Horse-flesh is orig.—C. 17—printers a.)

horse foaled on an acorn, a or the. The gallowas: ca. 1670—1850: low proverbial > literary s. Smollett, Grose; Lytton, Ainsworth.—2. The triangles or crossed halberds under which soldiers were flogged'? F. & H.: ca. 1790—1870; military.

horse-godmother. 'A large masculine woman': Grose, 1st ed.: (rather low) coll.: ca. 1570—1890; now—and perhaps orig.—dial. Wolcot, 'In woman angel sweetness let me see, | No galloping horse-godmother for me'; Thackery.
Horse is soon carried, a short. 'A little Business is soon Dispatched.' B.E. : coll. : ca. 1670-1770.

Horse is troubled with corns, that. That horse is foundered: loc. cit. : mid-C. 17-18mid.

Horse. To charge, in one's week's tally, for work not yet completed, the unprofitable remainder being dead horse, q.v. : workman's (— 1857).—2. See also horse, n. 3, and of horse, v. , 2.—3. To work hard : coll. : C. 20.

Horse-kiss. A rough kiss : coll. : ca. 1670-1760. Cf. horse-buss, q.v. Extant in dial. as 'a pretended kiss which is really a bite,' E.D.D.

Horse-ladder send for. To send on a fool's errand : rural (esp. Wilthtire) : coll. : mid-C. 18-early 19. The victim was told that it was needed to get up the horses (to finish a hay-mow) : Grose, 3rd ed.

Horse-latitudes. That space in the Atlantic which, lying north of the trade winds, is noted for bawling winds : nautical : from ca. 1775 ; ob. 'Perhaps adapted from Sp. Golfo de las yeques,' "the gulph of mare, so the Spaniards call the great used between Spain and the Canary Islands" (Stevens), supposed to be from contrast with the golfo de las damas (of ladies), from Canaries to West Indies, usually smooth and with favourable winds,' W.

Horse-laugh. A guffaw : coll. : >, ca. 1800, S.E. : from ca. 1710. Pope. 'Punning horse.'

Horse-leech. An insatiable person a whore : coll. : mid-C. 16-17-17. Jonson. Prob. ex.:—2. A cock : late C. 16-17. Hall, in Satires, 1597. 'No horse-leech but will look for larger fee.' Ex lit. S.E. sense.—3. Whence too : one an extortioneer; a miser : coll. : from ca. 1545 ; ob. (This sense should not, perhaps, be distinguished from the first. The O.E.D. considers it S.E.)


Horse-marines, the. 'A mythical corps, very commonly cited in jokes and quizzes on the innocent,' F. & H. : coll. : from ca. 1820 ; ob., except in form the marines. Scott. 'Come, none of your quizzing . . . Do you think we belong to the horse-marines?' Imp. ex.—2. The 17th Lancers: military: C. 19-20 ; ob. F. & Gibbons. In 1796, on a passage to the West Indies, they did duty as marines.

Horse-marines I, tell that to the. Don't be silly !, or Do you think I'm a fool ? Coll. : ca. 1850-1910. (See marines.) Occ. amplified with the sailors won't believe it or when they're riding at anchor. Perhaps suggested by * horse-marine, sea-horse (in heraldry) ; W.

Horse-miller. As a dandified trooper, hardly eligible.—2. A saddle- and harness-maker : coll. : ca. 1815-80. Ex the S.E. sense.


Horse-nails, feed on. 'So to play as not so much to advance your own score as to keep down your opponent's.' F. & H. : cribbage : ca. 1880-1914.

Horse-nails, knock into. To defeat heavily: low coll. : from ca. 1870 ; ob. Cf. knock into a cocked hat.

Horse- or horse's-nightcap. A halter; esp. in die in a horse(s')-nightcap, to be hanged: low coll., exclow s. († ex. c.) : late C. 16-19. Cf. anodyne necklace, choker, hempen crowd, Tyburn tippet.

Horse of another colour, that's a. (That is) quite another matter : coll. (in C. 20, S.E.) : orig. (1790's) U.S., anglicised ca. 1840 by Barham. Undoubtedly suggested by Shakespeare's 'My purpose is indeed a horse of that colour' (Twelfth Night, II, iii, 181). O.E.D. and Sup.

Horse of Troy, the. The collier River Clyde : naval and military : 1915. F. & Gibbons. She lay off 'V Beach', near Cape Helles, throughout the fighting on Gallipoli.

Horse-pox. An intensive of pox, esp. in adjuration or assovation : mid-C. 17-18low coll. E.g. 'Ay, with a horse-pox.'

Horse-Protestant. A churchoaman : tailors' : from ca. 1860 ; ob.

Horse-sense. Common sense, esp. if unrefined and somewhat earthly : orig. (1833), U.S. : anglicised ca. 1895 as a coll.


Horse sick, enough . . . See sick, enough to make a horse.


Horse to market, run before one's. To count unhatched chickens : coll. : late C. 16-17. Shakespeare. (O.E.D.)

Horse with (or Bayard of) ten toes, ride (up) on a. To walk : coll. : C. 17-early 19. Cf. narrowbone (punning Maryelone) stagecoach and Shank's mare, q.q.v.

Horse, be. To be flogged : to take on one's back a person to be flogged : coll. : ca. 1675-1896. 'Hudibras' Butler ; Smollett : Notes and Queries, Jan. 1, 1881. Ex the wooden horse used as a flogging stool.

Horses and mares, play at. To coll. : schoolboys' : from ca. 1850 ; ob.

Horse's head is swollen so big that he cannot come out of the stable, his. He owes much money to the ostler: a C. 17-18 p.

Horse's leg. A bassoon : military bandsmen's (~ 1900). Waro. 'From its shape'.


Horse's necklace. A contemporaneous variant of horse (or horse's) -nightcap, q.v.

Horse's-nightcap. See horse-nightcap, than which it is more gen.

Horses together, they cannot set (occ. hitch or stable) their. They cannot agree: mid-C. 17-18 coll., as in Swift and Garrick : C. 19-20 dial.

Hostile. See hostile.

Horsy-face. An unpopular officer, esp. if he had a long face : naval : mid-C. 19-20 ; slightly ob. Bowen.


Hose, in my other. Expressive of refusal or disbelief: late C. 16-17 coll. Florio. The early C. 20 equivalent is not in these trousseurs. Cf. I don't think I., in a horn, and over the left, q.v.
hosed and shot. (Gen. preceded by come in and in past tense.) Born to a good estate: ca. 1670-1750. Cf. born with a silver spoon in one's mouth, q.v.

hospital game. Football, esp. Rugby: non- aristocratic coll.: 1897; ob. Ware, 'From the harvest of broken bones it produces'.

hospitality, partake of Her or His Majesty's. To be in good: jocular coll.: 1894 (O.E.D. Sup.).

host, as a familiar term of address, is U.S. (1844), but host (occ. old horse, q.v.), has some extent been anglicised.—2. Moreover, host is, in England, a sol. (—1887) for horse. Baumann.

host, mine, a tavern-keeper, is by F. & H. considered, but this is extremely doubtful: in C. 20, it is a journalistic cliché. Likewise to reckon without one's host, to count one's chickens before they are hatched, was orig. (C. 15), in this its fig. sense, coll., to judge by Caution's 'It says no comyn that ...' (O.E.D.); but it very soon > S.E.

[hostler is mentioned here because Grosé wrongly held it to be coll. and gave it the punning etymology of out-stealer.]

hostile; often pronounced horroist. Angry, annoyed; esp. go hostile, to get angry: Australian and New Zealand military: in G.W.—and after.


hot. A mellay at football; a crowd: Winchester College (—1788). The second sense is ob.

hot, v.i. To crowd, or form a mob: Winchester College (—1788); ob. Also hot down and hot up: R. G. K. Wrench.—2. To heat; coll. from mid-C. 19; earlier—from late M.E.—it was S.E.; but in C. 20, except when playfully or jocularly among the cultural, it is low coll.—indeed almost a sol.—3. To reprimand severely: coll.: 1929 (O.E.D. Sup.). Ex give it hot, in the same sense.


hot, catch or get it; give it hot. To be severely thrashed, defeated, or reprimanded; to thraw, defeat, reprimand severely; coll.: from ca. 1860 for go for, ca. 1859 catch, and 1972 get.

hot, adj. See cop. v., 2.

hot, make it. To ask too much; exaggerate grossly; in short, to behave as if one were ignorant of the limits and limitations imposed by the commonest decency: C. 20 s. >, by 1930, coll. Esp. in
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sex rake: C. 19–20 (ob. the former).—2. A person contemptuous of the conventions: C. 19–20. (Both senses are low col.)—3. A dangerous and/or quarrelsome person: low s. > coll.: from ca. 1880, h. m. being very ob. Ware. (The earlier term—h. m.—may have been suggested by hot shot, q.v.) Cf. hot staff, q.v.

hot milk. The semen virile: low: C. 19–20 (ob.).

hot ca. Extremely severe towards or in respect of: of: C. 1800 > coll.—2. Unusually good or skilful at: from ca. 1890: coll. Variant, hot at. Cf. hot stuff (at or on).

hot place, the. Hall: orig. (ca. 1840) euphemistic; but from ca. 1890, coll. Blackwood's Magazine, March, 1891.

hot pot, a heated drink of ale and brandy, has, despite Grose & F. & H., been prob. always S.E. Cf. hot flannel and huckle-my-buff, q.q.v.

hot potato. A walker: (approximately) rhyming a. 1890; as an unmanly musical: Ware. hot potato, drop like a. To abandon with—often callous or unseemly—alacrity: (orig. low) coll. >, ca. 1920, S.E.: from before 1893. F. & H.


hot pudding for supper, have a. (Of women only) to coll.: low: C. 19–20. Ex pudding, the male member.


hot shot (indeed), a; hot shot in a mustard pot (when both one's heels stand right up), a. Always preceded by the v. to be, which is gen. in the present tense, and indicative of contemptuous irony: ca. 1650–1700. Ex hot-shot, one who shoots eagerly with a firearm.


hot stomach. See hot a stomach ...

hot-stopping. Hot spirits and water: 1861, Whyte-Melville, 'No man can drink hot-stopping the last thing at night, and get up in the morning without remembering that he has done so' (O.E.D.); ob. Cf. hot flannel and hot tiger, q.q.v.

hot stuff. A person very excellent, skilful or energetic (at, e.g., a game): coll. from the early 1890's.—2. A person out of the ordinary in degree, —dangerous,—(mostly of women) sexually hot or lax: coll.: C. 20. Collins.—3. A thing that is remarkable, behaviour that is either remarkable or censurable, a striking action: coll.: C. 20. In G.W. military a: heavy shelling.—4. Hence as adj. or as an admiring exclamation: coll.: from ca. 1910. For all four senses, see esp. Collins and the O.E.D. (Sup.)

hot-stuff, v. To requisition: military: 1914. Ex the n. Whence?


hot tiger. Hot-spiced ale and sherry: Oxford University (—1860); ob. by 1919, † by 1930. Cf. hot flannel, hot pot, and hot-stopping, q.q.v.

hot time (of it), give (a person) a. To make him thoroughly uncomfortable: to reprimand severely: coll.: late C. 19–20. Manchon. See also hot catch it.

hot un. See hot member and hot stuff.

hot up. See hot, v. 1.

hot water. (C. 1885, sense 1 with cost (one), sense 2 with be in.) Trouble; great discomfort: coll.: ca. 1635–1750.—2. Hence, a scrape: coll.: from ca. 1760. Gayton, 1650, 'This same search hath not cost me hot water (as they say)'—cited by Apperson; Lord Malmsbury, 1765, 'We are kept, to use the modern phrase, in hot water,—cited by O.E.D.; Punch's Almanack, Nov. 29, 1840, 'The Times newspaper first printed by steam, 1814, and has kept the country in hot water ever since,' (Until ca. 1890, The Times, until ca. 1900 Punch, had much less of a reputation for respectability than they now enjoy (?)).

hot-water play. A farce: theatrical coll., adopted in 1885 from U.S.; ob. Ware, 'The actors [† characters] in the play always being in difficulties until the fall of the curtain'.

hot with. Spirits with hot water and sugar: coll.: 1837 (O.C.D.); Thackeray, 1862, fig. (O.E.D.). Cf. cider and and cold without, and contrast Fr. cafè aver.

hotch-potch, despite F. & H., has always been S.E.

hotel; occ. Cupid's hotel or Cupid's Arms. The female pudendum: low: C. 19–20, ob. Cf. Cock Inn. (This kind of col. humour is morbid, thank heaven!)

hotel-barbering, n. Bilking; lodging at hotels and departing without paying the bill: low (—1892); † by 1930. The Daily Chronicle, March 28, 1892.

hotel-beat. 'A frequenter of hotels with no means of payment': adopted, before 1900, from U.S. (Ware.)

hotel Lockhart. A lower classes' c. ' satirical attack upon doubtful grandeur': ca. 1890–1914. Ware.


Hotsprs, you are none of the. A c.p. retort to, or comment on, a noisy braggart, with the implication that he is a coward: ca. 1720–1870. Cf. Hastings sort, q.v.


hottie. An Edinburgh High School term for one who has something pinned to his back of which he knows nothing', K.E.D.: mid-C. 19–20.


houghing. Rough or 'dirty' play: ibid.: from ca. 1925. Ex hough, q.v.

hound. An undergraduate not on the foundation: King's College, Cambridge: late C. 18–early 19. The Anecdotes of Bowyer.—2. Applied pejoratively to a man, it is S.E., whence dirty dog, whence dusty pup, q.v. But when as person, as in drink-hound, a drunkard (Evelyn Waugh, vide Brides, 1930) and gloon-hound, a gloomy person (John G. Brandon, The One-Minute Murder, 1934), it is as, verging on coll., of the upper and upper-middle classes, and it dates from ca. 1919. Of the use of

Hounslow Heath. The teeth : rhyming s. (— 1857). * Ducoange Anglicus.* Also Hampstead Heath, which displaced it ca. 1890.

houri of Fleet Street. A harlot : orig. (ca. 1880) journalistic, > gen. ca. 1890, † ca. 1910.

house, the audience in a theatre, is always S.E. (Abbr. playhouse.)—2. An exclusive set at parties and dances—a group whose members sit together and dance together—middle classes (— 1900); virtually †. Ware. (Post-War Society would speak of 'a gang').—3. A gambling form of lotto: military s. (from late 1900's) >, by 1915, coll. Its other name, box and numbers, partly explains the semantics. See also little Jimmy in the Addenda. Frank Richards, Old-Soldier Sahib, 1938, gives, at pp. 69—72, an excellent account of the game.—4, 5. See sense 4, 5 of:


house, be atop of (occ. on) the. A C. 17 variant of hosestop, be at the, q.v.

House, father of the. The oldest-elected member of the House of Commons : from ca. 1850: Parliamentary s. >, ca. 1890, coll.


house-farmer or - knacker. Resp. London coll. and s. for 'landlord', gen. pl., as in Baumann, who, in 1887, scathingly describes them as 'Londoner Bluteauger, die den Armen schlechte, wohlfliche Wohnungen vermieteten'.

house of call. A London house for Traveller Tailors, E.B.: late C. 17—18 tailors' s. >, coll. in early C. 18 and S.E. by 1790. (Also of other occupations.)


house on fire, like a. Very quickly or energetically; coll. : from ca. 1805. W. Irving, 1809, "like five hundred houses on fire"; 1837. Dickens. (O.E.D.)


house out of the windows, throw (in C. 16—17 occ. in C. 17 often fling) the. To make a great noise or disturbance in a house: mid-C. 16—mid-19 coll., then dial. Dickens, in Boz, quotes it in form 'regularly turned out o' windows', i.e. in an uproar. (Apperson.)

house-roof, up in the. See hosestop, be at the.


house-wallah. One who, esp. a Gypsy who, lives in a house in contradistinction to a tent: Gypsies' coll. (— 1890), esp. in Hampshire. E.D.D.


house (or tenement or apartments) to let. A widow: resp. mid-C. 18—20 (ob.), C. 18—19, C. 19—20 (ob.). Grose, 2nd ed.

house under the hill. The female pudendum: low: C. 19—20; †.

housebreaker. A breaker-up of houses: industrial: from ca. 1895. Ware.

household brigade, join the. (Of men) to marry: coll. (— 1881); †. Home Tidings, April, 1881. Punning the name of the English regiment.

Houseman. A member of the college of Christ Church, Oxford: from ca. 1868: orig. s.; by 1890, coll. : by 1905, familiar S.E. 'The Oxford Spectator', late 1888. 'While [it] is called Christ Church by strangers, by others it is called the House, and they themselves Housemen.' Ob. (O.E.D.).


houses, (as) safe as. Perfectly safe: coll. : 1859 (O.E.D.). E. Yates, 1864, 'I have the means of doing that, as safe as houses.' Perhaps, as H. suggests, the phrase arose 'when the railway bubbles began to burst and speculation again favoured houses'.

housestop (or top of the house or, C. 16—early 17, house-roof), be at (or up in) the. To be, become, very angry (cf. hit the roof): coll. : up in, ca. 1540—1660: at, ca. 1630—1800, then dial. Anon., Scooggins's Jests, 1626. (Apperson.) Cf. up in the bougths (see at bougths).

housewife. The pudendum mutelaere: C. 19—20 (ob.) low. (The other senses listed by F. & H. are S.E.)


housey-housey! The c.p. cry with which players of 'House' are summoned: coll., mostly military: C. 20.

house. To hustle, of which, presumably, it is a corruption: Winchester College: from ca. 1850; ob. by 1920.


how I, and. The U.S. variant, partly anglicised by 1933, of the English rather! Now verging on coll. By ellipsis, thus: " ' Fred Perry is a great player.' — "And how [very great a player he is] !";

' That's pleasant.' — " And how [pleasant] !"'

how, as. (= how = conjunction that.) E.g. '1
HOW I, HERE'S

do not know as how I can'; frequently seeing as how. Sol.: mid-C. 17-20; earlier, S.E. Cf. as = conjunction that. —2. Interrogatively, as how? — in what way? — coll.: C. 20. Ronald Knox, Still Dead, 1934, "'I think he's too stupid ..." "As how?" "'Oo, I mean about why he ran away ...'", A blend, or perhaps a confusion, of as for instance and how. —3. Also, tautologically, as in The Morning Post, July 8, 1785, "Bet Cox swears ...", that, though as how she was with the Prince, one night when he was drunk, yet that did not compensate her for the year and tear with his attendants,' quoted in Beside the Seaside, 1934.

how', here's. See here's.

how and about. Concerning all: coll.: ca. 1750-1830. Richardson, in Grandison, 'Emily wrote you all how-and-about it.' (O.E.D., which— wrongly. I feel—gives it as S.E.)

how are you off for soap? A city c.p. of ca. 1830-45. Marrat, in Peter Simple, "Well, Reefer, how are you off for soap?" —2. how are you so? (Often hyphenated and occ. preceded by Lord) Intoxicated: 1816 (O.E.D. Sup.): low s. >, by 1840, coll.; ob. by 1880, † by 1900.


how do we go? What chance is there (of obtaining something unspecified yet known to the person questioned')? — military c.p.: 1916; slightly ob. B. & P. Prob. an abbr. of how do we go about (getting it)?

do-how-you-do, how-d're-do. A fuss, a noisy difficulty, a 'mess': low coll.: ca. 1835. In C. 20, gen. preceded by (a) pretty.

how do you like your eggs cooked or done? An Australian c.p. (from ca. 1908), gen. as an unkind comment on misfortune: very soon, however, there was evolved the c.p. reply, scrambled, like your brains, yer (or you) bastard!


how-howish. See howish.

how is that for high?; how the blazes! See resp. high and blazes.

how'll you have it? See how will ... how many more? How many more minutes (till ...)?: Bootham School coll. (—1925). Anom. Dict. of Bootham Slang.

how much? What do you say, mean? A coll. request for an explanation: from ca. 1850; not quite extinct, though ob. so early as 1914. F. Smedley, 1852, "'Then my answer must ... depend on the ..." "On the how much?" inquired Frere, considerably mystified.

how we applies swim! A c.p. applied to a parvenu, a pretender, a person 'out of the water': mid-C. 17-19. Hogarth, in Works, vol. iii, 'He assumes a consequent air ...' and strutting among the historical artists cries, how we applies swim.' In C. 19 often tagged with quoth the horses-turd. Cf. humble-bee ..., q.v.

how will (gen.) how'll you have it? Either a specific or, hence, a vague general invitation to take a drink. Lyce, gives, as the commonest coll. invitations to drink, the following, all of which are of late C. 19-20, except the last two—rarely heard before ca. 1910:—what'll you have?, what's yours?, how'll you have it?, what is it?, name yours!, let's have one!, what about a small spot? and d'you feel like a small spot? Cf. what's your poison? (see poison) or name your poison?

Howard's Garbage. See Green Howards. Contrast:

Howard's Greens, the. The 24th Foot Regiment, in late C. 19-20 the South Wales Borderers: military: from ca. 1720; ob. Ex its facings and the name of its colonel, 1717-37. Contrast Green Howards.


howd'ydo? How do you do? C. 19-20; coll.; now archaic. (Denis Mackail, Summer Leaves, 1934.)

however. (Interrogative and conjunctive as in 'However did you manage it?') How, in any manner or circumstances? — coll.: 1871. S.O.D. —2. After but. See but ... however.—3. Placed at the end of a sentence, however is coll.: mid-C. 19-20. E.D.D.

howish. Vaguely feeling somewhat indisposed: mid-C. 18—early 19.—2. 'All overish' (q.v.): late C. 18—mid-19. Both coll. In late C. 17—early 19, also I know not howish and I don't know howish, while how-howish occurs ca. 1720-80. Dryden, 1694, 'I am—I know not howish.' (O.E.D.)

howl. Something very amusing: C. 20. (D. Sayers, Murder Must Advertise, 1933.) Ex howlingly funny, or ex howler.

howl, fetch a. See fetch a howl.

howler. A glaring (and amusing) blunder: from before 1890; recorded first in 1872 (S.O.D.) of a bitterly cold day; then 2, at least as early as 1876 (though this sense is ob.), of a—lit. or fig.—heavy fall, a serious accident, esp. in come, or go, a howler, as in Stephens & Yardley's Little Jack Sheppard, 1886, 'Our hansom came a howler': also, a tremendous lie: C. 20 (Lyell). Lit., something that howls or cries for notice, or perhaps, as W. proposes, by way of contracting howling blunder.—3. A fashionably dressed man: London: 1896—ca. 1914. Ware. Ex howling swell, q.v. in:

howling, adj. A general intensive: 1860, H., 2nd ed. (see bags); 1895, Sala, 'howling swell', a howling swell, orig. low, being, ca. 1865—1910, a very fashionably but over-dressed man. Applied also to e.g. a lie, a cad, trousers (i.e. howling bags, i.e. extravagantly cut or patterned: † by 1905: see bags.) S.E. itself has howling as an intensive, as e.g. in the Biblical h. wilderness.

howling comique. A 'very bad comic singer indeed!': music-halls (—1909); ob. Ware. Cf. howler, 1, and howling.

howlingly. A gen. intensive adv.: late C. 19-20: a till ca. 1910, then coll.: now on the verge of S.E.

how's battle. A coll. greeting of 1934-6, among the cultured. A result of the Crisis: battle of life.

how's the way? How are you?; good-day to you!: New Zealand coll.: C. 20.

how's things? How goes it? coll.: C. 20. Lyell. (See quotation at old sock.)

how's your (often yer) belly (off) for spots? A lower classes' c.p. (= how are you?) of ca. 1900-25.

how's your father? A military c.p. of 1915-17, 'turned to all sorts of ribald, ridiculous and heretic uses' (B. & P.). Ex a music-hall song.
HOW'S YOUR POOR FEET?

HUG, GIVE THE HUG

how's your poor foot (often pole) feet? A mainly London o.p.: ca. 1862-70; revived ca. 1889, but ob. again by 1895;† by 1910. G. A. Sala, in Breakfast in Bed. According to Ware, (presumably as how are your poor feet?, an occ. variant) 'from a question addressed by Lord Palmerston to the then Prince of Wales upon the return of the latter from India:—but that visit 'postdates' 1892, when (see All the Year Round, 1863, x, 180) it was indubitably current.


hoy. A call, exclamation of address at a distance (see also howy-oil), hence a summons to attention (esp. in give a person a hoy); also = steady! : late C. 19-20. Used very much earlier in dial.: E.D.D. A mean between archaic howl and hullo.


hub. As an, or the most, important city (gen. hub of the universe). it is S.E., but as a husband, it is a low coll. abbr. of hubby, q.v.: from ca. 1810; ob. Combo, 1812; Hood, ca. 1845. (O.E.D.)

hubbie. An incorrect form of hubby, q.v. [hubble-bubble, n., a hookah, confused speech, and adj., confused, are S.E.]

hubbie-de-shuff. Quickly and irregularly: military s. > coll.—2. Hence, confusedly: coll. Both sexes, C. 18. 'Old military term,' says Grose, † ex Northern dial. hubbidehow, (a) tumult, rabble, confusion.

dubom may possibly, in C. 17-18, have been coll. in C. 19-20, definitely S.E. Perhaps ex an Irish cry or interjection: W.

hubby. A husband: coll.: E. Ravenscroft, in London Cuckoos, 1888 (O.E.D.); 1798, Morton, in the epigoni to his comedy, Secrets Worth Knowing, 'The with poor thing, at first so blithe and chubby, Scarce knows again her lover in her hubby.' Ur. hub, q.v., and:


hubris. 'Accomplished, distinguished insolence' (Ware): academic s. >, by 1800, coll.: from early 1890's, but not ex Gr. On Oct. 28, 1894, The Daily News wrote thus: 'Boys of good family, who have always been toadied, and never been checked, who are full of health and high spirits, develop what Academia slang knows as hubris, a kind of high-floated insolence.'

huck. To bargain: C. 16-17; coll. prob. in C. 16 only, otherwise S.E.: in C. 18-20 (ob.), dial. Holinshed, 1577, 'If any man huckeled hard with him about the price of a selving, [he said]: 'So God helpe me...he did cost me so much,' or else, 'By Jesus, I stole him.'

huckle-my-buff or butt. 'Beer, egg, and brandy, made hot,' Grose, 1785, at which date Grose spells it butt; in the 2nd and 3rd edd., however, it is buff, as again in the Lex. Bal. and in Egan's ed.; Ainsworth, in Rookwood, returns to butt. Since the term is extant, though ob., in Sussex dial. as h.-my-buff, butt is prob. a misprint: see too huggle-my-buff.

huckster, n., despite F. & H., has always been S.E., but in huckster's hands, late C. 16-early 19, prob. was coll. orig., at least in sense: in a bad way.

huckstrum, the hip, may be C. 19 coll. ex Southern dial. (see E.D.D. at hook), but huck- or hulkie-bone, the same, is certainly S.E.

huddle. To have sexual connexion: low coll.: C. 18-20, very ob. Ex C. 17 S.E., C. 18-20 dial., where it = to hug or embrace. E.D.D.

*hue. To lash; punish (esp. severely) with the lash: late C. 17-18 c. B.E. † ex the resulting hue of the victim's flesh, or, more prob., ex S.E. hue, to assail or drive with shouts.

hue and cry, the. The Police Gazette: mostly journalistic (~ 1923). Manchon. Ex the wanted's. "These a town or a village: tramps' o. of ca. 1840-80. Mayhew. Origin?

huff, as a Winchester College abbr. of huff-cap (q.v.) is s. from before 1870 and now †. Mansfield, 1870; Adams, 1878, 2. In (− 1832), now †, to rob by throwing one's arms over the victim's shoulders and then taking (esp. money) from the pockets (O.E.D.).—3. As a low coll. for a (mean) trick, an (artful) dodge, ca. 1860-1910, it is prob. ex the removal of a piece at draughts, wherein Huff, v. and n., is. (F. & H.'s other senses of the n., as both of the v., are ineligible because S.E.)

huff, stand the. 'To be answerable for the reckoning in a public-house,' Grose, 2nd ed.: coll. — 1788; ob. by 1860, † by 1893. Prob. jocularity on huff, a slight blast.


huff-cap as † a swaggering bully,—likewise the corresponding adj.,—was always S.E., but as strong as it was orig. (1577) coll., now S.E., by 1700 † (except at Winchester College, where in C. 19 it survived as huff, q.v. 'From producing people to set their caps in a bold and huffing style', Nares.

huff-snuff, a bully, a person apt to take offence, was prob. coll. orig., but if so it very quickly > S.E. († by 1800). Lit., blow snuff, i.e. show resentment.


huffer, a threatening swaggerer, may possibly have been orig. (C. 17) coll.

huffie. To 'bagpipe', which says Grose, 1785 (neither term appears in later edd.), is 'a piece of bestiality [penlingism] too filthy for explanation'. Low: U. 18–28, 3. (See huff, huffly, huffiness, is, despite F. & H., good S.E.)


*hug. The act or (as in put on the hug) the practice of garrotting: c. (~ 1864); ob. by 1890, † by 1910. The Home Magazine, March 16, 1864. [hug, used fig. (to cherish, cling to), has, despite F. & H., always been S.E.]

hug, close. (Gen. the c. a.) Cotillion: coll.: C. 18–early 19. D'Urfeys, 'They've a new drug! Which is called the close hug.'

hug, give the. To close (with) and grapple the body (of): plagulistic: C. 19-20, ob.
hum brown Bess. See brown Bess. hug-brown Bess. See brown Bess.


hug-m's-tight. A jersey, a jumper, a pull-over:

Glasgow (— 1934). Cf. huggers, q.v.

hug it as the devil hugs a witch. To hold a thing as if one fears to lose it: coll.: mid-C. 18—early 19.

Grose, 2nd ed.

hug the ground. To fall; be hit off one's legs: punistic: c. 19.

hug the gunner's daughter. See gunner's daughter.

[hugger-mugger, whether n., v., adj., or adv., has, despite F. & H., always been S.E.]

hugger-mugger, in. Secretly: C. 16-20; S.E. till ca. 1830, then (in C. 20, low) coll. The C. 16 form is in huck-a-mucker. 'Perhaps partly suggested by M.E. huke, ... cloak', W.

huggers. Stockings: Glasgow lower classes' (— 1941). They cling.

hugging n. Carrotting: o. of ca. 1850-90. Ex hug, q.v.


Hugh Prowler. See Prowler, Hugh.—Hughie l. send her down. See David.—Hughli, n. Hooghly.

hugmates. Some kind of ale: either c. or fashionable s. of ca. 1698-1710. In Letters to Phalaris, Bentley names it along with humpity-dumpy and three-threads, q.q.v.; 'factious' Tom Brown, ca. 1704. Perhaps, as Murray (always ingenuous on drinks,—cf. his binge) brilliantly suggested, ex hug me l'ye.

hugmer; ugmer. A fool: centre s. on mug from ca. 1860: ob.


hulk, to hang about, is not coll. but dial. bullying. See bulky.

bulky, adj. Bulky, unwieldy; ungainly, clumsy: coll.: late C. 17-20. Ex S.E. hulk, an unwieldy mass (as in J. Beresford, 1801), a heavy ungainly person (as in Ned Ward, 1698).

bulky, adj. (Osc. as n.) Unwieldy; ungainly, clumsy; coll.: (— 1785). Grose, 1st ed.

hull. Whole, as 'in the hull of us' (all of us): sol. (— 1887). Baumann.

hull between wind and water, to. Possess a woman: C. 19—20 (†): nautical s. > low coll. Cf. between wind and water, q.v.

hull-cheese 'is composed of ... mault and water and ... is cousin germaine to the mightiest ale', Taylor the Water Poet, 1622: you have eaten some hull-cheese, you are drunk, and as such, latterly only in dial., it remained in C. 19.

Hull, hell, and Halifax. See Halifax, also hell.

hullabalo. A tumultuous noise or confusion; an uproar: from ca. 1760: coll. till ca. 1840, then S.E. 'Prob. ex Northern or Scottish dial. Smollett, 1762, spells hollo-ballo; another frequent early form is ballobal(l)oo. Evidently a rhyming reduplication on hallowo.

hullo, features! See features. (Ware classifies this † freely coq. as = prosoliate.)

huller-head. 'A silly foolish Fellow', B.E. Whence huller-headed, adj. Coll. in late C. 17-18, then dial. Lit., huller = holly.


1816, Jonson; Fletcher. Perhaps orig. o. Cf. juggs, q.v.—2. A hoax, a trick, a cheat: 1751 (S.O.D.); ob. by 1900; † by 1920. 'By 1830, the word was somewhat low. The World, No. 164 (1750); Lamb, 1806, 'I daresay all this is hum', where its derivation ex humbug appears very clearly. —3. A lie: ca. 1820-1900. Bee, 'Hum—a whispered lie.'—4. A person at church: c.: C. 18—early 19. A New Canting Dic., 1725. † ex amon mumbled into a resemblance to hum l—5. A stink: low: from ca. 1890. (Cf. hum, v., 4.) Collinson. Perhaps ex *hum, smelling, anything gnawed and then left by rats (see E.D.D.).—6. The ship Hermes: naval (— 1909). Ware. Cf. Dead Loss.

hum, v. To be all astir, very lively: coll.: 1726 (S.O.D.). Esp. in form it is (are), was (were), etc., humming.—2. Cheat, bamboozle, humbug: 1751 (S.O.D.); ob. by 1850, † by 1880: orig., prob. s., but by 1760 it was coll. Goldsmith, in his Life of Nash, 'Here Nash, if I may be permitted the use of a polite and fashionable phrase, was humb'd.' Ex humbug, q.v.—3. Hence, to cudgel: military: late C. 19—20. F. & Gibbons.—4. As to humble, esp. in hum and ha(h), it has always been S.E.—5. To stink: low: from ca. 1895. Prob. ex the corresponding n. (hum, sense 6): Ware, however, implies that the v. is the earlier and that it dates from considerably before 1895, and states that 'this is an application from the hum-bung of fermentation in an active manure heap.'

hum, make things. (Cf. hum, v., 1.) To accelerate, lit. and fig.: keep busy and moving: coll.: orig. (— 1887), U.S., but anglicised by 1895. Ex the hum of activity (W.).


hum-cap. 'Old, mellow, and very strong Beer', B.E.: late C. 17—18 c. Ex hum, n., 1.

human. A human being: mid-C. 10—20; S.E. till ca. 1830, then U.S. (see Thornton), as it still is, but in C. 20 it is in England either affected S.E. or jocular coll. according to the context.

Humber keel. 'See Billy-boy.'


humble-bee in a cow-turd thinks himself a king, a. A proverbial o.p. of ca. 1650—1800. See also how we apples swim I (Apperson.)

humble-cum-dumble, your. Your humble servant: jocular (— 1823); † by 1900. Bee.

humble-pie, eat. To apologise; be very submissive, even to humiliation: from ca. 1890; dial. till ca. 1850; coll. till ca. 1855, then S.E. Thackray, 1855; Manville Fenn, 'Our savings are gone and we must eat humble pie for the future.' By a pun ex umble pie, i.e. one made from a deer's umbles; cf. dial. to eat rue-pie (W.).

humbug. A † hoax, † befouling trick; an imposition, fraud, sham: coll.: ca. 1740; perhaps not (see O.E.D.) till ca. 1724, when F. Killigrew issued The Universal Jester, a collection of conceits, drolleries, bon-mots, and humbugs', tracked down (see ed. 1860) by H., who also discovered that 'Orator Henley [d. 1756] was known to the mob as Orator Humbug.' The term, however, occurs for certain in 1751—in The Student, ii, 41, a notable
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locus.—2. An impostor, a cheat, a ' fraud': coll. : 1804 (S.O.D.) Dickens in Pickwick, 'You’re a humbug, sir... I will speak plain... An impostor, sir.' Prob. this sense dates back to ca. 1762, for in 1763 we find a mention of the quasi- Masonic society the Humbugs.—3. Deception, pretence, affectation: coll. : 1825 (S.O.D.). Cf. humbugging, i. q. v. Etymology obscure; perhaps ex hum (and haw) + bug (bear). Cf., however, Nash’s 'without humdrum be it spoken', in Saffron Walden.

humbug, v. Impose upon, hoax, delude: coll. : 1751, Smollett, 'The most afflicted of the two taking his departure with an explanation of "Humbugged, edged !"'—2. v. t. to practise or be a humbug: coll. : 1763 (S.O.D.). Whence humbug about, q. v.—3. Change or transfer by fraud or trickery (v.t.): 1821 (S.O.D.): low coll. : ob.—4. v. t. and, more often, i., to cajole: esp. in h. of, cajole or cheat out of something (ca. 1760–1870), and h. into, cajole or hoax into doing something (from ca. 1810). These four meanings are all coll. As used in the following quotation humbug is ob. : H. Kingsley, in Ravana hoe, 'She was always ready to help him, provided, as she told him, “he didn’t humbug”.' Cf. preceding entry for etymology.

humbug, adj., corresponding to senses 1 and 2 of the n. : coll. : 1812 (O.E.D.).

humbug ! Stuff and nonsense ! Coll. : from ca. 1825. Ex the n., 3.

humbug about. To play the fool: C. 19–20: coll. Ex the v. 2.


humbug into and ↑ humbug of. See humbug, v., last sense.

humbug(able). Gullible: coll. : 1825, Southey. Rare in C. 20. But the seldom-used humbugg(able) is recorded as early as 1798.


humbuggery. Imposture; deception; pretence; from ca. 1830; ob. More gen. in U.S. than in Britain, where the word is apt to recall boggler.

humbugging, n. Deception, hoaxing (c. 18–20, ob.); pretence, foolery (c. 19–20). Coll. A. Murphy, 1752, ‘The never enough to be admired Art of Humbugging came into Vogue’; Henry Brooke, 1778, see humbugger, 3. (O.E.D.)

humbugging, adj. Swindling (ob.); hoaxing: from ca. 1800: coll.—2. Decentful, pretentious: coll. : from ca. 1830. Thackeray, 1840, ‘Do you not laugh... at the humbugging anniversary of a humbug’.—3. Apt to cajole or to play the fool: (rather low) coll. : from ca. 1860.

humbuggism. An ooc. coll. variant, now ob., of humbugging, n., q. v.: from ca. 1840. Tom Moore, 1842, ‘By dint of sheer humbuggism’. (The same word is attested in the sense of a melodramatic choral: now rarely used.)

humdrum. A wife, occ. a husband: C. 17–early 19 coll. (Other senses of the n., like all senses of the adj., are S.E.) By ‘reduplication on hum, with reminiscence of drum’, W.

humdreadge; humdungeon. An imaginary illness: coll. (—1785). Grose, 1st ed., spells it humdurance, the O.E.D. humdungeon, thus linking the word with dudgson, ill humour. Grose, ‘He has got the hum dungeon, the thickest part of his thigh is nearest his ase; i.e. nothing ails him except love spirits.’ The saying was ↑ by 1800.


humgruffin. A hobgoblin; a repulsive person. Also, a derivitive term of address: 1842, Barham : coll. Ob. Prob. hobgoblin corrupted by association with griffin. (O.E.D.)

humgumptions. Knowingly deceitful or artful: low: ca. 1820–70. Ex ↑ dial. humgumption, self-importance, nonsense, itself presumably ex humbug + gumption. (See, at hum.)


hum. A C. 17–18 variant of hum (esp. n.. 1).

hummer. (Cf. rapper, whoopper.) A notable lie (B.E., Grose): late C. 17–early 19,—being a special application of the sense, ‘a person or thing marked by extreme energy or activity.’ C. 1831 (S.O.D.); of persons, it has since ca. 1860 been mainly U.S. Ex hum v., 1.—2. An impostor, a pretender: s. > coll. : ca. 1760–1820. Henry Brooke, ‘Our hummers in state, physic, learning, and law’, 1778. A variant of humbug, n., 3, which it may have preceded.

hummis. A callous indulgence, induced by continual friction, on the back of the neck: dockers’ s.—1887 > coll. ; ob. ↑ ex hum or humnock. (O.E.D.)


humming bird. (Gen. pl.) A shell that, in its flight, makes a humming sound: military: in G.W.

humming October. Very strong ale from the new season’s hops: coll. : from ca. 1710; ob. by 1890, ↑ by 1910. Often just October, lit. ale brewed in October.

humnumm(s). A brothel: the form humnumn is prob. coll., while hummums is either s. or more prob., coll. : late C. 17–18. B.E.; Grose. (See O.E.D. and esp. Beresford Chancellor’s informative Covent Garden). Ex Arabic hamnam, a hot bath, some Turkish bath establishments (hummums in S.E.) being or becoming active better than brothels.

hump; sense 1 always preceded by the. Temporary ill humour; a sulky fit: from ca. 1725, but not gen. before ca. 1860. Esp. in get, or have, the hump: Jerome K. Jerome, in Idle Thoughts, 1886, ‘He has got the blooming hump.’ Also have the hump on or up (recorded by H., 1860) : ca. 1862–1900. Perhaps ex hip on dump(e): W.—2. ‘A long walk with a swag on one’s back’ : Australia: ca. 1890–1914. Boldwood. See hump, v., last sense.—3. (The Hump) Portland: nautical: late C. 19–20. Bowen. Ex the Bill’s shape and the feeling induced.

hump, v.t. To have sexual intercourse: ca. 1760–1800, Grose in 1785 remarking: ‘Once a
fashionable word'. It was transported to the U.S., where it survives in c. (Irwin).—2. To spoil; botch; low (mostly Cockney): ex. 1850-1900. Mayhew.—3. To shoofly: a rank or disastrous failure; a fiasco: c.: from ca. 1920. James Curts, The Gift Kid, 1936. Ex 'Hungry Dumpty had a great fall' in the nursery rhyme.

hump, get or have the. See hump, n. 1.

hump on or up, have the. See hump, n. 1.


hump(e)y. As an Australian native hut, it is colloquial. (1846 as unper, 1873 as humpy) >, ca. 1880 j.; but as a settler's small and primitive house, it is s. (1881) >, ca. 1910, coll. A. C. Grant, R. M. Praed, 'Rolf Boldwood', Gilbert Parker. Ex Aboriginal oompi; the initial h is a Cockney addition, Morris. Cf. gungah, q.v.

Hungry, dine with Duke. See dine.

humpy-dumpy. Ale boiled with brandy: coll.: late C. 17-20, ob. B.E.; Disraeli, in Venetia.—2. A short, dumpy, round-shouldered, gen. clumsy person: coll. (—1785): in C. 20, usually considered S.E. Grosio. Prob. by reduplication on hump by reminiscence of dump, with intrusive h (O.E.D.); or perhaps a reduplication on a corrupt or diminutive form of Humphry (W.).—3. Also adj. Both n. and adj. are occ. abbr. to humpy. A Dict. of Slang and Colloquial English (the abridged F. & H.), 1905: 'As adj. and adv., short and thick, all of a heap, all together.'


hunstrum, despite Grosio and F. & H., is S.E., except when, as in C. 18, it is applied jocularly to a violin: then, it is coll.

Hun. Jocular, or pejorative for a very objectionable person: coll.: from 1914 to ca. 1920 strongly; virtually † by 1929. For pre-coll. history, see W.—2. Hence, a flying cadet: Air Force: late 1916; ob. F. & Gibbons. He was destructive of the instructional 'planes.


Hun-pitching. n. 'Raiding an enemy trench in order to secure prisoners for the benefit of the Intelligence Department': military: 1917-18. Ibid.


hunoh. A suspicion; an intuition or premonition: orig. and still mainly U.S. (not long pre-G.W.); anglicised by 1918, thanks to the Canadian soldiers. (—The v.i. and t. to Josette, is ineligible.)

Hundred and Worst, the. The 101st Regiment: a G.W. military nickname ex an unsuccessful at Tanga. F. Brett Young, Jim Redlake, 1930.


hung for hanged (by the neck) is, in C. 19-20, increasingly considered a sol.

hug, be. To be held up, hence at a standstill, (ob.) in a fix: coll.: 1879, says Ware, who implies that it came from America and that it is a Society phrase—which, it may be added, had > gen. by 1910 if not a decade earlier.

hungarian. A hungry person: C. 17: orig. c. or merely and prob. jocular coll.; certainly punning Hungarian.—2. Hence, a beggar, a thief, a freebooter: C. 17, perhaps orig. v. (Occ. adj. in both senses.)

hunger, erroneously for hungri, i.e. hungry: C. 14-25, e.g. in The Digby Mystery, ca. 1485. (O.E.D.)

hungered, a or an. Improperly for a-hungred, anhungered: C. 14-20. O.E.D.

hunger drops out of one's nose. One is extremely hungry: proverbial coll.: C. 16-17. Skelton; Colgrave; Howell in his Letters. Apperson.

hungry as a hunter, as. Very and healthily hungry: coll.: from ca. 1800 or slightly earlier. Lamb, in a letter of 1800, 'I came home . . . as hungry as a hunter'; Marryat; Mrs. Henry Wood. Other hungry as phrases, all coll., are hungry as a church mouse (C. 17-20, dial. from ca. 1800), as a hawk (from ca. 1640, e.g. in R. L. Stevenson), as a June crow (C. 19-20, ob. proverbial, as a kite (C. 19-20, in C. 19-20 dial.: e.g. as a hawk), as a wolf (from ca. 1540, e.g. in Lytton, e.g. in C. 19 Leeds hungry as a dog, and as the grave (C. 19-20, ob. indirectly). Apperson.

Hungry Hundred, the. The first batch of [R.N.R.] lieutenants admitted . . . on the Emergency List in the 'nineties'; naval; † by 1914. Bowen.

hungry Liz.—A 6-inch howitzer now (Oct. 1918) collecting war-loan subscriptions in Bethnal Green [London] is called. W.

hungry Quartz. Unpromising quartz: Australian mining s., ca. 1900, coll. from ca. 1880. Ex S.E. application to poor land and fishless rivers.

Hungry Six, the. 'The first Flying Squadron [of warships] sent round the world under Admiral G. Phipps Hornby in the seventies. They were on "bare navy"' (Bowen) naval: ca. 1875-90.

hunk. A steward in the 3rd class: nautical: C. 20. Bowen. Perhaps ex Scots hunk, a slut, or, more prob., ex:

hunk, v. To clean: (naval and military) late C. 19-20. F. & Gibbons. Origin? Also, among telegraph-messenger boys, hunk up, to polish (one's buttons).

hunkers, on one's. In a squatting position: Scottish coll.: late C. 18-20. R. L. Stevenson. (O.E.D.)

Hunland. The country behind any enemy lines occupied, wholly or in part, by German soldiers: Air Force coll.: 1915. F. & Gibbons.

Hunnicut, the. The Department of German: Liverpool University students: 1916–18. Collin.

Hunnish, Jocular, or seriously pejorative for objectionable, unexpressing; from 1914; ob. by 1921, † by 1929. Ex Hun, q.v.—The adv. (in -y) was said of: hurly-burly.

hurly, a. Correct, indeed a dial and low coll., form of S.E. hunt's-up. O.E.D.

*hunt. To decoy a 'pigeon' (q.v.) to the gaming tables: c.: late C. 17–19. Mostly as vb.n. (B.E.). —2. See hunted, be.

hunt, in or out of the. Having a (good) chance or none; in or out in 'the swim': coll.: late C. 19–20. hunt-about, n. A prying gossip: coll.: from ca. 1850; ob.—2. A harlot ever walking about: low coll.: from 1850; ob.


hunt grass. To be knocked down: pugilists': C. 19. Cf. grass. —2. Occ., though mostly U.S., to be very puzzled (—1869); ob. by 1900, † by 1910. hunt leather or the leather. To field: cricket s. (—1902) to ca. 1900, coll. Now mostly journalistic j.—and something out-moded.

hunt the dummy. To steal pocket-books: o. (—1811). Cf. chase, q.v.

hunts, pitch the v., with vb.l.n. pitching the hunts: Low coll. (mostly costermongers' and cheap jacks): ca. 1845–1914. Mayhew, 1851, 'Pitching the hunters is the three sticks a penny, with the snuff-boxes stuck upon sticks: if you throw [† knock down] your stick, and they fall out of the hole, you are entitled to what you knock off.'

hunter's moon, the. An October moon, the moon next after the harvest moon: rural coll. — In C. 20, S.E.: C. 18–20, ob. Kingsley, 1855.

*hunting. The vb.l.n. corresponding to hunt, v., q.v.—2. hunting, good. See good h.


Huntingdon sturgeon. A native or an inhabitant of Huntingdon: 1687–ca. 1900, though ob. by 1830. Ex a young, flood-drowned donkey thought, in May 1812, to be a sturgeon by the people of Huntingdon, a black pig by those of Godmanchester, the latter being called Godmanchester black pigs, the former Huntingdon sturgeons. Braybrooke’s Pepys (the Diary), cited by Apperson.

Huntley and Palmer, take the v. (ca. 1894–1928) of take the biscuit, take the cake. W. Pett Ridge, in his clever Minor Dialogues, 1895; McKnight, English Words, 1823. Huntley & Palmer being the manufacturers of biscuits.

Hunt's dog, (which) will neither go to church nor stay at home,—like. A mid-C. 17–20 ob., mainly rural and latterly dial, proverbial c.p. applied to any very unreasonably discontented person. Grosz, who explains it by a certain labourer’s mastiff. (Ascribed to, or claimed by, various counties; see Apperson.

hup, v.i. and t. To cry hup (to a horse) in order to urge on or to turn to the right: coll.: from ca. 1820. Scott in St. Ronan’s Well. (O.E.D.)


hurdy-gurdy. As = a barrel-organ, this term was orig. (ca. 1845) coll., for properly it means, or rather meant, a lute-like instrument. Echoic.

hurkar. A messenger: Anglo-Indian coll. from ca. 1800; earlier as harkar(r)ah(h), hurca(or u)rra(or u)r(h). Ex Hindustani harkara, messenger, emissary, spy. Yule & Burnell.

hurry-burry, strife, a commotion, an uproar: mid-C. 18–20. Until ca. 1860, S.E.; since, increasingly thought of but slightly coll. Also adj. and † adv. Ex S.E. hurrying and hurrying.


hurrah boy. (Gen. pl.) A college student: 1928 (O.E.D. Sup.); ob.

hurrah clothes. One’s best clothes: mostly naval: from ca. 1905. (O.E.D. Sup.)

hurrah cruise. ‘A naval cruise to attract popular attention’: naval: from ca. 1920. Bowen. — ex:

hurrah party. ‘Naval men going ashore for a spree’: naval: C. 20. Ibid. Cf. bandai party, q.v.

hurrah’s nest. The utmost confusion: nautical from ca. 1845, but orig. (1829 or earlier) U.S.; prob. anglicised mainly by the popularity of R. H. Dana’s Two Years Before the Mast, 1840. Rare in C. 20; † by 1910 (i.e. in Britain).

hurricane. A very crowded—properly a fashionable—assembly at a private house: ca. 1745–1815; fashionable s. > coll. Mrs. Delany, Mrs. Barbauld, (Occ. as v., spend in or at a ‘hurricane’). O.E.D. Cf. bun-worry, tea-fight, q.v.


hurridum. A late C. 17–early 18 variant of harridan, q.v. B.E.

hurroo*. A coll. form of C. 19–20 S.E. hurroo, a cry of triumph or joyous excitement. Kipling, 1891, in Plain Tales, “There was a wild hurroo at the Club.” (O.E.D.) —2. Also v.l. and v.t.: from ca. 1850.

hurry. ‘A quick passage on the violin, or a roll on the drum, leading to a climax in the representation’, F. & H.: from ca. 1835: musical s. > j. (not in O.E.D.) Dickons, in Box, “The wrongful heir comes in to two bars of quick music (technically called a hurry).”

hurry, be in no. To have, or take, plenty of time: coll. (—1858). Buckle. (O.E.D.)

hurry, not... in a. Not very soon: coll. from ca. 1836. (O.E.D.)

hurry-curry. As a currie or swift car—cited by F. & H.—it is a S.E. nonce-word.—2. See hiri-kari (corrupt for hira-biri). From ca. 1860.

hurry-durry, hurry-durry. Rough, boisterous, impatiently wilful: mainly nautical coll.: ca. 1870—
1720. Wyochley, in *The Plain Dealer*, '‘Tis a hurryburyry blade.' Reduplication on hurry. —2. As a comparatively rare n., C. 18, it is a col. variant of Scottish hurry-burry. —3. A late C. 17 exclamation of impatience or indignation: col. Otway, Mrs. Behn. (O.E.D.)

**hurry-scurry.** A (hurried, disorderly) rush or a crowded rushing-on-or-about: coll. : 1754 (S.O.D.). Ex the adj.

**hurry-scurry,** v. 'To run or rush in confused and undignified haste' (S.O.D.): coll. : from ca. 1770. Prob. ex the n.


**hurry-scurry,** adv. Pelt-mell; in hasty and marked disorder: coll. : 1750 (S.O.D.). Ex the adj.

**hurry up.** (Gen. in imperative.) To hurry; coll. : late C. 19–20; Ware, however, dates it from 1850, makes it Anglo-Indian, and goes so far as to say that it 'originated in the river steamer navigation of U.S.A.' at, presumably, a date earlier than 1890. N.b., both v.i. and v.t.

**hurry-whore.** A harlot ever walking: C. 17 (1830) coll. Taylor the Water Poet, 'Hyryling has ever carryknives and hurry-whores'. Prob. with reference also to what is coarsely known as 'a short time' (q.v.).

**hurt,** v.i. To suffer injury, esp. to feel pain: C. 14–20: S.E. till ca. 1880, then coll. E.g. 'Does your foot still hurt?' (O.E.D.)

**husband's boat.** The Saturday London-to-Margate boat in the summer season: (lowish) coll. : ca. 1805–1914. A Vanity ballad, ca. 1897, was entitled *The Husband's Boat.*

**husband's supper, warm the.** To sit, with lifted skirts, before a fire: low: from ca. 1860; ob.

**husband's tea.** Weak tea: low coll. : from ca. 1850; ob. Cf. water bewitched.


**hush.** To kill, esp. to murmur: c. of C. 18–19. *A New Canting Dict.,* 1725; Grose, 1st ed., 'hush the coll'. Cf. silence.

**hush-boat.** See hush-ship.—hush-crib. See hush-shop.

**Hush-Hush Army, the.** The General Dunsterville's force in the Caucasus and at Baku in 1918–19: military of that period. F. & Gibbons. Ex the secrecy observed in its formation and activity. Cf.


**Hush-Hush Operation.** A projected, never executed attack on that part of the Belgian coast which was occupied by the Germans: military coll. : 1916–17. Ibid.

**hush-hush-ship.** (Often hush-boat.) A seemingly peaceable vessel that, carrying several guns, lures German submarines to its eager arms: 1915–18, and after: orig. coll., but by 1918 S.E. Bowen. Cf. Q-boat, q.v.

**hush-hush show.** 'A very secret affair' (Lyell): coll. : orig. (1917), military >, by 1919, gen. On preceding phrases; see show.

**hush-money.** Money paid to ensure silence: blackmail: coll. : 18 col. (the O.E.D. records at 1709); C. 19–20 S.E. Grose, 1st ed.

**hush-shop, occ. —crib.** An unlicensed tavern: low coll. (h.-crib may well be o.); from ca. 1843, D.U.B.

**Huzzy.** 1706. Wycherley, in *The Plain Dealer*, 'This is a hurryburyry blade.' Reduplication on hurry. —2. As a comparatively rare n., C. 18, it is a col. variant of Scottish hurry-burry. —3. A late C. 17 exclamation of impatience or indignation: col. Otway, Mrs. Behn. (O.E.D.)

**huz up,** v.i. To bo, more gen. become, quiet, silent, or still: coll. : C. 18–20, ob. Cf. the v.t. sense, which is S.E. (O.E.D.)


**husky,** adj. Well-built and sturdy and rough: coll. : ex U.S. (—1889), anglicised ca. 1918, though Canadianised by 1900. Perhaps because so many such men have husky voices; perhaps influenced by husky, an Eskimo dog (strong and hardy).

**husky-lour, huskylour.** A guinea: c. : late C. 17–18. B.E. Ex lour (q.v.), money, + husky, dry. (Dry money = hard cash = a specific coin.)

**huzzy, husky.** When, in C. 10–20, used jocularly as = woman, lass, esp. as a term of address, verging on coll.: otherwise wholly S.E.—2. See huzzy, below. Ex housewife.

**hustings (occ. houstings), you are all for the.** A mid-C. 17–18 proverbial c.p., app. = you're all due for trouble. ? ex Hustings, long the supreme law court of London. (The political sense of hustings did not arise before C. 18.)

**hustle,** n. 'Push'; energetic activity: ex. U.S. (ca. 1860); anglicised, as a coll. ca. 1905. Now almost S.E. Cf. and contrast sense of hustler, v.i. and n. To have some connexion (with): low: ca. 1830–1910.—2. As = to hurry, hustle, greatly bestir oneself, it is gen. considered as a coll. ex the U.S., but it is S.E. of more than a century's standing.—3. See hustling, 2.

**hustler.** A pickpocket that relies on jostling and hustling his victims: ca. 1825–1910: c.—2. One who works energetically and impatiently: ex U.S. (1880), whose, however, there is a previous notation of (often slight) unscrupulousness: anglicised ca. 1905, coll. till ca. 1925, then S.E. Ex hustle, v. 2.—3. An employee whose duty is to hurry people on to 'Tube' (q.v.) trains in London: 1920: s. > j. > coll. (W.)

**hustling.** Impatient energetic work: genesis as for hustle, v. 2.—2. 'Forcible robbery, by two or more thieves seizing their victim round the body, or at the collar', Bee: c. : from ca. 1820; ob.


**hutty.** An elephant: Anglo-Indian coll. : post-1886 but pre-1892: hutty, however, was used prob. as early as C. 18. Kipling, in *The Road to Mandalay*. Ex Hindustani hutte, properly hathi, an elephant.

**huxter; occ. huxter.** Money: low, being 'manch in use among costermongers and low sharpeners', H., 1874, therefore prob. c. at first and mainly: ca. 1860–1910. Also in pl. ? ex huxter, I, q.v. **huzzi, -js; also huzzy.** A housewife's companion, i.e. a pocket-case for needles, thread, etc.
A reduction of housewife: C. 18-early 10. Richardson, Scott. (O.E.D.)—2. See also hussy.

by-yaw! An exclamation of astonishment:


byzantine, as used by Spenser for his cynthia (the gem), is a corrupt form.

bybern-, for hybern-, is, e.g. in hybernate, an incorrect form: C. 17-19. (Like the following hydr-group, with the exception of hydro, this is merely a written error.) (O.E.D.)

hydruleum, -ion, -olean, hydroeleon, etc., are erroneous for hydroleon or -um. (O.E.D.)

hydratn is erroneous for hydritn: from ca. 1820. (O.E.D.)

hydratum. Erroneous for hydrry, an obscure medical term. (O.E.D.)

hydrocs. In error for hydrocsos: from ca. 1840. (O.E.D.)


hydropitcal. A C. 17 error (after epilepsy, epileptic) for hydropitic(al). (O.E.D.)

hydropyritic is erroneous for hydroptic(al): from ca. 1850. (O.E.D.)


hyeminal is in error for hitemal: ca. 1670-1800.

† after autumnal. (O.E.D.)

hyking, n. ‘Calling out at or after any one’: proletarian (— 1909); ob. Ware. A perversion or a corruption of chykack, esp. in the form chy-tke.

hyliost, occ. hu-. A C. 19-20 mistake for hylost, one who affirms that matter is God. Thomas Love Peacock. (O.E.D.)

hymastatics. Incorrect for homostatics: C. 18-20. O.E.D.

[hymenal sweets, colition, and hypogastric cranny, the female pudendum, both listed by F. & H., are ineligible, being mere pedantic euphemisms.] hymenial is erroneous for hymenal: C. 17-20. (O.E.D.)

hymns and prayers. (Esp. unmarried) men and women: late C. 19-20 ob. jocular coll. Suggested by hime and hers.

hyp (1738), gen. the hyp. Also in pl. (the) hyps (1705). Low spirits: coll.; ca. 1705-1895. (See hip, n. and v. and hyph, hyp. hyp.) Ex hypo-

chondria. Lamb, in The Paumbrook’s Daughter, ‘The drops so like to tears did drip, [They gave my infant nerves the hyp.’

hyp, Michael. See hip, Michael.

hyp’d. An † variant of hyped, q.v.

hyper. Abbr. hyperastic and hyper-Calvinist: coll. resp. late C. 17-early 18 (as in Prior) and mid-C. 19-20, ob., as in Spurgeon. (O.E.D.)

hypernese. ‘Ziph’, q.v.; schoolboyish gibberish (e.g. pegnannya, penny): Winchester College: ca. 1830-80. The Press, Nov. 12, 1864.

[Hyphens. See ‘Hyphenation’ in Addenda.] hypnotic. Catachrestic (late C. 19-20) for nar-
cotic or soporific, n. and adj. (F. W. Crofts, Sudden Death, 1935, ‘The [sleeping-]draughts were merely a quite ordinary mild hypnotic.’)

hypo. Abbr. hypoaquiphie (now technically known as thioaquiphie) of soda: from ca. 1860; coll., though not perhaps till thioaquiphie arose in 1873.— Also adj. (Both: O.E.D.)—2. See:

hypo; opp. hypo. (Very) low spirita: coll.: 1711; † by 1880. Abbr. hypochondria. (Cf. hip, hypocon, and hyp, q.q.v.) In 1711 Mandeville brought out his Treatise of the Hypochondriack and Hysterick Passion, vulgarly call’d the Hypo in Men and Vapours in Women. In the same year, Joseph Collett, merchant, wrote from Rio de Janeiro, ‘I have a better Stomach than usual and have perfectly forgot what the Hypo means’; Oct. 16th in his Private Letter Books, edited by H. H. Dodwell in 1933.

hypochondria, in its physiological sense, is C. 18 catachrestic when used as a singular. (O.E.D.)

hypoochoana, like hypooceouna, is a corrupt form of ipecacuanha: late C. 17-18. (O.E.D.)

hypocon, opp. hypocon. Abbr. hypochondria: coll.: 1704 to ca. 1710. ‘Facetious’ Brown. This is earlier than hip(p), hip(p)es, hyp, hyp, q.q.v.

hypothenuse. Hypotenuse: an erroneous spelling that, in late C. 16-mid 19, was S.E.; from then till C. 20, catachrestic; and in C. 20, coll. So too the adj. hypothenual, Ex late L. hypothenusa. (O.E.D.)

hyped (1710) and hypfish (1732). See hipped, hipphish.

hypo, gen. the hypo (1705). See hyp and cf. hypo, q.v. (For a tabulation of the earliest records of the various forms of the various hip, hyp, words, see Gross, P., s.v. hyp.)

hyp. An † variant of hyp’d = hyped: see however, hipped.

I

I after a v.t. or a preposition is, in C. 19-20, resp. sol. and gen. illiterate—i.e. low, coll.

† = in occurs in such † mild or trivial oaths as iex, ifath, ifeeks or i'fees, ifap or i'gap. —2. Long i for ai, ay (e.g. dailly, day > dilly, dyes) is a mark of Cockney. Cf. 'ah for ou', q.v. Short i for e is another mark of Cockney speech and, like the preceding, almost (one surmises) immemorial; e.g. git and stiddy (steady).

I am. See great I am.

I believe yer or you, my boy! Of this o.p., not wholly disused even yet, The Referees, on Oct. 18, 1886, wrote: 'Tis forty years since Buckstone's drama, The Green Buses, was first played at the Adelphi, and since Paul Bedford's [that most popular actor's] "I believe yer, my boy!" found its way on to tongues of the multitude." Cf. Bedford go, q.v., and:

I believe you—but thousands wouldn’t! A o.p. indicative of friendship victorious over incredulity: C. 20. Perhaps ex preceding (q.v.).


I desire. A fire: rhyming s. (— 1859); ob. Cf. I suppose.
I don't think! See think, I don't. Occ. fink.
I hope it keeps fine for you! See hope it keeps fine . . .
I refer you to Smith! An allusive imputation of a lie or a boast: 1897-ca. 99. Ware. 'From a character named Smith with an affliction of lying in The Prodigal Father (Strand Theatre, 1897).'
I say! A coll. exclamation, indicative of surprise: late C. 19-20. Ware implies that orig. it was prolatarian.
I say: sol. C. 19-20. In iliterate speech, it is often repeated needlessly, as in 1). Sayers, The Nine Tailors, 1934, 'And I says, "No", I says'.
I subscribe! Yes (on being offered a drink): coll. ca. 1870-1910.
I.T.A. (Irish toothache); sense 2 (q.v.): prolatarian (— 1869). Ware.
I.—this, bed.—(especially). I certainly shall: military c.p.: from ca. 1930.
-idle is often wrongly used for -able: e.g. uncontrollable. (Rarely distinguishable in speech.)
Ibsanity. A characteristic, or the chief characteristics, of Ibsen (d. 1908), esp. of his plays: ca. 1905-14: jocular coll., coined by Punch on obscenity. (W.)
icate, cut no. See cut no ice.
icycles chance in Hades or hell, not an. Not the least chance: coll.: from ca. 1910.
— (q.v.) if, denotes killer of, killing; the person, et c., represented by the n. forming the main part of the word: sometimes (rarely before C. 20) so extravagant or jocular as to be coll.
ichiserpu. See hackisierpu.
idea is an erroneous form of idea: C. 16-early 18. O.E.D.
—, see kidder!
—. the. What an idea!; well, I never!; coll.: C. 20. Manchon.
idea?, what's the big. What folly have you in mind?: coll.; orig. U.S., anglicised ca. 1930. O.E.D. (Sup.)
idigraph, etc., is erroneous for idigraph, etc.: from ca. 1839. So too ideological, etc., for ideological, etc.: from ca. 1797. (O.E.D.)—And, C. 19-20, ideological for ideologue. (O.E.D.)
—. An idea: C. 15-20: S.E. till C. 18, then low coll.
identical, the. The very same person, thing, or statement: coll. (— 1891). N. Gould, in The Double Event, "I'm the identical," said Jack.
identified with; be: identity oneself with. Catachrestos when simply — to be associated, associate oneself, with: C. 20. Ex U.S.
idle fellowship. (Gen. pl.) A sinecure fellowship: Oxford and Cambridge Universities' coll. (— 1884); ob. Ware.
-idles, the. Idleness, whether healthily deliberate or morbidly lazy: C. 17-20: coll. Gen. preceded by it sick of, i.e. with. Apperson.
-idolathite or -yte. Erroneous forms of idolathye: C. 16-18. (O.E.D.)
—. An idea: military: 1915. F. & Gibbons. Perhaps influenced by Fr. dis done! (Fr.)
—, see, y, an extremely common coll. suffix.
if it is often omitted in coll. speech, as in 'And yet, come to the rights of it, he'd no business there at all' (Baumann): C. 19 (? earlier)-20.
if as how. If: as in 'If as how anyone had come up' (Baumann): sol. (—1887).
if my aunt had been a man she'd have been my uncle. A C. 18-19 mid-proverbial c.p. in derision of one who has laboriously explained the obvious. Apperson.
if only I had some eggs I'd make (or cook) eggs and bacon—If I had the bacon I, with slight variations. A military c.p. of the G.W.
if-shot or -stroke. An unsound stroke: cricketers' coll.: 1897, Ranjitshihji. (Lewis.)
if you call yourself a soldier, I'm a bloody Army Corps! A military c.p. implying superior soldierliness in the speaker: 1915; slightly ob. B. & P.
its and ands. Conditions and stipulations; circumlocution; hesitation: coll.: C. 10-20, but since ca. 1820, mainly dial. and rurally proverbial: More, 1513; Davenport, 1824; Richardson, 1748; Sir Robert Horne, in The Times, May 30, 1924 (Apperson).
—ify, for -ify: incorrect in rarefy and stupify.
Igray Corner, at Bullecourt, a spot dangerous because of shell-fire in 1917. F. & Gibbons.
ignomus. An ignorant person: C. 17-20. In C. 17, coll.; then S.E. Ex Ignomus, a nickname for the title-role lawyer in Ruggles' lawyer-satirising play, 1615,—this latter being ex a Grand Jury's endorsement to a bill of indictment.
Ignomous Jury. The Grand Jury that, in 1681, rejected a bill of indictment against the Earl of Shaftesbury: late C. 17: coll.: then historical, therefore sancturared among the museum-pieces of reconditely allusive S.E. (O.E.D.)
ignorance. See ignorance.
I'll. I shall, or I will: coll.: C. 18. O.E.D.
—. Cf. 1d (at it, 1).

ikey, adj. Smart or smartly dressed: alert, wide-awake, artful: low: from ca. 1870; ob. Ex the preceding, sense 1.—2. Hence, conceited: low (— 1890); slightly ob. Barrère & Leiland.

ikey Mo. Same senses, period, and genesis as Ikey, n. Ex Isaac Moses.


ill. See illigant.

illiant. See illigant.

ill of that. As of that class, set, or family, it is a mid-C. 19–20 sol.: the phrase properly 'implies coincidence of name with estate, e.g. [Lundie of that ilk = Lundie of Lundie]', W. 


ill. A coll. abbr. of I shall, I will: C. 17–20 (O.K.D.). Cf. I'll and Ile (at ile, 1).

ill, be. To vomit: C. 19–20; euphemism, ca. 1916, coll.

ill-convenient and its n. in ence. (The being) inconvenient, ill-suiting: C. 18–20; S.E. till ca. 1820; coll. ca. 1820–70; then low coll. (O.K.D.)


I'll give you Jim Smith! I.e. a thrashing: (mostly London) streets' c.p.: 1887-ca. 90. Ware. Ex a pugilist prominent in 1887.

I'll be hopping to hell!; often preceded by well!; a C. 20 c.p. indicative of astonishment or admiration.

I'll have a basinful of that! A (mostly lower-middle classes' and lower-middle classes') c.p. directed at a long word or a new one: 1934–5. A synonym, from ca. 1910, is I'll have two of those!; as in Michael Harrison, Spring in Tartarus, 1936.

ill to, do. (Gen. in negative.) To do with (a woman): Scots coll.: C. 19–20; ob.


*illegitimate, adj. 'Applied to steak-chasing or hurdle-racing, as distinguished from work on the flat'; F. & H. : racing (— 1888); in C. 19, a.: in C. 20, coll. or †.

illigant; more correctly illigant. Elegant: Anglo-Irish: C. 18–20; † except as an archaic jocularity or as a typical example of the Irish pronunciation of English. See also elegant.


[illiteracies are in this dictionary termed solecisms ('sol'). For a classification, see Fowler.]

illiterate and stude are often, in C. 19–20, confused. So are illusion and allusion.

[Illuminated, having an interlinear translation, is given by the O.E.D. as college s. : true; American.]

illure, illurement are erroneous forms of allure, allurement: late C. 16–17. Due to the influence of words having prefix in- (O.E.D.)

illustrated clothes. See historical shirt.

illustricity, illustriousness, is very faulty in its form: C. 17–18. (O.E.D.)


I'm affatic. A boat, or a coat: rhyming s. (— 1859 the former; — 1874 the latter). H., resp. 1st and 5th ed.

I'm so frisky, Whiskey: C. 20 rhyming s. image, esp. in you little image. A term of affectionate reproach: coll.: from ca. 1870; ob.

I'm in the boat—push off! A variant, less gen., of if* you, Jack, I'm all right. B. & P.

imbibation. Erroneous for imbription: from ca. 1820; ob. O.E.D.

immanent, imminent, eminent, have, since ca. 1600, often—mostly the second for the first or for the third—been interconfused. So too the corresponding nn. and advv. All catachreses. O.E.D.

Immelmann. To have or to get one's own back: aircraft engineers': from ca. 1917. The Daily Herald, Aug. 1, 1936. Ex the name of a well-known aviator—one of the three greatest German G.W. 'aces.' He died in action on June 18, 1916; see Franz Immelmann, Immelmann, published in English in 1935. Max Immelmann was known as der Adler von Lille, the eagle of Lille.

immense. A general superlativa; splendid: from ca. 1760. G. A. Stevens, 1771, 'Dear Bragg, Hazard, Loo, and Quadrille, 'Delightful, extatic! immense!' Cf. great, q.v.

immembrane, adv. Immensely; very: 1764, Murphy, 'An immense fine Woman'. (O.E.D.)


imminent is ca. 1650–1820, occ. used—erroneously, of course—for emergent—urgent. O.E.D.

immigrant; imminent. See eminent, imminent immortal. Excessive; inhuman: coll.: ca. 1540–1630. (O.E.D.)

immortally. Infinitely; superhumanly: coll.: from ca. 1540.

Immortals. The 76th Foot Regiment, British Army: military; from ca. 1804; ob. F. & Gibbons. In the Maharatta War, 1803–4. Most of the men were wounded, very few killed, and so men kept reappearing. Known also as the Pigs and the Old Seven-and-Sixpennies, q.v.

imp. As a mischievous child, S.E.—2. One who prepared cases for a (law) 'devil'; q.v.: legal: from ca. 1856; ob.

impack. See contack.


impall. An † erroneous form of impale. O.E.D.

impartial was, in late C. 16–18, occ. used in error for partial. (O.E.D.)

impayable, adj. Beyond anything; the limit; 'priceless': coll.: 1818 (S.O.D.). ob. Direct ex Fr.; cf. Fr. c'est impayable!

imperance, ence; also † imperence. Impudence, impertinence: sol.: 1766, Colman, 'I wonder at your impudence, Mr. Brush, to use me in this manner.'—2. Hence, an impudent person: from

imperial, as a tuft of hair on lower lip, has, despite F. & H., always been S.E., but as adj., (of a fall) on one's head, it is sporting s. 1861. Suggested by imperial crown. Cf. crown.

imperial pop. Ginger beer: Cockneys': in 1854. This term was in honour of Napoleon III, who in that year passed in state through London. Ware.

imperiality, as an imperial right or privilege, is a C. 19-20 ghost-sense fathered by Webster and 'based on a misprint from Tooke'. The right word would be imperialty. (S.O.D.)


implement. 'Tool, a Property or Fool, easily engag'd in any (tho' difficult or Dangerous) Enterprise', B.E.: coll.: late C. 17-18.

implement, to. Fulfil (a promise). Ca. 1827-33 this term was so abused that it might, for that period, be fairly considered as cultured, even pedantic, s.

implicit for explicit (C. 18), a sol.; for 'absolute', 'unmitigated', (C. 17), a catchasias. (O.E.D.)

imp. See impot.


importune as = to import, portend, is catchastic. Spenser, imitated by Marston. (O.E.D.)

importunity of friends. Book-world c.p. or coll., ca. 1660-1780: 'the stale Excuse for coming out in Print, when Friends know nothing of the matter', B.E. (Still a frequent make-believe.)

impose. 'To punish (a person) by an imposition'; † university and ob. school s.: from ca. 1885. (O.E.D.) Cf.:


impose or imposh. Impossible: coll.: from early 1920's. (O.E.D. Sup.)

impost. That weight which, in a handicap race, a horse has to carry: racing: 1883 (S.O.D.).

impost-taker. A user that, attending the gaming tables, lends money at exorbitant interest: ca. 1690-1830: c. B.E., Grose. Cf. sixty per cent., q.v.


impragnate is, in C. 17-18, occ. used erroneously for impregnable. (O.E.D.)

impress, an erroneous form of impress: late C. 16-17.—2. Of impress (a distinctive mark): C. 17.—Likewise, impress is in C. 19 an occ. error for improvet, to lend, advance money. And vice versa. (O.E.D.)

imprimatur and imprunature are, in C. 19-20, occ. confused, the one for the other. O.E.D.

improve, on the. Improving: coll., mostly Australian: from ca. 1925.

improve the occasion, to turn to spiritual profit, seems, ca. 1855-90—not is it yet—to have been 'much in use among Chadbands and Stigginses'; H., 5th ed. H. calls it a., but it is perhaps rather a Nonconformist c.p. Lawrence, in Gay Livingston, 1857 (O.E.D.).

Imps or imps. Imperial Tobacco Company shares: Stock Exchange: from ca. 1919.

impudent stealing. 'Cutting out the backs of coaches, and robbing the seats', Grosse, 2nd ed.: ca. 1788-1830. (Not a mere description (hence S.E.), but a definition).

improve. A harlot: fashionable s. until ca. 1830, then coll.: 1784. Ob. by 1890; † by 1930; being S.E. in C. 20.

imame; imah; imahy! Go away! G.W. +; orig. military. Ex Arabic. (Also, intensively, imahy yeller!)

imahes (etc.) artillery. Trench-mortar batteries, esp. the 3-inch Stokes: Australian military: 1915; ob. Because, after firing, they hurried away.

in, n., a person in (esp. a political office): despite F. & H., this is S.E.)

in, preposition: all phrases not found here—and only a few are listed here—must be sought at the dominant n. or pronoun.—2. If suppressed, as before these days (at this time or age), it produces a coll.: C. 19-20.—3. 'Within the sphere of a particular class or order of things': coll.: 1866, Ruskin, 'The newest and sweetest thing in pinnacles' (O.E.D. Sup.).

in, adv. In office: C. 17-20: political coll. >, in C. 19, S.E. Shakespeare.—2. In season: from ca. 1850, though anticipated in C. 17: coll. till C. 20, then S.E. Mayhew, 1851, 'During July cherries are in as well as raspberries'.—3. Fashionable: coll.: from ca. 1890.—4. See in it and in with. —5. At the wickets: from ca. 1770: cricket coll. >, ca. 1860, S.E.—6. In, in prison (— 1862). 'It is the etiquette among prisoners never to ask a man what he is in for,' Anon., Five Years Penal Servitude. Cf. inside, q.v.—7. To the good; with a profit (of e.g. £1000): from ca. 1890: s. >, ca. 1905, coll.

in is often used erroneously for un-, as in inquity. Instances: too numerous to mention, nor need they be listed, here. Note, however, that many once S.E. words in in- have been displaced by those in us- with the gradual weakening of the Latin tradition. See esp. Fowler.

-in for -ing, when not a coll. affectation by the upper and upper-middle classes (hunting', shootin' and fishin', you know), is a low coll. bordering on, and in C. 20 considered as in fact being, so. It is contemporaneous with the whole of Mod. E.

in, and a bit. With a little extra; with a tip in addition: coll. (— 1923). Manchon.

in, well. See well in.


in-and-out (also, and gen., in pl.), inside working, intimate or secret details, is S.E., but the adj., when = variable, uneven (as applied to a horse's form), is sporting s. (— 1885) >, in C. 20, coll. >, ca. 1930, S.E.—2. An in-and-out is a pauper frequently returning, for short periods, to the poor house or casual ward: low: from ca. 1880. Ware.

3. The In and Out. The Naval and Military Club in Piccadilly: naval and military officers': from not later than 1914. F. & Gibbons, 'From
the words "In" and "Out", painted on the pillars of the approach to the courtyard in front.—


in-and-out shop. 'A shop through which one can walk in and out along a passage, where the goods are hung up for inspection' (O.E.D. Sup.): coll., orig. and mainly Londoners': C. 20.


[In dock, out nettle is proverbial and therefore ineligible. For this phrase, see esp. Apperson.] 


in for, gen. with it. Due to receive punishment, incur trouble: C. 17–20. Coll. till late C. 18, then S.E.—though not dignified. Cf. the modern for it, q.v.

in for (a person), get it. To remember to one's disadvantage: (rather low) coll.: from ca. 1860. Derby Day, 1864 (p. 121).

in it. (Of a woman), pregnant: lower classes' (—1923). Manchon.


in it, be. See in with.—2. Sharing in the benefits of robbery or swindle: c. (—1812). Vaux.—3. See like the man...

in it, for all there's. Esp. with play one's hand. To one's or its utmost capacity: (somewhat low) coll.: from ca. 1880.

in it, little or nothing or not much. (Gen. preceded by there's.) Much of a muchness; virtually no difference: racing s. (ca. 1905) >, by ca. 1912, gen. coll. (O.E.D. Sup.)


in on. Participating in, admitted to a share of, some thing or some affair of unusual interest or importance: coll.: from ca. 1919. 'Am I to be in on this ?'


in the tub. 'In the bad books of seniors'; (of a ship) having incurred the Admiral's displeasure: naval: late C. 19–20. Bowen.

in the wind. Drunk: nautical (—1823); ob. Egan's Grose; Bowen. See three sheets in the wind.

*in town. 'Flush of money', Vaux: c. of ca. 1810–60.

in with (or in it with), be. To be on guard against, or 'even with' (a person): low coll.: ca. 1860–1905.—2. To be on intimate or profitable terms with: late C. 17–20: coll. till C. 19, then S.E. Surtrees, in Hillington Hall, 'He was in with the players too, and had the entrées of most of the minor theatres.'—3. Hence, to be in partnership with: (orig. low) coll.; in C. 20, S.E.: from ca. 1810; Vaux.—4. Hence, in the swim: coll.: from ca. 1860.—5. To be compared with, count besides: coll. (—1889).

inamorata. In mistake for, or a corruption of, inamorata, prob. by confusion with amoreto: C. 18. Mrs. Manley. (O.E.D.)

inaccessible is erroneous for inaccessible, ceaseless, incessant. (O.E.D.).

insert (?) is an erroneous form of insert. O.E.D. [inch, to move slowly or by very small degrees, is S.E.]


inch before (or beyond) one's nose, not to (be able) to see. To find oneself in the dark: C. 17–20 coll. Apperson cites two examples of the now rare affirmative.

inch in, v.i., to encroach, seems to have been coll. in C. 17–18. B.E., Grose. So too the vbl. n., inching-in.


incipience, -ni, are occ., C. 15–17, used erroneously for insipience, -st. So too inypsum. O.E.D.

incision is, in C. 17, occ. used erroneously for incision, engraving. (S.O.D.)


incoven(i)ey. 't Rare, fine, delicate, pretty, nice '; fashionable s. of the c.p. kind: ca. 1585–1640. Shakespeare, 1598. * etymology.—Also adv. (O.E.D.)

inconstancy is occ., ca. 1580–1630, used in error for inconceivableness. O.E.D.


indaba. A(n important) meeting or conference: from ca. 1907: South African coll. >, ca. 1920. s. Ex indaba, 'a native council meeting for the discussion of business important to the tribe'; Pettman. Indeed and indeed ': Really and truly: coll.: from ca. 1670. Wycherley, 'Indeed and indeed, father, I shall not have him ' (O.E.D.).

indentures, make. To stagger with drink: C. 17–18 coll. Rowlands; Franklin, Drinker's Dict., 1745. (The legal documents had their tops or edges indented, mainly for identification.) Apperson.

indescribables. Trousers: coll. (jocular): 1794. Dickens. Of this orig. euphemistic, but by 1850 jocular and semi-satirical group, the two commonest synonyms are inexpressibles and unmentionables, q.v.; others are indispenables, inseffables, inexplicable, innominables, unnurturable and unwhisperables, q.v. The earliest is inexpressibles (1790), the latest unnurturables. By 1900, all except indescribables, indispenables, inexpressibles, and unmentionables were >; the second > ca. 1920. Not belonging to this class, yet cognate, is sit-upons (—1860).

index. The nose: sporting: 1817; ob. Cf. gnomon, q.v.—2. The face: (low) coll., or s. > coll.: from ca. 1818; ob. Egan. Cf. dial.
iniskillen, the female pudend, is literary rather than colloquial.


Indiana rubber. See bungy man. Bowen.

Ex his elasticity.


Indian. A Maori (1769); an Australian Aboriginal (1770) ca. catastrophic (Australian, New Zealand): ob. by ca. 1840, † by 1890. Morris.

Indian. Thomas Warner, a C. 17 governor of Dominica. He had Indian blood. (Dawson.)

indicated, pl. adj. (Always with v. to be.) Necessary (occ.); (gen.) desirable, advisable: coll.; from ca. 1915. E.g., 'a drink was indicated'. Ex S.E. sense, to suggest, to point to.

indict and indict are occ. confounded. So indie for tattle and incresce. (O.E.D.)

Indies, black. See black.

[Indirect question — See Fowler.]


individual, when merely = person, dates from ca. 1740: until ca. 1870, S.E.; then coll. when contemptuous, low coll. > sol. when unintentional. See esp. Fowler.

indorse; more gen. endorse. To cudgel. Esp. indorse with a cudgel. Coll. (— 1785); † by 1880. With a pun on † dorse, the back. Gros, 1st ed. — 2. Vt. and i., to practise sodomy (on) (—): low: from ca. 1780. Whence:

indorser. A sodomite: lower (— 1785); ob. by 1870, † by 1900. Gros, 1st ed.

Indy. India: C. 16–20: until C. 18, S.E.; then coll. till late C. 19, when it > sol.

ineffable, the female pudend, is a literary synonym, but as one not to be named, an anonymous journalist (1859), or a tremendous swell (1861), †, it is coll., while turliefles, trowsers, is a coll.: 1823 (O.E.D.): † by 1880, † by 1900. Leigh Hunt, 'the cuticles were given up for the ineffables'.

Inescraturation is erroneous for inescraturation: C. 17. O.E.D.

['Inevitable' or inseparable nicknames. See Nicknames.]


inexplitics. Trousers: coll.: Dickens, 1830, in Bos.: † by 1890. Cf. ineffables, inexpressibles.

inexpressibles. Trousers: coll.: from ca. 1790.


infestation is an † erroneous form of infestation. O.E.D.

infant. Walter Hancock's steam-carriage, 1832: coll.: 1832–ca. 1840.


Infantry, light. See light infantry.

Infants, the. The Infantry: cavalrymen's: late C. 19–20; ob. Cf. Gre-Gees, q.v.

[Inferre, cited by F. & H., is ineligible.]

inferior. Any non-professor member of the school: Winchester College: from ca. 1840; ob. Mansfield.

Inferior portion, the. The younger Tories: political: 1885–ca. 90. Ex a Gladstone-written phrase, which 'took at once, and was satirically used' (Ware).

inferiority complex. See complex.


[Infinitive for infinitive proceeded by do or does is coll. (late C. 19–20), only in dialogue. E.g., A. A. Milne, Two People, 1891, 'Anybody know its name?'..."

infarnary, my or the answer's in the. I.e. in the affirmative, which it puns: coll.: C. 20; very ob. Trob. ex some boxer's fate.—2. Hence, my answer is unfavourable, or a piece of bad news: from ca. 1910 and imm. much more gen. than sense 1.

inflected and afflicated are frequently confused by the illiterate.

influ. An occ. variant (— 1923; ob.) of flu, q.v. Manley.

influence. See 'fluence.

influence in the right quarter, have. A virtual e.p., naively ironic, applied to a man that has got a menial or otherwise distasteful job: New Zealanders': in G.W.

info. Information: Australian, mostly low and esp. among racing touta: from ca. 1930.


-ing added to a n., e.g. admiralving, indicates the active state of being that which the n. (e.g. admiral) denotes. Often preceded by a-, as in 'Hudibras' Butler's a-colonelling. Certain final consonants of the original n. are doubled. Coll.—2. For -in(s), -in(n), -in(n), it is sol.: C. 19–20. See quotation at handle the ribbons.

Inga. See ingan.

Inge. India: sol. (— 1887). Baumann. (Cf. Injun.) Whence injee-rubber (ibid.).

ingenious, ingenuous: often confounded since ca. 1600. So, too, the mn. and advv.

ingle, a calamine, and v., to sodomise, to caress, are, despite F. & H., ineligible, as is ingler, a sodomist; but we may note ingle used (from ca. 1840) catastrophically for an open fireplace: ingle-nook, the female pudend, is a mere literary synonym.


Ingun. occ. Ingan. An onion: Cockney (— 1823); ob. 'Jon Bee.'

inhaltler, is, from ca. 1820, often confused with habitable and inhabited. (French influence. O.E.D.

inhalent is wrong for inhaltal, C. 19–20. Ibid.

Inside Squatter

injuns, have a long. To live a long time; have had a long innings, to die at a ripe old age; coll.: from ca. 1860; in C. 20, S.E. Cf. not out (96), 96 and still alive.—2. Also as for preceding entry, sense 1.


innocent as a devil of two years old (as). A mocking assent to a declaration of innocence; coll.: ca. 1860–1770. Ray, Swift. (Apperson.) The equivalent new-born babe (or child unborn) simile is S.E.


innovents, massacre or slaughter of the. Devoting to extinction a number of useful measures which there was not time to pass; The Times, July 20, 1859: Parliamentary: the former from —1859, the latter from —1870.


inns a court is a coll. form of inns of court: C. 17–early 19. O.E.D.


insane, when applied to things, is coll.: from ca. 1845.


inscipient, erroneous for incipient, —incision, —tion, for incision, —incise(1), t. for inside. (All O.E.D.)

insect. Abounding in, or of the nature of, insects: coll.: ca. 1859, Alex. Smith (O.E.D.).


inside, adj. Secret, intimate, trustworthy (information): from ca. 1890; coll. till C. 20, when S.E.


inside lining. Food and drink, a meal. Esp. in get an inside lining. Low coll. (—1851); slightly ob. Mayhew. Cf. inner lining.


inside of a(n). ‘The middle or main portion of a period of time, exclusive of the beginning and end,’ O.E.D.: coll.: from ca. 1890; ob. Hardy, in Tour, ‘Home for the inside of a fortnight.’ Ex preceding term.

inside of everything, know the. To be especially well informed: from ca. 1880: coll. till C. 20, then S.E.

inside out of, take the. To empty (a glass); gut (a book): coll. (—1843); ob. Moncrieff, ‘Haven’t you taken the inside out of that quart of gatter yet?’ (See gatter.)


inside squatter. A settler in a civilised district;
Australian coll.: ca. 1870–1900. Cf. outside squatter, q.v.

inside the mark. Moderate; coll.: adopted from U.S. before 1900; slightly ob. Ware.

inside the probable. Probable; within probability; coll.: (ca. 1909); perhaps orig. American, certainly ob. Ware. Cf. the preceding.

inside track, be on or have the. To be safe or at a point of vantage; (with of) to understand thoroughly; sporting a., by 1890, coll.: from ca. 1845 ob. See inside running.


inside worry, do an. To copulate: low coll.: from ca. 1840.

inside. See inside, n., 2.

insignia is erroneous when used as a singular (with pl. -ae): from ca. 1770. O.E.D.

insinuator. A slow, twisting ball: cricketers' jocular coll.: 1845; ob. Lewis.

insinuation. An † erroneous form of incision: C. 17–18. O.E.D. (As = engraffment it is S.E.)

insky. A comic suffix added to almost any word; often abbr. to -sky, as in buttinsky, who butts in. C. 20. Prob. ex U.S.—2. Also in imitation of Russian, as is offsky.

insolente. Erroneous for insolite: late C. 15–18.—insomniac catachrestically as = troubled with dreams. Mainly a lexicographical aberration introduced by Blount. (O.E.D.)

inspector of pavements. A person in the pilory: ca. 1820–40. Egan.—2. A man out of work: from ca. 1840; ob. by 1914, † by 1920; also as:

inspector of public buildings. A man out of work: from ca. 1870; † by 1920.

inspire. To impart—unavowedly—a tendential, esp. an official tone to an article: journalists (—1884) orig. coll.; in C. 20, gen. S.E. The Daily Telegraph, Feb. 14, 1889, 'All the inspired papers keep laying stress upon this fact.'


institution. A widely recognised and established practice or object; an idea, an invention: coll. (1839): ex U.S. (1788). In C. 20, almost S.E. O.E.D.

[instrument as female pudend is, despite F. & H., ineligile.]

instrumentation. 'Erroneously used for: Performance of instrumental music; playing on instruments (with reference to style) 1866,' O.E.D.


'int. Abrbr. († except in poetry, where archaic) of in it: except in poetry, coll.: C. 17–19. (O.E.D.)

'int. A sharper: C. 17 c. Brathwayte, 'His nips, infects, bungers and prinados.' † ex interest or ex L. intus.

intellects. Intellectual power(s); 'wits': late C. 17–20: S.E. until ca. 1860, then—when not an archaisch survival—coll.: from ca. 1890, low coll. (O.E.D.)

intended. A prospective and affianced husband or wife: coll.: 1767 (S.O.D.) Gen. as my, your, etc. intended.


intentions. One's hitherto unavowed intention in regard to a proposal of marriage: coll.: 1796, Jane Austen (S.O.D.). Only of the man, esp. if bashful or 'dishonourable'.

Inter. The University of London Intermediate Examination; from ca. 1870; coll. in C. 20; orig. a. Cf. matric, which, likewise, was orig. an abbr.—3. Hence, adj., as in Inter arts: late C. 19–20.—3. Esp. the Third Inter, the Third International: Socialist coll.: post-G.W. (James Cleugh, Orgy by Numbers, 1934.)

inter-varisty. See 'variety'.

introduce. To introduce: sol. (—1887). Baum.

interesting condition, be in an. To be with child: coll.: from ca. 1745. Smoulet, 'I cannot leave her in such an interesting condition'; Dickens, in Nicholas Nickleby.

interloper. An unlicensed trader, interfering smuggler; hanger-on; busy-body: C. 16–20; ob. Coll. till ca. 1750, then S.E. Minshou; B.E.

internater. 'An international player: Oxford undergraduates': from the middle 1890's. Charles Turley, Godfrey Marter, Undergraduate, 1914, 'He is an "internater", you see, and I don't think he ever forgets it.' By 'the Oxford -er'.

internece, though etymologically incorrect as defined by Johnson, has so engraved itself on the language as it cannot be condemned even as catachrestic: though I see that the O.E.D. classifies internece, 'mutually deadly destruction', as improper.

[Interpolation is a minor characteristic of unconventional speech; prob. it does not antedate the C. 20, for it was rare before the G.W. E.g. not bloody likely, also-bloody-lutely, cheer-(most-)jrightfully-fo! This last occurs, e.g., in Dorothy Sayers, The Unpleasantness at the Bellona Club, 1928.]

intersturb, erroneous for † interturb.—intersusception, for intro- or intus-susception. O.E.D.

into, in to. 'The words should be written separately when their sense is separate,' Fowler, who cites, as erroneous, 'Lord Rosebery took her into dinner.' This catachresis has > distressingly gen.

into (a person) for (a sum of money), be. To owe a person so much, to have let him down for a stated amount: Canadian coll.: late C. 19–20. John Beames, Gateway, 1932, 'I wouldn't give that fellow Dow much rope . . . He's into me for ninety dollars, and I can't get a cent out of him.'

into (a man), be. To fight: coll. (—1864). H., 2nd ed. Cf. pitch into, slip into, qu.v.

into (a woman), be or get. 'To possess a woman carnally,' F. & H.: low coll. C. 19–20. Cf. be or get up—see up.

into next week. Violently; fatally; into insensibility: coll.: mid-C. 19–20. Gen. with knock; ooo. with hit, stab, etc. See the entry at knock into a cracked hat.

intricate. A sol. (—1923) for intimate. Manchou.

intro. An introduction (to a person): coll.: 1899, Clarence Rook; Michael Harrison, see the quotation at cold-canoeus.
introduce (the) shoemaker to (the) tailor. To kick on the posterior : lower classes" (—1909); ob. Ware.

innendo. An erroneous spelling of innuendo:
C. 18–20. O.E.D.

invade. To grope, or to coilt with, a woman:
C. 17–19. A literary euphemism, as are F. & H.'s be improperly intimate, or have improper intercourse, with, and interlural trench.)

invalid, invalidly. Valetudinarian; rather ill:
coll.: from ca. 1860. West 1844. S.O.D.

inveigle. To wheedle (one) out of something:
coll.: from ca. 1845; ob. E. N. Najder, 1849. He
managed to "inveigle " me out of sixpence. (O.E.D.).


invest, v.i. (v.t. with in) To spend money (on), lay out (for):
coll.: from ca. 1860.

investigate. Obstinately prejudiced; malignant, virulent; embittered:
C. 16–20. S.E. till ca. 1890, then coll.; in C. 20, low coll. Dickens, 1861, 'I felt inveigle against him.' (O.E.D.)

invidious. A sol. pronunciation of inviscious:

invincible. Invincible Brotherhood: Fenian coll.: 1885–ca. 1900. Ware.—2. Preston North End Football Club in 1889–99, when they 'won the League Championship without losing a match; and ... the F.A. Cup without having a goal scored against them.' (Athletic News Football Annual: 1935–36): sporting coll.: 1888–90.

invitant. Eroneous for an invited person:
C. 17–19. Galt. (O.E.D.)

invite. An invitation: late C. 16–20. S.E. until ca. 1830, then coll.; in C. 20 low coll. if not indeed sol. Dickens, 'The Invites had been excellently arranged.'

inward, a. C. 17, is ineliglible.—2. In pl., see innards.

-lous as a pejoratiue suffix tends to be s. or a. E.g., robustious.

ipecac. A coll. abbr. of ipecacuanha: late C. 18–
20: S.E. until ca. 1890, thon coll.

Also lpses.

ipsidixit. An unsupported statement: Cocksney
(—1886); ob. by 1895, ♩ by 1910. H., 2nd ed.
Ex ipses dixit.

ipsilateral is incorrect for ipsilateral: 1913.
O.ED. (Sup.)

Irish, n. Irish whiskey: from ca. 1880; ob.:
coll. verging on S.E. Crackanthorpe,—2. Anger: orig. dial. >, ca. 1870, s. See also Irish up and cf. paddie, a synonym. Presumably ex Irish immodesty.

Irish, adj. A derogative: from ca. 1890. In addition to the ensuing phrases, there are many in dial. (see esp. Grose, P.). Probably ex Irish uncoyness and lack of general education before C. 19.


Coll. verging on S.E.


Irish apricot. A potato: late C. 18–19. Grose, 1st ed. C. 19 variants, Irish apple or lemon. 'It is a common joke against the Irish vessels, to say that they are loaded with fruit and timber; that is, potatoes and broumsticks,' Grose.

Irish, arms, the; occ. Irish arms. Thick legs:
mid-C. 18–mid-19. 'It is said of the Irish women', remarks Grose, 1st ed., 'that they have a dispensation from the Pope to wear the thick end of their legs downwards'. Also Irish legs.


Irish battleship or man-of-war. A barge: naval:

Irish beauty. A woman with two black eyes:

Irish draperies. (Exceedingly rare in singular.)
Cobweb: (English) lower classes' (—1909). Ware.

Irish evidence. False evidence; a perjured witness:

Irish fortune. Pleudendum multihere and pattons:

Irish horse. Salt meat; corned beef: nautical:
(—1877); ob. Baumann.


Irish legs, see Irish arms.—Irish lemon, see Irish apricot.—Irish man-of-war. See Irish battleship.

Irish pennants. Flag-ends of rope, etc.: nautical:

Irish promotion. See Irish rise.

Irish rifle. A small comb: from ca. 1840; ♩ by 1920.

Irish, rise. A reduction in pay or position: coll.:
ca. 1850–1910. Also Irish promotion.

Cf. Irish toolbache.

Irish theatre. A guard-room: military: (—1864):

In late C. 19–20, gen. simply toolache, Cf. Irish root, q.v.—2. Pregnancy: lower classes' (—1909). Ware. Also I.T.A.

Irish toyle. A thief in the semblance of a pedlar:
mid-C. 16–18 c.—2. A member of the twelfth order of rogues: C. 17 c. Both in B.E.

Irish up, get one's. To become angry: low:
from ca. 1880. See Irish, n.

Irish wedding. The emptying of a cesspool:

Irish wedding, to have danced at an. To have two black eyes: coll.: from ca. 1840; ob.

Irish welcome. An invitation to come at any:
time: coll. verging on allusive S.E.: late C. 19–20, Benham.

Irish whist, where the jack takes the ace).
Cotillion: low: from ca. 1850; ob.

Irishman, the Wild. The Irish mail train between
London and Holyhead on the L. & N.W. Railway: coll.: from ca. 1890. The Times, Mar. 27, 1862. 'The Irish express train (better known as the Wild Irishman) between London and Holyhead ...' (O.E.D.)


Irishman's harvest. The orange season: London

Irishman's hurricane. A dead calm: nautical:

Irishman's promotion or rise. A reduction in

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Irishman's reef. 'The head of a sail tied up': nautical s. (— 1880) > i.
Irishman's rest. 'Going up a friend's ladder with a hod of bricks': lower classes' (— 1900). Ware.
Irishman's rise. See Irishman's promotion.
iron, v.i. and t. To speak ironically to: sol when not deliberate: ca. 1820–95. Bees's Dict. of the Turf.
iron, bad. A failure; a mishap; bad luck: workmen's: from ca. 1890; ob. Cf. bad bread.
iron, shooting and thieving. See shooting and thieving resp.
iron cow. The village pump: C. 19 coll. Cf. cow-juice, q.v.
[iron Division, the. The 13th Division: military of G.W.; rather sobriquet than nickname.]
iron hand, the. The Closure of 1876: political coll. of Victoria, Australia. Morris. Ex the iron hand in the velvet glove.
iron hoop. Soup (military and Cockney) running s.: late C. 19–20. B. & P.
iron with one's eyebrow(s), polish the King's. To look out of grated, esp. prison, windows: ca. 1780–1940. Grose, 1st ed.
iron bark, unyielding: hard: Australian (— 1888); ob. 'Rolf Boldrewood', in Robbery under Arms, 'I always thought he was ironbark outside and in.' Cf.: ironclad, adj. Severe, hard: unyielding: ca. 1854–1910. Mostly U.S., ex the vessel.
ironing. Irony: sol. when not a jocular perversion: from ca. 1840. Rare in C. 20. (O.E.D.) ironmonger's shop by the side of a common: keep an. (To which is often added: where the sheriff set one up.) To be hanged in chains: ca. 1780–1830. Grose, 1st ed. Cf. iron with . . ., q.v.
[irons. Fetters. Despite F. & H., this is ineludible.]
issues, pool one's. To work in profitable unison: coll.: from ca. 1860; ob.

It's. Abbr. to it: coll. when neither dial. nor poetic: before C. 19, normal S.E.

-Ist. A n. suffix; often jocular, occ. coll., in C. 19-20. Shelley. —(Without hyphen) a holder of an item, q.v.: from ca. 1810: coll. till ca. 1880, then S.E. (O.E.D.)

Isthmus of Suez. The bridge at St. John's College, Cambridge, also called the Bridge of Grunke; Cambridge University: ca. 1860-1910. Funning its synonym Bridge of Sighs and suze, swine, with reference to hog, n., sense 3, q.v.

It. As an indefinite object of a v., as in walk it, cab it: orig. S.E.; but from ca. 1880, coll. (So too in curses).—2. A chamber-pot: C. 19-20; ob.—3. The female, occ. the male, sexual organ: C. 19-20; orig. and still mainly euphemistic.—4. 'Coll. use of it for the consummate is [orig.] U.S., W.: from ca. 1910 in England. E.g. 'He thinks he's it' or 'just it'.—5. In quotation from books or newspapers, etc., it used with says or tells dates from C. 12: S.E. till C. 19, then coll.—6. Sexual appeal: from ca. 1920. Now jocular coll. Ex the novels of 'Victoria Cross' and Elinor M. Glynn.—7. In gin and it, it = Italian vermouth: coll. from ca. 1910.—8. For stylistic infelicities, see Fowler.

it, be for. See for it, be.

it, of. As in 'We had a nice time of it': coll., gen. ironic (—1887). Baumann.

it can't be did! See did, 3,—it isn't done. See done, it isn't.

it snowed. A c.p. indicative of misery or disaster: lower classes; adopted, before 1909, from U.S.A. (Ware.)

Italian quarrel. 'Death, poison, treachery, remorselessness': Society (—1609); virtually ⌃. Ware.


itch-bottoms, play at. To have sexual intercourse: late C. 16-19; coll. Florio.

itch in the belly, have an. To be sexually excited: ca. 1660-1900: coll. Cotton, D.Urfey.

itcher. The female pudend: C. 19-20 low; ob.

Ex itch, v. Also itching Jenny.


itching Jenny. See ither.

itching palm. See palm.


itchy. Affected with or like an itch: C. 16-20: S.E. until ca. 1840, then coll.

item. A hint or a warning: c.: C. 19. Bee. 'It was I that gave the item that the traps were a coming.'

-itis. A suffix indicating—or facetiously imputing—a disease: often a jocular coll. in late C. 19-20. E.g. jassitis (1919). W.


—2. (Occ. ite.) Coll. for it is: C. 17-20.—3. It, as in 'It's being so cold that day': coll. (—1887). Baumann.

it's a great life (if you don't weaken)! A G.W. variant of this is the life, q.v.

It's a way they have in the Army! A military (mostly officers) c.p. of 1916-18. B. & P.

itty umpty. See iddy umpty.


I've. I have: coll. from ca. 1740. Richardson. 'A queer sort of name! I've heard of it somewhere' (O.E.D.).

I've seen em grow! I've sh** em! Military c.p. of the G.W., resp. indicative of contempt at rapid promotion and of scorn for soldiers of another unit. B. & P.

ivories. The teeth: from ca. 1780, ob. Egan; Thackeray, 'Chatter your old ivories at me,' Punch, 1882, 'Sluicing his ivories' (cf. ivories, rinse . . . the).—2. Dice; billboard-balls: from ca. 1830. (Very rare in singular.)—3. See tickle the ivories.


ivories, flash the. To show one's teeth: low: C. 18-20; ob. See flash the ivory.—2. Occ., to smile.


ivories, rinse or sluice or wash one's or the. To drink: C. 19-20; ob. Moncrieff. See ivories, sense 1.

ivories, tickle the. To play the piano: mid-C. 19-20 coll. Cf. ivory-thumper, q.v.

ivory. See ivories, various senses. Rare in singular, except when collective.—2. A pass-ticket on a railroad, to a theatre, etc.: ca. 1855-1910.

ivory black. (African) negroes as merchandise: 1873 (S.O.D.); slightly ob.

ivory, flash the. See flash the ivory.

ivory, touch. To play at dice: (—) 1864; ob. Sala. (O.E.D.)


ivory carpenter. A dentist: low jocular coll. ca. 1885-1915. [ivory gate, the female pudend, is a literary euphemism.]

ivory-hammerer or -thumper, occ. -spanker. A pianist: from ca. 1860; ob. Cf. ivories, tickle the.


ivy bush, like an owl in an. Having a large wig or very bushy hair: anticipated in 1806 (Day) but properly of ca. 1705-1840. Swift, Grose. (Apperson.)

ivy-leaf. See pipe in . . . -ize as a v. suffix is often coll. in tendency in late C. 18-20.—So also -izer as a n. suffix.
J


J.S. or N. or D. Judicial Separation or Nullity of Marriage or Divorce: legal coll. (—1806). Ware. J.T. A euphemism (—1923) for John Thomas, 2. Manchon.

jab. A poke, prod, or stab: coll. and dial. (Scottish form of job): from ca. 1820.—2. In boxing s. (in C. 20, gen. coll.), an abruptly blow with the fist: from ca. 1850.

jab, v.i. and t. To poke, prod, stab, thrust: coll. and dial.: from ca. 1830. Both n. and v. may have owed their widespread coll. usage in part to U.S. influence: witness F. & H.’s error.—2. Hence, to strike smartly (e.g. jab him one!): late C. 19–20. C. J. De La Mare.

jabber. Chatter; incoherent, inarticulate, or unintelligible speech: in C. 18, coll.; then S.E. Ned Ward, in Hudibras Redivivus, ‘And stopp’d their bold presumptuous labour, By unintelligible jabber.’

jabber, v. To chatter; speak fast and indistinctly, talk gibberish: from ca. 1500; coll. till C. 19, then S.E. Pope, in The Dunciad, ‘Twas chattering, grinning, mouthing, jab’ring all.’ Imitative: cf. gabble and gibber.

jabberer. One who jabbers (see the v.): from ca. 1675: coll. till C. 19, then S.E. with a coll. tinge. ‘Hudibras’ Butler.

jabbering. Vbl.n. of jabber, to, q.v.: C. 16–20: coll. till C. 19, then S.E.—2. The same applies to the adv. in –ly.

jabber(k)naw. See jobberknow.

[jabberment, chatter, nonsense, gibberish, from ca. 1640, is a rare literary form.]

Jabber(s) or Jabez or, rarely, Japers, by (Anglo-Irish be). A low oath; first recorded in 1821 and as by jappers. Presumably a corruption of Jesus via the Anglo-Irish Jesus. Cf. begorra, q.v.


jabez. See jabbars.—2. Whence (?) v., to play a dirty trick: 1923, Manchon.

jack. A C. 17 (?) also C. 18) corrupt form of jackal. (O.E.D.)


jack, v. In e., to run away quickly: from ca. 1840; ob.—2. In low £. to corpulate: C. 19–20, ob.—3. See jack it.—4. App., to lock, as in gig(p)ers jacked in Anon., The Cotterpills of the Nation Anatomized, 1659: c.; C. 17–19.—5. See jack up.

Jack. Cousin. (See Cousin Jack.—Jack, every man. See every man Jack. Occ. every Jack man, t. jack, lay (occ. be) on the. V.i and t., to thrash or to scold soundly: coll. of ca. 1550–1640. In Jacob and Esau, a play, ‘If I sought one stroke-to-day, lay me on the jack ’; North, 1793, ‘Let it on the jacks of them.’


Jack, play the. To play the rogue: C. 17.—2. To play the fool: C. 19. Both coll.—3. V.t. with wrath, as in Shakespeare’s The Tempest, ‘Your fairy . . . has done little better than play the Jack with us.’


Jack-a-green. See Jack in the green.


Jack Adams. A fool: late C. 17–19: coll. till ca. 1850, then nautical s. for a foolish and stubborn person.
Jack Adam's(s) Parish

JACK


Jack Barre'. A minnow; nautical; late C. 19—20. Bowen.


Jack alicore. A lower classes' coll. (—1909) for a 'large-scale tory villain.' Ward.

Jack at a pinch. A person employed in an emergency; esp. a stop-gap clergyman; coll.: from ca. 1620; very ob., except in dial. B.E.

Jack at wars. A concocted little fellow: C. 19 coll. Ex dial. Jack at the wat, the small bag of a pig's intestines.


Jack Dandy. See Jack-a-Dandy.


Jack Frost. A coll. personification of frost: from ca. 1825; ob.


-6. A small but powerful screw, used by burglars: o. of ca. 1840–1910. 'No. 747'; in a 'locus' valid for 1846, likewise valid for the abbr., Jack (pp. 423, 439 resp.); Albert Smith, 1848. Prob. ex the nautical a. > coll. sense (—1801), 7, a large wooden male screw.—8. The male member: C. 19–20 ob. Ex sense 1—9. A game in which one throws at an object placed on the top of a stick set in a hole, beyond which the object, if hit, must fall clear to become the thrower's property: C. 19–20 ob. (low) coll.—10. A coll., mainly Australian name of the plant stylium granatum: from ca. 1850. Ex the sensitive stigma-column.

Jack in (C. 17–18 an) office. An imperious petty official; from ca. 1860; coll. till C. 19, then S.E. Cf. Jack in the pulpit, q.v.

Jack in the basket. A mark (orig. a basket) 'on top of a pole to serve as a beacon' ; nautical coll.; mid-C. 19–20; ob. Bowen.


Jack in the dust. See Jack Dusty.

Jack in the green. A chimney-sweep enclosed in a framework of boughs in a First of May procession: from ca. 1800; ob. by 1890: coll. >, ca. 1850, S.E.

Jack in the orchard, get. To achieve sexual intimosism: C. 19–20 low.


Jack in the water; occ. Jack. A handy man at boat-house or landing-stage: (low) coll.; from ca. 1835. Dickens in Bos. jack it. To die: low (—1900). Ware.

Jack Johnson. A heavy Ger. shell, esp. a 5–9: 1914–18: military. Ex the large and famous negro boxer (fl. 1907–12) via the black smoke issuing voluminously from the shell burst: moreover, Johnson's American nickname, as the O.E.D. (Sup.) reminds us, was the Big Smoke. Occ. abbr. to Johnson, q.v.


Jack Ketch's kitchen. That room in Newgate in which the hangman boiled the quarters of those dismembered for high treason: C. 18: perhaps orig. c. Ex preceding.

Jack Ketch's pippin. A candidate for the gal lows: C. 18 low. Also called a gallow's apple.


Jack Nasty. A sneak; a sloven: (low) coll.: from ca. 1855; ob. T. Hughes. Cf.


Jack northwestern. The north-west wind: nautical coll.: from ca. 1740; ob.

Jack-o'-Dandy. See Jack-a-dandy.

Jack of all trades. One who (thinks he) can do everything: C. 17–20; coll. till C. 18, then S.E. and gen, contemptuous. Minshull, Dryden.


Jack of or on both sides. A neutral; a runner with both hare and hounds: coll.: ca. 1650–1880: extant in dial. Nashe, Defoe, Spurgeon. (Apperson.)


Jack out of doors. A vagrant: C. 17: coll. quickly > S.E.


Jack pudding (or Pudding). A merry Andrew;
a slowing assistant to a mountebank: coll. : 1648 (S.O.D.); ob. by 1830, † by 1900. Cf. Fr. Jean Pogade.

Jack rag, every. A C. 19 (mainly dial.) variant of every man Jack, q.v.


Jack Robinson, before one can say. Instantly: late C. 18–20 coll. Fanny Burney, Dickens, Hardy. According to Grose, 1st ed., 'from a very volatile gentleman ... who would call on his neighbours, and be gone before his name could be announced'; which seems improbable. (Apperson.)


Jack Shay; Jackshees. A tin quart-pot: Australia (—1891); ob. † prompted by char, n., 2, q.v.; more prob. punning, or rhyming on, tay; † S.E. and present Irish pronunciation of tea; possibly at first Jack Shea (rhyming with tay). (Morris)


Jack Sprat. An undersized man or boy: mid-C. 16–20; ob. except in dial. Pejorative Jack with pejorative sprite. Whence presumably Jack Sprat could (or would) eat no fat, his wife could (or would) eat no lean.


*Jack the interim. To be remanded: c. of ca. 1860–1914.

Jack ca. Jew. A Jewish thief or 'fence' of the lowest order: c. of ca. 1820–90. 'Jon Boe.'

Jack the Painter. Very strong tea, drunk in the bush: Australia: from ca. 1850; ob. G. C. Mundy, Our Antipodes, 1855. Ex the mark it leaves around one's mouth. Morris.

*Jack the slipper. A treadmill: c.: from ca. 1860; ob.

jack up. To give way, collapse, become bankrupt, become utterly exhausted.—2. V.t., to ruin; exhaust utterly; destroy. Both from ca. 1870 and both coll. (perhaps orig. dial.: see E.D.D.). Perhaps ex jacked, q.v. below.—3. To abandon, 'chuck up': late C. 19–20; slightly ob. Ex dial. Edwin Pugh, Tony Drum, 1898; Ian Hay, Pip.
jacket job. A good job (e.g., a barman's) in the steward's department: nautical: C. 20. Bowen. 'From the distinctive uniform.'


jacketing. A thrashing; severe reprimand: coll. (—1861). Mayhew, 'I don't work on Sundays. If I did, I'd get a jacketing.' Cf. jacket, v., 2.

jacketing concern. The vbl.n. of jacket, v., 1, q.v.: c. ca. 1810-50. Vaux.

jacketly. Of or like a jacket: coll. : from ca. 1850. Surtees. (O.E.D.)


jackman. See jarkman, for which it is merely erroneous.


jacks, the. Military police: Australian and New Zealand military, 1914-18. (Very rare in singular.) See jack, n., q. sens.—2. Hence, in New Zealand c. (—1932), the police.

jacks, be upon their. To have an advantage: coll. : C. 17-18. Ex bowls.


Jackson. jammed like. See jammed like Jackson.

Jackson's hens, fly up with. To become bankrupt: from ca. 1570: coll. till C. 19 then dial.—2. Hence, make one fly with Jackson's hens, to ruin a person: C. 17-18.


*jacky. See jackey.

Jacky. See jackey.

Jacky (or Johnny) hangman. A Jack hanger, i.e. lamus collaris: Natal coll. (mostly juvenile): from ca. 1890. Ex 'the bird's habit of hanging his captures on thorns until they are to his taste', Pettman.

Jacky Winter. The brown flycatcher, a small bird common about Sydney: coll. New South Wales: from ca. 1890. 'It sings all through the winter, when nearly every other species is silent,' Morris.


Jacob's ladder. A rent in which only the wool threads remain, e.g. 'a longitudinal flaw in the leg of a ballet-girl's tights,' H. : theatrical > gen. a. (—1859); ob. Sala.—2. The female pudend. C. 19 low. Cf. jacob, last sense.

jade, contemptuous for a woman, is, despite F. & H., ineligible.)

jag, (a bout of) intoxication, on a jag, on a drunken spree, and have a jag on, gen. supposed to be U.S., were orig.—C. 17-20, ob.—Eng. dial., whence U.S. and Eng. a. usage in late C. 19-20. Lit. sense, a load. (But jaggied, tipsey, is a solely U.S. term.)


jag up. To punish: military: from ca. 1912. F. & Gibbons. Prob. ex the preceding, sense 1.

*jagger. A gentleman: c. of ca. 1835-1910: more U.S. than Eng. ? ex Ger. jäger, a sportsman (Branden.)—2. As hawk, it is ineligible.


jail-khan(n)a. A gaol (jail): Bengal Presidency coll. (—1886). A hybrid ex khan(n)a, a house, a room; Yule & Burnell.

jailer; loosely jailor. A policeman: Glasgow (—1934). Not ex the current S.E. sense, but coined anew from jail.


jake, adj. Honest, upright; equitable, correct; 'O.K.‐; excellent: Colonial and U.S.: C. 20. (I cannot adduce an early example, but jake was certainly used, in these senses, at least as early as 1910.) Prob. ex jannock, q.v. Often elaborated to jake-a-foo, occ. to jake-a-bon or tray jake, i.e. très (very) jake.

jake, adv. Well, profitably; honestly, genuinely: Colonial: from ca. 1900. Ex jockeying jake with the lever up. Excellent: extremely satisfactory or pleasant: Canadian: from ca. 1920. See jake, adj.

jakes. A privy; from ca. 1520; slightly ob.: S.E. till ca. 1750, then col. Shakespeare, in Lear, 'I will tread this unboiled villain into mortar, and daub the walls of a jakes with him'; Sir John Harington's Metamorphosis of Ajax, ed. by Jack Lindsay, 1928. Prob. an abbr. of Jack's place.


jalouse as = regard with jealousy, begrudge jealously, is late C. 19–20 catastrophically. O.E.D.

jam, a crush, a crowd, is ineligible, as is jam, excellence. Good luck, though jam on it, luxury, is (late C. 19–20) collog. --2. A difficulty, awkward 'mess': coll.: from ca. 1920. Ex sense, crowd, crush. Esp. in get into a jam.—3. As clear profit, an advantage, or a certainty of winning, it is late C. 19–20 s. (orig. racing) > coll.—4. Hence, a joy, a great pleasure: preparatory schools: C. 20.


Grose, 2nd ed. t = jamb.—2. To spread with jam: coll.: from ca. 1850.


jam, bit of. A very pretty girl: lower classes': from ca. 1890; ob. See bit of . . . and cf. jam-tart, 1.

jam, money for. See money for jam.

jam, not all. Despite its apparently coll. tinge the phrase is S.E. But real jam is coll., jam and fritters is s.: ex jam, n., 3.


jam on both sides. See d'ye want jam.

jam on it. Something pleasant: naval (—1900) > military. See jam, n., 3, and cf. jammy, q.v.


jam-tin. A hand-grenade improvised from a jam-tin; military: coll.: 1915, then rare. B. & P.

jam-up, adj. and adv. (Ina) the pink of perfection; low coll.: ca. 1850–80. Also real jam: from ca. 1880. Cf. jammy, q.v.


jamboree. A 'good time': esp. a drinking-bout: Australian (—1935). A perversion of:


Jamie Moore, have been talking to. To be tipsey: Scots coll.: C. 19–20 ob.

jammed, be. To be hanged (see jam, v.), hence to meet any violent death: ca. 1800–50. Lex. Bal.

jammed like Jackson. A C. 19–20 naval c.p. verging on the proverbial, 'and when something goes seriously wrong, or leads to a disaster', F. & Gibbons. Ex John Jackson who, in 1787, refused to listen to his pilot and 'nearly wrecked his ship in consequence'.


jammy. Exceedingly lucky or profitable: from ca. 1870; (low) coll. Hence, in C. 20, excellent, 'topping'. Ex jam, good luck. Cf. am on it and jam-up, q.v.

jammy bit of jam. An intensive of jam, n., 5: 1883, says Ware.

jam. Abbr. jimjama, q.v. Always the jama.

Jan. See Feb.

*jan. A purse: C. 17 c. Rowlands, in Martin Mark-All: Jonson.

Jane, the. The Junior Army and Navy Club: naval and military officers': C. 20. F. & Gibbons.


*jan-of-apes, a pert girl, cited by F. & H. is a literary though topical nonce-word, while jango, liquor, is dial. Moreover, janizary, one of the rabble, as in B.E. and Grose is a mere S.E. transference of sense.


[janeite, an admirer of Jane Austen's works, is rather literary j. than coll.: C. 20.]


jannock, jonnick, jonnock, jonnuk. Honest, loyal, equable; proper, customary; conclusive: dial. >, ca. 1840, provincial coll. >, in 1914, fairly gen. coll. (Its use in Lancashire has been wittily satirised by C. E. Montague in A Hind Let Loose,
JANTY


Japan. To ordain (a priest): from ca. 1755; ob.: mainly university. Ex the clerical black coat. (The sense, to make shiny and black, is S.E.) Japanese knife-trick. Eating with one's knife: low: ca. 1886–1910. [Jap., n. v. Jest. V.t.,] jar(p)ers, be or by. See jab(b)ers. jar. (A source of) annoyance: Public Schools' coll.: 1902, P. G. Wodehouse, The Poohunters. That which jars on one. jar, on or upon a or the. Ajar: from ca. 1670: S.E. till ca. 1860, then coll. jarbee. An able seaman: naval (— 1900); ob. Ware; Bowen. A perversion of A.B. [Jargon, considered by Charles E. Leach (Of. Top. of the Underworld, 1933) to be c., is actually S.E.] jargooled. To mislead, lit. and fig.: C. 19–20 ob.: coll. Prob. by bamboozle ex † S.E. jargolo, to confuse.


Jarvey, the Fighting. Bill Wood: pugilist: ca. 1810–30. "Jon Bee." Ex:

jarvis or jërvë; jarvë(y), jarvë(y). A hackney coachman: a. >, ca. 1870, coll.: the -ë forms in late C. 18–early 19: the -(ë) -ë forms from 1819, ob. by 1888, † by 1910 except as = the driver of an Irish cab. Grose, 3rd ed.: Serjeant Ballantine in his Entertainment, ca. 1819–70. Moncrieff.—3. Occ. as v.t., to drive a carriage: 1826; † (O.E.D.). Ex the proper name, "perhaps in allusion to St. Gervase, whose attribute is a whip or scourge;" W.

jas(o)y or jaz(o)y. A (worst) wig: † orig. o.: by 1840 coll.: by 1870, S.E.: 1789, George Parker. Ex Jersey (fraz). jasey (or jazey), cove with a. A judge: † orig. o.: C. 19.


*jauz. To discern; discover: o. of ca. 1815–1000. Haggart; Egan's Grose, where it is spelt jade. Origin ? Possibly cognate with dial jauz (= jam), to corner in an argument (E.D.D.).

jaunty. A master-at-arms: naval (— 1909). Ware, "Supposed to be from 'gendarme'," The more gen. form is jaunty, recorded by the O.E.D. (Sup.) for 1904. Also jolly. Whence; jaunty's boat's crew. The men remaining in one of the old naval bulks after the ships had drawn their companies': † ca. 1800–40—a dating that affects jaunty.

java or Java. Tea; coffee: Canadian: C. 20. B. & P. Cf. S.E. Mocha.


jaw, v. To chatter; speak, esp. if impudently or violently; (v.t.) abuse grossly: (low) coll.: mid-C. 18–20. Smollett, 'They jawed together . . . a good spell'; Thackeray.—2. To address abusively, soild or address severely: low coll: from ca. 1810. Marryat.

jaw, hold or stow one's. To fall or be silent: coll. >, ca. 1890, undignified S.E.: from ca. 1860. Foote (hold). In C. 19–20, often stop, as in H. Kingsley's Geoffrey Hamlyn.

jaw-bone. Credit ('tick'): Canadian (ca. 1860) >, ca. 1860, military. (O.E.D. Sup.)—2. Hence, call one's jaw-bone, to live on credit: from ca. 1890. F. & H.


jaw-breaking, adj. Difficult to pronounce: coll.: from ca. 1840. Thackeray.—2. The adv. in -ly is recorded for 1824. (O.E.D.)


jaw-me-dead. A very talkative fellow: late C. 18–mid-10. Grose, 1st ed. Baumann (1887) has jaw-me-down, which he classifies as nautical: so, too, Bowen.


jaw- (or jawing-) tackle. The organs of speech: nautical: from ca. 1830, 1858 resp.; ob. Trelawney, 1831; C. Reade, 'Ah! Eyo, my girl, your jawing tackle is too well hung.' Baumann, 1897, records the variant javing-gear.


jaw-work! A cry used in fairs by the sellers of nuts, Grose, 1st ed.: coll. or c.p.: mid-C. 18–mid-19.
jawanb. See jiuwanb. (Also jobation, q.v.) A general con- 

fabulation; coll. and dial.: C. 19–20. Ex.:—2. A 


a talking; (low) coll.: late C. 18–20.—2. 


jawm-gear. See jaw-tackle. 

jawing-match. Wordy warfare: (low) coll.: 

from ca. 1815; ob. Moore. 

jawing-tackle on boat, have one's. 'To be 

scolded' by; from Egan's Grove: ca. 1820–1920. 

jawkins. A club bore: clubmen's coll.: ca. 

1840–60. Ex Thackeray's Book of Snobs. 

jay. A wanton; late C. 16–early 17 coll. > S.E. 

Shakespeare.—2. An amateur; an inferior actor: 

theatrical: ca. 1870–1905.—3. A simpleton (occ. as 

j): coll. (—1880); ob. (Ware dates it at 1880.) 

Punch, Feb. 22, 1890, 'She must be a fair j as a 

matron.' The p. abbr. jags. Its U.S. origin 

shows clearly in C. 20 muove, a fool, and in the 

New Zealand coll.: (ca. 1900, q.v.). 

jay, flap a; play or scalp one for a. To befool or 

swindle (a simpleton): low coll. (—1887); ob. 


jay-walker. (Hence, jay-walking.) One who 

crosses a street to the peril of the traffic: 1925; a 

(ex U.S.) >, ca. 1934, coll. Ex U.S. provincial ' boon.' See esp. Logan Pearsall Smith in 

The New Statesman, June 15, 1935. 

jaz(e)y. See jasy. 

jemeen. A flunkie; a footman: 1846; coll. in 

C. 19, S.E. in C. 20. Thackeray instituted the term 
in The Diary of C. Jemmes de la Pluche, etc.—2. 

(james.) The Morning Post: journalists': ca. 

1850–1865. H. 2nd ed. Ex James affectedly pro- 

nounced. 

jebbel. The inevitable military nickname on 

Egyptian service, of men surnamed Hill: from ca. 

1920. Ex the Arabic for a hill. 

Jedburgh, Jeddart, or Jeddwod justice. Hanging 


historical S.E. A. Shields, 1706, 'Copper 

Justice and Jedburgh Law.' Ex a piece of sum- 

mary justice done at this Scots border town. Cf. 

Cupar justice, Halifax law, Lyndford law. 

jee. A variant of gratter's gee (q.v.). George 

Orwell, Down and Out, 1933. 

jee or Gee! An origin euphemistic, now mostly 


Wilence, jee whizz! indicative of surprise: late 

C. 19–20; as in C. J. Dennis. 

jee whiskers! A New Zealand facetious variant 

(—1935) of jee whizz (see preceding). 

jeer. See jere. 

jee or Jesus! Jesus! low: C. 20; ex U.S. 

jeff. A rope; circus n. >, by 1900; j. > from ca. 


fellow: sailors'; late C. 19–20. Gen. in combina- 

tion: e.g. flat-iron jeff, q.v. 

jeff, v. 'To throw or gamble with quadrate as 

with dice;' Jacob: printers' (—1888). Ex U.S. 

(1837). 

jelly. See jifty. 

jogger. See jigger, n, 1.—Jehovahaphat. See 

jumping Jehovahaphat. (A sonorous name for the 

mill purpose.) 

[jehua. A furious driver, hence a coachman, is 

merely jocular S.E.] 

jeldi (or -y). See jildi. 


(—1853) >, ca. 1860, S.E. (O.E.D.) 

jelly. A buxom and pretty girl: low: ca. 1840– 

1900. Perhaps ex Scotia jelly. excellent.—2. The 


jelly-bag. The scrotum.—2. The female pudend. 

Both low coll.: C. 17–20, ob. 


Cf. forty-guts. 

jelly-dog. A harrier (dog): sporting (—1897). 

With harriers, one hunts hares, which are gen. eaten 

with jelly. O.K.D. 

jelly-dogging. V./n., hunting with harriers: 

sporting: ca. 1889, R. S.S. Baden-Dowell. (O.K.D.) 

*jem. A gold ring. (A rum gem -- a diamond 

ring.) Mid-C. 18–mid 19 C. Grace, 1st ed. 

jem (occ. Jim) Mace. A face: rhyming s. = late 

C. 19–20. B. & P. Ex the noted pugilist. 

jemmy! An occ. spelling (—1923) of jemmy, 

q.v. Manchon. 


(—1887); ob. Baumann. Cf. Biddy, q.v. 


jemmy?, often preceded, occ. followed, by o(4). 

A variation of bibi, q.v. 

jemmily. Neatly: coll.: ca. 1830–90. Ex 

jemmy, adj., 1. 

jemminess. Neatness, spruceness: low coll.: 

ca. 1755–1890. See jemmy, adj. 

jemmy! (in C. 19, occ. jammy). A short crowbar 

used by housebreakers: (occ. (—1811) c. by 

1870, coll.; by 1910, S.E. Lex. Bal.; Dickenson, in 

Oliver Twist. Earlier jemmy, q.v.; ca. 1810–30, 

occ. called a jemmy rook (Lex. Bal.); in U.S., 

jenny. Cf. jama, q.v.—2. A dandy: coll.: ca. 

1752–1800, thereafter gen. jemmy jessamy (by 

1900), though the two terms were orig. distinct. 

The Adventurer, No. 100, 1753; 'The scale ... con- 

sists of eight degrees; Greenhorn, Jenny, Jessamy, 

Smart, Honest Fellow, Joyous Spirit, Buck, and 

Blood.' See also jemmy jessamy, adj., separate 

entry.—3. Hence, a light cane, orig. and esp. one 

carried by a 'jemmy' or dandy: ca. 1753–1800.— 

4. Hence, also, a finicky fellow: naval: ca. 1760– 

1890. Bowren, 'Adopted by the midshipmen of 1797 

for all officers.'—6. A sheep's head cooked: coll. 

from ca. 1820; ob. cf. bloody jemmy.—8. A 

showing-coat: a greatcoat: coll.: ca. 1890–1910. 

Dickenson, 'Your friend in the green jemmy.'—7. A 

term of contempt, esp. as all jemmy (more gen. all 

jemmy), all rot i.: ca. 1860–1910. 

jemmy, adj. Dandified, smart, neat: coll.: 

ca. 1750–1800; extant in dial. G. A. Stevens, 

'Dressed as jemmy ... as e'r a commoner in all 

England.' Ex t. pim, smart, spruce.—2. Hence, 

sharp, clever: ca. 1760–90.—3. A pretentious: low: 


Jimmy Donnelly. A jocular coll. name given to 

three kinds of large timber tree: Queensland: 

from ca. 1880; ob. Morris. 

Jemmy Ducks. (Occ. Billy D.) The ship's 


Jemmy Grant. See Jimmy, n., 2, and Jimmy 

Grant, 2. 

Jemmy jessamy, gen. with capitals. Adj., dandi- 


Jessamine, not before 1823. See jemmy, n., 2. 

jemmy-john. A low coll. corruption (—1864) of 

demijohn. T. B. Aldrich. 

Jemmy o' Goibin. A sovereign: (orig. theatri- 

cal) rhyming s. (—1895). More frequently
Jemmy o' Goblin. occ. abbr. (— 1909) to Jimmy (recorded by Ware).

jennyo rook. See jemmy, n., 1.

Jemmy Squaretoes. The devil : nautical: C. 19–

Jemmy Twitcher. John Montagu, 4th Earl of Sandwich (d. 1792). Ex Gay's *The Beggar's Opera*, in which a highwayman, so named, betrayed his friends.

jerkers. An occ. form of jankers, q.v.

Jemmy' hen, die like. I.e., unmarried: Scots coll.: C. 18–19.


Jenny Lee or Lee. Tea: rhyming s.: late C. 19–

jenny linda or -er, Jenny Linda or -er. A window: rhyming s. (— 1857). 'Ducange Anglicus.' On winder, the low coll. pronunciation, ex Jenny Lind, the famous mid-C. 19 singer.

Jenny Willocks. A very effeminate male; a hermaphrodit: Glasgow (— 1934).


An excellent example of the people's poetry ('twopence coloured').

jere or jeer. (The latter is rare and erroneous.)


Jeremiah. To complain: lower classes' coll. (— 1900); slightly ob. Ware. Cf.: Jeremiah-mongering. 'Deplorable and needless lamentation': Society: 1885–86. 'Invented to describe the behaviour of those who after the fall of Khartoum — the country is going to the dogs, sir! — went around maintaining that England had indeed come to a finality' (Ware).

jeremy diddler (or with capitals). A shark or sharper; a shabbish and dishonest borrower: coll.: 1803. Kennedy names thus a man in *Raising the Wind*; ob. Personification of diddler, q.v.


Jericho, have been to. To be tipsey: C. 18–early 19: drinkers'. Apperson.


jerk, a witty sally, a retort; a lash with a whip: both S.E. despite F. & H.—2. A musculo-tendinous reflex (action): medical students' (— 1933). Flegg, p. 192. E.g. a 'knock-jerk.'

jerk, v. To write, as in jera a poem: (low) coll.: ca. 1860–1905.—2. To accost eagerly: coll. or s.: ca. 1740–1810. 3. To rob (a person of): c. from ca. 1880. Baumann.

*jerk, oly the. To be whipped at the post: C. 17–18 c.

Jerk, Dr. A flogging schoolmaster: coll.: ca. 1740–1830. Foote.


*jerk a gybe. To forge a licence: mid-C. 17–18 c.

Head & Kirkman.

jerk a part. See slang a part.

jerk a wheeze. To tell a 'wheeze' with brilliant effect: theatrical: 1860, says Ware, but he, I believe, anticipated it by a decade—perhaps even by two decades.

jerk chin-music. To talk: ca. 1870–1910: coll., mostly U.S.

jerk in(to) it, put a. To act smartly or vigorously; hurry: from ca. 1912. Ex physical training and prob. suggested by jum to it. (B. & P.)

jerk-nod. See yerknod.

jerk off, v. and v. reflexive. To masturbate: low coll.: C. 18–20. An ob. low s. variant is jerk one's jelly or juice.

jerk the cat. See cat, jerk the.

jerk the tinkler. To ring the bell: locacular: ca. 1830–1925. Dickens, in *Oliver Twist*.


jerran. Anxious; (greatly) concerned: Australian: ca. 1820–1900. Peter Cunningham, 'Rolf Boldrewood.' *Ex jirrand*, Botany Bay Aborigine for afraid. (Morris.)


Jerry. occ. Gerry, N. and adj., German; esp. (of) a German soldier: 1914 +; ob. From mid-1916, more gen. than Fritzy. Often half-affectionately, as in 'Poor old Jerry's coppering it hot from our heavies.' B. & P.

Jerry


Jerry-built. Unsubstantially built: 1883; coll. till C. 20, then S.E. Cf. next two entries. Etymology: perhaps ex Jerry, familiar and/or contemptuous for Jeremiah. More prob. a corruption of jury (as in jury-mast, -leg, etc.), as W. suggests.

Jerry, v.i. and t. To recognise; discern, discover, detect; understand: low: from ca. 1880. Ex the v.— 8. A variant of jerry, q.v.


Jerry-built. Unsubstantially built: 1883; coll. till C. 20, then S.E. Cf. next two entries. Etymology: perhaps ex Jerry, familiar and/or contemptuous for Jeremiah. More prob. a corruption of jury (as in jury-mast, -leg, etc.), as W. suggests.


Jerry-built. Unsubstantially built: 1883; coll. till C. 20, then S.E. Cf. The Daily Telegraph, March 23, 1883; J. Newman in Scampering Tricks, 1891. Ex or = jury-built (W.); see Jerry, adj.


Earlier, thorough-go-nimble.—2. An antic or 'jack pudding' (q.v.): C. 19 coll. > S.E. Henley & Stevenson.


*Jerry-nicking. See Jerry-getting.

Jerry over !; Jerry up. Resp. a night and a day warning that a German plane was overhead: military coll.: 1917–18. (F. & Gibbons.)

Jerry-shop. A (low) beer-house: from ca. 1830: s. > coll. > ca. 1860, S.E. Often abbr. Jerry, as in Mayhew, 'a beer-shop or, as he called it, a Jerry.'


*Jerry-stealing. See Jerry-getting.—Jerry up! See Jerry over !

Jerry wag. A spreester, esp. if half drunk: ca. 1820–70. 'Jon Bee.'

Jerry-wag shop. A coffee shop or stall: ca. 1820–70. Ibid.

Jerry (cum) mumble. To shake, tussle, tumble: C. 18–early 19. Clobber the shorter, Grose (1st ed.) the longer form. Perhaps on stumble. Whence, perhaps, tumble, to understand (v.t. with to), Jerry, the same, and rumble, the same: q.v.

Jerry-mander. See gerry-mander. See for which it is erroneous.

Jerry, Mr. Mrs. Langtry: a turf nickname. Ex her sobriquet, the Jersey Lily. (Dawson.)

Jerry hop. 'An unceremonious assembly of persons with a common taste for vailing; from Jersey, U.S.A. ca. 1883–1900. Ware.'


Jerusalem, be going to. To be drunk: drinkers: C. 18–early 19. Cf. Jericho, to have been to, q.v. Drunken scenes occur in Franklin's Drinker's Dict., 1745. (Apperson.)


Cf. Jericho, I, go to.


Jerusalem the Golden. Brighton: from ca. 1870. Ex the numerous rich Jews there.

Jerry. See jerry.


Jes'sammon. A C. 19 variant of: Jesammon. As n., a fashionable man next above a 'jemy' (see n. 2); ca. 1750–1830.—2. An adj., disfigured, effeminate: ca. 1680–1850. Head G. A. Stevens. (For both, see also jesmon jemmy. Like jesammon, of which it is a corruption, it is the ex flower (jasmine)).


Jessie or jessy, give (a person). Tothresh: non-aristocratic (ca. 1890): slightly ob. H., 2nd ed. Origin? Perhaps—via Jess—it is a corruption of give a person gas, q.v.


Jester. A 'joker' (q.v.): chap, fellow: coll. ca. 1890–1905. See also artist, merchant. A very interesting s. and coll. synonymy exists for a fellow.

Jesus. A sodomite: coll. ca. 1630–1820. Whence jesus's fraternity, the world of sodomy, as in Rochester, 'Tho Jesuits's fraternity.' Still leave the use of buggery. 'Cf. box the Jesuit and the opprobrious sense attaching to Jesuit even in S.E. The Society of Jesus is here made the scapegoat for all monastic orders,—against whom, as against sailors, the charge of masturbation is often laid.—2. A graduate or an undergraduate of Jesus College, Oxford: Oxford University: ca. 1760–1890. Smollett, in Humphry Clinker.

Jesus, box the. See box the Jesuit.

Jesus appears in blasphemous oaths; often disguised, as in jabber, by, q.v.

Jesus-eyes. Forget-me-not: Roman Catholic coll. (— 1908). Ware.

Jesus wept! A low v. expressive of commiseration or disgust or annoyance: C. 20.


Jet one's juice. Of men) to experience the sexual spasm: low: C. 19–20; ob. Cf. come, q.v.

Jesus inExternal. See deuced internal.


Jew, a hard bargainer, despite F. & H. is 3.E., but the v.t. and t. jeto, to drive a very hard bargain, to overreach or cheat, is coll.: 1845 (S.O.D.).—2. A


Jew fencer. A Jewish street buyer or salesman, esp. of stolen goods: low: from ca. 1850. See fencer, n. (not fencer).

*Jew-Jack. See Jack the Jew.


Jew’s compliment. See Judæuse compliment.

Jew’s eye, worth a. Extremely valuable: late C. 16–20; ob. Perhaps ex eyes put out by medieval torturers to enforce payment. G. Harvey, ‘Let it everlastingly be recorded for a sovereign Rule, as dear as a Jewes eye’: Grose.

Jew’s-jarhp. A hair-comb with tissue paper applied to one side: on blowing against the other, one can produce queer music: C. 19–20: s. >, ca. 1890. coll. Punning the S.E. musical instrument so named.

Jew’s letters. See Jerusalem letters.

Jews on a pay-day, (as) thick as two. (To be) intimate: Cockney (— 1887). Baumann.

Jew’s poker. One who lights Jews’ fires on Saturdays (the Jewish Sunday): from ca. 1870. Lloyd’s Weekly, May 17, 1891.

Jezebel, an objectionable or shrewish woman, is, despite F. & H., ineligible.—2. The male member: C. 19–20 low. Perhaps ex 2nd Kings ix. 33: ‘And he said, throw her down. So they threw her down.’

jib. The underlip (as in hang one’s jib, to look dejected); also, the face (as in nautical cut of one’s jib (q.v.), one’s personal looks or look); and dial.: from ca. 1820.—2. A first-year undergraduate: from ca. 1830; ob. Lever.—3. A horse given to jibbing: 1843 (S.O.D.); coll. >, ca. 1895, S.E. Mayhew.—4. See jibb.—5. A ‘flat-folding, “chimney-pot” hat, closed by springs set in centre of vertical ribs’: Society: 1848–50. Ware. Ex Fr. gibus (from the inventor’s name).

jib, v. To shirk or funk, prob. to be considered S.E.—2. To depart (esp. hastily or slyly): low: from ca. 1860. Ware.

Jib draw l, long may your big. ‘Good luck!’, esp. to a man leaving the service: naval (— 1909). Ware. Of erotic origin.


*ibbb. The tongue; hence language, speech: C. 19–early 20 tramps’c. Ex Romany ibb, jib.

jibber. To drive seamen and thus wreck ships ‘by fixing a candle and lantern round the neck of a horse, one of whose fore feet is tied up; this at night has the appearance of a ship’s light,’ Grose, 2nd ed.: late C. 18–early 19. The phrase is mysterious; jibber—by itself, however, unre corded before 1824—gen. to talk confusedly, here prob. = to confuse. But what is kibber unless it be a rhyme-tag?


jiffess. An employer’s wife: tailors: from ca. 1860; ob.

jiffy. See jiff.—2. jiffy-quick is a variant of in a jiffy: coll.: 1927 (O.E.D. Sup.).

jig. Abbr. jigger, c. senses, q.v.—2. Applied to a person, a domestic animal, etc.: jocular coll.: C. 18–19. Bentham, This Lord and Lady Traction are the queerest jips you ever saw ‘(O.E.D.)’—3. A swindler: Winchester College: ca. 1840–70. —3—Hence, a clever fellow: ibid.: from ca. 1880.—4. A swindle, a low joke, an object of sport: ibid.: from ca. 1870. (The other F. & H. senses are S.E., as are those given by F. & H. for the v.)

jig, on the. The Fidgety: coll.: from ca. 1880. Jefferies, in Wood Magic. O.E.D.

jig, the feather-bed or the buttok- or Moll Peatley’s. Copulation: low coll.: C. 17–20; ob. jis-jig; in C. 19 often jis-jig. N. and v. for sexual intercourse: low: v. from ca. 1840. n. from ca. 1900. F. & H. says U.S., but this is very doubtful: almost certainly Eng., perhaps orig. dial. In the 1840’s there was a street-ballad entitled Jig Jig to the Hirings, wherein jis-jig occurs as a v. (B. & P.) Popularised in and by the G.W., when used by French touts in form jis-a-jig très bon. Echoic. Cf. jig-jog and jiggie.


jig is up the. The game is up: late C. 18–20: S.E. till ca. 1850, then coll.; in C. 20, s. and dial. Contrast on with the danse.


jig’gamahob, occ. jiggembob. See jigjambob.


jigger, v.t. and i. To shake or jerk often and
**Jigger, Not Worth A**


jigger, not worth a. Worthless: (low) coll.: 1861, Punch, 'The churches here ain't worth a jigger—nor, not half-a-jigger.'

*jigger-dubber. A door-keeper, turnkey: c.: ca. 1770–1880. Parker, Beo. See jigger, esp. 1, 2, 3.

jigger it! Curse it! A C.G. 20 variant of jiggered, q.v.

jigger-stuff. Illicitly distilled spirits: ca. 1840–1900: low († orig. c.).


jiggered be. As in I'm or I'll be, jiggered!; you be jiggered!; Marryat, 1837 (S.O.D.). Possibly a deliberate fusion and perversion of Jesus and b**red; cf. however, squiggled.


jigget, occ. jiggit, v.i. To jig, fidget, hop about, shake up and down: coll.: 1867. Mrs.Behn, Miss Mitford, Kipling (O.E.D.). Diminutive of jig.

jiggy, jiggity. Having a hopping or jerky movement: coll.: from ca. 1880.

jiggle, v.i. and t. To have sexual intercourse with: low: from ca. 1845. Ex the S.E. sense. Hence jiggling-bone, the male member. Cf. jigg-a-jig, q.v.


Ware. Fr. gigot.

jig(g)umbob. Also jigg(g)umbob, -embob, -ombob; gig(g)umbob(s), etc.; gingam (or um)bob. Something odd or very fanciful; something unspecified: coll.: C. 17–20; ob. Beaumont & Fletcher, 'What Giggomob have we here!' Rare of a person. Ex jig, n., cf. kickumbob and thingumbob, q.v.


jildi, jildy; jildo; occ. jeldi (-y); very often jillo. Adj. and adv. lively; look sharp!; Regular Army's: late C. 19–20. Ex Hindustani. (Also, as adv., on the jildo; † H. & P.) Cf. Romany jido, jildio, lively; † V. See Addenda.


jilt, to. Enter a building slyly or on false pretences, and then steal: c. from ca. 1800; ob. jilt-flirt is erroneous for gilt-flirt.

jilter. A thief acting as in jilt, to, q.v.: c.: from ca. 1860. Also called a note-blanker. (Such thieves wear masks.)

Jim Dr. Dr. Leander Starr Jameson (of Jameson's Raid) from the late 1860's.


Jim Crow. See Billy Bazzow.


Jim Mace. See Jem Mace.

Jimbug. A sheep; Australia: from ca. 1850; ob. More gen. is jumbus († 1846); orig. the natives' pidgin English: the word meaning, in Aboriginal, a white mist, the only thing with which a flock of sheep could be compared. Morris.

jiminy. Se gemini.

jimkwim; jimmant. Corruptions of Doctor (or Dr.) Jim, q.v. Ware.

Jimmie's. See Jimmie's.—jimmies, see Jim-jam, 4.

jimmie. A mainly U.S. variant of jemmy, n., 1, q.v.—2. (Jimmy.) A new chum or immigrant; Australian († 1850); † by 1897. Also († 1867) Jimmy (or Jimmy) Grant, presumably after immigrant, though see Jimmy Grant, 2. Morris. (Only Jimmy: —) In South Africa (esp. Natal) by 1878, notes Petman.—3. A contrivance; anything faked; a concealed helper: showmen's: from ca. 1850.—4. Abbr. Jimmy o' Goblin, q.v. see Jimmy o' Goblin. Both forms occur in Neil Bell's Andrew Otway, 1931.—5. The nickname used as an alternative to Shiner for all naval Greens (Bowen): late C. 19–20. Also, in C. 20, for military Greens.

jimmy, adj. See jemmy, adj.

jimmy, all. All nonsense: Cambridge University: ca. 1860–1910. See also Jemmy, n., 7.

Jimmie Bunge(s). A cooper: naval († 1909). Ware (Bunge); Bowen (Bunge). Prob. ex bung-hole. Also Bungs, q.v.


Jimmy Grant. See Jimmie, n., 2.—2. An emigrant: rhyming s.: from late 1850's. Also Jimmy Grant.


Jimmy-o, like. 'Like billy-o,' which prob. suggested it: military († 1923). Manchon.

Jimmy o' Goblin. See Jimmy o' Goblin.


Jimmy Round. (Gen. pl.) A Frenchman: naval: late C. 18–early 19. Ware derives it from the Fr. je me rends, I surrender. Cf. kamerad, q.v.


Jimmy Woodser. A drink by oneself: Australian: C. 20. Also a drink with the fles, which is C. 20 coll.
JOE FOR HER, DO A WOMAN'S

Jimmy's. St. James's Restaurant in Piccadilly: ca. 1870-1910. (The site of the present Piccadilly Restaurant.)

**jingbang,** occ. **jimbang.** (Sometimes hyphenated. Always preceded by the whole.) A lot, or group, complete: mainly Scots coll. (— 1801). Stevenson, 'The only seaman of the whole jingbang.'


**jingle-boy.** See **jingle-boy.**

**jingle-brains.** A wild harum-scarum fellow: C. 17—18; coll. Extant in dial.

**jingler.** A horse-dealer frequenting country fairs: late C. 17—18 o. B.E.

**jingo,** by the living. A C. 19—20 (ob.) elaboration of:

jing ; more gen. by jingo ; in late C. 18—20 Scotland, always (by) jing(e). A mild oath: coll. from ca. 1694 as an exclamation, but in 1670, and prob. much earlier, it was an piece of conjurer's gibberish. (S.O.D.)—As a noisy patriot, it is S.E. The word comes prob. ex Basque J(a)ingo, God, via the Basque harpooners on British whalers. W. J. Smee, in C. 18—19 juniper, lecture. A scolding: late C. 17—mid 19; coll. B.E.'s juniper-l. is obviously a misprint, but it may have reproduced a Cockney pronunciation.

**jink.** Coin, money: late C. 19—20. Perhaps on chink, q.v.; but cf. jingle, 2—2. In pl., see high jinks. (F. & H.'s jink and jinker, copulate, copulator, are ineligible because dial.)

**jink one's tin.** To pay, 'shell out'; rattle one's money: low: from ca. 1850; ob.

**jinker.** A light sulky, with room for only one person; esp. one used in speed-trotting trials: Australian coll. (from ca. 1910), now verging on S.E. Ex jinker, a vehicular contrivance for the transport of tree trunks.

**jinket.** To be very merry; dance about: coll., the former 1742, ob., the latter 1823, ob. Ex jink. (O.E.D.)

**jinks.** See **high jinks.**—2. Jinks the Barber. A secret informant: middle classes: mid-C. 19—20; ob. Ware, 'The general barber being such a goosiper. Jinks is a familiar name'—coll, from ca. 1820— for 'an easy-going man.'


**Jip; esp. step of jip.** Indian ink: o. : mid-C. 19—20. 'No. 777.' Cf. jiggling, q.v.

**jip, give one.** See jip, give.

**jipper, jippo.** Gravy: naval: from ca. 1850. Ooc. it = juice, syrup, or even dripping (E.D.D.). In the C. 20 British Army, jippo, and among the Australians ooc. = stew. A correspondent remembers it being, ca. 1906 at school, used of the slimy outside of pudding. Perhaps ultimately ex jippo, a tunic, tent, tentacle. Just possibly, a Gippo being a form of Bruno, or sense 2; but I shouldn't be surprised if it proved to be a corruption of jipper.—2. Jippo, an incorrect form of Gippo, an Egyptian.

*Jiggling, vbln. Staining (part of a horse) with Indian ink to conceal a blemish: o. : mid-C. 19—20. 'No. 747' : cf. jip.

**jippo.** See jipper.

**jirrand.** See jerran.


Likewise **jes.**

**jitters, the.** A feeling, a bout, of (extreme) nervousness or of irritation, annoyance: as, from ca. 1850. (The Passing Show, July 15, 1933.) Cf. jim-jams. Perhaps a perversion of S.E. twitter, a trembling.


**jo.** See **joe, n.—2.** An exclamation, a warning: Australia: from ca. 1853; ob. Also **joe, joey.** Ex Charles Joseph La Trobe, the Victorian Governor at that time. W. Hovitt, Two Years in Victoria, 1855. (Morris.) Also a v. (— 1861), with variant joey. T. McCombie, Australian Sketches, 1861.— 3. A banjo: mostly Canadian: C. 20. (John Beames.)

**Jo-jo.** A man with much hair on his face: Melbourne (Australia): low: ca. 1880—1905. Ex a Russian 'dog-man,' ostensibly so named, exhibited in Melbourne ca. 1880. Morris.

**joan, Joan.** A fetter, esp. in Darby and Joan, fetters coupling two prisoners. C. 18—19. Suggested by darbies, handcuffs or fetters.

**Joan, homely.** A coarse, ordinary woman: C. 17—18 o. B.E. In dial., Joan Blunt.

**Joanna; occ. Joanna or —ner.** A piano: rhyming s. (— 1923) on pianier. Manchon.

**job.** A henchpacked husband: lower and smaller-middle classes: coll. 'coined' by Douglas Jerrold, in Mrs. Caudle's Curtain Lectures, 1846; ob. (Ware.) Ex the Biblical character.


**job, v.** To coot with: coll.: C. 16—20. Anon. play of Thersites, 1537; Burns. All other senses listed by F. & H.—e.g. to prod—are S.E.; excepts, 2. job = jobs, q.v.—3. To smite: coll.: C. 20. C. J. Dennis. Ex job, to prod; cf. jab, v. 2, q.v.

**job, be on the.** 'To mean honestly; to be genuine; to "run straight": to work quickly and steadily; to achieve complete success; to be bent on.' F. & H. Coll.: from ca. 1880.


**job, have got the.** To have got the commission to bet on a horse: racing: from ca. 1875.

**job for her, do a woman's.** To accomplish the sexual act with her—and to her pleasure. Low coll.: from ca. 1850.
job for him, do a man's. To ruin; knock out; kill: low coll.: from ca. 1860.

job for oneself, do a. To defecate: late C. 19-20: ('toilet' low) coll. S. E.

johanieriah. A maunuder: lower classes (— 1900); ob. Ware, 'Combination of the two doeful patriarcha.'

jobation. A (tedious) reproof or rebuke: coll.: from ca. 1865; ob. Ex jove, v. The alternative form faubation has been influenced by jaw, n. and v. Colman, 1767, in The Ozen in Town. 'As dull and melancholy as a fresh-man ... after a jobation.'

jobbed, that job's. It's finished: coll.: 1840; Marryat, 'That job's jobbed, as the saying is (O.E.D.); ob.

[jobber is ineligible because it is S.E. So too is jobbery.]

jobbourni, -nol(l), -nole. A fool's head; a fool: coll.: late C. 16-20; ob. † ex job(h)ard, a simpleton. The -nol(l) forms not before ca. 1670, and rare after 1750. — 2d. Adj., stupid: coll.: from ca. 1825; ob.

*joberknot, -nut. (Or hyphenated.) A tall, clumsy fellow: C. 19 e.


*jobe. See job, n. 2.

jobes, occ. job. To rebuke lengthily and tediously: coll.: ca. 1670-1830. 'Cambridge term', Grose, 2nd ed. (following Ray). Ex 'the lengthy reproofs of Job's friends', S. O. D.

[job's comfort—comfort —news —post are all S. E. Cf. however :]


Job's tears. The seeds of Coix lacryma, 'which are used for necklace-making by the native tribes on Cape York peninsula, are there called Job's tears', Harris, A. (— 1897). But also of the natives of Papua, where they are worn only by widows as a sign of mourning: cf. Job when 'separated from his family.'

Job's turkey, as poor as. Exceedingly poor: coll. of ca. 1820-1910: mainly and perhaps orig. U. S.


JOb'burg, Joburg. Johannesburg: Ware says, 'Military, 1900 on,' but it is more prob. miners' coll. originated a decade earlier. (The town was founded in September, 1886.)


jock. 'Private parts of a man or woman,' Potter, Dict. of Canl and Flash, 1790: low. (Of a woman, very rare after ca. 1880.) See jock, v. N.b., jock-strap is athletes' and footballers' S. E.— 2. Abbr. jockey: coll. from ca. 1825; ob.


*jockam. See jockum.

jockey, n., is, in all senses listed by F. & H. S. E.; but see jockeys.—2. the Jockey. Charles Howard (1749-1815), the 11th Duke of Norfolk, at one time Lord-Lieutenant of the West Riding. (Dawson.)—3. (jockey.) The piece of bread added to a 'toke' (small loaf) to make up the correct weight: prison o. : C. 20. (James Spencer, Limey Breaks In, 1934.)—4. A 'bus-driver: busmen's: from ca. 1920. The Daily Herald, Aug. 5, 1936.

jockey, v., in sense to cheat, is, again despite F. & H., ineligible.—2. At Winchester College, from ca. 1820, to appropriate, engage, supplant: all ob.

*jockey not!; jockey up! Winchester College ob. cries of (a) exemption, (b) participation. (Cf. bags I and finge, q.q.v.) Mid-C. 19-20. Wrench.

*jockey-stick. The thin piece of wood with which the 'jockey' (see n., 3) is attached to the 'toke': prison o. : C. 20. James Spencer, Limey Breaks In, 1934.

jockey (or bag) the over. So to run as to get all the bowling to oneself: cricketers': from ca. 1860. In C. 20, bag is much the commoner.

jockeying. 'Vehicular racing': London streets': C. 19. Ware.


[jocko, a chimpanzee, is familiar S. E. verging on coll.]

jocketer, a small almanac, jockey or (jagkey), a large pocket-knife, and Jocky, a Scot, are, despite F. & H., all ineligible because dial.]


*jockum-cloy. To coit with (a woman): C. 17-early 19 o. B. E. Ex jockum + cloy, q.q.v. Cf. jock, v.—2. Also n.

JOE RONCE


Joe, not for. See Joseph, not for.


*Joe Blake the Bart(h)lomew, v. To visit a prostitute: c. and low (— 1859); ob. H., 1st ed.

Joe Hook. Crook: rhyming s.: C. 20. P. P., Rhyming Slang, 1932. Other ‘rhyming Joe’s are Joe Blake, Joe Hook, Joe Skinner, all noted by the same glossarist.

Joe Monton. A foaling-piece made by Joseph Monton (d. 1837), a well-known London gunsmith: coll.: 1816 (S.O.D.); ob. by 1890, † by 1910. Also Monton. See Joe Miller, 2.

Joe Miller. A jest-book: coll.: 1789, George Parker; ob. Ex comedian Joseph Miller (1834-1738), whose name was ‘identified’ with a book pub. in 1739 but not compiled by him.—2. Hence, a jest, esp. if a stale one: coll.: 1816. Scott, ‘A fool and his money are soon parted, nephew; there is a Joe Miller for your Joe Monton’ (S.O.D.). Cf. chestnut.

Joe Miller of it, I don’t see the. I don’t see the joke; or the fun of doing it: coll.: ca. 1830-95.


Joe Savage. A cabboge: rhyming s. (— 1859).


joey, v. See jo, 2, and joey, v.—2. To ‘mug’ or attract the public’s attention, while the ‘mugger’ is up-stage: theatrical: mid-C. 19—early 20. Ware.

Ex joey, n., 3.

joey! See jo, 2.

[joe, v.i. and t., to oot (with), is a literary euphemism, while—again despite F. & H.— ‘joe-trot has always been S.E.]

joe the moo. To pump briskly: nautical coll.: C.19—20. Bowen. Obviously moo is water (Fr. Pouv.)

jogger. To play and sing: theatrical or, rather, Parlyaree (— 1893); ob. Ex It. gicar, to play. See Parlyaree and cf.: joggling onnez (or onzye). A musician, esp. if itinerant: Parlyaree (— 1863); ob. See jogger.

*jogus. A shilling: c. of ca. 1810—60. Vaux. † the origin of bob.

*jogul. To ‘play up’, or simply to play, at any game, esp. cards; gaming c. (— 1859). Ex Sp. juguer. H., 1st ed.

Johanna,—ner. See Joanna.


[John-a-Nokes (like John-a-Stiles), despite F. & H., is S.E., as are John-a-dreams,—among the maids, John Cheese or Trot (a rustic, a dole), John China-man. See Words or at ‘Representative Names’ for a group of such names.]


John Audley; occ. Orderly! A brigate the performance!: theatrical: from ca. 1810. Ex the actor-manager John Richardson (d. 1837), who used to ask ‘Is John Audley here?’ whenever another ‘house’ was waiting, though tradition (H., 1804) has it that John Audley or Orderly taught him the wheese.—2. Also occ. as a v. Also, to depart: circus s.: C. 20. (E. Seago, Circus Company, 1933).

[John Barleycorn is S.E.]

John Barleycorn, or Sir J. B., is nobody with him.

He’s no drinker: proverbial c.p.: C. 17—18.

John Barleycorn’s, or Sir John Barleycorn’s, the strongest knight. Malt liquor is strong stuff: proverbial c.p.: C. 17—18. Ray.

John Blunt. See Jack Blunt.

John Collins. A drink made of soda water, gin, sugar, lemon and ice: Australia: from ca. 1890. The Australasian, Feb. 24, 1895, ‘That most angelic of drinks for a hot climate . . .’

John Company; occ. Johnny Company. The Honourable East India Company: coll.: from ca. 1785; now only historical. Ex Dutch Jan Kompanie, by which the Eastern natives speak of the Dutch East India Company and government.

John Cotton. See Dolly Cotton.

John Crap(p). See Johnny Crapose.


John Finality. The 1st Earl of Russell (1792—1870), who ‘always spoke of the Reform Bill of 1831 as a “finality” ’ (Dawson).

John Fortnight. The tallyman; London workmen's; late C. 19–20; ob. Ware, "From his calling every other week."

John Gray's bird, like. Fond of company, even if it be rather above one; coll.: C. 16. Gascogne.

(Apperson.)

John Hop. A policeman; New Zealanders'; C. 20; ob. Rhyming on Cop.

John Long (in C. 18–19, occ. Tom Long) the carrier, stay for or send by. To wait, or postpone for, a long time; coll.: C. 16–19. Cotgrave.

John Oderly. See John Andley.

John Roberts. A, or enough, drink to keep a man drunk from Saturday to Sunday night: Anglo-Welsh (— 1886). Ex the author of the Sunday Closing Act.

John Roper's window. See Roper's window.


Johnian. A student of St. John's College, Cambridge; Cambridge University coll. >, in C. 19, S.E.: mid-C. 17–20. But Johnian hog (— 1785, Grose, at hog) and J. Pig (from ca. 1800) are s.


Johnny Bates(s) Farm. See Bates' Farm.

Johnny Bon. An Englishman: East End of London: from ca. 1850; ob.


Johnny cake. A cake cooked in a frying pan or baked in the ashes: Australia (— 1861); coll. Adoption of a U.S. term, which (orig.—1775—journey cake) denotes a thin cake made of Indian meal and toasted before a fire. (Morris; Thornton.)


Johnny hangman. See Jacky hangman. (Woodward, The Birds of Nata, 1899.)


Johnny Horner. Round the corner; i.e. to, at, a 'pub': rhyming s. (— 1909). Ware.—2. See Jack Horner.


Johnny Squarehead. A German (soldier): military: in G.W.

Johnny Turk. The orig. form of Johnnie (-y), 8. B. & P.

Johnny Won't Hit To-Day. J. W. H. T. Douglas, the English all-rounder, slow-scoring batsman: Australians': 1920's.


*joint, work the. To swindle with a jockeyed lottery table: q. v. (— 1895). Ex joint, 1.

joke. The 'victim' of a joke: coll.: from ca. 1870.

joker. A man, chap, fellow: from ca. 1810. (Pepys's 'At noon ... to the Trinity-house, where a very good dinner among the old jokers'
mising.) Cf. artist, merchant, shaver, and see Herring Joker.

"joker, little. See little-joker.


Jollies, the. See jolly, n., 2, quotation from Bowen: ? C. 17-early 19.


jollily. Excellently, splendidly; delightfully: from ca. 1560; S.E. till ca. 1850, then coll.; slightly ob. (Cf. jolly, adj., 1 and 2.) M. C. Jackson, 1878. (O.E.D.)


Possibly a euphemising (suggested by jolly, adj.) of ballocks, q.v. (cf. code, a curate); prob. ex dial. jolock, jolly, hearty (O.E.D.): 2. (Jolly.) A fat person: 1805-1815. O.E.D.


jolly, v.t. and i. To joke; rally; chaff; vituperate: from ca. 1890. — 2. To cheer: from ca. 1890.—3. V.t., to make a sham bid (at an auction); 1890 (O.E.D.): c.: low; ob.: — 4. To treat (a person) pleasantly so that he stay in, or become of, a good humour: orig. (1893); U.S.; anglicised ca. 1910. Esp. with up or along. (O.S.D.)

jolly, adj. Excellent; fine; indicative of general approval (in mid-C. 19-20, often ironical): C. 14-20; S.E. till C. 19, then coll. The Daily Telegraph, 1869, 'He is annoyed when young ladies use slang phrases, such as awfully jolly.' — 2. Ex. tremely pleasant, agreeable, suitable, charming; mid-C. 16-20; S.E. till ca. 1860, then coll. — 3. Slightly drunk: from ca. 1650; euphemistic S.E. till C. 19, then coll.—4. ‘Healthy and well developed; well conditioned; plump': coll. and dial.: ca. 1860. (S.O.D.) Whence. — 5. Fat; too fat: the turf: from ca. 1886.

jolly, adv. with adv. or adj. (In mid-C. 19-20, often ironical.) Very; exceedingly; mid-C. 16-20; S.E. till C. 19, then coll. Dickens in Oliver Twist, ' 'He is so jolly green,' said Charley.'

jolly, chukk a. See chuck a jolly.


Manchon.

jolly boys. 'A group of small drinking vessels connected by a tube, or by openings one from another,' F. & H.: coll.: from ca. 1890; slightly ob.


jolly jumper. A light sail set above a 'sky-scraper' (q.v.): nautical (— 1883); ob. Clark Russell.

jolly nab. See jolly, n., 1.


jolly Roger. A pirate's flag: nautical coll. > S.E.: from ca. 1880. Stevenson, in Treasure Island, 'There was the jolly Roger—the black flag of piracy—flying from her peak.'


jomer. A fancy girl; a sweetheart: c. (— 1839) >, ca. 1850, theatrical and Parlyearre; † as theatrical. Perhaps a corruption of It. donna (cf. dona(h), q.v.), it is always—in contradiction to blow, blowen—a complimentary term, says Brandon.

(jonah, a bringer of ill luck, is—despite F. & H.— S.E.)

Jones, Mrs. See Mrs. Jones.

jonnick, jonnock, jonnuk. See jammock.—jonty. See jaundy.

joo. Did you ?—slovenly coll.: C. 20. Denis Mackail, The 'Majestic' Mystery, 1924, 'When joo get down, Langley ?'

jor ('r' rasped). A sol. pronunciation of jau: since when? In illiterate speech, any vowel + w tends to be pronounced owr, ever, etc., with the 'e' clipped short.


Jordan, over; this side of Jordan. Reep, dead; alive: coll. (— 1889). Barrière & Leland; Manchon. Ex its use in 'pictorial language to symbolise death.' (O.E.D. Sup.)

jormam, of a boat-song other than Gaelic, is cacachrific; late C. 19-20. (O.E.D.)

jorum, a drinking bowl, despite F. & H., is S.E. But the derivative sense, a large number or quantity, is dial. and, thence, in late C. 19-20, s. verging on coll.]


Bowen, 'A relic of the days when the Maltese did a lot of this business.'

Joseph. A marine: nautical: C. 19-20; ob.— 2. As coat, or woman-proof man, it is S.E.


Joseph and Jesse! A political c.p. of 1886.
JOSEPH'S COAT

Sartorius of Joseph Chamberlain and Jesse Collings, inn. after the latter assumed office. As Mr. Chaplin rather neatly put it... the voice of Joseph, the hand is the hand of Joseph," The Daily News, Feb. 26. (Ware.)

Joseph's coat. A many-coloured coat; a dress of honour: from ca. 1890. Kipling, 'A Joseph's jury-coat to keep his honour warm.'


Josh. A fool; a sleepy fellow: coll.: mid-C. 19–20; ob.: ? ex jostin, q.v.

Josh. v.t. and i. To banter; indulge in banter: U.S. (1880's). anglicised by 1935, thanks to the 'talkies'. O.E.D. and Sup. Perhaps ex Northrnon dial. and Scottish joss, to jostle, push: possibly influenced by 'Josh Billings', that humorist whose writings were, ca. 1860-95, a household name in the U.S.A.

Josh. v.i. To move clumsily or carelessly: C. 20. E.g. in John G. Branden, Th' Big City, 1931. Prob. ex S.E. jostle influenced by josh, n.: q.v.


Jossop. Syrup, juice, sauce, gravy: schoolboys': from ca. 1860; ob. (Manchon). Perhaps a corrupnt blend of juice + syrup.

*Jostle. To cheat: c.: late C. 18–20. (Cf. haste, v., and hustler.) Whence:

*jostler. A swindler: Glasgow c.: C. 20—and prob. from well back in C. 19.

jottle (v.l.): do a jottle; go jottling. To copulate: low: C. 19–20; ob.

journalistic. Inferior journalistic writing: 1882 (S.O.D.): coll. till ca. 1930, then S.E. According to a certain journalist, most journalism is written—or spoken—by politicians.


'Stuart Wood', Shades of the Prison House.

journey, this. On this time or occasion: coll.: 1884; slightly ob.


journeyman parson. A curate: London: ca. 1820–60. Bee. Because apt to be moved about far more than is a full-blown clergyman.


Jove!; by Jove. A coll. exclamation, asseveration: from ca. 1570. Shakespeare, 'By Jove, I always took three threes for nine'; Miss Ferrier. (O.E.D.)

Jow. (Gen. in imperative.) To go away; be off: Anglo-Indian: from ca. 1890; slightly ob. H., 1884. Ex Hindustani; cf. Romanjow and Sampson's Jaf.

[jowl (a jaw, a cheek); cheek by jowl. Despite F. & H., both are S.E.]


joy-stick. The control-lever of an aeroplane: 1915: s. > by 1925; coll.: now verging on S.E. Ex its vibration or else ex the joy one experiences in handling it.—2. The penis: low: late C. 19–20.


joy-wheeler. A girl given to pleasure, esp. 'joy-rides': 1834, H. A. Vachell, Martha Penny.

joyful, O be. See o be joyful.—2. Cf. sing 'O be joyful' on the other side of one's mouth, q.v. at 'o be joyful' on . . .

joyous spirit. See jemmy, n., 2. (Transient s.)

jug. A coll. ablur. of jugude (the lozenge): from ca. 1840.


jugule waggon. A two-foot gauge skip: id.; id. jugule it? Do you believe it? (or, 1): a c.p. dating from the Silver Jubilee (May 6, 1935) to the death (January 20, 1936) of H.M. King George the Fifth. Ex an advertisement by Shell. In 1887 (Queen Victoria's first Jubilee), moreover, there was a popular song in which the singer, speaking of the contemporary jollifications, declared that they were 'would jubilee it, quite driving me mad'.

Judaic superba(e)z. A 'Jew in all the glory of his best clothes': Covent Garden Theatre and vicinity: 1887–ca. 1899. Ware.

[judas, a traitor, judas-coloured, judas-hole: all, despite F. & H., are S.E.]


judge. An expert, sagacious thief or swindler: c.: ca. 1810–50. Vaux;

judge and jury. A mock trial, the fines being paid in beer: tailors': from ca. 1870.


judicial and judicious are often confused: C. 18–20. (Neatly exemplified by R. Keeverne in The Man in the Red Hat, 1930.)

Judasie (or Jew's) compliment. A large penis but no money: low: from ca. 1850; ob. Cf. Yorkshire compliment, q.v.
**judy.** A girl, esp. one of loose morals: from ca. 1810: prob. orig. c., always more or less low; common among C. 19 sailors. Also, later, jewel. Vaux, 1812; Runciman, The Chequers. Ex Punch and Judy, or, like Jane, direct ex the Christian name. —2 A simpleton, a fool: orig. (1824); anglicised ca. 1850. Esp. in make a judy of oneself, play the fool, act the giddy goat.—3 In C. 20, gen. = a woman of ridiculous appearance, but also, in low s., any woman.

**judy-fitnessment of yourself?, don’t make a.** Don’t be a fool.: Anglo-Irish (—1932). Of topical origin, ex make a judy of oneself, to play the fool: anglicised ca. 1850 ex U.S.; see judy, 2.


**[juff.** The cheek; in pl., the posteriors. F. & R., adding ‘old’. In neither O.E.D. nor E.D. nor, as far as I know, elsewhere. Perhaps—of spurious jones—by error on Fr. joues, cheeks.]

**jug.** A prison: C. 19 c., C. 20 low. Also stone jug, q.v. Ainsworth, 1834, the first English user, the term occurring in U.S. in 1815 (O.E.D. Sup.).—Dickens, Thackeray. Ex Fr. joug, a yoke, via ob. Scots joug(ers), a pillory.—2 As a mistress and as a term of contempt, it is, despite F. & H., indisputably S.E.—3 Abbrev. juggins, q.v.—A bank: c., from ca. 1860. Cornhill Magazine, 1862; C. W. E. Leach, 1933.

**jug, v.** To imprison; look up: orig. (ca. 1840) a.; by ca. 1860, low. See the n., and cf. Scots joug, to confine in the jougs.—2 To deceive, humorously or, more gen., illogically: low: from ca. 1870; ob. jug-bitten. Tiptsy: coll.; ca. 1620-1750. Taylor the Water Poet.

**jug-loops.** Hair worn with tiny curls on the temples: low Cockney: ca. 1885-1905. Baumann.

**juggolo(w).** A dog: c. of ca. 1810-60. Vaux.

**juggul, not by a.** By a long way: coll.: ex U.S. (1834), anglicised ca. 1850; ob. by 1910, low by 1930.

**jugged, arrested, imprisoned: see jug, v., 1.**


**juggler’s box.** The branding-iron: c.: late C. 18-early 19. Grose, 2nd ed.

**juggling law.** In late C. 16—early 17 c., it is a branch of criminal activity, practised among the devotees of certain games. Greens, A Disputation, 1592, ‘The Juggling Law, wherein I will set out the disorders at Nynaholes and Ryffing [i.e. diceing], how they are only for the benefit of the Cut-purses.’

**juggro.** In the punishment-cell; hence, out of action, ill: military: from ca. 1910 F. & Gibbons. Ex jugged: see jug, v., 1.


**Also, gravy: a solely Charterhouse sense: C. 20.—5.** Petrol: 1909. Hence, from ca. 1918, step on the juice, to accelerate. O.E.D. (Sup.).—6. Electricity: electrical current: electricians’s, (1903) >, ca. 1920, gen. s. O.E.D. (Sup.).

**juice, v.i.** To rain: low: (—1932). Slang, p. 244. Ex juice, n., 4.—2. To weep; v.t., to reprimand: Bootham School (—1925). Cf. juice-meeting.

**juice, bright-work.** See bright-work juice.

**juice, bug.** Hair-oil; juice, cow. See cow-juice.

**juice, fresh.** Fresh water. All four terms are Conway cadets’s: from ca. 1890. John Mason, The Conway, 1933.

**juice for jelly, give.** (Of a woman) to experience the sexual spasm: low: C. 19-20. (Otherwise, juice in this sense is rare.) Cf. jelly, q.v.

**juice-meeting.** A reprimand: any address to the school: Bootham School (—1925). Anon., Dict. of Bootham Slang. Cf. juice, v., 2.

**juicer.** See ‘Moving-Picture Slang’, § 5.

**juicily.** Excellently; ‘splendidly’: 1916, E. F. Benson.


**jukrum.** A licence: C. 17—early 19 c. B.E. Cf. jackrum.

**Julius Caesar.** The male member: low: from ca. 1840; ob. Julius Caesar, dead as. Certainly, or long, dead: coll.: C. 19—20; ob. Julius Caesar was a pup, not since. In, or for, a devilish long time: from ca. 1890.

**Juliﬂower.** A colt. persion of gillyflower: mostly C. 19, though dating from C. 16. (O.E.D.)


**jumble.** A jumble-sale, or articles therefor: coll.: from ca. 1900. O.E.D. (Sup.).—2. (Also jumbling.) An unintentional confusion in the ringing of the bells; i.e., technically, a ‘breakdown’ of bell-ringers’s: coll. (—1901). H. Earle Bulwer’s Glossary.


**jumbling.** See jumble, n., 2.

**jumbo.** A clumsy, heavy follow: from ca. 1820; coll. >, ca. 1900, S.E. ‘Joe Bee.’—2. In C. 20, gen. of a very fat boy or man: coll. > S.E.—3. An elephant: from ca. 1882. ‘Chiefly in allusion to a famous elephant at [the London] Zoo (d. 1885),’ W. ; it was sold to Barnum in Feb., 1882 (O.E.D.)—4. Whence Jumbo, the Elephant and
JUMBOISM


jumboism. 'The hesitative policy of the Liberal Whigs': Conservatives' nickname therefor: 1882, at the time of 'the Jumbo craze' (see jumbo, 3). Ware. Cf. bad as your breath ... , q.v.


*jump; occ. dining-room jump. 'Robbery effected by ascending a ladder placed by a sham lamp-lighter, against the house intended to be robbed ... Because, should the lamp-lighter be put to flight, the thief ... has no means of escape but that of jumping down,' Grove, 2nd ed.: c. from ca. 1875; † by 1890.—2. A window (on the ground floor): c. 1893. Vaux.—3. Pl. see jumps. —4. The corresponding to jumping v. 5. same period. Esp. have a jump.—5. A fright: coll. late C. 19-20. Desmond Coke, The House Prefect, 1908, 'Good heavens, Manders ... You did give me a jump.'

*jump, v. To seize and rob (a person): c. ca. 1780-1890. Also to rob (a building) by way of jump, n., 1: c. C. 19.—2. To seize and arrest: Australian: ca. 1870-1900. 'Rolf Boldrewood.'—3. To possess oneself of a mining right, in the owner's absence. Gen. with a or the claim. From ca. 1854, when in The Melbourne Argus: jumping of claims, however, occurs in U.S. in 1851 (Thornton): coll. >, ca. 1870, S.E. Marryat, in Mountains and Moelhills, 'If a man jumped my claim ... I appealed to the crowd.'—4. Hence, in South Africa, to appropriate (goods) wrongfully: 1871, The Queenstown Free Press, Aug. 18, 'Five thousand bricks were jumped the other night from ... a brickyard at Klipdrift,' Pettman. —5. To copulate, v.i. and t.: C. 17-20 coll.: ob.—6. To try a medicine: medical: from ca. 1860; ob.—7. See jump a ship.—8. (Also jump with.) To agree, tally: a S.E. sense, despite F. & H.

jump, at the first. At the very beginning (of proceedings): coll.: ca. 1670-1700.

jump or jumps, be for the (high). To be about, or obliged, to face a difficulty or a very unpleasant task: military (ca. 1912), esp. as to be on the crimsheet, hence due for trial. F. & Gibbons. Ex stelephasing. Also, in G.W., be up for the long jump (Ibid.).

jump, from the. From the beginning: coll. (in c. 20, tending to S.E.): appr. orig. U.S. (1848) and anglicised ca. 1870.

*jump, go the. To rob as in jump, n., 1: c. C. 10. Baumann.

jump, not by a long. Not by a long way: non-autocratic coll. (—1887); ob. Baumann.


jump, see how the cat will. To watch the course of events before committing oneself: coll. from ca. 1820. Scott, Bulwer-Lytton.

jump a hill, to dishonour an acceptance, like jump one's self, to be absconded, is orig. and mainly U.S., partly anglicised ca. 1890.


jump as. To accept eagerly: coll. >, ca. 1905. S.E.: 1760 (S.O.D.). J. Payn. 1882. 'He might well have jumped at such an offer.'—2. To guess: coll.: from ca. 1890.

jump-down. 'The last place ... in course of erection on the outskirts of ... civilised life,' Staveley Hill, in From Home to Home, 1885: Colonial: ca. 1880-1910.

jump down a person's throat. A variant (—1887) of jump upon, q.v. Baumann.

jump on. See jump upon.

jump one's horse over or the bar. To sell horse, bridge and all, to the landlord of a public-house: Colonial: ca. 1880-1905. The Daily Telegraph, March 20, 1886.

jump out of one's skin. To be greatly startled: coll.: C. 19-20.

jump to it. To bestir oneself: military, esp. N.C.O.s: from ca. 1912. B. & P. Cf. put a jerk in it (see jerk ... ).

jump up. To get the best of (a person); or the reverse: tailors: from ca. 1850.

jump up behind. To endorse the bill of a friend: commercial: from ca. 1870. Cf. endorse.

jump (up)on. To criticise severely: coll.: 1808 (S.O.D.). M. E. Brandson, 'In vulgar phraseology, to be "jumped upon".'


jumping cat, the cult of the. The practice of waiting before committing oneself: coll. (—1896); † by 1920.


jumping Jehosaphat or Jupiter or Moses, by the. Mild oaths: mid-C. 19-20 coll.; ob. Jehosaphat is occ. employed alone, often in the sol. form Jehoshaphat.


jumping-powder. A stimulant: s. >, ca. 1890, coll.: ca. 1825-1914. Blaine, 1840, in Encyclopaedia of Rural Sports, 'Fortified ... by a certain quantum of jumping powder.'

jumps. Delirium tremens (—1879).—2. The fidgets: coll. (—1881). (Both with the.)—3. As a garment, it is (despite F. & H.) S.E.

jumps, be for the high. See jump, be for the high.

jump as a bag of fleas. See fleas, jump as ...
June too-too. June 22, 1897, the sixtieth anniversary of the Queen's reign: zion-aristocrat c.p.: 1897 only. Punning; 22', and satirising 'too-too' of the Kestethes. Ward.


junior. Smaller; lower; the less good. (So tight junior, the smallest, lowest.) Winchester College: C. 19-20; ob. The opp. is senior. Wrench.


juniper-lecture. See juniper-lecture.

juniper, a old or inferior cable, fig. salt beef, is S.E.


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junk. Whence, however, sense of (a) miscellaneous, second-hand stuff, hence (b) rubbish: orig. (1842), U.S.; anglicised as coll., resp. ca. 1880 and ca. 1900; both nuances now verge on S.-E. —2. Whence liquor; dregs: Australian (and U.S.) nautical: C. 20. Bowen.


junket, v. To exult (over): Winchester College: from ca. 1850; ob. Ex the S.E. v.


jxm. (a trick), wrongly defined, is also wrongly included by F. & H.: it is S.E.]

Jupiter. Used in mild oaths of C. 17-20; literary until C. 19, then coll. if used with a smile.—2. (Also Jupiter Tonans. Cf. the Thunderer.) The Times newspaper: Fleet Street: ca. 1850-1900.

Jupiter Carlyle. The Rev. Alex. Carlyle (1722-1806), who impressed his many notable friends and acquaintances as having a Jovian head. Dawson.


Jupiter Placida. Lord Brougham (d. 1868.) In contrast to Jupiter Tonans, 1. Dawson.

Jupiter Scopin. 'A tricky minister': political and Society's coll.: late C. 19-early 20. Ware. Ex the Parisians' nickname, ca. 1810, for Napoleon I.


**JUNE TOO-TOO**

**K**

*k.* See ka' me, ka' thee.—2. For such obscure words gen. spelt with a c as are locked in vain under k, see c.: e.g. kushy is a possible form of cussly, but it will be found only at cussly.—3. Sol. for gw: mostly Cockey: C. 19-20. E.g. (h')arekinad.—4. See ink.—6. For ct, k is an illiteracy: e.g., ack for act: immemorial.

**K.A.B.G.N.A.S.** These letters, which, in back a., form back slang (the needless c being omitted), are

'uttered rapidly to indicate that this mode of conversation will be agreeable to speaker' (Ware); mostly Cockneys' (—1898). Also kabac genals.

**K.E.B.** See K.E.B.

**K.E.B.'s. the. The King's Dragon Guards**; military coll.: from ca. 1881. F. & Gibbons.

**K.E.G.** H.M.S. *King George V*; naval coll.: 1912. Ibid.

'K.E.B. A 'King's hard bargain', more gen.
'King's bad bargain'; an undesirable sailor or, occ., soldier: coll. 1825, 'Taffrail' (O.E.D. Sup.).

k-legged. Knock-kneed: shaky on one's legs; printers: from ca. 1860. In dial., k or kay denotes 'left', as in k-posed, Cheshire and Lancashire for left-handed.

k-nut. See knut.

k.o.; occ. kaye. V. and occ. n. Knock-out. Also give one the k.o. Orig. and mostly pugilists': C. 20, in U.S. (O.E.D. Sup.).


ka' me, ka' thee. One good turn deserves another: proverbial coll. (— 1546) >, ca. 1700, S.E. Other forms k, kay, kawe, kob; Kay, C. 17, has clue, which, being also the earliest form, may provide the origin. Cf. the late C. 19—20, scratch my back and I'll scratch yours.

kabao genals. See K.A.B.G.N.A.L.S.

kadi. See cady.


kafrish. The market where, on the Stock Exchange, transactions in South African land, mining, and other stocks are effected: South Africa and London financial: from the early 1890's. A. J. Wilson, 1895; Pettman. Ex Kafris, q.v.


kail through the reek, give one his. To reprimand, or punish, severely; Scots coll.: C. 19—20. Scots. Ex the unpalatableness of smoking-tasting soup.

kaio. A 'popular corruption in the South Island of New Zealand of Ngaiia', the Maori name for myoporum latum, a tree whose wood is used for gun-stocks: from ca. 1870. Morris.

karaker-booseah. Prematurely voided excrement: low (— 1823); † by 1890. Bee. See cack.

kalomine is erroneous for calcimine: from ca. 1890. O.E.D.

kamered! Stop; that's enough; don't make it too hot!: military: 1915; ob. Ex the Ger. soldiers' cry (lit., 'comrade!') on surrendering. B. & P.—. 2. Also (1916), v., to surrender; cry 'enough!': ob. Ibid. (3rd ed.).

ka na du? A military variant of can do, 2. As if ex Hindustani.

kanga. Abbé kangaroo: Australian coll.: from ca. 1890.


kangaroo (or Anzac) poker; also double-see poker. A gambling game played by confidence-trickers: c., and police s.: from ca. 1916. Charles E. Lach, On Top of the Underwood, 1893. Prob. introduced by Australian soldiers in 1915, when hundreds of them were evacuated, wounded, from Gallipoli to England.

kangaroos. West Australian mining shares; dealers in these: Stock Exchange: 1896 (Morris).


kant[ see cant—Kanuck ] see Canana.—kanurdl. A loose form of kem(surd), q.v.


kap(o)ut. Finished, dead: no more: military: 1915. B. & P. (Only predicatively.) Ex Ger. kaputt. Cf. Low Ger. kaputt (or kaput) gaan, to die; Devonshire dial. has rapi go copooh, to die, recorded by the E.D.D. Sup. for 1881.

karibat. Food: Anglo-Indian (— 1864). H., 3rd ed. Ex Hindustani for curry and rice, the staple dish of both Europeans and natives in India.

karno. See Fred Kanno...


Kathleen Mavourneen system. The hiro-purchase system: Anglo-Irish (— 1922). Ex the refrain of the song: 'It may be for years and it may be for ever.'

katterzem. A parasite: Scottish (— 1900). Ware. Ex Fr. quatorzième, fourteenth: he being willing to go, at a moment's notice, to prevent the number of guests being thirteen.


keek. See kek.


kedge. To cadge: Cockney (— 1887). Bavmann.

keel-clo. See kicks.


Keel-bully. A lighterman carrying coals to and from the ships: late C. 17-18: c. >, ca. 1770, s. >, ca. 1800, coll. >, ca. 1890, S.E. See B.E., Grose. Mostly derivative.

Keel-haul, ring, even fig., are S.E.

Keelie. A (gen., street) rough: from ca. 1850: Scots s. >, ca. 1870, coll. Ex the Keelie Gang, an Edinburgh band of young blackguards, ca. 1820 (O.E.D.). Cf. hoodlum and hooligan, q.v.; see also larrikin.


Keen (on); Fond (of); eager (for); greatly interested (in): coll. (—1807); by 1930, almost S.E. "Mary Kingsley. ' . . . If they don't feel keen on a man surviving' (O.E.D.). ' Keen on a girl!' [keep. As board and lodging. (despite F. & H.) always S.E.; as a kept woman (rarely man) it may orig. have been coll.: long S.E.]

Keep. v. To live; reside; lodge: C. 14-20; S.E. till ca. 1770, then coll. and mainly Cambridge and U.S. Shakespeare; Grose.—(2. Other senses in F. & H. are S.E.)

Keep a cow,—as long as I can buy milk I shall not.

Why have the expense of a wife when one can visit a whore? Proverbial c.: C. 17-20; ob. Bunyan.

Keep a pig. To have a hogger: Oxford University: mid-C. 19—early 20. Eep, of a freshman quartered on a senior undergraduate.

Keep a stiff upper lip is coll. (orig.—ca. 1815—(U.S.) >, in C. 20, S.E. Not to show fear or sorrow.

Keep [a person] back and belly. To clothe and feed: coll.: C. 18-20; ob.

Keep the cave! To watch, and give warning: Eton College: C. 19-20.

Keep chapel. See chapel.

Keep company. As = go into society, S.E.—2. (V.t., with.) To be or act as a sweetheart; coll.: from ca. 1830. Dickens in Sketches by Boz, ' Mr. Wilkins kept companion with Jemima Evans.'

Keep down the census. To abort; masturbate: low: mid-C. 19–20; ob.


Keep it clean! Don't be indeclicate, smutty! c.p.: from the late 1920's. Cf. S.E. clean fun.

Keep it dark. See dark.

Keep it up. To prolong a debauch: from ca. 1780: coll. Grose, 2nd ed. Ex the S.E. sense, to continue doing something.

Keep off the grass! Be cautious!: a coll. c.p. orig. proleterian: late C. 19–20. Ware. Ex notice in parks. Keep nil. To keep watch; to be on the 'quill'


Keeve-clay. See kicks.


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keg, little bit o(t). Human cepulation: low
(— 1900). Ware. Lit., a small piece of common meat.
keg-meg. Tripe; derivatively keg-meg shop: low
'kag-mag', inferior meat, refuse. Cf. cag-mag above.
2. Hence (?), an intimate talk: (low) coll.: 1883,
J. Payn in Thicker than Water.
keg-gans. To be jacked at: nautical: mid-
C. 19–20; ob. Bowen. Ex cac(g), q.v.
keifer. *Generice for muttos (q.v.), F. & H.; see
monosyllable, the.
kek or keck. An especially heavy mail: Post
Office telegraph-messengers' (esp. in London):
from ca. 1920. Perhaps ex dial. keck, a jolt, a
blow.
kelder. Belly: womb: low coll.: mid-C. 17–
Kelly from the Isle of Man. A C. 20 (now ob.)
cp. ex a popular song. Collinson.
Kelly's eye. One, esp. a solitary one: mostly in
house (the gambling game): military; C. 20
Anecdotal ex a one-eyed Kelly. Also Kelly's wont.
*kelp. See caip.
*kelp, v.t. To lift one's hat to (a person): c. of
ca. 1800–50. Vaux.
Kebo consort, the act of accompanying a friend a
The same query applies to kelby, a bumper glass, also
listed by F. & H.: I consider all three to be dial.—
except perhaps the third. E.D.D.]
kelter; occ. kilter. As order, condition, it is
dial. and S.E.—2. As money, it is c. of ca. 1780–
1820. George Parker, 1789. Also dial: ? before
it was c.—the earliest dial record being 1808.
F.D.D.; O.E.D.
kemessa. See camessa.
[Kepp's morris, listed by Grose, is ineligible.]
Kemp's shoes to throw after you I, would (that)
I had. I wish I could bring you good luck: a C. 17–
early 19 c.p. Ex a lost topical reference. Grose,
1st ed.
*ken. A house (in compounds, house or place): c.
: ca. 1500–1800: thereafter somewhat literary,—
except in compounds. Harman, B.E., Lyttom,
Henley & Stevenson. The O.E.D. essays no
etymology, W. proposes abbr. kennel, I suggest a
corruption of Romney tan, a place, or a corruption of
the original whence tan itself springs. (H., 3rd
and later edd., refers to 'khan, Gipsy and
Oriental. The word does not exist in Romney
in this form; but there is the Hindustani khan(s),
a house, a room, which appears, in various forms, in
the various Gypsy dialects.) For bob- or bowmen-
ken, see bob-ken; for boozing-ken, see boozing.
*ken, bite or crack a. To rob a house: c.: resp.
late C. 17–18 (B.E.), late C. 19–20 ob.
*ken, burn the. See burn the ken.
*ken-crack lay. Housebreaking: c.: C. 19–20,
ob. See ken and lay.
Grose, 1st ed. (both).
Cf. kennurd for the euphonic e.
kenney. A poker: low London: ca. 1820–
1900. Bee, 1823. Ex one Kennedy killed in
'tough' St. Giles's by a poker. Hence, give one
kenney, hit one with a poker, as in Henley's
Villain's Good Night: 'Frequently shortened to
neddy,' H., 1859.
[kennel, female pudden; kennel-raker, scavenger.
S.E., despite F. & H.]
*kenner. A C. 19 (?–20) variant of ken. Man-
chon. Influenced by khanna, q.v.
kenneteeno. Stinking: manipulated back a. or
central s. (— 1859). H., 1st ed.
*kennick. 'A mixture of flash-patter [i.e. cat] and
padding-ken [or low lodging-house] talk,' says
'No 77' at p. 17 in a reference valid for the year
1865. Fanciful ex ken, q.v.
kening by kenning, vbl.n. 'Increasing a seaf-
aman's wages by the work he does, a term principally
used by the old whalers': nautical coll.: from ca.
1860; ob. Bowen. A natural development ex
Scottish and Northern dial. kenning, a little.
ken(jurd). Tipay: back a. (— 1859) on drunk
H., 1st ed. (Since knurd is ugly.) Mayhew has it
in 1851 in form kenourd (E.D.D.).
Kensingtons, the. The 13th London Regiment:
Military; from ca. 1805 (?). (See esp. 'The Ken-
singtons', by Sergeant O. F. Bailey & H. M.
Hollier, 1936.) Ex their headquarters' being in
Kensington.
ken. A coloured cotton handkerchief: low:
from ca. 1810; ob. Vaux. Also:
Kent clout or rag. See preceding entry. H.,
1839.
Kent-street ejectment or distress. The removal,
by the landlord, of the street door when rent is in
arrears: (low) coll.: ca. 1780–1830. Grose, 1st ed.
Ex a Southwark practice.
[Kentish fire, a salvo of applause; S.E., despite
F. & H. and Manchon.]
Kenth knock. A Kentish smuggler: c. 19:
local coll. > S.E. Ex Kentish Knock, the sand-
bank facing the Thames-mouth. (O.E.D.)
Kenth long-tail. A native of Kent: coll. nick-
name: C. 13–20; since ca. 1750, dial. The legend
behind the name is in Laymon's Brut, vv. 10555–
86. Apperson.
Kentucky loo; fly loo. Betting on certain antios
of flies: students': mid-C. 19–20; virtually t.
Ware.
kenud. See kennurd.
kep. An occ. variant of kin, n., 3.
Kepp's snob, put up at the. To be a snob:
naval: ca. 1870–1910. Ware. I.e. at The
Kepp's Head, an inn named after Admiral Keppel
(d. 1780); pun on no2, head.
[ke-, intensive a. or coll. prefix, indicative and
imitative of effort, as in ker-walloped, is U.S.
(1852); it has never > gen. in the British Empire. Of.
the k in knout: see kn-]
kerb-walker. A singer on the pavement-edge:
Glasgow (— 1834).
*kerbside Virginia. See hard-up, n., 5.
kerbstone broker. A stockbroker operating out-
side the Stock Exchange: orig. (1860), U.S.;
popularised ca. 1890 as coll. by 1930, S.E.
kerbstone jockey. A soldier in the Transport
(A.S.C.): New Zealand soldiers'; in G.W. A safe
job, comparatively; esp. as the horses were heavily
harnessed.
kerel. A chap, a fellow: South African coll.
late C. 19–20. Also (simply kerul), a term of ad-
dress = 'old chaf'; Ex Dutch; cf. † S.E. carl (cognate with short). Pettman.

kernel of the nuts. See k-nut and filbert.

Kerry security. 'Bond, pledge, oath—and keep the money,' Grose, 1785. Coll.: late C.18-mid.19.

Kerry witness. One who will swear to anything: coll.: from ca. 1825; ob.

kerrynette. Erroneous form of cassinetelle; 1846 onwards. O.E.D.

kersplosh 1. Splash! Australian (—1916). C.J. Dennis. See ker-


ketch; See Jack Ketch.

kerr Mug. The inevitable nickname, on Egyptian service (—1935), of men surnamed Braines or Brainy (etc.). Ex the Arabic for 'big' + mug, face.


kettle, cook the. To make the water in the kettle to boil: South African coll.: from the late 1860's. Hicks, The Cape as I Found It, 1900. (Pettman.) Cf. the English run the bath.

kettle and coffee-mill. Boiler and engine: from ca. 1870; ob. Bowen remarks that it was applied by sailing-ship men to wind-jammers ruined by the intrusion of 'these monstrosities!'

kettle black, pot calling the. See black a*se and cf. the proverbial 'the kin call the oven burnt house (C.17-19). Apperson.

kettle of fish, a pretty. See fish.


key, a translation, is S.E.—2. The penis: C.18-20; ob.: sometimes euphemistic, but gen. low col. 'Let's a man in and the maid out', F. & H. (Cf. lock, last sense, q.v.) Whence keyhole, the female pudend, for which F. & H.'s keystone of love is a mere literary euphemism.

key, v.t. So to word (an advertisement) that one can check its selling-appeal: publicity men's and publishers': from ca. 1920: s. > j. >, by 1934, S.E.

key, his wife keeps the. He is addicted to drinking on the sly: proletarian (—1887). Baumann.

key of the street, have the. To be shut out for the night; to have no home: from ca. 1835: coll. till C.20, then S.E. Dickens in Pickwick.

key under the door (occ. threshold), leave the. To go bankrupt: C.17-19. coll. Swift; Ray, 1870, say the key ... a variant. (Apperson.)

key-wee, on the), Alert: lower classes': 1862. Ware. Ex qui-vive. Cf. bee-gee.

keyhole. See key, n. 2.

keyhole (occ. keyholed), be all. To be tipsey: low: from ca. 1860; ob. Perhaps because a drunk man has difficulty in finding the keyhole. *keyhole-whisperer or -whistler. A night's lodger in barn (see skipper, whence skipper-bird) or out-house: tramps' c., resp. 1845 ('No. 747') and 1851 (Mayhew); ob.

keystone under the hearth, (keystone under the horse's belly). A C.19 smugglers' c.p. > proverbial, the reference being to the hiding of contraband spirits below the fireplace or in the stable. Wise, The New Forest, 1863. (Apperson.)

khabbar, khubber. See kubber.


Khaki Election, the. The General Election in Britain at the time of the Boer War: political coll.: ob. Collinson.

khalisee. (Gen. pl.) A native Indian sailor: nautical coll.: mid-C.19-20; ob. Bowen, † a corruption of Khaile(a), the Sikhs collectively.

khanna. A house, compartment: often used very incongruously in Anglo-Indian coll.: late C.18-20. Yule & Burnell. (See also ken.)

kia ora! Good health to you!; good luck! New Zealand (and occ. Australian): from ca. 1870. Ex Maori keora ta-u and k. tatu. See esp. Morris.

kibber. See jiber the kibber.

kibé is catachrestic when = to kick, to gall: C.19-20, O.E.D.—2. l!be, to whose benefit ? Universities' (—1909); ob. Ware. Ex cui bono.

kibosh. (The i gen. long.) Nonsense; anything valueless: low: 1860 (H., 2nd ed.): ob. Punch, Jan. 3, 1885, 'Appy New Year, if you care for the kibosh, old chappo.' Occ. kiboshery. By bosh, nonsense, out of kibosh, put the: qv.v.—2. Fashion; the correct thing: low: from ca. 1888; ob. E.g. 'That's the proper kibosh.'—3. See kibosh on, put the.

kibosh, v. To spoil, ruin; check; bewilder; knock out (lit. and fig.): from ca. 1850 (E.D.D.). Milliken in his 'Arry Ballads.


kibosh on, put the. Same senses as in kibosh, the v.: 1836. Dickens, in Boz, 'Ifooroar, executes a pot-boy ... ' put the kye-bosh on her, Mary !''; 'Put the kibosh on the Kaiser' was a G.W. soldiers' c.p. Perhaps ex Yiddish, which has kyeboosh or kibosh; eighteen pence (cf. kye, q.v.): a sense that has got into East End of London s.

kiboshery. See kibosh, n., 1.—kibsh(e)y. See kyepe(y).

kick. The fashion; vogue: from late C.17; very ob. Preceded by the. (If preceded by a singularity is indicated.) Hence, high kick, 'the top of the Fashion', B.E.; all the kick, 'the present mode,' Grose.—2. A sixpence: from ca. 1700; slightly ob., except in two and a kick, half-a-crown. Only in compound sums, e.g. 'fourteen bob and a kick,' Moncrieff.—3. The hollow in the butt of a bottle: trade: from ca. 1860. (Occ. kick-up.) Mayhew. † cognate with kik, W. pertinently asks.—4. A pocket: o.: from ca. 1850. Mayhew. Fr. ex kick;—5. A moment (cf. jiffy): low coll.: from ca. 1855; ob. Esp. in a kick: H., 1st ed.—6. (Cf. the boot) dismissal from a job: 1844 (S.O.D.). † Preceded by the and esp. in get the kick. Cf. kick out, get the, q.v.—7. A complaint, a 'grouse'; a refusal: coll: mid-C.19-20; orig.
(1839). U.S. E.g. 'He has a kick coming.' Ex the C. 14-20 S.E. v., to resist, be recalcitrant, wrongfully included by F. & H., as is that of 'to recoll' — 8. A chance; an attempt, 'go', as in 'Let's have one more kick' (Baumann): coll. (1887); ob.

kick, v. To die: ? c. (1725) > s. — 2. To escape: C. 18 c. Also kick away (A New Cantic Dict., 1725). In C. 19-20, but ob., kick it: low: — 3. V.t., ask for (money): borrow from (a person): low: from ca. 1790; ob. Maybe, 'Kick him for some copper.' Cf. break skins and kick for the boot, q.v. V.t., demand money, work, a rest, etc., from (a person): esp. tailors': 1829 (O.E.D.). (See also the n., seventh sense.)

kick, get the. See kick out, get the.

kick, have the. To be lucky: athletic ex football: ca. 1880-1915.

kick a (person's) hung out. To castigate severely: low: (1899). Ware. Prob. ex U.S.

kick at waist. To fit badly at the waist: tailors': ca. 1870-1919.

*kick away. See kick, v., 2.


kick down the ladder, as in Thackeray's Snobs, vili, is ineligible.

kick for the boot. To ask for money: tailors': from ca. 1890. Cf. kick, v., 3, and:

kick for trade. To ask for work: tailors': from ca. 1855; ob. Cf. preceding.

kick, or odd kick, in one's gallop. A whim: strange fancy: mid-C. 18-19 coll.


kick in the pants. See thump on the back.

kick it. See kick, v., 1 and 2.


kick on one's side, have the. To have the luck: sporting coll. (— 1887) ; slightly ob. Baumann.

kick one's heels. See cool one's heels.— 2. See kick up one's heels.


kick out, get or give (the dirty). To be dismissed; to dismiss (from employment): C. 19-20; with dirty, s. : without, coll. till ca. 1920, then S.E. Also get or give the kick: coll. : late C. 19-20 (Lyell).

kick over the traces. To 'go the pace'; to be recalcitrant: from ca. 1890; the former sense verging on S.E., the latter S.E. since ca. 1905. Ex a fractious horse.

kick-shoe. A dancer; a buffoon: coll. : 'old', says F. & H. — but how old?

kick the bucket. See bucket, kick the.

kick the cat. (Gen. he kicked the cat.) To show 'signs of domestic dissatisfaction': lower classes' coll. (— 1909). Ware.

*kick the clouds or the wind. To be hanged: resp. c. (— 1811), ob., often amplified with before the hotel door (Lex. Bal.), and s. or coll. : late C. 18-early 19 (Flor. Nov.).

kick the eye out of a mosquito, can or be able to. This coll. Australian expression (— 1888; ob.) indicates superlative capacity. 'Rolf Boldrewood.'

kick the stuffing out of. To maltreat; to get the better of: orig. U.S.; anglicised, as low, ca. 1900.

*kick the wind. See kick the clouds. Manxhon, erroneously (I believe), gives it as kick up the wind.


kick up at. To reprimand: at certain Public Schools, esp. Marlborough; late C. 19-20. Charles Turley, Godfrey Mann, Schoolboy, 1902 (pupil loquitor), 'Pollock ... has been kicking up badly at me in the last week. He says my prose is "the immature result ..."

kick up one's dust in the park. To stroll there: Society (— 1909); ob. Ware. Ex Fr. faire sa poussière.

kick up one's heels. To die: C. 16-19: orig. coll. but soon S.E. Cf. kick, v., 1, kick out, and bucked, kick the.

[kick up the wind. See kick the wind.]


kickeraboo or -boob. Dead; West Indies 'pudgin': late C. 18-19. Grose, 1st ed. Prob. ex kick over the bucket rather than ex kick the bucket.

kickers. The feet: low: C. 19-20; ob.— 2. A fit of nervousness, or of nerves: from ca. 1930. R. H. Mottam, Rumphy's, 1934 (concerning aviation), 'I won't go if it gives you the kickers.' Cf. jitters, which it may 'folk-etymologise'.


kicking-strap. An elastic strap inside a garment: tailors': from ca. 1890. Ex the strap adjusted on a horse to prevent his kicking.


kicks than halfpence or ha'pence, more. Esp. with get, more trouble than profit or money; hence, more unkindness than kindness: coll. (in C. 20, S.E.): 1824, Scott, 'Monkey's allowance ... more kicks than halfpence.' Cf. monkey's allowance, q.v.


[kickshaw(s), a trifle, etc., kicky-wicky, and kicky-winsky are, despite F. & H., ineligible.]

kicksey. See kicksey.


*kickster. A pair of breeches: c. (— 1839); ↑ by 1900. Brandon.

kicksey; occ. kicksie. Disagreeable; apt to give trouble: ca. 1850-90. 'Duceang Angloicus'; H., 1st ed. I.e., apt to kick.

kicky, adj. Kicking (ball) cricketers' coll.: 1888, A. G. Steel. (Lewis.)
*kid. (The 1899 Middleton-Massinger quotation given by both F. H. & the O.E.D. may belong to sense 1; perhaps to sense 3.) A child, esp. if young: late C. 17–20: orig. c. or low; ordinary s. in C. 19–20. J. Payn, 'He thinks how his Missis and the kids would enjoy the spectacle.' Ex the young of a goat.—2. A thief, esp. a young and expert one: c. (—1812); ob. by 1880, ↑ by 1896. Vaux; Bee: Egan's Grove.—3. A man, esp. if young: low (—1823); ob., except in U.S. and, in England, except when applied to a (clergy or e.g. Kid Berg; this boxing noun is allied to the preceeding sense. 'Jon Bee'; Bulwer Lytton.—


kid, hard. See hard kid.

* kid, nap the. To become pregnant: c. (—1811); ob. Lex. Bal.

kid, no. See kid, n., 5.—kid, with. See kidded.


* kid-ken. See kidded.


Contrast: kid oneself; occ. kid oneself on. To be conceived; to delude oneself: low > ordinary s.: from ca. 1860. See kid, v., 2, and kid on.

* kid-rig. See kid-lay and cf. kichen-lay, q.v.


kid up. To dress oneself properly or in style; military (—1923). Manchon. Contrast.—2. kid oneself up to delude oneself: lower classes' coll. (—1923); Ibid. Ex kid oneself./


Kidd, slurring of less usual kid-ken; occ. kiddie-ken. A lodging house frequented by thieves. esp. by young thieves: c. (—1839); ob. by 1890; ↑ by 1920. Brandon in Poverty, Mendicity and Crime.

kiddier. As dealer, huckster, S.E. > dial.—2. A glib, persuasive speaker; an expert in chaff: low (—1859) >, ca. 1900, ordinary s.—3. Hence, one given to pretending: low (—1880) >, by 1900, gen.—4. A person employed by a (usually hawked-) tradesman to 'buy' and therefore to stimulate genuine sales: 'tramps' c. (—1818) F. Jennings, Tramping with Tramps.—5. (Also Kiddier.) A Kidderminster carpenter; Cockney (—1887). Baumann.


kiddey, kiddie. See kiddie.

kidder. A pork-butcher: low: from ca. 1880; ob. H., 2nd ed. ↑ pejorative on kid, a young goat.


kid(d)i(e)ywink. A raffle: low (—1884); ob.—2. A small village shop: from ca. 1855; ob. H., 1st ed. (Coll. Of West Country dial. sense, an ale-house.)—Hence, 3, the late C. 19–20 nautical sense, 'a seaman's beer-shop in the Western English ports': from ca. 1870.—4. A woman of unsteady habits: from ca. 1860; ob. H., 2nd ed.

kiddle. A term of address to a girl or, mostly by the father, to a daughter of any age whatsoever: from the late 1800's. (Christina Stead, Seven Poor Men of Sydney, 1934.) Cf. boyo.


kiddy, v.t. To hoax, humbug: low (1851) >, ca. 1880, ordinary s.; c. Mayhew.

kiddy, adj. Fashionable, smart, showy, flash: low: ca. 1805–1900. Also, arrogant: nautical (—1887); ob. Baumann. Moncrieff, 'That kiddy artist . . . the dandy habit-maker'; Dickens, 'In the celebrated "kiddy" or stage-coach way."

kidder. See kidded.

kiddly-nipper. 'Taylors out of work, who cut off the waistcoat pockets of their brethren . . . thereby grabbing their bits, or money, says Grose, 1st ed. c. : late C. 1850. See kiddy.

kiddish. Stylish; somewhat showy: low: ca. 1815–60. 'Think of the kiddyish spree we had,' Jack Randall's Diary, 1820. Ex kiddy, adj.—2. Gay; frolicksome: low (—1880); ob. H., 2nd ed.

kiddnapper. A C. 17–18 form of kidnapper, q.v.

diameter. Humbug; 'gammon', 'blarney': c. (<1839) > by 1890, low; ob. Brandon.—2. Hence, a false story, a begging letter, etc.: c. from ca. 1845.—3. Professional patter; cheapjack's: s. from ca. 1850.—4. A pocket hankkerchief, esp. one fastened to the pocket, and partially hung out to entrap thieves: c. of ca. 1835-1910. Brandon; H., 1st ed.—5. Hence, from ca. 1860, any inducement to crime: c.; ob.

kids, kitna. How much; Anglo-Indian (1864); ob.: coll. H., 3rd ed.

*kindap. To steal children: orig. (late C. 17th) c. > ca. 1750, s. > ca. 1800, coll. > ca. 1840, S.E. Ex kid, n., 1, + nap = nab, to steal. Recorded four years later than:

*knapper; occ. *knapper. A child-stealer, orig. one who sold the children he stole to the plantations in North America: ca. 1775 (S.O.D.). In late C. 18 used also 'for all recruiting crims,' Grose. For rise in status, see back-formational kindap.

kiddish. As kind, class, disposition, S.E. (mid-C. 10-20) although ca. 1740-1890 it had a coll. tinge.—2. F. & H.'s second sense (a waiter) arises from a misunderstanding.—3. A fractional part of a shilling: Stock Exchange: from ca. 1890. Ex Cadney, the first broker known to deal under 'J.'


'The boys were kindap, and kindap, and kindap, and kindap, and kindap, and kindap—' Morley.


*kidsman. One who teaches boys how to steal, esp. one who also boards and lodges them: c. of ca. 1835-60. Brandon; Bauman.


kift, all. All right; all correct: military: 1915; ob. Gen. as an (emphatic) affirmative and prob. suggestedly Fr. s. kid-kif, equal, similar, the same (esp. in c'est kif-kif, it makes no odds). B. & P., 3rd ed.

kift. A 'booz' (1): Ayrshire s.: 1892, Hew Ainalie, A Pilgrimage to the Land of Burns.' 'To ... invite them all to that ancient hostelry for a 'kift o'wre a chappin' ' (E.D.D., Sup.).

kibboragym. 'Swank', 'side', pose: 1923. Manchon, Ord.: 'I surmise an error.'


kill. A ruined garment: tailor's: from ca. 1860.

kill, v. See 'Moving-Picture Slang,' § 3.—2. 'To hurt badly, put hors de combat,' Wrench.


kill, dressed (or got-up) to. See dressed.

kill-calf or -cow. A butor or a murderous ruffian; a terrible person: coll. ca. 1580-1750: coll. quickly > S.E.; extant in dial.—2. Also as adj., murderous. (Naree.)


kill that baby! Turn out the spotlight: film-industry c. p.: from ca. 1930. A baby because it is only a small light.


kill the canary. To evade, or malinger at, work: bricklayers' (> 1909). Ware.


*kill who? Ca. 1870-1915, a prolierarian o.p.: satirical protest against a threat (Ware).

killed off. Removed from (or lying under) the table because intoxicated: ca. 1805-1900. Boc, 1823, 'Borrowed from a phrase used of our brave defenders by Mr. Windham, minister-at-war' (William Windham, 1750-1810) — Bauman.

killers. Eyes (never in singular): Society s. of ca. 1770-1800. C. Whitley, in Cop and Cowl, quotes one Mansell (1780): 'Their eyes (in fine language ... killers.)'

killick. A petty officer's arm-badge: blue-jackets': late C. 19-20. F. & Gibbons. It is shaped like an anchor or killick.

killing. Extremely funny: coll.: from ca. 1890. Prob. ex killingly funny.—2. The sense 'fascinating or irresistible (G. 17-20), exhausting (from mid-C. 19), despite F. & H., have always been S.E. (Kilmarneck-cowl and K. whittle, listed by F. & H., are dial.)


kilter, esp. in U.S.: see kilter.


kim kam (occ. hyphenated), adv. and adj. (In the wrong way; out of order: coll.: late C. 19—early 19, then dial. In Cornewall and Shakespearean: clean kam; North, 1740, chim-chun. (Apperson.) Prob. clean (wholly) caim (awry, crooked).

*Kindbaw. To cheat, trick; esp. beat severely and then rob: c. of ca. 1690-1830. B.E., Ainsworth. Ex a kimbo (akimbo): cf. (w) cross, q.v.


*kinchen- (or kincbin) oc (C. 16-18) or cove (C. 17-19). A boy brought up to stealing: c.: from ca.
kinchen. A satirical pronunciation (kinned) of kind: Society: late 1884, only. Ex Barrett's production of Hamlet, in which, October 1884, 'he made this reading,' "A little more than kin and less than kind'!" (Ware.)

kind. Adj, kindly: C. 17–20; S.E. till ca. 1820, then coll.; since ca. 1880, sol. Dickens, 1849.

kind-heart. A dentist: jocular col.: ca. 1610–40; Johnson.

kind of. Adj.: Adv., in a way, somewhat; as it were; coll.: orig. (–1900); U.S.; anglicised 1850, Dickens using it in David Copperfield, (Cf. sort of.) Often—this is a sol.—spelt kinda, kinder.

kind of (with pl. n. and v.), these. C. 16–20; S.E. till late C. 18, then coll., as Holcroft, 1799, 'These kind of barrows ... are ... more expensive' (O.E.D.).

kind of a sort of a. A coll. (gen. jocular) variation of kind of a and sort of a, themselves both coll. forms of kind of, sort of (ex. thing).

kinds, kinder. See kind of.—2. Hence, kinder-way, in a: somehow or other; mediocriely. Manchon.

kindly, adv. Easily, readily, spontaneously, congenially: C. 15–20; S.E. till ca. 1880, then coll.—and dial.

[Kindness, the sexual favour, is euphemistic S.E.] Kind. King, William's Town (on Buffalo River): South-African coll.: 1890. Pettman.—2. The steward in charge of this or that on a modern liner: nautical: C. 20. Bowen. Thus, the linen king, the crockery king, the silver king.—2. See King Death.


King Coll. Colley Cibber (1671–1757), the actor-dramatist. Dawson.


King Dick. Admiral Sir Frederick Richards when he was First Sea Lord in the [eighteen-] nineties, Bowen.—2. A brick: rhyming s.: late C. 19–20.

King Joe. Mr. Lambton when Lord Durham: ca. 1820–35. The Creeper Papers. Because he said that 'one can jog along on $40,000 a year.'

King John's men, one of. Occ. amplified with eight score to the watched. A little under-sized man: late C. 18–19; from ca. 1850, mainly nautical. Grose, 1st ed.


King pin, the. The leader; most important person: Australian (–1916). C. J. Dennis. Perhaps ex ninepins.

Kingdom come. The after-life: late C. 18–20: s. >, ca. 1920, coll. Grose, 1st ed.; Wolcot, 'The Parson frank'd their souls to kingdom-come.' Hence, go, send, to k.e., to die, kill. Ex thy kingdom come in the Lord's Prayer (O.E.D.).

King's (or Queen's) bad bargain. See bad bargain.


King's or queen's cushion or chair. Ineligible because S.E.

King's English, clip the. To be drunk: drinking a. (–1745) >, ca. 1800, coll.; † by 1890.


King's (or Queen's) Head Inn. Newgate Prison: c. of ca. 1690–1830. B.E. Also called the Chequers Inn in Newgate Street.—2. Any prison: c.: ca. 1790–1850.

King's horse, (you, he, etc.) shall have the. Ac. p. directed at a list: ca. 1670–1840. Scott in The Black Dwarf.

King's man or K.-m. See kingsman.

King's Men, the. The 78th, from 1881 the Seaforth Highlanders: military coll.: C. 19–20; ob. F. & Gibbons. Ex a Gaelic motto: Cuidich'r Rhi, Help the King. Also the Kingsmen.


King's (or Queen's) Pictures. Money: esp. coins: C. 17–20, ob.: c. >, ca. 1780, s. >, ca. 1860, coll. Brome, B.E. Grose. Also, in C. 19–20, King's (or Queen's) portrait.

King's plate. Fettors: low (–1811); ob. by 1880, † by 1910. Lex. Bal.


Kingsley's Stand. The 20th Foot, in late C. 19–20 the Lancashire Fusiliers: military: late C. 18–20; ob. Their commander of 1754 69 was Wm. Kingsley; despite heavy losses at Minden, the regiment volunteered for guard-duty the next day. F. & Gibbons.

Kingsman. A handkerchief green-based, yellow-patterned; costermongers (–1851); ob. Mayhew: 'The favourite coloured neckerchief of the costermongers,' F. & H. A very emphatic one is a kingsman of the roriest († by 1910): Ware.—2. (Gen. with capital K.) A member of King's College, Cambridge: Cambridge University (–1852): coll. >, ca. 1900, S.E.

Kingsmen, the. See King's Men, the.


Kink. A rare C. 19 variant of kinchen.

Ducango Anglicus.'

kink. A whim; a mental twist: S.E. (The adj. kinky is U.S. coll.) But—2, as large number (of persons), it is Bootham School a., † by 1925.

kiss. A suffix, coll. in tendency, seen both in the euphemizing of oaths (e.g. boditika) and in diminutives (e.g. babykins). O.E.D. (Sup.).


kip. A brothel: 1766, Goldsmith, 'Tattering a kip'—kinking' s brothe, *as the phrase was, when we had a mind for a frolic': low (? orig. e.) † by 1880, except in Dublin, where it has > a. Ex Danish kippe, a hut, a mean alehouse; † cf. Romany kipes, a basket,—kitchen, an inn.—2. A bed; a hammock: low (— 1879, perhaps orig. e.) and nautical. Cf. does, letty, lib(b), and lig, qq.v.—3. A lodging or a lodging-house, a does-house: low (— 1833). Answers, Jan. 31, 1891.—4. Sleep: unrecorded before C. 20; perhaps it arose in G.W., when it was much used by British soldiers.—5. Grose's sense has always been S.E.—6. 'A small chip used for tossing pennies in the occult game of two-up', C. J. Dennis: late C. 19–20: s. >, by 1920, coll. †, by 1930, j. Perhaps a corruption or a perversion of chip.


Kiplingism, gen. pl. (One of the errors and/or solecisms in Dr. T. Kipling's ed. (1793) of the Codex Bezae: Cambridge University coll. rather than a.: ca. 1794–1840. O.E.D. (Sup.).

kipper; esp. giddy kipper. A person, esp. if young; a child: C. 20. O.E.D. (Sup.). Cf. queer fish.—2. See next.—3. A tailor's help; tailors' (— 1933).

[kipper and kips(e)y] in F. & H. are ineligible, but kipper, a stoker (from being roasted), is naval (— 1909); ob. Warw.

kipsey. A house; the home: low Australian (— 1916). C. J. Dennis. † ex kipsey, a wicker-basket, influenced by kip, n., 3.


kirk and a mill of, make a. To make the best of: C. 18.—2. To use as one wishes: C. 19–20. Galt. Both senses are Scots coll. (O.E.D.)

kirk is Scots > gen. coll. in Auld Kirk and Free Kirk: from ca. 1880. (The secession was in 1843.)

Kirke's (wrongly Kirks') Lambs. The 2nd Foot, British Army: military: 1868; but in C. 19–20 merely historical. Ex its first colonel, Percy Kirke (d. 1891), and ex the Paschal Lamb on its colours.

*kirkling; cracking a kirk, vbl.n. Breaking into a dwelling whilst the occupants are at kirk or church; c.: from ca. 1860. Cf. U.S. 'kirk-buzzer'.

kisky. Drunk; stupid with drink; from ca. 1860. Ob. perhaps ex fuddled speech or ex Romany kueshe, good (cf. feel pretty good) or else, as Baumann suggests, on frisky and whiskey.


kiss. As the sexual favour, S.E.—2. 'A drop of wax by the side of the seal': of a letter: coll. (mostly rural): from ca. 1825; ob. Thackeray, Dickens.—3. (Gen. pl.) A full-stop: shorthand-typistes' (— 1835).

[kiss, v.; kissing, n. Whether sexual or of light touching in billiards: S.E.]

kiss-curl. A small curl, lying on cheek or temple: coll. (in C. 20, S.E.): from 1854, says Ware. Punch, 1856, 'those pastry-cook's girl's ornaments called kiss-curls'.


kiss my —. See a' se. (Also as adj.) Cf. the old proverbs, If that doth kiss and do no more, may kiss behind and not kiss one who sets out on Saturday (or Sunday). Apperson.

kiss my hand, as easy as. See easy as damn it.

kiss the Clink, the Counter. To be confined in the Clink (see clink, n.) or in the Counter prison: mid-C. 16–18 coll. J. Wall, Rowlands. To kiss the bane. To take a drink: bon viveurs' (— 1913); ob. A. H. Dawson's Dict. of Slang.

kiss the hare's foot. See hare's foot. (The following phrases defined by F. & H. are S.E.: kiss the claus (perhaps orig. coll.) or hands, to salute; kiss the dust, to die or be defeated; kiss the post, to be shut out.)

kiss the maid. To lose one's head in an early form of the guillotine: late C. 17–mid. 18. B.B.

kiss the master. To hit the jack: bowls: ca. 1570–1600. Gosson.


kissing-crust. The soft-baked surface between two loaves; also the under-crust in a pudding or pie, F. & H.: coll.: 1708, W. King's Art of Cookery; Barham, 'A mouldy piece of kissing-crust as from a warden pie.'

[kissing-strings. Bonnet-strings tied under the chin, ends loose; † S.E.]

kissing-time, (it's) ; or half-past kissing-time, (it's time to kiss again). A c.p. (— 1923) to children (continually) asking one what time it is. Manchon.—2. See half-past . .

kissing-trap. The mouth: low and boxers': from ca. 1850; ob. On potato-trap, q.v.

[kist(-fu) 'whistles or whistles, an organ, is Scots dial.]

kistmutgar. See kitmutgar.


*kitchen co, kitchen mort. Awdelay's variants (1851) of *kitchen-co(e) and *kitchen mort, q.q.v.

[kitchen-Latin, -medicine or -physic, -stuff, despite E. & H., are S.E.]

*kitchener. A thief haunting a 'theives' kitchen' q.v.: c.: from ca. 1840.

Kitchener wants you! A military c.p. to a man selected for filthy, arduous or perilous work: 1915-16. B. & F. Ex a famous enlistment-poster.


kitchenite. 'A loafing compositor frequenting the kitchen of the Compositors' Society house; F. & H.: printers;': from ca. 1870.


kite, v. To move like a kite through the air; also fig.: coll.: 1863, Le Fanu, *H's has been 'kiting' all over the town' (O.E.D.)—2. V.L., same as fly a kite: see kite, n., 2: from ca. 1850; commercial.—3. As v.t., to convert into an accommodation bill, it is not very gen.: from ca. 1900: commercial.

kite, blow out the. To have a full stomach: Cookney* (—1909); ob. Ware.

kite, fly a. See kite, n., 2: 1805; app. orig. Anglo-Irish.—2. As to put out a feeler, it is later and S.E.—3. See kite-flying, 2.

kite, put a. To make a face, a grimace: c. (—1887). Baumann.

kite-flyer. One who raises money or maintains credit by the issuing of bills of exchange and/or accommodation: commercial: from ca. 1830. See kite, n., 2.—2. Hence, a passer of worthless cheques: c. (—1935). David Hume.

kite-flying. The vbl.n. corresponding to the preceding senses 1 and 2: resp. from ca. 1820 and in C. 1940. Whoremongering: low: ca. 1820-30. 'Jon Bee'.

*kite-lark. (With lark, cf. the c. senses of law and lay.) 'Stealing letters in transit, removing any cheques they may contain, and, after suitable manipulation, casting them at the banks': c.: C. 20. A gang that operates this racket is known as a kite mob. Charles E. Leach, *On Top of the Underworld, 1933. See kite, n., 3.


*kite-mob. See kite lark.


kitimugur. An under-butler, a footman: Anglo-Indian (Bengal) coll.: from ca. 1750. More correctly kitimutgar or khedmutgar, khid-; kitimutgar is an † sol. Yule & Burnell.

kite. See kites.

*kitten. A pint or half-pint pewter pot: c.: from ca. 1850; ob. *See eat and kitted.

kitten, to. To be brought to bed of a child: low coll.: O. 19-20.


[kittie (or kitock) and kittle-breaks, in F. & H., are inelligible.]


kittle-pitchering. 'A jocular method of hobbling or bothering a troublesome teller of long stories' (Grose, 1st ed.) by constant inquiries about minor points: ca. 1780-1850.


kivey. A man, fellow, chap: from ca. 1850; ob.: low. Bradley, in *Verdant Green. This diminutive of *cove (see also covey) was possibly influenced by L. civis, a citizen.

Kiwi, kiwi. 'A man on ground duty and not qualified for flying service': Air Force: 1917; ob. F. & Gibbons. 'From the name of the flightless bird of New Zealand.'

kiwi (or Kiwi) king. 'Any officer fussy about polish; military: 1916-18. B. & P. Ex 'A well-known dressing for leather.'

klaaar Ready (1852); clear (—1912): South African coll. Ex Dutch klaar, which is used in both these senses. Pettman.


klep, v. To steal: from ca. 1885; ob. Ex the preceding.


klopper. See clobber.


klopp. A coll. imitation of a cork being drawn: from ca. 1870.

Kloosh. See Gloosh. (Bowen.)

kn-. Common to the Teutonic languages, but, in S.E., silent since C. 17. In C. 20 'there has been a tendency to reintroduce the k- sound in knut.
Knightbridge*, W. Cf. kar, q.v., and the jocular pronunciation (connotative also of emphasis) of twenty as ter-venty.

knab, knap, and compounds. See nab, nap, etc. But see also knap.

[knack. A trick, a trinket, etc., is S.E., while F. & H.'s definition as penis is almost certainly an error; knack-shop also is S.E.]

knacker. An old and worn-out horse; coll. ex dij.: from ca. 1838. L., 1st ed.: W. Bradwood. —2. As a horse-a-lighter, it is S.E.

*knacker; gen. in passive. To kill; ruin: c. or perhaps merely low s. (—1887). Baumann. Ex sense 2 of the preceding.—2. (Rare except as knackered, ppl. adj.) To rob (a person) of something: Conway cadet* (—1891). J. Masefield, The Conway, 1933.


knap, to strike crisply, is S.E.—2. Its other senses, receive, endure, steal, all derive from that of 'to take': c. or low: from ca. 1810. Vaux; H., 1864, 'Oh, my! won't he just knap it if he can!': i.e., take anything if there's a chance. (Cf. the Whitby knap, a person not strictly honest.) In combination: —knap a clout, to steal a handkerchief; knap the swag, to grab the booty; knap seven penn'orth, to be sentenced to seven years: all being c.

knap, give or take the. To give or to get a sham blow: ca. 1850–1900.

*knap a Jacob from a danna—or-dannaker, dunnican-knag. To steal a ladder from a night-cart: c.: ca. 1810–90. Vaux; Egan's Grose.

knap a hot un. To receive a hard punch: boxing: from ca. 1820; ob.

Knap is concerned, Mr.; Mr. Knap's been there. She is pregnant: low. ca. 1810–1910. Vaux, 1810, Egan's Grose, 1823.

*knaph the lim. To catch a 'clap', q.v.: c.: from ca. 1810; ob. Vaux.

*knaph the rust. To become (very) angry: c.: from ca. 1810; † by 1910.

knap the stool. To be made 'inspector of the pavement': q.v.: c.: ca. 1820–70.

knapped, be. To be pregnant: low. ca. 1820–90. Egan's Grose.

knapper. The head: low, from ca. 1840. Because the 'receiver general', q.v.—2. (Rare in singular.) The knee: from ca. 1790: since ca. 1830, dial. ob. T. Brydges. (O.E.D.)

*knapper's poll. A sheep's head; late C. 18–early 19 c. Grose, 2nd ed.


*knappi-nappi-gagger, dub at the. To pay at the turnpike; c. (—1859); † by 1900. H., 1st ed.

Knap's been there, Mr. See Knap is concerned.


knap. A ca. 1850–1900 variant of nark, q.v. Mayhew; Baumann.

kna. A hard task; a tyrant; a person not easily fooled; tailors: from ca. 1860; ob. † the perversión—or the survival of an † form—of gnat.

knave. A dunce: Christ's Hospital: from ca. 1820; ob.

knave in grain. A late C. 18–mid-19 jocullar coll. for a corn-factor, a miller. Grose, 2nd ed.


knealing is C. 18–20 erroneous for mealing, an old form of annealing. Cf. † kneck, possibly erroneous for kink; † kneck for seed; knevel for kneed. O.E.D.

knee, break one's. To be delavered; made pregnant: coll.: C. 19 20; ob. [knee, give or offer a, is S.E., as also is F. & H.'s knee-trick.]

knee-drill. Kneeling, to order, for prayers: Salvation Army j. (1882) >, ca. 1895, jocullar coll., gen. used loosely as = praying. Ware.

knee-high to a(n) . . . Very small or young, esp. in knee-high to a mosquito or a duck: orig. (1824), U.S.; anglicised ca. 1890. Thornton.

knee-trembler. A standing sexual embrace: low coll.: from ca. 1850.


kneller. See knueller.

knick-kneck, trinket, is S.E.; female pudend, low, C. 19–20.


knife and fork, lay down one's. To die; low coll.: from ca. 1890. (S.E., however, is play a good knife and fork.)

knife and fork tea. High tea: lower-middle class's coll.: 1874; slightly ob. Ware.

knife-board. A seat running lengthways on the roof of an omnibus: 1852 (S.O.D.); coll. >, ca. 1890, S.E. Leech's cartoon in Punch, May 16, 1852 (O.E.D.).

knife. To decamp; esp. as imperative, stop !, go away !, run !: low (—1821); ob. Vaux; H., 1st ed. Cf. cut it out !


knifey. (Of a person, esp. a customer) that cuts things painfully fine when dealing in the money-market: stockbrokers* (—1935).


knifish. Spiteful; tailors': from ca. 1860; ob. knight and barrow pig. 'More hog than gentleman. A saying of any low pretender to precedence', Grose, 1st ed.: c. of ca. 1760–1840.
 knight of the... 'Forming various jocular (formerly often slang) phrases denoting one who is a member of a certain trade or profession, has a certain occupation or character, etc.', O.E.D. Most are ironical (cf. carpet-knight, q.v.) and origin, were, prob., derivative, of the many sets or classes of knights and/or of the various orders of knighthood. Some are c., some a., some call, some S.E., even literary, and long demoded. A few arose in C. 16, many in C. 17-18; the numerous C. 19 additions are or call, the practice is, fortunately, †. The principal phrases—drawn from F. & H. and O.E.D.—are these:—blade, a bully: late C. 17-18; c. > s. —brush, an artist: (1880): coll.; also, a housepainter: jocular coll.: from ca. 1890; ob.— cleaver, a butcher: jocular coll.: from ca. 1870; ob.— collar, one who has been hanged: ca. 1580-1680.—cuet, a billiard-marker: jocular coll.: 1887 (O.E.D.); ob.—elbow, a sharpening gambler: late C. 17-18: —spigot, a knob: ca. 16-early 17.— forked order (or without the) Hornsey: jocular: resp. ca. 1660-1760, ca. 1630-1700. (Contrast order of the fork, below.)— grammar, a schoolmaster: perhaps merely literary: ca. 1690-1740.—green cloth, a gambler: orig. (—1881). U.S. — anglicised ca. 1885; ob.—Hornsey. See forked order.—industry (the being occ. omitted): from ca. 1690: prob. literary. Fr. chevalier d'industrie.—jenny, a burglar: Society: late C. 19—early 20, Ware.—knife, a cutpurse: C. 17; Jonson.—lapstone, a cobbler: jocular coll.: C. 19—20; ob.—napkin, a waiter: from ca. 1850: jocular; ob.—needle, shears, thimble, a tailor: resp. 1778, Footo; from ca. 1780, Grose (1st ed.); late C. 18-20, Grose, 1st ed. All orig. jocular s. or coll. but by 1860, almost S.E.—order of the fork, one who digs with a fork: jocular coll.: from ca. 1620. J. Taylor the Water Poet. Contract forked order, above.—pen, a clerk or (cf. guild) an author: from ca. 1860; ob.: resp. jocular coll. and near-literary.—pencil, a bookmaker: jocular coll.: from ca. 1880; ob. or †.— pestle, an apothecary: C. 17-20; ob.: jocular coll.— petticoat, a brothel's bully: low coll.: ca. 1880-1910.—piss-pot, a physician or an apothecary: from ca. 1860; ob.—pit, a fanatic of cock-fighting: from ca. 1870; ob.: jocular coll. or perhaps journalistic.— post, a notorious and/or a professional purjurer: from ca. 1888; ob. — road, a free man, esp. a notable one: from ca. 1880; ob. — share, a wise, low creature: ca. 1840, S.E. Also, the K. of the P., Titus Oates of the Popish Plot: C. 17. (The most widely used of all.) Nash, Ford, Mrs. Centlivre, W. T. Moncrieff. † ex fit (for) the whipping-post. F. & H.'s other sense is suspect: see whipping-post and knighted in Bridewell.—quill, an author: late C. 17-20; ob.: coll. soon S.E.—rainbow, a footman: ca. 1780-1880. Grose, 1st ed.—road, a highwayman, esp. a notable one: from ca. 1690; ob. —spigot, tapester or publican: from ca. 1820; ob.: jocular coll. Scott.—sun, an adventurer: literary: from ca. 1720; † by 1910. Punning the Knights of the Golden Fleece, an order of chivalry. —thimble. See needle.—trencher, a tableman: from ca. 1780: jocular. Grose, 2nd ed.— vapour, a smoker: C. 17; perhaps a nonce-word (Taylor the Water Poet).—wheel, a cyclist: prob. S.E.: from ca. 1810; ob.—whip, a coachman: from ca. 1810; ob.: jocular s. > coll. Bee.—whipping-post, a disreputable person, esp. a sharper: ca. 1815-60. Scott.—yard, a shop-assistant: ca. 1885-1910.— knighted in Bridewell or bridedell, to be. To be whipped in prison: late C. 16–17. Cf. knight of the post and the whipping-post, q.v.— knight's. Shares in the Watertasand Mining Company: Stock Exchange (—1805). A. J. Wilson, Stock Exchange Glossary. knights, to the guest of the cross-legged. To go dinnerless: C. 18–early 19. Ex the eligibles in the Round Church (in the Temple, London), a rendezvous of hungry men looking for jobs from the lawyers and their clients. Cf. dine with Duke Humphrey.— knit it! Stop!; 'shut up!'; Glasgow (—1934).— knitting-needle. A sword: military: ca. 1850-1910. Cf. toothpick, q.v.— knob. The head: from ca. 1720. Hence, one on the knob, a blow on the head (Grose). Gen. nob.—2. Abbr. knobstick, q.v.: 1838 (S.O.D.).—3. A 'nab' or 'big wig': see nob in that sense. Cf.—4. An officer: naval: † mid C. 17–mid-19. Bowen, 'Apparently introduced into the British service with the amylation with the Scotch Navy.'— knob, v. To hit: ca. 1818: from ca. 1815. Prob. ex hit on the knob.— knob of suck. A piece of sweetmeat: provincial: C. 19–20; ob.— knob on to. To pay court to: fall in love with: Cockey (1887); nimbly ob. Baumann.— knobs, make no. Not to hesitate or be scrupulous: coll.: ca. 1670-1770.— knobs on, (the) same to you with. The same to you—only more (so): from ca. 1910. B. & P. Ex.— knobs on, with, adj. Embellished; generous.—2. Adv. with embellishments; with interest, forcibly. Both, C. 20. Ex knob = excrecence—ornament.— knobstick; occ. nobstick. A non-unionist; a workman that takes less than the agreed price or one who works while his fellows are on strike: workmen's: from ca. 1825; ob. — >, ca. 1870, coll. >, ca. 1900, S.E.—2. A master paying less than union wages: workmen's: from ca. 1850: a. >, ca. 1880, coll. >, ca. 1905, S.E. Maybew.— knock. A copulation; low coll.: C. 16-17. See the v.—2. The penis: C. 18-20. More gen. knocker.—3. A lame horse: horse-dealers: from ca. 1860. The London Review, June 18, 1864, 'The knock... is a great favourite for horse-coping purposes, as he is often a fine-looking animal.'—4. An innings: cricketers: coll. from ca. 1919. E.g. The Daily Express, May 13, 1935, 'Nourse's perfect knock.'— knock, v.t. and i. (Of a man) to have sexual intercourse (with): low coll.: late C. 16–20. Florio, 'Cunnata, a woman mocked.' See nock, n., for possible etymology, and cf. the mainly U.S. knocked-up, pregnant. —2. To rouse or summon one by knocking at his door, v.t.: coll.: C. 18–19. Abbrev. C. 19–20 S.E. knock up.—3. To astound, alarm, confound; to 'floor': coll.: from ca. 1718; ob. except in that knocks me /, that confounds or is too much for me.—4. To impress greatly, to 'fetch', to surprise: 1883, The Referee, May 6, 'It's never too Late to Mend...,' is knocking 'em at the Pavilion'. Cf. Chevalier's song title, 1892, Knocked
knock, get the. To drink too much, become drunk: from ca. 1860; ob.—2. To be dismissed from employment: from ca. 1860; ob. Cf. get the sack.

knock, take the. To lose to the bookmakers more than one can pay: the turf (—1890). Hence, from ca. 1895, to suffer a financial loss.—2. To be drunk: C. 20. Manchon.

knock about, v.i. To wander much, roam, aimlessly: coll.: from ca. 1850. Mayhew, ‘I’ve been knocking about on the streets.’ In C. 20, however, one can say, e.g. ‘He’s knocked about the world for many years,’ where knock = knock about, v.i. From ca. 1880, also knock (a)round.—2. To pass round, esp. in knock about the bub (drink): low (—1781); ob. G. Parker.

knock—about, adj. Noisy and violent (e.g. commotions): theatre: ca. 1891.—2. The n., a ‘knock—about’ performer or performance, is recorded four years earlier.—3. Abrb. of next.

knock—about man or hand. A handy man: Australian coll.: from ca. 1875. W. Harcus, 1876, ‘Knockabout hands, 17.2. to 20a. per week.’ Also (—1889) knock— about dem.—coll. Cf. rouseabout, q.v. (Morris.)

knock about spare. (Gen. as p. ppl.) To have nothing particular to do: military coll.: G.W. (B. & P.).


knock all of a heap. See heap.

knock along. An Australian variation (commented-on in the Tichborne case, 1874) of knock—about, v.i.; very ob. Ware.

knock at the cobbler’s door. See cobbler’s knock.


knock handy. To astound, ‘flabbergast’; tailors: from ca. 1860.

knock (or let) daylight into. See daylight.


knock down, v. To call upon, nominate, urgently invite: coll.; slightly ob.: 1759, Goldsmith, ‘... Had knocked down Mr. Spriggins for a song’ (O.E.D.). But knock down for a song, to sell very cheaply, is S.E.—2. To reduce considerably in amount or degree: coll.: from ca. 1865. E.g. to knock down prices, colours.—3. To spend in drink or other riotous living: Australia: 1889. Marcus Clarke, 'Knocked down thirteen notes, and went to bed as light as a fly.’ Morris.—4. To introduce (one person to another): C. 20 Australian ex (—1896) U.S.

knock ’em down. To gain applause: proletarian (—1887). Baumann.


knock—in. The game of loo; a hand at cards: from ca. 1860; low s. > coll.—2. The same as knock—out, n. 1.

knock in, v.i. To return to college after the gate is closed: university: 1825, C. M. Westmacott.—2. To join in (cf. chip in) a game of cards; clubmen’s and gamblers’: from ca. 1860.—3. To make money: costermongers’ (—1808). Ware, i.e., in to the pocket.

knock in the cradle. A fool; but gen. as to have got a knock... be a fool. Coll.: ca. 1670—1850. Resp. B.E., Ray.

knock into a cocked hat. See cocked hat.—knock into fits. See fits.—knock into (gen. the middle of) next week. See week.—knock spots off or out of. See spots. These four = to defeat utterly, be much better than: C. 19—20. The first and second are coll., the others are not.

knock it back (invariable). To eat; occ. to drink: mostly military: from ca. 1912. B. & P.

knock it down. To applaud by hammering or stamping: low: from ca. 1860; ob.

knock it out of one. To exhaust; punish severely: coll.: ca. 1910, S.E. Punch, 1841, ‘The uphill struggle... soon knock it all out of him.’

knock—me—down. See knock—me—downs, n. 1.—2. As adj., violent, overpowering, overbearing: coll.: 1760, Foote, ‘No knock—me—down doings in my house.’ (O.E.D.)

knock—me—downs. See knock—em—downs.


knock off corners. To be successful: musical halls’: ca. 1880—1914. Ware cites Entr’Acte, April 16, 1880: ‘Just as Arthur Williams had commenced to “knock corners off” at the music hall, he is once more summoned to the Gaiety. More study!’


[knock on the head, to frustrate or kill, is S.E.]

knock—out; occ. (—1800) knock—in. One who, at auctions, combines with others (hence, also, the combination) to buy at nominal prices: from ca. 1850; coll. >, in C. 20, S.E. Ex.—2. knock—out, an illegal auction: from ca. 1820; coll. >, ca. 1890, S.E. ‘Jon Bee’ (These auction sericke are also used adj.)—3. Applied in admiration, or by way of outraged propriety, to a person, esp. one who does outrageous things; also to an astounding or outrageous thing. Chiefly as a regular knock—out. From ca. 1894. Perhaps ex boxing, a knock—out
being a champion, but more prob. ex knocker, q.v.—4. As a knock-out blow, it is S.E.

knock out, v. Corresponding to the n., sense 1 and 2: from ca. 1870: coll. >, ca. 1905, S.E.—2. To make (very) quickly or roughly: coll.: from ca. 1885.

Dickens, Hardy. (O.E.D.)—3. Hence, to earn: Colonial: from ca. 1895. Ex knock up, fifth sense, q.v.—4. To render bankrupt: from ca. 1890.

—5. To leave a college by knocking at the gate after it has been shut: university: from ca. 1890.

 Cf. knock in, v., 1. —6. To let so persistently against a house that a short price retires to an outside place,' F. & H.; to force out of the racing quotations: from ca. 1870: mostly the turf.


knock out an apple. To beget a child: 1818, Keats in a letter of Jan. 5; † by 1890. (Thanks to Allen Walker Read.)

knock out of time, v.t. To punch so hard that one's opponent cannot rise at 'Time' : boxers: from ca. 1890: s. >, ca. 1900, coll. >, ca. 1910, S.E.

knock-outs. Dice: gamblers' s. : from ca. 1850.

knock over, v.i. To give way; to die: from ca. 1890: s. >, ca. 1905, coll.: ob.

knock round. See knock about, v. 1.

knock saucepans or smoke out of. To attack violently; gen., however, to defeat utterly: Australia: ca. 1885—1905, 'Rolf Boldrewood', both uses in Robbery under Arms.

knock sofly. A fool; a simpleton; a too easy-going person: coll.: 1894: ob.

knock spots off. See the group at knock into a cocked hat.

knock the bottom (or filling or inside or lining or stuffing or wadding) out of. To confound, defeat utterly; render useless, valueless, or invalid: coll.: resp. 1875, ca. 1890, ca. 1890, ca. 1890, 1890, ca. 1895. The O.E.D. compares it won't hold water. Cf.:

knock the end in (gen. v.i.) or off (gen. v.t.). To 'spoil the whole show': military: 1915. F. & Gibbons. Ex preceding.

knock-toe. A 'Deal lugger-rigged galley-punt, in which there was little room for the feet': nautical: C. 19. Bowen.

[knock under, abbr. k.u. (the) board, despite F. & H., is S.E.]

knock up. To exhaust, become exhausted, is S.E. as are to rouse by knocking at the door, to put together hastily.—2. To gain, in class, a place (v.i. and v.t., e.g., 'He knocked Jones up!'): Christ's Hospital: from ca. 1830. Cf. oz up, q.v.—3. Make (so many runs) by hitting: cricket coll.: 1890 (Lewis). Ex.—4. To earn: coll.: from ca. 1885. Cf. knock out, v., 3.—5. See knocked up, its only part.—6. To arrange (e.g. a dance): (low) coll. (—7. Bernam.)

knock up a catcher; gen. to have knocked up ... To be put on an easy job: dockers': from ca. 1921.

(The Daily Herald, late July or early Aug., 1936.) Ex cricket.

knock-upable. Easily fatigued: coll.: from ca. 1870. George Eliot. (Ware.)

knockabout, n. and adj. See knock-about.

knocked, wounded; knocked cold, killed: New Zealanders' and Australians': in G.W., and diminishing afterwards.


knocked out. Unable to meet engagements: commercial coll.: from ca. 1860.


knocked up a catcher, (to have). (To be) detected, found out: mostly military (—1914). F. & Gibbons. See catcher.—2. See knock up a catcher.


knocker, on the; knocker-worker. Resp. adj. (or adv.) and n. applied to one who sells things by going from door to door: low s., esp. grafters': C. 20. Philip Allingham, Cheapside, 1834. He is constantly using the door-knocker.

knocker, up to the. (Very) healthy, fit, or fashionable; adv., exceedingly well: 1844, Selby, in London by Night.

knocker-face or -head. An ugly-face (or its own) owner: low: from ca. 1870; ob.


knocker on the front door, have a. To have achieved respectability: lower and lower-middle classes' coll. (—1909). Ware.

knocker-worker. See knocker, on the.

knockers. Small curls worn flat on the temples: coll.: ca. 1890—1915.


knocking-house or, more gen., -shop. A brothel: low: mid-C. 19—20. H., 2nd ed., has the latter.


knocking-shop. See knocking-house.

*knob, a set or group of persons, has always been S.E.: in C. 17—19, however, it was, like crew, used often of the underworld.—As v., to cut, it is S.E.)

*knob, tie with St. Mary's. To hamstring: coll.: C. 19.

*knob to. To abscond: low: from ca. 1880; ob.
KNOT WITH THE TONGUE

**knot with the tongue that cannot be undone or united with the teeth, knit or tie a.** To get married: coll.: late C. 18-19; then dial. Lyly, Swift, Scott. (Apperson.)

**know, know all.** To be a bookworm: proletarian coll. (-1897). Baumann.

**know, don't you.** See don't you know.

**know, in the.** Possessing special and/or intimate knowledge: coll.: 1883, The Referee, April 29, "As everybody immediately interested knows all about them, perhaps Refreaders would like to be in the know likewise."

**know, we or you or do you (?)** A mildly exclamatory or semi-interrogatory (virtual) parenthesis: coll.: from ca. 1710. Addison, 1712: Jane Austen, "Do you know, I saw the prettiest hat you can imagine." (O.E.D.)

**know a great A from a bull's foot, (2) a thing or two, (3) a trick or two, (4) a trick worth two of that, (6) how many blue beans make five, (6) how many days go to the week, (7) how many go to a dozen, (7a) one's book, (8) one's life, (9) one's way about, (10) something, (11) the ropes, (12) the time of day, (13) what's o'clock, (14) what's what, (15) which way the wind blows. To be well-informed, experienced, wide-awake, equal to an emergency. Nos. 5 and 14 are a, the others coll.: nos. 7, 9 and 15 are almost S.E.—No. 1, C. 18-20, ob.; no. 2, late C. 18-20 (Holler); no. 3, C. 18-20, ob.; no. 4, late C. 18-19 (Shakespeare); no. 5, C. 19-20, see blue beans; no. 6, C. 17-18; no. 7, from ca. 1850; no. 7a, from ca. 1880; no. 8, from ca. 1890, ob.; no. 9, from ca. 1860; no. 10, from ca. 1870, ob.; no. 11, from ca. 1850, original nautical; no. 12, from ca. 1890; cf. no. 13, from ca. 1850 (Dickens); no. 14, what is what from ca. 1400, what's what from ca. 1600 (e.g. in Jonson and Wycherley): see esp. Apperson; no. 15, from ca. 1640; ob. by 1890; ↑. Cf. known, b. to a battledore, not to. See B and ef. know a great A from a bull's foot.

**know it, not if I.** Not if I can help it: coll.: 1874, Hardy. (O.E.D.)

**Know-it of Know-all Park.** A know-all: coll.: from ca. 1910. (Compton Mackenzie, Water on the Brain, 1933.)

**know life, in the C. 19 underworld, meant, to know the shady tricks and the criminal acts, but not necessarily to be a criminal oneself.** Vaux.

**know much about it, not.** Not to know how to deal with: esp. of a batman towards a bowler: coll.: C. 20.

**know of, not that I.** So far as I know: coll.: from ca. 1850.

**know of, not that you.** A defiant expression addressed to someone in reference to something he proposes or is about to do: coll.: ca. 1740-1820. Richardson, "As Mr. B. offer'd to take his Hand, he put 'em both behind him.—Not that you know of, Sir!" (O.E.D.)

**know one point, occ. an ace, more than the devil.** To be (very) cunning: coll.: C. 17-18. Prob. ex Spanish. Cf. the Cornish know tin—in tin occurring in many forms. Both are much stronger than know a thing or two, etc.

**know one's way about, the ropes, the time of day, what's o'clock (etc.).** See know a great A.

**know one's stuff.** See do one's stuff.

**knewed.** Knew; known; sol.: C. 18-20. (Often as deliberate jocularity.)

**knowing, shrewd, artful, is, despite F. & H., ineligible, for it has always been S.E.—2. Stylish; knowing, what's what in fashion, dress, manners: coll.: ca. 1795-1860. Jane Austen; T. Hughes, "Tom thought his cap a very knowing affair."

**knowing bloke.** A sparrow on recruits: military (—1837); ob. Brunelles Patterson in Life in the Ranks. (But knowing one is S.E.) For knowing codger (—1839) see knowing, 1, + coiler.

**knowledge-box.** The head: (—1780 coll. >, ca. 1890, S.E. Grose, 1st ed. But knowledge-casket (—1901) has not taken on. (In U.S. c., knowledge-box is a school. Irwin.)

**knowledgeable.** Having or showing knowledge or mental ability: from ca. 1830: dial. >, ca. 1860, coll. Hence knowledgeably (—1865) and knowledgeableness (—1886). O.E.D.

**known, n.** A well-known person: coll.: 1835 (O.E.D.). Never very gen.

**knows, all one.** (To the best of one's ability; to) the utmost: coll.: from ca. 1870. Other forms are possible: all one knew, all they know or is, dial.

**[kneb, to rub against, tickle, listed by F. & H., is dial.]**

**knuck.** A thief, esp. a pickpocket; c. of ca. 1810-90. Vaux; Ainsworth, in Rookwood. Ex known, n. 1.

**knuckle.** A pickpocket, esp. an expert; c. of ca. 1780-1840. Parker.—2. Abb. known, duster, q.v.; never very common: coll.: from ca. 1870.

**knuckle, v.** To pick pockets, esp. if expertly: c. of ca. 1785-1870. Parker; Grose, 3rd ed.—2. To pummel, punch, fight with one's fists: c. from ca. 1860; ob. —3. To acknowledge defeat, give in: S.E., whether as knuckle or as knuckle down or under; so too is knuckle down (to), to apply oneself earnestly (to).

**knuckle, down on the.** (Almost) penniless: either c. or low: from ca. 1840; ob. "No. 747" (reference to year 1845).

**knuckle, go on the.** To practise pickpocketry: c. of ca. 1810-70.

**knuckle, lie on the.** See lie on the knuckle.

**knuckle, near the.** Slightly indecent: coll. (1850, W. Pett Ridge) >, by 1930, S.E. Cf. the c.p., the nearer the bone the sweeter the meat.

**knuckle-bone, down on the.** Penniless: c. from ca. 1880. Baumann.

**knuckle-constounders or -dabs.** Handcuffs; c. of ca. 1780-1850. Grose, 1st c3.

**knuckle-duster.** A knuckle-guard that, made of metal, both protects the hand and gives brutal force to the blow: orig. (—1868). U.S. and c.; anglicised, ca. 1865, as coll.: by 1900, S.E. The Times, Feb. 15, 1858.—2. Hence, a large and either heavy or over-gaudy ring: low: from ca. 1870. H., 5th ed.

**knuckled.** Handsome; tailors': c. from ca. 1860; slightly ob.

**knuckler.** A pickpocket; c. ca. 1810-90.

Vaux. Ex known, n. 1. Cf.: Ex known, c. 1.

**knuckling-nove.** The same: id.: id. Ibid. Ex known, v. 1.

**knuller; occ. kneller.** A chimney-sweep given to soliciting custom by knocking or ringing at doors: low: ca. 1890-1900. ↑ Ex knell.—2. A clergyman; low: ca. 1860-1910. Ex sense 1 via clergyman, q.v.
Knut, k-nut. (The k- pronounced.) A very stylish (young) man about town; a dandy: from ca. 1865. Prob. nut orig. = head and knut has perhaps been influenced by knob, q.v. See also fillbert and kn-.

Knuta, the. Important persons crossing to France during the G.W.: Dover Patrol nickname. Ex preceding.

Knutty. The adj. of knut: 1915; ob. Also cosum, q.v. Perhaps this strange word is cognate with Sampson's 'chaxano, lying, counterfeit: cf. 'chaxani, a sham horoscope (Welsh Gypsy).

Kollah. A loosejeal of callokh, q.v. (Ware.)

Konk. See conk, n. and v.

Konobin rig. The spelling of large pieces of coal from coal-sheds: c. (1811); † by 1900. Lex. Bal. This may be the original of noble: but what is its own etymology?


Koota, kooti, kuti. New Zealand forms (late C. 19-20) of cootie, q.v.

Kootee. A house: Anglo-Indian: (1864). H.


Koop, illiterate for cop.


Kopje wallower. A diamond-buyer visiting the Kimberley fields: ca. 1896; ob. Ex kopje, a small hill. Pettman.

Kooba, the. The King's Own Scottish Borderers: an occ. military nickname: C. 20. F. & Gibbons.


Koshar; occ. cossher. See kosh.—2. Adj. fair; square: East End of London: from ca. 1860. Ex Hebrew koshar, lawful, esp. as applied to meat.

Kotey. An illiterate form of quota, q.v.

Kotoo, kotow, kowtow, despite F. & H., is S.E.

Koylies, the. The King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry: military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons.


"No. 747", p. 419. A corruption of (the only app. later) pruitting-ken.

Krakenhohe. A local, late 1918–early 1919 military c.p. 'cuss-word'. F. & Gibbons, 'A German town, found hard to pronounce by our men, who passed it in their advance after the Armistice.'


For k'rect card, see correct card.


Kruger's tickler or tiddler. A little feather brush used, in the celebrations after Ladyzith and Faekzing, to tickle fellow-celebrants' faces: coll.: Boer War. Collinson.

Krushen feeling, that. Verve and energy: a c.p.: from ca. 1926; slightly ob., Collinson. Ex an advertisement of Krushen Salts.

Kuanthropy. An inferior, indeed an incorrect, form of kyanthropy: from ca. 1890. O.E.D.


Kudize. To esteem, honour; praise, extol: students: (–1887); virtually †. Baumann. Ex: kudos. Glory, fame; university s. (from ca. 1890 >, ca. 1890, gen. coll. Gr. κῦδος. As rare † v.; kudos occurs in 1799, kudize in 1873: both, pedantically ineligible.

Kutcha. See cutcha.—kuti. See koota.


Kyacting. Playing the fool, or jocularity, during hours of work: naval (–1909). Ware. This may be a confusion of chy-ack (or -teking) and sky-tarking.

Kybosh. See kibosh and cf. kyebosk.


Kye-bosh. See kibosh on.—kyebosk. See kibosh.

Kyebosk. A low Cockney variant of kibosh.

Baumann, 1887.

Kychen. See kinchen.

K'yon! ( Pronounced as the letter q.). Thank you! slovenly coll. (verging on sol.) abbr. from the 1890's.

Kypher, v.i. and t. To dress (her): lower classes' (–1909). Ware. Ex Fr. coiffer.

Kyps, occ. kipsy, a wicker basket, is S.E. > dial.

Kyrze eleison, give or sing a. To suold (v.t. with to): ecclesiastical (1528, Tyndale) >, ca. 1600, gen. coll. (as in Taylor the Water Poet); † by 1780. Ex the Gr. for 'Lord, have mercy'. O.E.D.

Kyah. A cushion: a small, flat, square squab used for sitting on and for carrying books: Marlborough College: late C. 19–20. By corruption of 'cushion'.
LADIES’ FEVER

L

1 is ooc. omitted in illiterate speech, esp. in all; thus all right > a’ (pron. aw) right or o’right. C.19-20.


La, the three. Lead, latitude, look-out: nautical coll. : from ca. 1860. Smyth; Clark Russell. Dr. Halley added a fourth, longitude.

L.S.D. Money: coll. : from ca. 1835 : in C.20, S.E. Hood, ‘But, p’raps, of all the felonies de se, ... Two-thirds have been through want of £ s. d.’ (O.E.D.)


la-di-da, or ooc., as in Baumann, la-de-da ; also lardy-dardy, q.v. Very stylish; affectedly costume, voice, manner: from ca. 1860: coll. ‘Its great vogue was due to a music-hall song of 1880—He wears a penny flower in his coat, La-di-da’; W., who suggests imitation of affected haw-haw (q.v.) speech.—2. Also, from 1893 (O.E.D.), a n.: derisive coll. for a ‘swell’. Cf. † U.S. la-la, a ‘swell’. And—3. ‘Elegant leisure, and liberal expenditure’ (! mostly London) streets’ (— 1900); ob. Ware.—4. Occ. as v. : 1867, S. Coyne, ‘I like to la-di-da with the ladies’ (O.E.D. Sup.).

la, la !, or la-la ! A coll. imitation of a French exclamation: C.18–20.—Also, C.16–20 (ob.), an expression of derision: polite >, ca. 1850, somewhat trivial and coll. Cf. la, la (?). q.v.


Labby. Henry Labouchere (1831–1912), the witty journalist (editor of Truth) and politician.

[labour, to beat; prob. labourer, a midwife; labour-tea, to copulate, are all inegible, the third being an † Standard Scottish euphemism.]

Labour, the ; gen. on the Labour, on unemployment-relief: working classes’ coll. : from ca. 1921. (Michael Harrison, Spring in Tartarus, 1935.)

lac, lack, lakh, esp. in pl. A large number or quantity: Anglo-Indian: from ca. 1888. Kipling. Ex Hindustani lak(h), a hundred thousand.—2. Earlier, in (—1804) Anglo-Indian coll. that, ca. 1810, > standard, it meant 100,000 rupees.

lace. Strong liquor, esp. spirits, added to tea or coffee: coll. >, ca. 1750, S.E. : C.18–20, ob. The Spectator, No. 488 (i.e. in 1712).—2. By inference, sugar: C.18. Ex:

lace, to intermix with spirits: S.E. (from ca. 1875). (With sugar, ca. 1690–1720, is prob. s. or coll.) Ex lace as an adornment, an accessory. W. —2. Also S.E. is lace, to flog, to thrash, again despite F. & H.—3. To wear tight stays (v.i.) from ca. 1870. Coll. >, ca. 1895, S.E. ; ob. lace into. A C.20 coll. variant of lace, to thrash. Lyell.


laced, ppl.adj. Intermixed with spirits: S.E.—

laced mutton. A woman, esp. a wanton: ca. 1575–1860. Whetstone, 1578; Shakespeare, in Two Gentlemen, ’She, a lac’d mutton, gave me, a lost mutton, nothing for my labour’; B.E. : Lex. Bal. Cf. mutton and mutton dressed as lamb, the latter at lamb.

Lacedemons, the. The 46th Foot Regiment, since ca. 1881 the 2nd Battalion of the Duke of Cornwall’s Light Infantry : military: late C.18–20; ob. F. & Gibbons. Ex its colonel’s speech, made in 1777, under fire, about the Lacedemoman discipline. Also Murray’s Bucks and the Surpriors.

lacing, spirits added to tea or coffee, is S.E. But as a flogging, it is C.17–20 coll. (B.E. ; Gross.)

lack, Latin, an ignorant person, like lack-land, a propertyless one, is S.E.


lactary is erroneous for lactary: mid-C. 17–20.


lad o’kax. A cobbler: coll.: from ca. 1790; ob. by 1890, by 1920. Baumann notes the variant, rock-a-wax, q.v.—2. A boy; a poor sort of man (contrast man of wax, a ‘proper’ man): C.19 coll. lad of, occ. on, the cross. See cross, n.

lad of the village, gen. in pl. A dashing fellow or cheerful companion, esp. if a member of a set: late C.19–20 coll. Perhaps an extension of lad, q.v. (or vice versa), or, more prob., ex.—2. (Gen. in pl.) One of a set of thieves and pickpockets congregating at a given spot: e. of ca. 1820–80. ‘Jon Boc.’


ladder, climb or go up or mount the. To be hanged: semi-proverbial coll.: ca. 1650–1870. In C.17–19, to led or to rest is gen. added. Harman, climb three trees with a ladder. Cf. (and see) the following few of many synonyms: catch or nab the stitfer, cut a caper upon nothing, dance the Paddington frisk, preach at Tyburn cross, trine, wear hemp or a Tyburn tipped.

ladder, groom of the. A hangman: either S.E. or jocular coll.: ca. 1640–1700.

ladder, unable to see a hole through a. See hole in a ladder.


laddle. A lady: chimney-sweeps’ (esp. on May 1); mid-C.19–early 20. On that date, the sweepers’ wives, collecting money for the men, carried brass ladies. (H., 1860). ’Ducange Anglicus,’ 1857, classifies it as c.

ladies. See la-di-da.

ladies, Card s. a. gambling (hence almost c.): 1890, The Standard, March 15.

ladies’ cage. The Ladies’ Gallery: parliamentary (—1870). See also cage, n.

[ladies’ fever, syphilis, like ladies’ delight, (etc.), the penis, is euphemistic S.E.]
ladies’ finger or wish. A tapering glass of spirits, esp. if gin: (low) coll.: ca. 1850–1910.—2. In Australia, but gen. as lady’s finger, a very short, thin banana: from ca. 1890: coll. on the verge of standard, which latter it > ca. 1920. ladies’rog. Grog that is hot, sweet, strong, plentiful: from ca. 1840; ob.


ladle. To enunciate solemnly and pretentiously: theatrical coll.: from ca. 1870; ob.

[ladron and lad’s leavings in F. & H. are ineligibly.]
lad, one of. The variant of lad of the village: coll.: C. 20. Lyell.
lady. A woman-hatted woman: ca. 1690–1870. B.E. Cf. lord (quv.), by which suggested.—2. A wife (esp. my old lady: cf. old woman) low coll.: from ca. 1860; earlier, S.E. Cf. lady, your good, q.v.—3. Madam, as term of address: M.E.—C. 20: polite till ca. 1800, then increasingly coll. and low. (See W.’s comment.)—4. The reverse of a coin: low: C. 19–20; ob. Ex tail, via sex. —5. A quart or a pint pitcher upside down: low: C. 19–20; ob.—6. He who attends to the gunner’s small stores: nautical (—1711); † by 1930. Whence, in the same period, the † lady’s hole, the place where such stores are kept. Both terms were coll. by 1750, S.E. by 1800 at latest.—7. With sense 2, cf.: mother, gen. the old lady: (jocular) coll. (—1887). Baumann.
lady, old. The female pudend: low: C. 19–20; ob.—2. A coll. term of address to animals, esp. mares and bitches: from ca. 1840. O.E.D.
lady, perfect. A prostitute: low when not jocular: from ca. 1880. Ex the claims of such women—or ex male irony.
lady, your good. Your wife: C. 18–20: S.E. till ca. 1890, then low coll. Cf. your or the miss us and Fr. votre dame. (Rare in other persons’)


[lady-chair, given by F. & H.; is S.E.; cf. king’s cushion, q.v.]

[lady-feast, an abundance of sexual love.—lady-flower or star, the female pudend.—lady-ware, the male genitals (also trimkets), are all S.E. euphemisms: despite F. & H.]

*lady green, or with capitals. A clergyman, esp. a prison chaplain: c.: from ca. 1880; ob. † ex inexperienced mannerism.
lady-killer. A male flirt: from ca. 1810: coll. >, ca. 1890, S.E. Whence lady-kill ing, n. and adj., which aboes, the adj. in 1823, the n. in 1837 (O.E.D.): same change of status. Cf. same.
lady of easy virtue. See easy virtue.—lady of pleasure. S.E. euphemism.—† lady of the lake, a mistress: S.E.
lady (or Virgin) of the Limp. A coll. variant (military) of the S.E. the Hanging Madonna or, esp., the Leaning Virgin, the displaced Basilique de Notre-Dame de Brébières, at Albert: 1914–18. B. & P.
lady of the manor. An occ., late C. 19–20 variant of lord of the manor, sixpence. B. & P.
lady-sitter. A lady who allows herself to be appraised—and painted: painters’ (—1887); ob. Baumann.
ladyshied. Having the appearance (‘l’air mais pas la chenoan) of a fine lady: coll.: from ca. 1890.
lady’s finger. See ladies’ finger.
lady’s hole. See lady, 6.
lady’s ladder. Rattles set (too) close: nautical: from ca. 1850.

[lady’s low toupée (in D’Urfey, toppie). Ineligible: S.E. euphemism.]
ladyship, her. Our ship: nautical coll. rather than a. (—1887); slightly ob. Baumann.

*lag. (Also lage, q.v.). Water: c.: ca. 1560–1870. Harman.—2. Also, wine: c.: late C. 16–19.—3. Hence (also lage), a ‘wash’ of clothes: c.: ca. 1560–1860. Harman. Esp. in lag of duds, in C. 17–18 often corrupted to lag-a-duds.—4. A transported convict: c.: (—1811); † by 1895. Lex. Bal. Prob. ex lag, v., 4. (It may well date back to 1740 or so.) Hence, any convict: from ca. 1830; also c. Prob. via returned lag (1828), Bee.—5. A sentence of transportation: c.: (—1821); † by 1865. Hence (also lagging) a term of penal servitude: c.: from ca. 1850.—6. A ticket-of-leave man: c.: from ca. 1855. ‘Ducange Anglicus.’ Usually old lag (—1850), which also was a one-time convict.—7. A lag: Westminster School (—1881).—8. As the last, hindmost, person: S.E.

*lag, v. To urinate: c.: ca. 1560–1850.—2. To wash (gen. with off): c.: ca. 1560–1700. Harman.—3. Also v.t., to water (spirits): c. of ca. 1810–60. Vaux.—4. To transport as a convict: c.: from ca. 1810; † by 1900. Vaux; Dickens. Ex † lag, to carry away.—5. To send to penal servitude: c.: from ca. 1850. Edgar Wallace, passim.—6. Midway between these two senses: to arrest: from ca. 1823: c. >, by 1890, low and military. De Quincy; Nat Gould. (O.K.D.)—7. V.i., to serve as a convict: c.: C. 20. Ex sense 5.—8. To inform on (a person) to the police, to shop: c.: from ca. 1870.—9. To carry off or steal, and as to be last or very slow, it is S.E.

*lag, old. See lag, n., 6.—lag-a-duds. See lag, n., 3.

*lag-fever. Illness feigned to avoid transportation: ca. 1810–90. Lex. Bal.


*lag. See lag, n., 1, 3. Esp. lage of duds. Ex Old Fr. lait ou laitue, the water: † cf. neuf for (a) et.:—2. V., see lag, v., 1–3.

*lagger. A sailor: low († orig. o.) > nautical:
LAMING

from ca. 1810; ob. Vaux. Perhaps ex lag., to loiter.—2. A convict during or after imprisonment: c. 1810 (O.E.D.); ob. 3. An informer to the police: from ca. 1870: e. Ex lag., v., 8.—d. A bargeman that, lying on his back, pushes the barge along with his feet on the roof of a subterranean canal: nautical: from ca. 1880. Bowen. An extension of sense 1, possibly influenced by sense 2.

lagging. The vb.ln. corresponding to lag, v., 4—7, q.v. Ex. as a penal term of three years: e. (?—1923). Anon., Dartmoor from Within. Cf. the next three entries.


lagging and a lifer. Transportation for life: c. of ca. 1835—90. Dickens. See lifer.

lagging-dues will be concerned. He will be transported: c. 1810—20. Vaux.


lagging-matter. A crime potential of transportation: c. of ca. 1810—60. Vaux.—2. Hence, a crime likely to result in penal servitude: e. from ca. 1860.


laid. Lay (past tense); lain (past pp!): sol.: C. 18—20. 1934.

laid on the shell; laid (up) in lavender. Pawned: resp. C. 19—20, late C. 16—20 (slightly ob.).—2. (The latter phrase only): ill; out of the way: turf: from ca. 1870.

laid on with a trowel. See trowel; cf. lie with a latchet, q.v.

Laird of Lag. the. Sir Robert Grierson (d. 1733), very severe towards the Covenanters. Dawson.


laker-lady. An actor’s whore: theatrical: C. 18—early 19. ‘ex lady of the lake or lake (now dial.), to play amorously.


lakin l, by (our). A (low) coll. form of by our Lady l: C. 15—mid-17. O.E.D.

lakh(s). See lac.

laddie, give (something). To enjoy it greatly: Glasgow (1894). Ex dial. give laddie, to punish.

lamb-ashan. Claret: Anglo-Indian coll.: from ca. 1780. Ex Hindustani al-sharab, red wine. Yule & Burnell, ‘the universal name...in India’.

*lally. Linen; shirt: c. (1789); ? by 1800.

Parker. Gen. bully, q.v.


E.D.D. Ex:

lam, v.; lamb; old spelling lamm(s). To beat, thrash: 1896, though implied in 1896 in belam: S.E. >, in C. 18, coll.; in late C. 19—20, low coll. Dekker, ‘Oh, if they had staid I would have so lamb’d them with flouts’; Grose; Anstey (d. 1934). Cognate with Old Norse lemja, lit., to lame; fig., to flog, thrash. Cf. lambbeck, lambaste, lambek, lamb-pie.—2. To hit hard: cricketers’ coll.: 1855. Lewis.

lam (it) into one; lam out, v.t. To hit out; give a thrashing: mainly schoolboys’: from ca. 1876.

lama. Erroneous for llama, the animal: mid-C. 17—20. Contrast llama, q.v. (O.E.D.)

lamb, as an easy-going person, a simpleton,—as (esp. as Nottingham lamb) a cruel or a brutality man (cf. mint-sauce, q.v.),—and as a term of endearment: despite F. & H., it is S.E.—2. See pet lamb. —3. See Kirke’s Lambs.—4. An elderly woman dressed like a young one: C. 19—20, mostly Cockney, and gen. as mutton dressed as lamb, mutton dressed lamb-fashion.

lamb, v. See lam.—lamb, skin the. See skin the lamb.


lamb-fashion. See lamb, n., 4.


[lamback, 1589, to beat, thrash, and as n.; lambacker, 1592, a bully; lambek, 1555 as v., 1591 as n.; lambeskin, to beat, a heavy blow (1573); these began as S.E. and did not survive long enough to > coll.]

lambaste. To beat, thrash: 1637: S.E. >, in C. 18, coll.; in C. 19—20, (dial. and) increasingly low coll. Davenant, ‘Stand off awhile, and see how he lambaste him’. Ex lam, q.v., on lambaste, q.v.


Lambeth, n. and v. Wash: South London (—1900); very ob. Ware, ‘From the popular cleansing place in S. London being the Lambeth baths.’

lambie. See lamby.

lambing. See lammimg.

lambing-down. Vbl.n. of lamb-down, q.v.


lambkin (occ. lamb-skin man). A judge: c. of ca. 1690—1830. B.E. Ex judge’s gown, linid and bordered with ermine (Grose). Cf. furman, q.v.—2. See lamback.

lamb’s wool, a hot drink of spiced ale, is, despite F. & H., definitely S.E.


lame as a tree. See tree, lame as a.

lame as St. Giles, Cripplenegrate, (as). Very lame indeed—applied to badly-told untruth: coll.: C. 17—19. Ware. Ex the frequenting of that church by cripples, St. Giles being their patron.

lame dog over a stile, help a, despite F. & H., is S.E.—2. A scapegrace: Australian coll. (—1895); ob.


lame post, come by the. To be late (esp. of news)
LAMENTABLE 468

LANDED ESTATE

from ca. 1860 : coll. >. ca. 1700, proverbial S.E. Fuller, 1732, records, 'The lampl post brings the true news.'

lamentable, despicable, wretchedly bad : late C. 17–20: jocular S.E. verging on, indeed occ. descending to, the coll. Cf. deplorable. (O.E.D.)

lamm(e). See lam.

[Lammas, at lat(e)r, never, is, despite F. & H., ineligibl.e.]


Lammie Todd. I would—if I got the chance! From ca. 1860; ob.: tailors'. Prob. ex a well-known tailor's name.

Lammikin, a variant of lambkin (see lamback).

Lamming. A beating, thrashing: 1611, Beaumont & Fletcher, 'One whose dull body will require a lamming': S.E. till C. 18, then coll.; from ca. 1705, low coll.

lammyn, a chiefly nautical term, is, despite F. & H., ineligibl.e. — 2. A term of address: dustmen: (— 1823); † by 1900. Bee suggests derivation ex Fr. lami, as in 'Ohé ! l'ami.'


lamp-lighter, (off) like a. (Off) 'like a streak' coll.: from ca. 1840; ob. E.D.D., which notes the variant like lamp-lighters.

[lamp, smell of the, is impeccable S.E., while]

lamp of life, the male, lamp of love, the female pudend, and lance, the penis, are S.E. euphemisms.]

lamp-post. A tall, very thin person: (low) coll.: from ca. 1870. Cf. hop-pote and reach me down a star.

lamp-post, between you and me and the. In confidence: urban coll. (— 1887); slightly ob. Baumann. Cf. bed-post, q.v.

lamps. See lamp, both senses.


Lance-knight, lanceman, lance-man-priger. A highwayman: c. of ca. 1850–1860. The first in Nash, the other two in Greene. See prigger. Perhaps lance-man was suggested by Fr. se lanceur.

*Lancepresado, lancepresado, lancepresado. One who comes into company with but two pence in his pocket: c. of ca. 1890–1900. B.E.—2. Other senses, S.E. Ex lancepresa, lancepresado, a lance-corpsal in an army of mercenaries.

lance- (or rear-rank) private. A private 'on approbation' on trial; inferior: jocular military coll.: from ca. 1906. B. & P.

lancer. A shot missing the target: Regular Army: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Perhaps because of the splinters it causes to fly from the framework.

[pronounced lanks, the. The (—) Lancas-

shire Regiment: military coll.: C. 20. E.g., F. Brett Young, Jim Redlake, 1930.

land, to arrive, cause to arrive, set down, is S.E.—2. To cause a horse to win (v.t.); (v.i.) to win: sporting coll.: 1853, Whyte-Melville.—3. To establish, set one 'on his feet', make safe: 1808, Yates (O.E.D.); Hindley, 'I bought a big covered cart and a good strong horse. And I was landed.'—4. (V.t.) to deliver, get home with: boxers' (— 1887).

Baumann: 1888, J. Runciman, 'Their object is to land one cunning blow.' Earlier lend, playful for give (W.).


[land-carr
tack or frigate, a mistress: despite F. & H., † S.E.]


land-face. See ship one's land-face.

land or lands in Appleby ?, who has any. A c.p directed at one who is slow to empty his glass: late C. 17–early 19. B.E. Perhaps orig. of ciler.

land lies, see how the. To ask how stands one's account or bill, esp. at a tavern: coll.: late C. 17– early 19. B.E., Grose.—2. Gen. sense is S.E.

*land navy, the. Pretended sailors: vagabonds' c. (— 1909). Ware.

land of incumbents. Good clerical livings: Oxford University: ca. 1820–70. Egan's Grose, 1823. See also land of promises and land of

[land of nod, sleep, is S.E., despite F. & H.]


land-security. A C. 19 variant of leg-bail, q.v.


*land squatters. (Very rare in singular.) Those tramps who, in their begging, do not specialise in either themes or localities: tramps' c. (— 1932). Frank Jennings, Tramping with Tramps.

land-swab. A landsman; an incompetent seaman: nautical; from ca. 1840. See also swab.

landabrides. Erroreous for † S.E. landabrides, a mistress. O.E.D.

lander. A blow or punch that reaches its mark; pugilistic (—1923). Manchon.

landies. Gaiteers: Winchester College; ca. 1840–80. Ex Landy & Currell, the firm that supplied them.

landlady, bury the. To decamp without paying: low: C. 19–20, ob. Cf. burn the ken and moonshine; contrast bury a roll.

landowner, become a. To die: late C. 19–20, esp. among soldiers in G.W. Prob. a development ex landed estate, q.v.

Land’s End or land’s end, at (the). At last; sooner or later; proverbial coll.: ca. 1540–1600. ‘Proverbs’ Heywood. Ex the geographical feature, perhaps; prob., however, in reference to land-end, ‘a piece of ground at the end of a “land” in a ploughed field’, O.E.D.

Land’s End to John o’ Groats, from. All the way; thoroughly: proverbial coll.: from ca. 1820; ob. Scott, Peckrong.


lane, a nautical ‘highway’, is S.E.—2. The throat: from ca. 1550. Udall. Gen. preceded by the. Esp. the narrow lane (Udall, 1542; † by 1800) or the red lane (1783, Grose) and Red Lion Lane (1865; now †: O.E.D.). Cf. gutter lane, q.v.—3. See Lane, the.

Lane, another murder down the. Another (melodrama at Drury Lane Theatre: theatrical: from ca. 1880; ob.

Lane, Harriet. Preserved, gen. tinned, meat: nautical and military: ca. 1870–1910. Ex a girl, so named, found chopped into small pieces.

Lane, the. Abbr. of — Drury Lane Theatre: theatrical (—1890). G. H. Sims. Cf. Lane, another murder down the, and Garden, the.—2. Mining Lane: (mostly Colonial) brokers: from ca. 1870.—3. Mark Lane: corn-factors: from ca. 1800.—4. Chancery Lane: legal: from ca. 1850.—5. Petticoat Lane: c.: from ca. 1870.—6. Horsemonger Lane Goat: c. of ca. 1890–90. Mayhew. (This goat was demolished before 1896.)

langiers and goddesses. The singing of Auld Lang Syne and God Save the King: Oxford University, but not very gen.: c. 20. See ‘ser’, the Oxford.

langolee. The male member: low: mid-C. 19–20; ob. † a perversion of Welch Gypsy tranjuli, tools (Sampson).

*langret. A die so loaded that it shows 3 or 4 more often than any other number: mid-C. 16–18: c. -> s. -> coll. -> j.: >, by 1700, S.E. and archaic. Greenough, Ex Peacock.

langtries. Fine eyes: Society: ca. 1880–1900. Lily Langtry, ‘the Jersey Lily’, shone as one of the most beautiful women of her time (1852–1929); went on the stage in 1881 and had a tremendous success; married Sir Hugo de Bathe in 1889. Just as in the Orient, to the natives every gentleman is Mr. Mackenzie (occ. Maclaglen), so, at Aden and Suez, every pretty woman is (or was until 1924, at the last), Mrs. Langtry. (I.e. in address.)


language of flowers, the. ‘Ten shillings—or seven days; the favourite sentence of Mr. Flowers, a very popular and amiable magistrate at’: Bow Street Police Court: 1860–83. Ware. Contrast say it with flowers.

[lank, as adj., has always been S.E., while F. & H.’s lank sleeve is merely a special nuance of the S.E. sense.]

lank comes a bank, after a. A proverbial c.p. in reference to pregnant women: ca. 1650–1820.

Lanky and York, the. The Lancashire and Yorkshire line: railwaymen: late C. 19–20.

lanpressedo, -prisado. See lancespressado.

[lant, lantern-jawed, and -jaws, are, despite F. & H., definitely S.E.]

lantern (late C. 18–19) or lanthorn (late C. 17–19), dark. A servant or an agent receiving a bribe at court: ca. 1690–1820. B.E.


lap. Any potable: from ca. 1365; ob. In C. 10–19 c., butter-milk, whey (Harman); in late C. 17–19 c., also pig (Hend). In C. 18–20, also tea (G. Parker) and, from 1618, less gen. strong drink: low except, as often in mid-C. 19–20, when jocular. Among C. 19–20 (ob.) ballet-girls, it gen. denotes gin. Ex the v.—2. In athletic terminology, it is S.E.

lap, v. As: to drink, it is S.E., though undignified when used of persons: in C. 19–20, jocular or trivial.—2. As an athletic term, it is (again despite F. & H.) S.E.

lap, go on the. To drink (strong liquor): low a : low coll.: from ca. 1885; ob. Punt, Sept. 25, 1886. ‘Grinda’ard, never goes on the lap, 1 Reads Shakespeare instead o’ the Pink ‘Un.’


lap-priest, in F. & H., is a S.E. nonce-word.—lap the gutter. See gutter.

lapel, ship the white. To be promoted from the ranks; esp. to become an officer of marines: naval coll.: mid-C. 18–early 19. (In 1812, marine officers began to wear, not white lapels but epaulettes.)

lap-tul. A husband, a lover; an unmarried child: resp. low s, low coll.: C. 19–20, ob.


lap-yung. A lapsus linguæ: lower classes’ sol. (—1900). Ware.

larboard pinger, one’s, One’s left eye: nautical (—1857); ob. Baumann.

larbollana, -ins (both in Smyth); larbowlines (Bowen). Men in the larboard, or port, watch: nautical (—1867); ob.

lardy; lardy-dardy; lardy-dah. Adj., affected, ‘swell’, though lardy (abbr. lardy-dardy) very rarely = affected. Somewhat low: resp. 1890 and ob., 1861 (Miss Braddon), ca. 1870 and a mere variant of la-di-da (q.v.). See also lardy-dardy below.
lardy-dah; also la-di-da (q.v.) A pop, a 'swell'; from ca. 1820, somewhat low.

lardy-dah (or la-di-dah), come or do the. To dress for the public; to show off in dress and manner; low: from ca. 1883. See la-di-da, of which lardy-dah is a corruption.

lardy-dardy, v.i. To act the 'swell'; to be affected; show off: 1887, G. R. Sims, 'Other men were lardy-dardying about ... enjoying themselves.' (O.E.D.). Cf. la-di-da, 4.

lave-over (or lave-over); lay-over, layer-over. A word instead of one that must, in decency, be avoided: late C.17—early 20: the first, coll. and dial.; the others, S.E. (B.F.) Cf:

laveovers for meddlers. 'An answer frequently given to children, or young people, as a rebuke for their impertinent curiosity,' Grose: o.p.: C. 18—early 19: then dial., gen. as layers for meddlers.

large, adj. gen. used as adv. Excessively: (low coll.) from ca. 1850. Thus, dress large, i.e. showily; large, drooly; play large, i.e. for high stakes; talk large, i.e. boastfully. Cf. fine and large, q.v.


lark, v. See the amorous and the sporting sense of larking.—2. To play (esp. the fool); to be mischievously merry; go on the spree: 1813, Colonel Hawker; Barham, 'Don't lark with the watch, or annoy the police.'—3. To ride in a frolicsome way or across country: 1835, 'Nimrod' (O.E.D.): sporting s. >, ca. 1870, coll.—4. V.t., tease: Dickins, 1848, Thackeray (O.E.D.): s. >, ca. 1880, coll.—5. V.t., to ride (a horse) across country: from ca. 1880: sporting s. >, ca. 1880, coll.; ob.—6. To jump (a fence) negligently: 1834, Ainsworth; ob. (O.E.D.) Ex the n., which is ex the Northern dial. lake, sport. Whence sky-lark, q.v.

lark, go on or have or take a. To be mischievously merry; go on the spree: from ca. 1815: s. >, ca. 1870, l.

lark, knock up a. Same as preceding: 1812, Vaux; † by 1890: prob. c. > low s.

larker. A person given to (mischievous) fun: from ca. 1825: s. >, ca. 1870, coll.

larkiness. The abstract n. of larky, q.v.: coll. C. 20. (O.E.D. Sup.)


larking, adj. Given to 'larks' (see lark, n., 1); sportive: 1828, J. H. Newman: s. >, ca. 1870, coll. (O.E.D.)

larkish. Fond of, or of the nature of, a 'lark' (q.v.): from ca. 1880. Whence larkishness.


larksome. Fond of a 'lark', apt to indulge in 'larks': coll. from ca. 1870.

larky. Ready or inclined to play 'larks' (see lark, n.): 1841 (O.E.D. Sup.): s. >, ca. 1870, coll. H. Mayo, 'When the Devil is larky, he solicits the witches to dance round him' (O.E.D.).—2. Hence, occ. as adj.: C. 20. O.E.D. Sup.

larky subaltern's train. See cold-meat train.—Lawrence. See lary Lawrence.

larrys. A C. 18 variant of lurrives (see at lurry). The Scoundrel's Dict., 1754.

larrkin; occ. larkin. A (gen. young) street rowdy: orig. and mainly Australian: 1870 or a few years earlier: s. >, ca. 1890, coll. >, ca. 1910, S.E. The Melbourne Herald, April 4, 1870, 'Three larrkins, n. had behaved in a very disorderly manner in Little Latrobe-street.' Cf. hoodlum, hooligan, tough, q.v. Also as adj.: 1870, Marcus Clarke. See esp. Morris. Etymologies proposed: larry kinchen (see separate words), fantastic; a pronunciation of larking, ineptly fantastic; Larry, a common Irish pet-form of Laurence, + kin, O.E.D.; perhaps orig. Cornish, where larrkin = a 'larker' (q.v.), suggested by W., not to the exclusion of the preceding, which seems the most likely.

larrykiness. A female larrkin: 1871; same remarks as for preceding, q.v.

larrkinism. The habits and tricks of larrkins: 1870; remarks as for larrkin, q.v. The Australian, Sept. 10, 1870, 'A slight attempt at 'larrkinism' was manifested.'

larrup; occ. larrup and † lirrop. To beat, thrash; coll. and dial. from ca. 1820, Fonblanque, 1829, 'Is this a land of liberty, where a man can't larrup his own nigger?' (O.E.D.) ex lee-ropo, as an early glossariest proposed, or, as W. proposes, suggested by lather, leather, and wallap, q.v.


Larry, (as) happy as. Very happy: Australian coll. late C.19—20.


lars; large. Last: sol. (esp. Cockneys') and dial. from ca. 19—20. (R. Blaker, Night-Shift, 1934.)

lascar. A tent-pitcher; in full, gun-lascar an inferior artillerymen: Anglo-Indian coll. from late C.18; both ob. (A. sailor, S.E.)


lash-up. A break-down; a failure, a fiasco or 'mess-up': naval (late C.19—20) >, by 1915, military. F. & Gibbons.—2. Hence, a turmoil: nautical (—1935).

lashin(g)s. (Gen. of drink, occ. of food, rarely of anything else.) Plenty; coll. orig. Anglo-Irish: 1829, Scott, 'Whiskey in lashings'; 1841, Lever, 'Lashings of drink,' these quotations illustrating the gen. forms; the former is ob. Perhaps ex, or for, lavishings (W.): prob. ex † E. lask (out to squander. Cf. whope, q.v., and:}
lashing(ge)s and laving(ge)s. Plenty and to spare: Anglo-Irish coll. : from ca. 1840.


[lass in F. & H. is t S.E. for a looseness of the bowels.]

lass in a red petticoat. A wife well-endowed; proverbial coll., esp. in the less in the red petticoat shall pay for, or piece up, all: ca. 1690-1800. J. Wilson. *The Chests, 1864.* (Apperson.)


last. A person’s most recent joke, witticism, etc. : coll. : 1843 (S.O.D.). E.g. ’X’s last is a scream.’

last, the. ’The end of one’s dealings with something’: coll. : 1854 (S.O.D.). Dickens, ’If it ever was to reach your father’s ears I should never hear the last of it’ (O.E.D.).

last bit of(?) family-plate, the. The final silver coin. Henry. Ware.

last compliment. Burial: coll. : from ca. 1780; ob. — 2. As the sexual favour, it—with the synonymous last favour—is S.E., as also is F. & H.’s last feather.

last drink, take one’s. To die by drowning: Canadian lumbermen’s coll. : late C. 19-20. John Beamns.

last hope. An iron ration: military : 1915-18. F. & Gibson. (Used only in emergency.)

last shake of(?) the bag. Youngest child: proletarian: C. 19-20; ob. Ware.

last ship, a. A nautical coll. (C. 19-20), thus in Bowen, ’Anything that is the epitome of excellence, for the sailor always has good things to say, and odious comparisons to make, of his last ship, no matter what she was like.’


latching, adj. (Of a horse) having staying power: sporting : from ca. 1810.

lat or lat-house. A latrine : C. 20 military. B. & P. Occ. the late.

*latch. To let in: c. of ca. 1720-1850. A New Canting Dict.

latch-drawer (in F. & H.) is S.E.

latch-key. A crowbar: Irish Constabulary’s : 1881-92. Ware. Because so often used by them in evictions.


late. Keeping late hours: coll. : from ca. 1630. ’Having to do with persons or things that arrive late’: coll. : 1802, ’the “late” mark’. But late fee, earlier later-late fee, has passed from coll., via Post Office j. to S.E. (S.O.D.)


[late unpleasantness, the. In U.S., before 1916, the U.S. Civil War. In British Empire, the Great War. Perhaps orig. coll., but prob. always S.E.] late-rake, like lake-rake, is erroneous for lake-wards: C. 1920.

—later, —later; —later; —later. One who worships; (excessive) adoration, worship. In mid-C. 19-20, this suffix is ooc., as in babydolatry, so jocular as to verge on coll., even in nonce-words.

latest, the. The latest news: coll. : C. 19-20. Baumann, ’What’s the latest?’


lathet. The sexual secretion: low : C. 19-20; ob. Hence lather-maker, the female pudend.

lather, v. To beat, thresh: from ca. 1795: coll. >, ca. 1890, S.E. Cf. lace, lather, laup, strap, qq.v.

[latly, thin, despite F. & H., is S.E.]


latistat. An attorney: coll., though perhaps orig. legal s. : 1565, Cooper’s *Theaurus*. Foote, in *The Maid of Bath*, ’I will send for Luke Latittat and Codicil, and make a handsome bequest to the hospital.’ >, by 1860 in England, the term derives ex an old form of write. (For legal s., see my Skynge, published in 1833.)

lative runter. False news: a will story: a baseless prediction: military : 1915. Ex the fact that latrines were recognised gossiping places. Cf. *cookhouse rumour, ration-dump r. or yawn, and transport r. or tale*. See esp. B. & P. and Stephen Southwold’s essay on rumours in *A Martial Medley*, 1931.

—latry, —olatry. See —later—lats, the. See lat.

latter end. The posteriors: mid-C. 19-20: jocular coll. >, ca. 1910, S.R. According to Baumann, a careful observer, it was at first a boxing term.

lattice. See red lattice—latty. See letty.


laugh on the other, or wrong, side of one’s face or mouth is, despite F. & H., indubitably S.E.

laughing, be. To be ‘comfortable, safe, fortunate’: military coll. : 1915; ob. (Hence, more gen., to be winning: Glasgow.) B. & P.’, ’He’s got a job at Brigade Headquarters, so he’s laughing’. Ex one’s laugh at such good luck.


lauk! So lawk!


launch, v. (Gen. in passive.) To reverse a boy’s bed while he is asleep: Public Schools: ca. 1810–90. G. J. Berkeley, *My Life*, 1865.


laundress, despite F. & H., is in all senses S.E. Laurence. See *lauk—2. have Laurence on one’s back, have a touch of old Laurence, to be lazy: coll. : C. 19-20; ob. except in dial. See lazy Laurence.

laurestinus is an error for laurustinus, an evergreen flowering shrub: late C. 17-20.—So laur—lauristin, erroneous for laurustin, the same. (O.E.D.)


laverden, al. Always negative: It ain’t all laverden, it’s not all fun or all pleasant: lower classes’ coll. (—1923). Manchon.

laverden, lay (up) or put in. (The put form not before C. 19.) To pawn: from ca. 1590; slightly
ob. Greene, in his Upstart Courter. Like the next sense, ex the preservative virtues of lavender. — 2. ‘To put out of the way of doing harm, as a person by imprisoning or the like’; from ca. 1820; ob. Scott, in Nigel. (O.E.D.) — 3. See laid on the shelf, 2. — 4. As = put carefully aside for prospective use, it is S.E.


lavish. Bacon fat; the fat on ‘shackles’ (q.v.); mostly military: C. 20. Semantics: rich.

law, the old sporting term, is S.E.—2. A phase of crime, esp. of theft; a trick or ‘lay’ (q.v.): e.g.: ca. 1560–1650. Esp. in Greene’s ‘coney-catchers’.

See also lurk, packet, rig, slum.

law or Law! Lord!: late C. 16–20; in C. 19–20 low col., perhaps origin. euphemistic. Prob. arising from cumulative force of law (q.v.), i.e. l, and Lor (q.v.). See also law(k)s, laws, and lorn.


law-lord. A judge having, by courtesy, the style of ‘Lord’: Scotia coll.: from ca. 1770.

lawed, it is, was, etc. It is settled by law: coll. and dial. : C. 19–20; ob.


lawk, lawk. Lord!: coll. (rather low): from ca. 1765; earliest as lawk, latest as lawks. Dickens in Pickwick, ‘Lawk, Mr. Weller ... how you do frighten me.’ Occ. (C. 19–20, ob.) lawk-a-daisy (me) i.e. lackaday = lackaday!, and (C. 19–20) lawk-a-muzzy, the latter a corruption of Lord have mercy! Either ex lack as in good lack! or ex Lord influenced by lack and la! or law!, q.v. See also lor!


lawn. A handkerchief, esp. if of white cambric; low coll.: from ca. 1810; ob. Vaux.

lawyer. Refreshment served on the lawn to a hunt: middle and upper classes’: from ca. 1925. (Evelyn Waugh, A Handful of Dust, 1934.) ‘The Oxford-er.’

Lawrence. See Laurence and laxy Lawrence.

laws !; laws-a-mee !; lawly! A low coll. form (cf. law, lawks, lorna, q.v.) of Lord!: from ca. 1875.


lawyer. An argumentative or discontented man, esp. one given to airing his grievances: military coll.: late C. 19–20. F. & Gibbons. In Australia, such a man is called buss lawyer: coll.: C. 20.


lawyer must be a great liar, a good. A frequent n.p. in conversations tending on the law; ca. 1670–1780. Ned Ward, 1703. (Apperson.)

lawyerizing, n. and adj. (Concerning, of) a lawyer’s profession: coll.: from ca. 1860.

lawyers go to heaven, as. (Gen. preceded by fairly and softly or by degrees, etc.). Very slowly: from Restoration days: proverbial coll.: in C. 19–20, mainly dial. (Apperson.)


lay, v. As to wager, as to search or lose in wait for (also lay by, lay for): S.E., despite F. H.—2. To lie (down): M.E.—C. 20; sol. in C. 18–20, except when nautical Cf. laid, q.v.—3. See lay into.—4. V.i. and v.t., to borrow (money): Regular Army’s: from ca. 1920.


lay, on the. At (illicit) work: C. 18–20 c.—2. On the sht, e.g. for something to steal: C. 19–20 c. See lay, n. 2.

*lay, stand a queer. To run a great risk: c.: from ca. 1720; † by 1850. A New Canting Dict., 1725. See lay, n. 3.

lay a duck’s egg. In cricket, to score nothing: sporting: from ca. 1870; ob. See duck’s egg and blob.


lay a or in water. To defer judgement; esp. too long: coll.: C. 15–early 17; is not before C. 16. (The a is, of course, the preposition as in a board) Lyly, ‘I see all his expeditions for warres are laid in water; for now when he should execute, he begins to consult.’ (Apperson.)

lay-about. A professional loafer: c. (— 1932) Scott Pearson, To the Streets and Back. i.e. ‘lie-about’.


lay at. To (attempt to) strike: C. 15–20: S.E. till C 19, then dial. and coll.

lay by the heels. To put in stocks (1) or in prison: C. 18–20: coll. >, ca. 1800, S.E.


lay down, gen. lay them down. To play cards: c.: mid-C. 19–20; ob.—2. See lay, v., 2.

lay down one’s, or the, knife and fork. To die: low coll. (— 1859); ob. H., 1st ed. Cf. hop the twig, lose the number of one’s mess, peg out, q.v.

lay down the law. To dogmatise: coll.: 1885 (O.E.D.). Ex lit. sense, declare what the law is. lay, or lay himself, down to his work. (Of a horse, etc.) to do his best: sporting: from ca. 1880; slightly ob. Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News, May 20, 1893. (O.E.D.)

lay in, v.i. To attack with vigour: coll.: from ca. 1888.—2. V.i., to eat vigorously: from ca. 1800: S.E. >, ca. 1890, low coll.
Lay in One's Dish

lay, v. (of a horse) to pull hard; esp. of a racing horse. (Ob.)


lay into its collar. (Of a horse) to pull hard: Canadian coll.: late C. 19-20. (John Beamens.)

lay it on. To exaggerate, etc.: S.E.—2. lay it on the game: coll.: mid-C. 19-20. See thick.


lay off, v.i., to give over, is dial. and U.S.)


lay or lie on the face. To be excessively dissipated: lower classes' (— 1909); slightly ob. Ware.

lay on to be. To pretend to be: lower classes, esp. Cockneys: 1914, A. Neil Lyons, 'I don't lay on to be a saint' (Manchon).

lay one's shirt. To take one's all: sporting s. > coll.: mid-C. 19-20. If the stake is lost, one does (or has done) one's shirt: late C. 19-20 sporting.

lay oneself open, lay oneself out or forth (to exert oneself in earnest), and lay oneself out for (to be ready to participate in anything), all in F. & H., are S.E.

lay out, to intend, propose, is S.E., but to override or disable, esp. with a punch, also to kill, is s.: orig. (1829), U.S.; Anglicised ca. 1860. Ex the laying-out of a corpse.

lay over, in F. & H., is (there unavowed) U.S.— lay-over. See Laverover.

lay the razor. A term, ca. 1865, in racing c. (or perhaps s.), as in 'No. 747' of obscure meaning: Possibly, to judge precisely when to spur one's horse to win the race.


lay up in lavender. See Lavender.

laycock. See Miss Laycock.


layer-over. See Laverover.—laystall, leystall, laystow: S.E., despite F. & H.

laze. A lazy rest: coll. from ca. 1860. Ex the S.E. v.


lazey as Ludlam's, or (David) Laurence's, dog. (Sussex dial. has Lamley's). Extremely lazy: probberial coll. from ca. 1690; ob. by 1870, f except in dial. by 1900. According to the proverb, this admirable creature leant against a wall to bark.

 Cf.:

lazey as Joe the marine who laid down his musket to sneeze. Exceedingly lazy: C. 19 semi-proverbial coll. Prob. ex:

lazey as the drinker who laid down his budget to fart. The same of laziness: late C. 18—early 19 low, semi-proverbial coll. Grose, 3rd ed. Cf. two preceding entries.

lazey-bones. A loafer or a very lazy person: coll. from ca. 1590. Harvey, 'Was . . . vivacity a
LEADEN FAVOUR

leaden favour or pill. A bullet: American, anglicised before 1900. Ware.

Leadenhall Market sportsman. ‘A landowner who sells his game to Leadenhall market poulterers’; sporting: ca. 1870–1915. Ware.

leader. ‘A remark or question intended to lead conversation (cf. feeder). 1882: col.; slightly ob. (S.O.D.)—2. the leader, the commanding officer; the grand leader, the senior general or other officer commanding a garrison; semi-jocular military (officers);’ from ca. 1933. Ex newspaper accounts of Herr Hitler (der Führer).

leading article. The nose: coll. (— 1886); ob.— 2. The female pudend: low; mid-C. 19–20; ob.— 3. ‘The best bargain in the shop—one that should lead to other purchases’: tradesmen’s: from ca. 1870; ob. Ware.

leading heavy. (Gen. pl.) The role of a serious middle-aged woman: theatrical; from the late 1880’s; prob. from U.S.A. Ware.


leaf, drop one’s. To die: low († orig. c.): C. 19–20; ob. Manchon. Ex: *leaf, go off with the. To be hanged: Anglo-Irish c. > low: from ca. 1870; ob. Grose, 2nd ed. Either ex the autumnal fall of leaves or ex a hanging-device shaped like the leaf of a table. Cf.: *leafless tree. The galleries: c. of ca. 1825–70. Lytton in Paul Clifford.

leaguer is occ., ca. 1670–1830, used in error for ↑ leaper (i.e. leger or ↑ sense). O.R.D.


leaky, unable to keep a secret, despite F. & H. is S.E.; but leaky, in the particular sense, talkative when drunk is a proletarian coll. dating from ca. 1880 (Ware).—2. Tearful, apt to weep: lower classes (— 1923). Manchon.

lean, adj. and n. Unprofitable (work): printers; (— 1871). From G. 17 In a different sense, but this (e.g. in Moxon) is J. Contrast fat, v. q.—2. Unremunerative (i.e. (and) coll. (— 1875).


lean as a (1) rake, (2) shootent herring. Extremely thin: resp. late C. 16–20, S.E. >, ca. 1700, coll., but in C. 19–20 mainly dial.; and proverbial coll. from ca. 1850 (after ca. 1830, mainly dial.).


lean off it or that! Cease leaning on it! coll.: 1829, Marryat, ‘Lean off that gun’; ob.

lean on your chin-strap! A military c.p. used when marching up a steep hill: military: 1918; ob. F. & Gibbons.

leap, to copulate, like leaping-horse, is S.E.—2.

LEAST IN SIGHT, PLAY


leap at a crust. ↑ to be very hungry; or, snatch at any chance whatsoever: semi-proverbial coll.: ca. 1830–1780. Draxe; Swift. (Apperson.)

leap at a daisy. To be hanged: coll.: ca. 1530–1620. Anon., République; Greene; Pasquillo’s Jest, 1604, ‘He say’d: Have at you damsel that growes yonder; and so leaped off the gallows.’ (Apperson.)


leap-frogging. ‘Penetration by successive “waves”, each “wave” or “leap” remaining in the trench or other objective that it [has] captured. Introduced by the British in 1917’: military coll. >, by late 1918, J. B. & P.

leap in the dark or up a ladder. A copulation: C. 18–20 low; ob. Cf. leap, do a, and leap at Tyburn, q.v. (In S.E., leap in the dark is often applied to death or to any other great risk.)


leap over the hedge before one comes to the stile. To be in a violent hurry: proverbial coll.: ca. 1540–1800. Heywood, Gascoigne, Ray, Motteux.

leap (or jump) the besom, broom-stick, sword. (U.S., book.) To marry informally: C. 18–19 coll. See the nn. separately. ‘The sword form, military. leap the stile first, let the best dog. Let the best or most suitable person take precedence or the lead: coll.: C. 18–early 19.

leapt, to have. (Of frost) to thaw suddenly: coll., mainly rural: 1869, H. Stephens, ‘When frost suddenly gives way . . . about sunrise, it is said to have “leapt”’ (O.E.D.).

learn. To teach: from M.E.; S.E. till ca. 1780, then coll.; from ca. 1810, low coll.; since ca. 1890, coll. Chiefly in I’ll learn you (often jocularly allusive). Cf. Fr. apprendre, to learn, also to teach.

learned men. C. 19 nautical coll., thus: ‘In the old coasts, certified officers shipped for foreign voyages to satisfy the regulations.’ Bowen.

learning-shower. A school-teacher: Cockney’s: 1809; ob. Ware.

learning the followes. The ringing of ‘call changes’; bell-ringers’ (— 1901). H. Earle Bulwer’s glossary of bell-ringing.


leisy bloke. A showy dressing lower class, of fewer lower classes: low (— 1859); ↑ by 1880. H., 1st ed. Cf. leary, 2, and chickaleary cove.


least in sight, play. To hide; make oneself scarce; keep out of the way: low: ca. 1780–1870. Grose, 1st ed.
leasaways. A C. 19-20 variant of *leasewise. At least: C. 16-20; S.E. till C. 19, then coll.; in C. 20, low coll. In C. 19-20, also dial.

leather. Skin: C. 14–20; S.E. till ca. 1700, then coll. till ca. 1780, when it > s. Hence, lose leather, C. 18–20 (ob.), to be saddle-galled.—Hence, the female pudend: C. 16–20 low coll. Whence, labour or stretch leather, to coll., C. 18–19 and C. 18–20, and nothing like leather, nothing like a good ***. C. 19–20. —3. A as football or a cricket ball, it is S.E., as are hunt leather and leather-hunting.

leather. To beat, thrash: from ca. 1620; coll. >, ca. 1820, S.E. Prob. at first with a strap. Cf. lather, tan, dust, qq.v.


leather-head(ed), n. and adj., (a) blockhead: late C. 17–20; ob. Davenant; B.E.


leather-lane. The female pudend: C. 18–20 low; ob.—2. As an adj., paltry, it is c. of ca. 1810–60. Vaux; Egan’s Grose. Always as Leather Lane concern.


leather-stretcher. The male member: C. 18-20, ob.: low. Ex leather, n. 2. Hence, go leather-stretching, to have sexual intercourse.


[leathernly, clumsily, sordidly, despite F. & H. is † S.E.]

leathers. A person wearing leggins or leather breeches, e.g. a postboy: coll.: ca. 1835–1910. Dickens; Thackeray, in Pendennis. Cf. boots, buttons, q.v.—2. The ears: low: from ca. 1860.

leave. A (favourable) position for a stroke: billiards: from ca. 1850.

leave, take French. See French leave.

leave . . . be. To let be; cease, or abstain, from interfering with; coll.: from ca. 1825.

leave . . . end. To desert: to coll.: ca. 1825.

leave . . . go (with) . . . (of), (hold of), (loose of), v.i. To let go: coll.: from ca. 1810.

leave in the air. See air.—leave in the hurk. See hurk.

leave in the briers or seeds. To bring to, or leave in, (grape) trouble: semi-proverbial coll. 1833, Udal (briers); ca. 1590, Harvey (seeds). Rare since ca. 1820. Apperson.

leave it all to the cook I, I’ll. I won’t take that bet: sporting c. of ca. 1820–40. Egan’s Grose. (A cook is a good judge of meat, a betting-man of horseflesh.)

leave the minority. To die: Society: 1879; ob. Ware. On join the majority: to leave the sea and go into steam. To transfer to a steam-driven ship: sailing-men’s c. of: ca. 1860–1890. Bowen.

leave-yer-(h)omer. ‘A handsome, dashing man . . . Derived, very satirically, from “That’s the man I’m goin’ to leave me ome for” (Ware) lower class women’s: late C. 19–20.

leaving-shop. An unlicensed pawn-broker’s shop: low coll. (—1857); ob. The Morning Chronicle, Dec. 21, 1857, J. Groome. (Hence: a lead horse.)

ledgers. (Iron. ledgers.) Lectures: Oxford undergraduates': from late 1890’s. Ware. (Oxford-er.)

*lecher, the v., is, despite F. & H., just as much S.E. as the n."

led-captain. A teady, sponge, pimp: from ca. 1670; coll. >, ca. 1800, S.E. † by 1880. Wycherley, in Love in a Wood, ‘Every wit has his cullsey, as every squire his led captain.’ Prob. ex a led horse.


*leer. A newspaper: c. of ca. 1786–1870 G Parker, in Life’s Painter, 1789, ? ex Ger. leeren, to read; much more prob. ex the lure, q.v.

*leer, roll the. See roll the lar.

leery. See leary.


lef. See lep.

left. adj. Revolutionary; socialist(e); communist: coll. (? before 1918); in 1830’s verging on S.E. ‘In Kiel, where the revolution started.

left, be or get. To fail; be outdistanced metaphorically; be placed in a difficult position: coll.: orig. (ca. 1890), U.S.: anglicised ca. 1895. Abbr. be or get left in the lurch (Ware).

left, over the; over the left shoulder. In the wrong way. But gen. a c.p. used to negate one’s own or another’s statement, the thumb being sometimes pointed over that shoulder: from ca. 1610; slightly later, in C. 19-20, when the phrase is somewhat lower, shoulder is gen. omitted. Cotgrave; H. D. Traill, 1870, “Don’t go... It’s go and go over the left... it’s go with a hook at the end.”

left-forepart. A wife: mid-C. 19-20; ob. † ex-left rib. †Cf. Dutch, q.v.

left-hand man of the line, the. ‘The sentry on the last post westward of the British line in Flanders’: jocular military coll.: 1914-18. F. & G. Gibbons.

[left-handed, left-handed wife, left-hander, are S.E.]


left in the basket. See basketed.

left shoulder, over the. See left over the.—left-off, gen. in pl. Left-off clothes: coll.: from ca. 1890.

left-over, over the. See over the letter.

Lefty. A proletarian ‘inevitable nickname’ (late C. 19-20), as in Francis D. Grieson, Murder at Lancaster Gate, 1934, ‘Lefty Harris, they called him, on account of his being left-handed.’


leg, v. To trip up: ca. 1880: also dial. The Saturday Review, April 22, 1882, ‘They legged the coppers, and he fell to the ground.’—2. Gen. as leg it, to run away: S.E.

[Of F. & H.’s leg phrases, many—despite the “look” of some—are S.E.—make or scrape a leg (to bow), in high leg, leg up (assistance), lift a leg (make water), shake a free or loose leg, not a leg to stand on, † fight at the leg, put one’s best leg foremost, (put) the boot on the other leg, leg of mutton (adj.), be or get on one’s legs (but see legs, get on one’s hind), get or set on one’s legs, fall on one’s legs, feel one’s legs, have the legs of one, on one’s last legs, stand on one’s own legs, stretch one’s legs.] leg, as right as my. As right as may be; decidedly: from ca. 1600; ob.: low coll.—2. Occ. as adj., perfectly right, ‘a bit of all right’: C. 18-20; ob.

leg, break a. To give birth to a bastard: low coll.: from ca. 1670; ob. R. Head, in Proteus Reduxius. The proverbial form gen. added above the knee: gen..., too, as to have broken her leg. See also broken-legged.

leg, cut one’s. To get drunk: C. 18-early 19 coll., from the a. To decamp: lower classes’ (—1923). Manchon.—2. To make a leg to bow or curtesy: rural coll. (—1923) and dial. Ibid.

leg (or arm or throat), have a bone in one’s. To be incapacitated: coll., as a playful refusal: from ca. 1540. Udall, 1542, ‘Alleging that he had a bone in his throat and could not speak’; Torrino, 1666, ‘The English say, He hath a bone in his arm and cannot work’; Swift, ca. 1706 (pub. 1738), ‘I can’t go, for I have a bone in my leg.’ In C. 19-20 dial., to have a bone in the arm or leg is to have a shooting pain there.

leg, lift one’s. To eat: low: C. 18-20; ob. Anon., in Duncan Davidson, a song. (But, gen. of a horse, lift a leg, to walk, is S.E.) leg, make a. (Of a woman) to display one’s leg(s): lower classes’ coll. (—1923). Manchon.

leg, make one’s. To feather one’s nest: id. Ibid. Contrast the preceding.

leg, pull one’s. To before; impose on: coll. (—1888): now on verge of S.E. Ex tripping-up, leg, show a. To rise from bed: orig. naval coll. (in C. 20 verging on S.E.): from ca. 1850. In C. 20, gen. in the imperative. Cf. military rise and shine!, q.v.

leg, swing the. To loaf; malinger: nautical: from ca. 1860. (Corrupted by the Army to swing the lead: see at lead). Ex a dog running on three legs, sometimes to rest the fourth, sometimes to elicit sympathy (Mr H. G. Dixey, in a letter to the author). Cf. leg-swinger, swinging, swinging a leg.

leg-and-leg, adv. and adj. (Of a game) when each player has won a ‘leg’ or point; level: cards coll.: from ca. 1860. In Anglo-Irish, horse-and-horse.


leg-bail (and land-security), give or take. To escape from custody; to decamp: from ca. 1760: semi-proverbial coll. >, ca. 1700, S.E.; slightly ob. Ray, Grose.


leg-drama, -piece, -show. A play or a ballet distinguished for the amount of leg shown by the female participants: resp. from ca. 1870, 1880, 1890.

leg-grinder. A revolution round the horizontal bar as one hangs by one’s legs; gymnastic coll. (—1887). Baumann. Cf. muscle-grinder, the same exercise as one hangs by one’s arms.

leg in, get a. To win another’s confidence, esp. to gain proof of confidence and/or esteem: coll.: from ca. 1860. Nat Gould.

leg in, own a. To have an interest, a share in (horses): sporting: from ca. 1865; ob. ‘No. 717.’ leg-lifter. A male fornicator: C. 18-20 (ob.) low. So leg-lifting, fornication.

leg-maniac. An ‘eccentric, rapid dancer’: theatrical coll.: ca. 1880-1915. Ware.

leg of mutton. A sheep’s trotter: low: from ca. 1860. (Adj.: S.E.)


leg off or shot off, have a. (Of an animal) to have a leg broken, e.g. by a shot: South African coll.: 1906, Watkins, From Farm to Forum. Ex Cape Dutch idiom. Pettman.

leg on or over, lay or lift a. To coil with a woman: low coll.: C. 18-20. D’Urfey, Bruns. Cf. leg, lift one’s, and leg-lifter.

leg-pieces. See leg-drama.

leg-shaker. A dancer: (low) coll.: C. 19-20; ob.

LEG SHOT OFF

See leg off.

LEG SHOW. See leg-drama. Very common in 1914–18. Leg-show is applied less to the programme as a whole than to the underdressed personnel in action or to a leggy 'number'. B. & P.

LEG-SWINGER. A loafer; malingerer: nautical: from ca. 1860. (Corrupted by the Army to lead-swinger, q.v.) Ex leg, swing the, q.v. Cf.: leg-swewing or swinging the leg. Loafer; pretended illness or injury: nautical: from ca. 1860. See leg swinging the.

LEGAL, the. Abbr. the legal fare: lower classes' coll. (—1923). Manchon.

[Legem pone and legedermain, despite F. & H., are both S.E.]

LEGEND. Catachrestic for legion: late C. 16 20. Shakespeare, Mrs. Behn. (O.E.D.)

LEGGER. A giver of short weight in coals.—2.


LEGGERED. In irons: c. > low: ca. 1830–70. Brandon.


LEGGERINGS. Stockings: (somewhat low) jocular coll.: from ca. 1870; ob.

LEGISM. The art or the character of a 'leg' (q.v., sense 1): from ca. 1820; ob.


LEGGY-PEGGY. A (little) leg: nursery (—1887). Baumann.

LEGIT. the. A C. 20 theatrical abbr. of legitimate drama. See legitimate, the.

LEGITIMACY. The reason for much early emigration to Australia: Australia: ca. 1820–60. Ex the legal necessity of the voyage. Peter Cunningham. Cf. legitimate, the.


LEGITIMATE. adj. Applied to flat racing as opp. to steeplochasing: racing (—1888).

LEGITIMATE, the. The legitimate drama, i.e. good (mainly Shakespearean) drama, as opp. to burlesque: theatrical (—1887).


[Leglin-girth, cast a. To conceive a child. Ineligible: Scots dial.]


LEGS, be or get on one's hind. To be speaking, rise to speak, esp. if formally: jocular coll. (—1897). Without hind, it is S.E.—2. To fall into a rage (occ. with rear instead of get): C. 20. Ex a horse rearing.

LEGS, give—or show (a clean pair of). To run away; decamp; coll. (—1893). Legs, have. To be (considered) fast (e.g. of ship, train, runner): coll.: from ca. 1870.


LEGS, MERRY. See merry legs.

LEGS AND ARMS. Weak beer: tailors': from ca. 1850. Because without body.


LEGS IN A BED, MORE BELONGS OR GOES TO MARRIAGE THAN FOUR BAR. A c.p., > proverbial when applied to a portionless couple: from ca. 1540; ob. Heywood, 1546; Swift; Scott: Apperson. Cf. the C. 17–18 proverb, there belongs more than whis- tling to going to plough.

LEGS ON ONE'S NECK OR TO GROUND, LAY ONE'S. To decamp; run away: coll.: C. 17–early 19, C. 17–20, the latter extant only in dial.

LEGSHIRE. The Isle of Man: C. 19–20; ob. Ex heraldic bearings.

LEISURE HOURS. Flowers: rhyming s. (—1909). Ware.

LEMMA. An error for lemma, a genus of aquatic plants: mid-C. 18–20. O.E.D.


LEMON. An unattractive female, esp. if a girl: U.S., anglicised by 1932. C.O.H., 1934.—Ex.—2. Something undesirable: from ca. 1821. Ex: in the answer is a lemon (see below): but also as in The Daily Express, Dec. 13, 1927, 'Middlesex seem to have picked a lemon, for the draw gives them South Shields as opponents' (O.E.D. Sup.).


LEMON-ROB. Lemon- or lime-juice as an anti-scorbatic: nautical (—1807); slightly ob. Smyth. Subjectively pejorative.

LEMONCHOLY. Melancholy: London (—1909); ob. Ware. By jocular transposition and slight distortion of melan. Cf.:


LEND. A loan: coll. from ca. 1825 ex C. 16–20 dial. 'For the lend of the ass you might give me the mill,' old ballad.

LEND, V. Give, as in 'Lend me a lick of the ice-cream!': proletarian coll. (—1887). Baumann.

LEND US YOUR BREATH TO KILL JUMBO! A proletarian c.p. of 1889–ca. 1910. Ware, 'Protest against the odour of bad breath.' (See jumbo, 3, and jumbo-lam.)


LENTO. See lento.


LENGTH OF A . . . GO THE. To lend as much as a (guinea, etc.): coll. (—1887). Baumann.

LENGTH OF ONE'S FOOT, GET THE. See foot, get the length of one's.
let

lentiness. Incorrect for lenities. : C. 16–19. Also
lentiness. O.E.D.

[lenten-faced, lenten fare, in F. & H., are S.E.]

Lents. The Lent Term boat-races: Cambridge University: 1803 (S.O.D.): coll. till C. 20, then S.E.

lep; occ. left. Left, esp. in words of command: military: C. 19–20. (Andrew Buchanan, He Died Again, 1933.) In the same way, right > ri, as in ri turn, ri wheel.


leram[oi]pooop, liripipe, liripipe, liripoop, liripup; also two r's. S.E.]

lertiniit is erroneous for lentiniite: from ca. 1867. O.E.D.


Lesbian. A woman sexually devoted to women: coll. (—1806), ca. 1830, S.E. Ex the Sapphio legend. (In neither O.E.D. nor S.O.D.)

-less in mid-C. 19–20 usage often borders on the coll.


lesson. See simple arithmetic.

-lest. A diminutive that, in C. 18–20, occ. has a coll. force.

let. To. Of a canvas sparsely filled: painters' (—1900); ob. Ware.—2. See apartments to let.

let alone. (Prepositional phrase.) Much less; not to mention: coll. 1816, Jane Austen; Barham, 'I have not had — [a] brown to buy a bit of bread with—let alone a tart.' Occ. letting alone (1843; ob.). O.E.D.—2. let me, him, etc., alone (↑ for doing; to do something) coll.: C. 17–20. Shakespeare, 'Let me alone for swearing'; Dryden, 'Let me alone to accuse him afterwards.' O.E.D.

let daylight into. To stab, shoot; kill: coll.: C. 19–20. See also at daylight.

let down. A disappointment; deception: coll. (—1894).—2. The v.: S.E.

let down (a person's) blind. To indicate that he is dead: coll. (—1923). Manchon.

let down easily or genteely. To be lenient to: coll.: 1834, M. Scott, 'By way of letting him down gently, I said nothing.'—2. Occ. let down, to disappoint: late C. 19–20; coll.

let drive, aim a blow, is S.E.—let fly: see fly.

let 'em all come! A c.p. expressive of cheeky defiance: 1806; lower classes', by ca. 1912, gen.

Ware relates its origin to the manner in which the British received the German Emperor's message of congratulations to Kruger, on the repulse of the Jameson Raid, the U.S.A.'s communication concerning the English boundary dispute with Venezuela, and the shortly ensuing tricoloured agitation in the French press. Cf. let her rip!


let go. To achieve sexual emission: low coll.: C. 19–20.—2. Not to mention; all the more reason, e.g. 'Let go he wasn't there': lower classes' coll. (—1933). Manchon. On alone . . . let go on the painter. See painter.

let her blush. 'To keep on all possible sail in a strong wind': Canadian (and U.S.) nautical: from ca. 1870; ob. Cf.: let her rip! Let it (etc.) go freely!; damn the consequences!: coll.: mid-C. 19–20. Perhaps orig. U.S. (as Ware and Thornton think).

let her roll! Let's have it! 'om with the dance!': Canadian lumbermen's: C. 20. John Beames. Ex logging.

let-in. An illegal victimisation; a robbery; a gross deception: coll. (—1923). Manchon. Ex:

let in, v. To victimise; deceive, cheat: coll. from ca. 1830. Thackeray, 'He had been let in terribly ... by Lord Levant's insolvency.' Ex ingle giving way.—2. V.i. to deal, gen. followed by with: university (mostly Oxford) from ca. 1880; ob. T. Hughes. Tom Brown at Oxford. Cf.:

let (another or oneself) in for. To involve in: coll.: late C. 19–20; by 1935, S.E. Always with—occ. jocular—implication of unpleasantness.

let into. To attack; abuse; beat: from ca. 1850; ob. Mayhew, 'Those that let into the police, [got] eighteen months.' Cf. S.E. let out at.

let it run. To write as fully as the facts allow: journalistic coll.: late C. 19–20.

let loose. See let oneself loose.


let me chat yer (or you)! Let me tell you! a New Zealand soldiers' c.p. in the G.W.

let me die! A synonym of carry me out!, q.v.: ca. 1890–1914.

let off steam. See steam.

let on. To admit; betray: dial. (—1725) > ca. 1830, coll. Hailburton, 1835; Boucicault, 'Don't let on to mortal that we're married.'—2. Hence, mostly in Australia and New Zealand and from ca. 1860, occ. to pretend, make believe, give to understand: coll.: orig. dial. >, by 1828, Southern U.S. (Thurston).


let out. As speak strongly, strike out, it is, despite F. & H., clearly S.E.—2. To disclose a secret, information, v.i.: from ca. 1870: coll., mostly U.S. (The v.t. is S.E.)—3. A gen. v.i. of action, but esp., v.t., to give a horse his head; v.i., to ride at greater speed: coll. from ca. 1885. 'Rolf Boldrewood.'—4. See lets out her fore-rooms.—5. To exonerate, vindicate, clear from all suspicion of guilt: coll.: C. 20. Adopted, ca. 1918, from U.S.A., where employed before 1900 (Ware). 'This new piece of evidence certainly lets him out.' See almost any post-War detective novel.

let out a reef. To unbutton after a meal: from ca. 1850: nautical >, ca. 1880, gen. coll.

let rip. See rip, but cf. let her rip.—let slide. See slide.—let the cat out of the bag. See cat.

let-up. A pause, a cessation: orig. (1837) and still mainly U.S.; partially adopted by ca. 1880; colll. till C. 20, when S.E. (Thurston.)—2. Hence, a sudden disappearance of artificial causes of depression,' F. & H.: Stock Exchange: from 1880's. In C. 20, S.E.

let up, v.i., to become less (esp. less severe), to cease, is orig. (ca. 1857) and still mainly U.S.: rare in England before C. 20. Coll. Cf:

let up on. To cease to have—esp. anything pejorative—to do with: coll. (orig. (1887) and still mainly U.S. (Thurston.)

let-ch-water. The sexual secretion: low coll.: late C. 18–20; ob. See S.E. lech.

let's! Let us (so. do something expressed or implied): coll.: late C. 19–20. Often yes, let's!
let's, no. Without hindrance or modification: schoolboys: from ca. 1850. Cf. 

let's have one! See how will you have it?

let's hear from you! Hurry up!; look lively: military c.p.: G.W. (P. & Gibbons.) Ex the vocal numbering of a rank of soldiers.

let's out her fore-rooms,—she lies backwards and. She is a harlot, esp. one not professed: proverbial col.: ca. 1630—1860. 

let's play silly b—gers! Let's pretend we're mad!; (playfully) Let's do something silly!: a lower classes' (from early C. 20) >, by late 1914, military c.p.; ob. B. & P. Cf. run away and play trains!


letter, go and post a. To colt: low: mid-C. 19—20; ob. Cf. see a man about a dog.—2. Occ., to visit the w.c.: C. 20. 


letter in the post office, there is . See flag, n. 3; it is synonymous with the phrase there: late C. 19—20; ob.

letter-man. (Gen. pl.) A steward doing his first trip with a company; nautical: late C. 19—20. Bowen. Because presumed to have had a letter of introduction to the seniors.—2. letter man. One who has been in prison an indicated number of years: prison c. (—1933). Charles E. Leach. Each year an alphabetical letter is assigned by the prison authorities to indicate the current year of a sentence.

letter Q. An underworld dodge known also as the billiard scam or mace, q.v. Hence, go on the (letter) Q, to practise this dodge: c.: ca. 1810—60. Vaux. 'Alluding to an instrument used in playing billiards'.


letting alone. See let alone, 1.

letty. A bed; a lodging. Also v.i., to lodge. 

Early: early c. 1900. Cf. levanted.

levant: --despite F. & H., these are S.E.]


level best. One's best or utmost: coll.: orig. (1851), U.S.; anglicised ca. 1870. E. Hale, 1873, I said, 'I'll do my level best, Doctor.'


level pegging. (Of competitors) keeping level; also n. Collins. This s. (from before 1900) has, by 1920, > coll. Collins.' In back s., is sometimes allowed to stand for eleven, for . . . it is a number which seldom occurs. An article is either 10d. or is 1s.; H., 1899.

Levi Nathan. The U.S. Leviathan: nautical: early C. 20. By 'Hobson-Jobson' and 'from the favour she won with wealthy Hebrews'. (Bowen.)

leviathan. A heavy backer of horses: sporting journalists' (—1887); virtually †. Baumann. Ex S.E. sense.

[levite, whether clergyman or dress, is † S.E.: despite F. & H.]

levizor is catachrestic for levator: C. 17—20. O.E.D.


[lew infusion is euphemistic S.E.]


leystall. See leystall, liable to. Used in error for incident to: 1831—1746. (S.O.D.)


lib, v. To sleep, lie down; also to colt: c. of ca. 1560—1870. Harman, B.E., Grove. Also lyp (C. 16—17)—2. As castigate; E.

*lib-beg, liblebeg; lyb beg(e), libbeg(e); lib(b)edge. A bed: c. of ca. 1560—1800. Harman, Rowlands, Head, B.E., Grove.


[liberty hall, or with capitals. Not coll., but allusive S.E.]

library. A theatre-ticket agency: theatrical: C. 20. Denis Mackail, Romance to the Rescue, 1921, 'In the Christmas holidays people will go to any show that the libraries tell 'em to go to.'

licence? have you a. See have you a licence? 


lick, a blow, s. and dial. But see licks.—2. A hasty wash; a dab of paint: coll.: from ca. 1500. Cf. lick and a promise and licked—3. A drinking bout: low (—1890); ob. The Daily Telegraph, March 3, 1886—4. A turn of speed or work, esp. if great or vigorous: (dial. and) U.S. and Australian coll.: 1837 (S.O.D.). See licks, big, lick, v. To beat, thrash: perhaps orig. c. or low (it's in Harman) >, ca. 1700, gen. s.: from ca. 1655. (See also lick into fits.)—2. To defeat, surpass: s. >, in C. 20, coll.: from ca. 1800. De Quincey—3. To astound, puzzle: from ca. 1855. (See also lick into fits.)

lick, (at) a great or, more gen., full. At a great or at full speed: coll.; U.S. (? orig.) and Australian; from ca. 1888. 'Rolf Boldwood'.

lick and a promise, a. A piece of slovenly work, esp. a hasty, inadequate wash of hands and/or face: coll.; from ca. 1870. lick and a small, a. Almost nothing, esp. as to food; a 'dog's portion', q.v.: coll.: mid-C. 18–20. Grose.

[lick-box, -dish, -fingers, -pan, -pot, -sauce, -trencher; lick-penny; lick-spigot (a tapster); lick-splittle (and v.):—despite F. & H., all S.E.]

lick into fits. To defeat thoroughly: from ca. 1875. Ex lick, v.,1.

[lick into shape, like lick the trencher (to toady): S.E. deep. F. & H.,1] lick of the tar-brush, a. The, A, the, the scamman: nautical: late C. 19–20. Bowen. Ex the utility of tar on shipboard.

lick one's (more gen., the) eye. To be well pleased: low coll.: mid-C. 19–20; ob.

lick out of. To drive (something) out of (a person) by threatening: from ca. 1880; ob. O.E.D.


lick-up. Trade s. of mid-C. 19–20 as in quotation at another.

lick you, I'll. This threat in C. 18–early 19 evoked the following 'dovetail', i.e. c.p. reply: If you lick me all over, you won't miss my ****. Grose.


licker. Anything excessive, in size, degree, quality: C. 18–20; ob. Cf. the adj. licking, also spanker, thumper, whopper, qq.v., and lick, v., 3, its imm. origin.


licking, adj. First-rate, splendid, excellent: from ca. 1890; ob. by 1900; by 1936, all but †. Cotton, Eden Phillpotts. (O.E.D.) Cf.licker, q.v.

licks, with my, your, his, etc. A thrashing: late C. 18–20; coll. (†) and dial. Burns. Ex lick, n.,1.

licks, big. Hard work; also, adv. by hard work, 'great guns': Australian, from ca. 1888 (e.g. in 'Rolf Boldwood'); but ob.; orig. (— 1891). U.S. Cf. lick, (at) a great.

licks, give (something) big. To enjoy greatly: Glasgow: C. 20. Exactly equivalent, semantically, to laddie, give, qq.v.; cf. punish.

licks me, it. It's beyond my comprehension: coll.: from ca. 1855. Anon., Derby Day, 1894. Ex lick, v.,2; cf. it beats me. (The past tense occurs: e.g. in 'It licked me how the bottom itself did not tumble clean away from the ship,' The Inverness Courier, Nov. 13, 1870.)

ld. A hat, a cap, or (in Glasgow, at least) even a bonnet: from ca. 1905. — 2. A steel helmet; soldiers': from 1916. B. & P. Cf. battle bowler and tin hat.

lid; dip one's. To raise (lit., lower) one's hat: Australian (— 1916). C. J. Dennis. See lid, 1.

lid,—like pot, like (pot—); or with such for like. (Also a lid worthy of such, or the, the). A proverbial coll. expressive of suitability, similarity, adequacy: C. 16–18. 'Palsgrave, Urquhart, Fuller. (Apperson.)

lid on (it), that's put the. (Cf. The life with a lid on, q.v.) That's done it; nothing more's to be said; that's finished it; 'good night'! late C. 19–20 c.p. lie, n. See while lie and whole cloth; also trowel and load one.


[lie-abed, n., and lie down, be brought to bed: despite F. & H., clearly S.E.]

lie as fast as a dog can lick a dish; as fast as a dog (or horse) will trot. To tell lies 'like anything'; semi-proverbal coll.: resp. C. 16–17; C. 16–20, but in C. 19–20 mainly dial. Apperson.

lie at the Pool of Bethesda. (Of theological candidates) to await employment: theological students' (— 1909). Ware. Ex Ger.

lie back and, etc. See lets our fore-rooms. lie by one, not to let anybody. To be a liar: C. 17–18 coll. Ray.

lie by the wall. To be dead: C. 15–20; coll. till C. 18, then dial. (Apperson.)

lie doggo. See doggo.

lie down. To take a reprimand, a lie, a beating, etc., abjectly. Only in take lying down. 1888, The Saturday Review, Aug. 4. (O.E.D.)

lie flat. See lie low; † by 1910.

lie in. To remain in one's room when one is supposedly out on leave: Royal Military Academy: ca. 1870–1914. Ex the S.E. sense.

lie in state. To lie between two women: low: C. 19–20 (? ob.).


lie like a flat-fish. To tell lies adroitly; nautical: late C. 19–20. Bowen. By pun on lie! lie like truth. To tell a lie with seemly verisimilitude: coll. (— 1876). C. Hindley, 'Cheapjack[s] are always supposed, and by common consent allowed, to lie like truth.'

lie low. (Also † lie flat.) To hide one's person or one's intentions; occ., but † by 1910, to keep to one's bed: coll.: from ca. 1845. F. Ansty, 'So you've very prudently been lying low.'

lie nailed to the counter. See counter.

lie off. To make a waiting-race': F. & H.; the turf (— 1896).

lie on the face. See lay on the face.

lie on the knuckle. (Of a ship) to be 'drawn alongside the entrance to a dock, generally waiting for a tug': nautical coll.: late C. 19–20. Bowen. lie out of one's ground. To lie off ('q.v.) too long and so, unintentionally, lose the race: the turf (— 1896).

lie with a latched. A thorough-going lie: coll.: C. 17–20, but since 1820, only dial. Ray, Fuller. (Apperson.) Also known as a † lie made of whole cloth, or (in dial.) out of the whole stuff, and one laid on with a trowel.

lie with a lid on, gen. preceded by that's a. Coll., but mostly dial.: 1880, Spurgeon. (Apperson.)

LIFE, BET YOUR

life, bet your. See bet your life.—life, it's a great. See it's a great life.—life, know. See know life.—life, lag for. See litter 1; also lag.

life, nothing in my young. Gen. preceded by he (or she) is. 'He means nothing to me;' from ca. 1830. Orig. among the youthful and of one sex for the other. E.g. in Achemed Abdullah's story in Nash's Magazine, Feb., 1935.

life, not on your. Certainly not! coll.: from middle 19th.; life, this is the. See this is the life!—life, we, we ain't got much money but we do see. We see ain't . . .

life and everlasting, for. (Esp. of sales) final; without appeal: lower and lower-middle classes' coll.: mid-C. 19-early 20. Ware.

life of him, me, etc., for the; for my, etc., life (ob.). Gen. preceded by accounted. To save one's (exaggerated) life; coll.: 1809, Malkin, 'Not knowing how for the life of him to part with those flattering hopes!' (O.E.D.).

life-preserver. A loaded bludgeon or stick, properly one used in self-defence. F. & H. gives as U.S. c.: rather is it S.E. (1837; S.O.D.)—2. The penis; low: from ca. 1840; ob.

life there's soap, while there's. A jocular e.p. variation on the old proverb: C. 20.


*lifter. One sentenced, for life, to transportation (1830; ↑ by 1890) or (from ca. 1860) to penal servitude: c. R. Dawson, The Present State of Australia, 1831; Dickens. Also, lay for life (ob.).—2. Penal servitude (orig. transportation) for life: 1832: c. Besant, Twenty-five years . . . as good as a lifter.' Cf. lugger and a lifer, q.v. (O.E.D.)


l. As assistance, it is S.E.—6. Convict, 'sides'; presumption: Shrewsbury School: from ca. 1886. (Desmond Coke, The Hiding of a Twig, 1906.) Whence the adj., lifty, recorded by the same author. Cf. roll, q.v.

*lift, v. To steal, v.i. and t.: c. (1526) >, ca. 1750, gen. a. Skelton, Greene. From ca. 1860, gen. applied to stealing cattle and horses.—2. Hence, to transfer matter from one periodical to another: journalists' and printers' (ob.)—3. To bring (a constellation) above the horizon in sailing, etc.: coll.: 1891. Kipling. (O.E.D.)—4. To sporting senses are S.E.—5. See lifted, be.—6. To arrest: low Glasgow (– 1934).


lift-leg, play at. To have sexual intercourse: C. 18-mid-19 low. Also lift one's leg.

lift or raise one's elbow, hand, little finger. To drink, esp. to excess: late C. 18-20: s. >, ca. 1860, coll. The hand phrase admits the addition of ↑ to one's hand. C.f. 2nd ed.).

lift (up) the hand(s); occ. the arm. To do a little physical work: from ca. 1890. 'Rolf Boldrewood.' (O.E.D.). See also the preceding entry.

D.U.R.

LIGHT-COMEDY MERCHANT

lifted, be. 'To be promoted unexpectedly or undeservedly': naval coll.: C. 19. Bowen.

*lifter. A thief, esp. from shops: c.: ca. 1590-1830; from ca. 1750, gen. s. Shakespeare, 'A he so young a man and so old a lifter!' Ex lift, v., l. —2. (Gen. in pl.) A crutch: S.E. or coll. in C. 16-mid-17, then low or c. until ca. 1870, when it fell into disuse. Cotes and B.E. classify it as c.—3. A heavy blow: from the late 1880 s. (O.E.D.)—4. A horse given to kicking: stables' coll. (—1900). Ware.

lifting. Thieving; theft: late C. 16-20; ob., except for the stealing of live stock: c. >, ca. 1750, gen. s. Greene. Also in late C. 16-mid-17, lifting law (Greene, passim).

lifty. See lift, n., 6.


lig-by, liggy, a bedfellow, a comrade, despite F. & H. is S.E.

light. Credit: low or rather workmen's: from ca. 1820. Bosc, 1823, says that it is orig. printers' s. and gives 'strike a light, to open an account, of the minor sort, gen. applied to a man-house.'—2. Hence get a light, obtain credit: have one's light put out, exhaust one's credit. H., 1st ed.—3. As a notable or conspicuous person, even when the application is jocular, the term is S.E.


light, bring to, may orig. have been s. or even c. Vaux, 1812, 'A thief, urging his associates to a division of any booty they have lately made, will desire them to bring the snig to light.']

light, make a. See make a light.


light, put out one's. To kill: C. 17-20: S.E. till ca. 1820, then (increasingly low) coll.; in C. 20, indeed, it is s. The Graphic, Sept. 27, 1884, 'So now, the malfeasant does not murder, he "pops a man off", or "puts his light out".'


light as . . . The similes verge on but do not > coll. (E.g. light as a feather, a fly, a kiss, the Queen's gown, though the last—C. 17—may after all be coll.) Apperson.


light bob. A light-infantry soldier: 1785, Grose; military s. >, ca. 1890, S.E. Whyte-Melville, 'A light-bob on each side, with his arms sloped.' Light Bobs, the. The 13th Foot Regiment, from ca. 1818 the 1st Battalion of the Somerset Light Infantry; military: C. 19-20; ob. F. & Gibbons.

light fantastic, the. The foot as the means of dancing; dancing: coll. from ca. 1840. Stirling Coyne, 'Then you're fond of sporting on the light fantastic,' Ex Milton's 'Come and trip it as you go.' On the light fantastic too' (L'Allegro).

light-feeder. A silver spoon: c. from ca. 1850; ob.

light food. Tobacco for chewing instead of a meal: 'lower classes' (— 1800). Ware.


light horseman. A liberal as operating as one of a gang on the Thames: C. 19-20; ob. Colquhoun; The Daily News, Jan. 9, 1899. (O.E.D.)


light the lumper. To be transported: c. of ca. 1790-1830. Perversion of lump the lighter.

light-timbered. (Of persons) limber; slender- limbed; weak: coll. late 17-19. B.E. Cf. the S.E. lightly built.

light (or candle) to the devil, bear or hold a. See candle to . . .


light up, v.i. To light one's pipe, cigar, cigarette: coll. from ca. 1800. T. Hughes. (O.E.D.)—2. V.i., to light the lamps; put on the lights: coll. late 19-20.—3. To give (a person) a dose of cocaine: c. from ca. 1920. E.g. in E. Wallace, The Flying Squad, 1928.

light-weight, n. and adj., are, despite F. & H., simply S.E.


lighter. See lump the lighter and light the lumper.—2. An animal's lights: low Cockney and tramps' c. (— 1932). Scott Pearson, To the Streets and Back.


lighting. Gin: low (perhaps orig. c.): from ca. 1780; ob. G. Parker. (Cf. blue ruin.) Hence, flash o' lighting, a glass of gin (— 1811); Lex. Bal.

lighting, like greased. Very swiftly: orig. (1833, as g. l.), U.S.; anglicised ca. 1845 as a coll. Hood, 1842, 'I will come, as the Americans say, like greased lightning.' Thornton.

lighting-conductors. 'Naval full-dress trousers.

with the broad gold stripe down the seam': naval: C. 20. Bowen. Ex the brightness of the stripes.

lightning. A performer rushing in front of the curtain on the least approbation; theatrical coll. >, by 1920, S.E.: 1884. Ware.


lights. The eyes: from ca. 970: S.E. till ca. 1810, then boxing a. The Sporting Magazine, 1815, 'He mill'd the stout Caleb and dark'en'd his lights' (O.E.D.); 1820, 'Peter Corcoran' Reynolds. Also daylight and top-lights.—2. A fool: low: ca. 1860-1910. H., 2nd ed. F. An animal's lights, influenced by light-headed.

lights up! A play-goer's c.p. indicative of condemnation: ca. 1900-15. Ware.


Ligoniers, the. The 7th Dragoon Guards: military coll.: mid-C. 18-20; ob. F. & Gibbons. Ex Earl Ligonier, their colonel in George II's reign.

like. v. Always preceded by the, and from ca. 1860) gen. in the pl. and followed by of (rarely t) to: such a person or thing, in C. 19-20 often pejorative: coll. from ca. 1630, the first record being a letter by Rutherford in 1637, 'In a broken reed the like of me'; likes occurring in 1787 ("the likes of me"); Cobbett, 'the like of this'; Du Maurier, in Trilby. (O.E.D.)

like, v. Misused as in like, adj. 3 (had liked to . . .). q.v.

like, adj. Inaccurately constructed with the dative, etc., instead of with the elliptical possessive: C. 14-20: catachrestic verging, in C. 18-20, on coll. Historian Freeman, 'His domestic arrangements . . . are rather like a steamer' (O.E.D.).—2. Likely, with to and the infinitive: i.e. 'that may be reasonably expected to . . .': C. 14-20: S.E., indeed literal, to ca. 1790, then increasingly coll. A. E. Housman, 1896, 'Such leagues apart the world's ends are, we're like to meet no more.' O.E.D.—3. Apparently about to: sometimes confusedly as in had like to = was like (i.e. likely) to, or, worse still, had liked to = had been like (i.e. likely) to. From ca. 1550: S.E. (except in the + and ob. confused constructions) until ca. 1820, then coll. and dial. Mrs. Carlyle, in letter of 1853, 'I am like to cry whenever I think of her.' O.E.D.

like, adv., at the end of a phrase or a sentence. Somewhat, not altogether; as it were, in a way; in short, expressive of vagueness or after-thoughted modification: (dial. and) low coll. 1801, 'Of a sudden like': Scott, Lytton, De Quincey, E. Peacock. O.E.D.

like, conjunction. Like as: the v. being often omitted in the like clause. Late C. 15-20: S.E. till ca. 1880, then increasingly coll.; in C. 20, low coll.; from ca. 1930, gen. considered a sol. J. K. Jerome, 1886, 'Did [Robinson Crusoe] wear trousers? . . . Or did he go about like he does in the pantomime?' Prob., in the main, ex the semi-prepositional force of like combined with the suppression of as in like as. O.E.D. (See esp. Fowler.)—2. Also in such phrases as that in H. C. Bailey, Mr. Fortune Wonders, 1932, 'I came down [at] half-past seven. like usual': sol.: late C. 19-20.

like, anything—nothing—nothing, in comparison (e.g. Payn, 'Not the Payn is an exchange, for anything like it'), are S.E.; but the elliptical something like, something like what is obligatory, intended, or desired, is late C. 18-20 coll. The O.E.D. quotes "'This looks something like, Sir,' said she, 1798. Often by itself.
like, feel. See feel like.—like, most or very. See like as not.

like ?, what. (Absolutely or as in 'what like is he?') Of what character, nature, quality?: dial. (—1820) >, coll. (1860), low) coll.

like a . . . like anything, etc., where speed, energy, or intensity is indicated, has a colloquial tendency that often > coll. or, if the second member is coll. or, even s. Many of the following phrases, which are s. unless otherwise designated, are found at the resp. n., pronoun, adj., or adv.:—like a basket of chips (Moore, 1819), ↑ l. a bird (from the 1860's: 'Quoting from Bonham), coll.; l. a dog at a fair (Barham), ↑ l. a house on fire (1857, see house on fire), s. > coll.; l. a shot (1850, Smedley), coll.; l. a streak (—1890), coll.; l. a thousand, or a ton, or a cart-load, of bricks (from ca. 1840), cf. l. bricks; l. a tom-tit on a horse-turd (gen. in another sense: see horse-turd); l. anything (from ca. 1860: as anything, 1942), coll. l. be(-)damned (C. 20),—cf. smart as be damned, i.e. 'damned smart': l. beans (ca. 1700); l. belly (late C. 19—20); l. blades (—1845): Dacier, De Quincey, cf. l. a house on fire; l. ↑ boots or old boots (1868, Miss Bradson; prob. earlier), cf. l. the very devil; l. bricks (1835, Dickens), ↑ by 1914; l. b***dy (see bu**ry); l. fun (1819, Moore), s. > coll.; l. hell (see hell); l. hot ↑ cake or cakes (—1888), orig. U.S.; l. mad (from ca. 1660), coll. in Pepys's 'A mad coachman that drove like mad': l. old boots (mid-C. 19—20); l. one o'clock (from before 1847: orig. of a horse's movement (very rapid), says Halliwell), contrast l. one o'clock half-struck, separate entry; l. oh! to a show! (late C. 19—20, low, ob.); l. smoke (C. 19—20); l. thunder (from ca. 1830, ob.; M. Scott); l. the very devil (from ca. 1830; M. Scott); l. wink(ing) (—1890) and l. winking (Barham).

like a birch-broom in a fit. See birch-broom.—l. a bird. See bird.—l. a book. See book.—l. a dose. See dose of salts.—l. a whele. See whele.—l. Christmas beef. See beef.—l. greased lightning. See lightning.

like a halfpenny, or a penny, book,—you talk like. A c.p. remark to a fluent or an affected or pedantic speaker : low coll.: ca. 1880—1910.

like as. As: sol. mid-C. 19—20. J. Storer (Loudon, 1832).

like as not, (as); like enough; most (ob.) or very like. Adverbially: coll. and dial. resp. (but as like as, without not, occurs in 1861); 1563, Foxe; 1611, Shakespeare, 'Most like I did'; 1610, Shakespeare, 'Will money buy 'em? . . . Very like.' O.E.D.


like it but it doesn't like me, I. Applied to food, drink, work, etc.: a semi-jocular coll. c.p.: late C. 19—20.

like it or lump it. To like or, disliking, put up with it: from ca. 1860: coll. See lump, v. 3.

like it if you may do the other thing I, if you don't. Equivalent, and allusive to, the preceding: coll. (—1864). H., 3rd ed.

like . . . like . . . These proverbial consequences, e.g. like mother, like daughter, look—or some of them look—rather coll. but they are the very flesh and bone of S.E. (Apperson for examples.)

like mother makes it. See mother makes it, like.

like nothing on earth. See nothing on earth.

like one o'clock half-struck. Hesitatingly: 1870, Hindley: low; ob. Contrast like one o'clock, a.v like a . . .

like something the cat has brought in, or, in Australia, like something the cat brings in of a wet night. A c.p. applied to a person looking utterly disreputable or very bedraggled: from ca. 1920. Also look what the cat's brought in!

like that !, I. A derisive or indignant 'Certainly not,' 'I certainly don't think so': coll.: late C. 19—20. Cf. not half, adv.

like the man who fell out of the balloon: he wasn't in it. He stood no chance: c.p.: C. 20. (The Humorist, July 28, 1934)

like to meet her in the dark, he'd, I, etc., Plain: lower classes': from ca. 1884; slightly ob. Ware.

likely, had. A catachrestic variation of ↑ was likely, came near (to be or do . . .). C. 17—18. Cf. like, v., and like, adv., 3: q.v.

likely !, not. Certainly not !: coll.: 1923, Mancheon; but in use before the G.W. and prob. from late C. 19.

*likeness, take a. To take a criminal's measurements and record physical characteristics, almost solely of the face: c. of ca. 1810—1910. Lex. Bal. Ex likeness, a portrait.

likes, the. See like, n.—likes of, the. See like, n.

[likenwise as conjunction is considered by Fowler to be an illiteracy; rather is it an infelicity.]

like, Little: a drunken or an undervalued contraction: C. 19—20 coll.


Lilley and Skinner. Dinner: London rhyming s.: from ca. 1910. Ex the well-known boot- and shoe-makers and retailers; the firm was established in 1835.

[Lilliputian, n., like lily-liver(ed),—despite F. & H.,—is N.E.]

lily benjamin. A white greatcoat: C. 19 low. See benjamin; cf. lily shovel.

lily of St. Clements. See St. Clements.


Lily-Whites, the. The 17th Foot (now the Leicestershire), also the 10th Foot (now the East Lancashire) Regiment: military: resp. C. 19 and C. 19—20. Ex their white facings. (F. & Gibbons.)


limb. A very mischievous child: 1625, Jonson, 'A limb o' the school . . . a little limb of nine year old': coll.; slightly ob.—2. Hence, depressively, of older persons: coll.: C. 19—20; ob. except in combination, e.g. limb of Satan (Estcourt, 1705).


limb of the bar. A barrister: 1815; coll. > ,
c. 1860, S.E. Ex : 
limb of the law. A lawyer; a lawyer's clerk :
1730 : coll. , > , c. 1800, S.E. 
limber up. To answer one's name: naval: from:
c. 1916, Bowen. (Indicative of military influence.)
limbered, pl. adj. Arrested; in detention or prison:
C. 20 military. Ex limber, to imprison,—
cf. in limber, limbered, Lombard Street, q.v.—,
influenced perhaps by limbo, q.v., and certainly
by S.E. limber, the detachable front of a gun-
carrriage.
limbo. A prison; any place of confinement :
from c. 1560, ; t by 1910; coll. till c. 18, then .
in c. 19-20, o. Gros, Moncrieff; Anon., Five
Years' Penal Servitude, 1877, 'It was a heartless,
cruel robbery . . . Before that occurred he had never
been in limbo.' Ex the theological sense,
sp. the phrase, in limbo potrum.— 2. Pawn;
a pawnshop. c. 1600-1820, Congreve.— 3. The
female pudend: C. 19 low.— 4. Bread: military:
late c. 19-20. F. & Gibbons. Perhaps because often it
is, on active service, 'as hard as hell'.
limbs, duke or duchess of. A gawk: from c. 1780;
ob.: low. Gros, 1st ed.
limburger, that's the. That's 'the cheese', i.e.
elegant, excellent, splendid: late c. 19-20. See
cheese.
lime. A man that has lost a log: New Zea-
landers: in G.W. Cf. wingy, q.v.
lime-basket or -kin, as dry as a. Exceedingly
dry: coll.: from c. 1835: the former, , by 1915.
Dickens, Hume Nisbet.
lime-juice. Lime-light: theatrical: c. 1875-
1916. Ware. '(This does sound generate sense !)
— 2. A 'new chum': Australia ( — 1886); ob. by
1896, , by 1910. Ex the lime-juice served on ou-
going ships. Cf. :
lime-juicer. The same as lime-juice, 2 ; ibid.: 
O.E.D. ( — In U.S.: see limey.) 
lime twig, -twig, limetwig. As a snare, , .E. — 2.
A thief: late c. 16-early 17: o.: Greene, third
Cony-Catching, 1892.
limehouse. 'To use coarse, abusive language in
a speech' (Lyell); coll. ( — 1931. Ex the S.E.
sense, 'to make fiery (political) speeches such as
Mr. Lloyd George made at Limehouse in 1909'
(O.E.D. Sup.).
limericks. Shares in the Waterford & Limerick
Railway: Stock Exchange coll. ( — 1895) , by
limey, Limney. An Englishman: C. 20 U.S. > ,
in 1933, partly anglicised, thanks to Spenser's Limney,
a notable book on the U.S. underworld. Ex lime-
juicer, the U.S. ( — 1881 but ) term for a British
ship or sailor, lime-juice being served on British
ships as an anti-scorbutic. Cf. lime-juice, q.v.
limit, the. Esp. in that's the limit. A person, act,
or thing that is the extreme (or beyond) of what one
can bear, gen. in jocular use: coll., orig. (ca. 1903),
U.S.; anglicised ca. 1908. (O.E.D. Sup.) Cf.
dizzy limit, and frozen limit, q.v.
limit, the sky is one's. One is ambitious; one
rises in the world: 1923, The Diary Mirror, Oct. 29.
limine, limine, limine. In c. of late c. 16-early 17,
as explained by Greene in A Disputation, 1592, 'The
limmiting Lave, disouercing the orders of such [pro-
fessional criminals] as followe Judges, in their
sircuites, and goe about from Fayre to Fayre.'
Linen, the. The stage curtain: theatrical: ca. 1880-1910. Cf. the rag.

Linen, wrap up in clean. To couch smutty or sordid matter in decent language: coll.: C. 18-19. We still say nicely wrapped up.


Linen Cook. Rotten Cook (mid-C. 17-early 18), eccentric vegetarian of Ipswich and Bristol.

(Dawson.)


linsey, linly. Wrinkled: coll. (— 1887). Baumann. E.g. 'a linny face'.


[lingo and Lingua Franca, despite F. & H., are S.E.; so are F. & H.'s lining, get within the titling of one's smock, and linsey-woolsey. Note, however, that H., 1859, says that 'Slang is termed lingio among the lower orders': this is a coll., ob, in C. 29.

linguistic is catachrestic when made to = of, or concerned with, language or languages: mid-C. 19-20. S.O.D.

*link. To steal from a person's pocket: c.: ca. 1830-60. Haggart.

link and from. These related terms in Yiddish and hence in low London s. date, as to the latter at any rate, from the 1880's. Ware. See from, of which link is the opp.

linkster. A linguist; esp. an interpreter: nautical (— 1867). Smyth. (Also dial.)


[links. Saws; not a but dial. Because linked together.]

Linen. See linen.

lino. A coll. abbr., from ca. 1880, of linoleum (1803).—2. In C. 20, among printers and journalists, a coll. abbr. of linotype (1888), itself contracting line of type.


lint-scraper. A surgeon, esp. if young: coll.: 1763, Foote; Thackeray. Ex the lit. S.E. sense. liny. See liny.


lion, Cotswoold or Lammermoor; lion, Essex or Romford. Resp., a sheep; a calf. Cotswoold lion or lion of Cotswoold, mid-C. 15-19. Anon., Thersites; Ray; Grose. See also Essex I., Lammermoor I., Romford I.

lion, tip the. To squeeze a person's nose and flatten it to his face: late C. 18 mid-19. Grose, 1st ed.

Lion Chang, or long L.C. Li Hung Chang, an eminent Chinese who passed through London in 1896, to which year and place the nickname is, virtually, confined. Ware, 'His entourage also obtained, in several instances, droll names, Lo Feng Luh became Loafing Loo, Vincent Li became Lud Lullietty, and S'eng became Song-Song.'


[lion-drunk, lion-hunter, lionesse (but the C. 16 sense, a harlot, may be), while that of a lady visitor to Oxford—1805—is certainly a.), lionesse, are all, in all senses and despite F. & H., good S.E.; so are lion's provider, lion's share and put one's head into the lion's mouth.]

Lions, the. The 4th King's Own, now the King's Own Royal Regiment: military: C. 18-20; ob. Ex the lion badge. F. & Gibbons. (Badges, facings, and mottoes are responsible for many nicknames of regiments.)—2. Millwall Football Club: sporting: C. 20. Their ground is the Den: cf. Daniel in the lion's den. Cf.:


lions in the Army, they came. A Regular Army c.p.: late C. 19-20. (Frank Richards, Old Soldiers Never Die, 1933.) In reference to military discipline.


lip, v. To sing: c. (1780, G. Parker) >, ca. 1800, low s.; ob. Esp. in lip a chant, sing a song.—2. To speak, utter: coll.: from ca. 1880; rare after 1918. Punch, Jan. 10, 1885, 'I had great power, millions licked my name.'

lip, all betwixi cup and: S.E.—make a lip: S.E., as also are lip-clip, lip-labour 'or work, and lip-salve 'or wash, all in F. & H.]

lip, button one's. (button one's mouth is † S.E.) Gen. in imperative. C. 19-20: a, verging on coll.; once (— 1888) common among schoolboys.

lip, carry or keep a stiff upper. See keep.

lip, give it. 'To talk vociferously', C. J. Dennis • Australian (—1910).


lip-thatch or -wing. A moustache: jocular coll. verging on S.E.: resp. 1892 (Kipling), 1825 (Westmacott): ob. O.E.D.
 liaison. See libiken.
 lip. Impertinent.: from ca. 1890. Ex lip, lip:—. (Q.R.D. Sup.)—. See lippy.
 lips hang in your light, your. (Occ. his, her, etc.) A proverbial c.p. = you're a (born) fool. C. 16–17.
 Skelton (eye for light); Davies of Hereford; 'Phraseology' Robertson. (Apperson.)
 liqu. See what will you lugs?
 liqueur of four ale. A glass of bitter: City (— 1909); ob. Also City sherry. Ware.
 liquor. A drink: from ca. 1860; mostly U.S. Also liquor-up.—. The water used in adulterating beer: publicans' (— 1909). Ware. (Obviously, a euphemism.)
 liquor, v.t. To supply, or to ply, with liquor: mid-C. 16–20: S.E. till C. 18, then coll. till ca. 1850, then a. Also, late C. 19–20, liquor up. Surtex.—. 2. V.i. To drink alcoholic liquor: orig. (1836), U.S.; anglicised ca. 1840. Mrarryat. Also, from 1845, liquor up.—. 3. To thrash, esp. in liquor someone's hide: ca. 1860–1880. D'Urffy. Punning tick. [liquor, in. S.E., despite its associations—and F. & H.]
 liquor up. See liquor, v. and 2; and the n.
 liqueored, drunk, 1667, now gen. liqueured up (not before C. 19): liquorer, a hard drinker (— 1885: ob.); liqueouring, vbl.m., hard drinking, C. 19–20, now gen. liqueuring-up. All ex the v. and 1 and 2.
 Cf.: Lorticpond Street, to have come from. To be drunk: ca. 1825–1910. Buckstone, in 23, John Street, Adelphi, 'I don't know where you are, sir; but you seem to have just come from Lorticpond Street.'
 Anon., Dict. of Bootham Slang.
 List. See Linn.
 list. See add.—. 2. Short for list of geldings in training: the turf: 1890. Hence, put on the list, to castrate. S.O.D.
 listener. An ear: low and boxers': from ca. 1890: ob. (Gen. in pl.) Bee.
 listman. A ready-money bookmaker: from ca. 1885: ob.: the turf. Ex the list of prices exhibited by his side.
 [lists of love, like litter, little (paltry), little ease, and Little Engander, despite F. & H., are S.E., while Little Guid, the devil, is dial.]
 lit (slightly), gen. well lit (quite), tipsey: from ca. 1920. Cf. light-house, q.v. Also lit up, slightly drunk (dial). Literally as in its strongest admissible sense: catacistic: late C. 19–20. Even more catachistic when, as in C. 20, it is used as a mere intensive,—in fact, it is then a slovenly col.
 literature. Any printed matter whatsoever, as in 'the literature of patent-medicines': coll. : 1895 (S.O.D.).
 little beg. Little beggar as a 'friendly term applied by upper form to lower form boys': Public Schools: late C. 19–20. Ware.
 *little ben. A waistcoat; c. : C. 19–20; ob. Ex benjamin, q.v.
 little bird told me, a. A semi-proverbal c.p. (C. 19–20) in reply to the (not necessarily expressed) question, 'Who told you?'
 little bit of . . . See all right. fluff and leg and
grow.
 little deers. Young women, esp. if associated—or declaring themselves associated—with the stage: Anglo-American Society (— 1909); † by 1920. A. J. Wilson, Stock Exchange Glossary. Cf. Chats, q.v.
 little cheque, a. A c.p. à propos of the repayment of a loan: ca. 1803–95. Ex Two Roses, a popular comedy, in which this phrase is often spoken by Digby Grant played by a famous actor. (A. E. W. Mason, The Dean's Elbow, 1930.)
 little deers. Young women, esp. if associated—or declaring themselves associated—with the stage: Anglo-American Society (— 1909); † by 1920. Ware. Punning dear to form the feminine of stay in its Society sense.
 little devil. See devil.
 little end of the horn, the. A difficulty; distress: hence, come out at the little end of the horn = to come to grief, be worsted. Coll.: C. 17–20; after 1800, mostly dial. and U.S. (See esp. Apperson and Thornton.)
 Little Fighting Fours, the. The 44th Foot Regiment, since ca. 1881 the Essex Regiment, rather the 2nd Battalion of the 2nd Essex: military: C. 19–20; ob. Ex low stature and high courage. F. & Gibbons; R. J. T. Hills. Cf. S.E. Bantams.
 little finger. The male member: female euphemistic: C. 20.
 little go. The first examination to be passed for one's B.A. degree: university coll.: 1820: Oxford († by 1864) and Cambridge. Thackeray. Cf. smalls.—. 2. Hence, one's first imprisonment: c. (— 1889). Ware, 'First invented by a fallen university man.'
 little-go-vaile. 'Ordinary step to the first ex-
LITTLE GRENADE, THE 447


Little Grenadiers, the. The Royal Marines: military: 1761; ob. F. & Gibbons. Ex their grenadier caps and their stature less than that of the average grenadier in C. 18.

little grey house in the west. A vest: rhyming a. in G.W., and after. B. & P. 'From the popular song of that name.'

little house. A privy: from ca. 1720: S.E. till ca. 1850, then dial. and, in New Zealand, coll. Ex petty house, q.v.

little joker. The hidden pea in the thimble-rigging game: c. : from ca. 1870. 'Ex the card-game sense of joker.'

Little Lions. Little Lonsdale Street, Melbourne: Australian: ca. 1816. C. J. Dennis.


little man in the boat. The navel: trivial: late C. 19—20. (Also in a very indelicate metaphorical c.p.)

little Mary. The stomach: coll.: 1903. Ex Barrie's Little Mary. (O.E.D. Sup.)

little man in the boat. See boat.

little more Charley behind. 'More lumbar width—speaking of feminine dress or costume': theatrical: (—1909) : ob. Ware.


little red book. the. See crook, go.

little side. A game between houses only:

Rugby school: from ca. 1870: coll. > j.


*little snakeman. A young thief that, entering by a window, opens the door to the gang: c. of ca. 1780–1890. G. Parker.

little spot. See spot.


Little Sussex. The Duke of Sussex, son of George III: 1st half of C. 19. The Crecy Papers. He was the shortest of the King's sons.

Little Willie. See Willie.

Little Witham, be born at; go to school at; belong to, etc. To be stupid: coll. (more or less proverbial): late C. 16–mid-19: extant only in dial. Punning wit; Nashe, e.g., has small Witam ... little Brainford. (Apperson.)

littler, littled. Smaller: -est; younger, -est.

C. 19—20: unintentional, they are sol. or dial. deliberate, they (though rarely littler) are jocular coll., as in the Littlest ones (the youngest children), The Observer, 1932, Christmas number.

live, energetic, forceful, is S.E. (though mostly in U.S.)—2. Jocular a. verging on coll., esp. as a real live —; e.g., 'A real live glass milk jug', 1887 (S.O.D.), 'A real live philosopher', 1890 (ibid.).

live bache. To live as a bachelor: Society coll. (—1909). Ware.


live horse. Work additional to that included in the (gen., week's) bill: workmen's: C. 19—20; ob. Opp. to, and suggested by, dead horse, q.v.

live even in a gravel pit, he would. A semi-

proverbial, mainly rural, c.p. applied, ca. 1660–1780, to a cautious, niggardly person. Ray, Fuller. (Apperson.)


live message. (Gen. pl.) A message in course of transmission: telegraphers' coll. (1870) >, by 1910 j. Ware.

live-on. A fine girl or woman: low: late C. 19—20; ob. Ware. ('leave yer-homer.

live one. A shell that will explode: military coll. verging on j.: G.W. (B. & P.)

live sausage. See sausage.


live with, can or be able to. To be able to play (a person) on level terms: sporting: from ca. 1928.


lively. A lively person: coll.: 1889, Clark Russell, in Maurice. O.E.D.


liven. To make, or to become, lively: coll.: 1884 (S.O.D.). In C. 20, gen. liven up.


liver curl. See curl, make one's liver.

liver, have a. To be irritable, bad-tempered: coll.: from ca. 1890.

liver and grapes. 'Fried liver and bacon for the wardroom breakfast': naval: C. 20. Bowen.

Why grapes? —unless it = grapefruit.

liver-faced. Pale- or white-faced; cowardly: low: (—1857). 'Ducange Anglicus.'

livish. 'Livery' (q.v.); having the symptoms attributed to a liver out of order: coll.: 1806. The Daily News, July 9, 1806, an advertisement. O.E.D.

Liverpool Blues. The 79th Foot, British Army: military: ca. 1778—84.

Liverpool button. 'A kind of toggle used by sailors when they lose a button', F. & H.: nautical a. > j.: from ca. 1850; ob.


Liverpool weather. 'In the Merchant Service, a special brand of dirty weather': coll.: late C. 19—20. Bowen.

[Liverpudlian and living fountain, despite F. & H., are S.E.J.

livery. 'Livery': coll.: from ca. 1806. Cf. litterish, q.v.—2. Hence, in C. 20, irritable, bad-tempered, morose, gloomily silent. Cf. liver, have a livery, be one of the. 'To be a cuckold': ca. 1680—90. Betterton. (O.E.D.)


living with mother now. A females' c.p. addressed to proposals of marriage or mistresse-ship: 1881—ca. 1914. Ware notes that orig. it was 'the refrain of a doubtful song'.
**LOB'S POUND**

Loaferies, the. The Whitechapel Workhouse: East London: 1898–ca. 1906. Ware, 'From the tenderness shown towards the inmates' and on such names as Colinderies and Freakeries.

Loafers, loafing and loafish have not reached England; ob. in U.S.

Loafering, vbl.n. Aimless lounging; deliberate idling: orig. (1838), U.S.; anglicised ca. 1850 as a coll. >, in C. 20, S.E. Cf.:—

Loaf, adj. Lounging; deliberately idle: orig. (ca. 1838), U.S.; anglicised ca. 1890 as a coll. >, by 1905, S.E., T. Hughes, 'A ... poaching, loafing fellow'.

Loamick. See lomick.

Loap. See lope. A C. 18 variant.


Loaves and fishes, benefits, profit, is, despite F. & H., ineligible.


lob, v. To droop; sprawl: late C. 16–20; ob. ca. 1800, s. Fegan.—2. The cricket term, whether v. or n., is S.E.—3. To arrive: Australian (—1916). C. J. Dennis. (Also military, esp. in lob back, to return to one's battalion. 1915–18. B. & P.)

*lob, dip or frisk or pinch or sneak a. To rob a tilt: from ca. 1810: c. : all slightly ob. See also lob-crawler and -sneaking.

*lob, go on the. To go into a shop to get change for gold and then secrete some of the change: c. : ca. 1750–1820. C. Johnson; Grose, 2nd ed.

*lob, make a good. To steal much money from a tilt: c. of ca. 1810–80. Vaux.


*lobb. See lob, n.


*lobbilly is S.E., but lobbilly-boy, a doctor's assistant, is navel s. (1748, Smollett) >, ca. 1890, S.E., and merchant-service s., in C. 19, for a steward, also for a spiritless boy at sea (ca. 1850; ob.), while lobbilly doctor, a ship's doctor or surgeon, is nautical s. of C. 18. Both ex lobbilly, gruel.


[LOB's pound, despite F. & H., is ineligible—even in the sexual sense.]
lobscouse, a meat-and-vegetable hash, is nautical j. and dial., but lobscouser, a sailor, is nautical.

lobster. One of Hazelrigg's regiment of Roundhead cuirassiers: 1643-77. Ex the complete suits of armour, encaressing them as a lobster's shell the lobster. Clarendon.-2. A British soldier: 1867, T. Brown, is app. the earliest indisputable record; ob. by 1815. B.E., Grose, W. W. Jacobs. Also boiled lobster, q.v. Ex the red coat. (O.E.D.)—3. As a bowler of lobs in cricket, jocular S.E., the normal word being lob-bowler.—4. ' Often carelessly used in Australia for the crayfish': mid-C. 19-20. Morris. (Cf. locust.)


lobster, boil one's. 1 (Of a clergyman) to turn soldier: military: ca. 1785-1840. Grose, 2nd ed. Because clerical black is exchanged for red and because an unboiled lobster is bluish-black, a boiled one is red. Cf.: 

lobster, boiled. Same as lobster, n., 2: ca. 1875-1905. In contradistinction to, and suggested by:

lobster, raw or unboiled. A policeman: ca. 1829-ca. 1910: a >, ca. 1870, coll. Ex the blue uniform equated with the colour of a raw lobster: see lobster, boil one's.


lobster-cart, upset one's. To knock a person down: coll. orig. (1824) and mainly U.S.; † in England. Cf. apple-cart, q.v.

lobster-kettle of my c***. I will not make a. 'A reply frequenty made by the nymph of the Point at Portsmouth, when requested by a soldier to grant him a favour', Grose, 2nd ed.: ca. 1785-1860. Ex lobster, n., 2.


lobster-smack. A military transport (cf. lobster-box, q.v.): 1829, Marryat (O.E.D.): jocular coll. >, ca. 1880, S.E. Ex lobster, n., 2.


lobtat. To sport or play: nautical: ca. 1850-1910. Ex a whale smacking the water with his fin.


local is erroneous for local, a place, locality: C. 19-20. Thus O.E.D.; Fowler, however, recommends locale.

*lock. A place for storing stolen goods: c.: late C. 17-early 19. B.E.—2. Hence, a receiver of such goods: c. of ca. 1690-1870. B.E. (This sense is also expressed by lock-all-fast, q.v.)—3. A line of business or behaviour: c.: ca. 1780-1830: low; perhaps orig. by G. Parker.—4. A chance, gen. in standing a queer lock, have a poor one: c. of ca. 1720-1860. A New Casing Dict., 1725. Hence, prob., the next sense.—5. As in Grose (1st ed.), to stand a queer lock, bear an indifferent character; †—

6. The female pudend: mid-C. 18-20: low. Also lock of all locks (G. A. Stevens, 1772). The male counterpart is key, q.v.

*lock-all-fast. A late C. 17-18 variant of lock, 2. B.E.

(lock-hospital and lock-up house, despite F. & H., are S.E.)


lock-ups. Detention in study: Harrow School: from ca. 1830; ob.


locker, Davy Jones's. See Davy Jones.—locker, shot in the. See shot.—lockers-ram or lockers-jawed is S.E.

lockers, be laid in the. To die: nautical (1813, Scott) >, ca. 1890, S.E. Cf. lose the number of one's mss., q.v.


locomotive. A hot drink of burgundy, curacoa, egg yolks, honey, and cloves; coll.: ca. 1885-1910.

locomotive tailor. A tramping workman tailor: tails': from ca. 1870.


locum. Abbr. locum tenens: medical, clerical: from ca. 1900. The Scotsman, March 11, 1901, 'Acting ... as locum ... during the severe illness of the minister' (O.E.D.)—2. Hence, a locum-teneney: medical: C. 20. R. Austin Freeman, 1926, 'I am doing a locum. Only just qualified, you know.'

*locus. See locust, v.

locus. See locust, v.

locus. See locust, v.

loco. See locust, v.

lock. A small house for storing goods: c.: from ca. 1850; ob. Mayhew. Also locus(s), esp. when used in the wider sense, a drug ('generally ... snuff and beer', H., 1st ed.). The term occurs in combination (locus-ale) as early as 1653. Perhaps ex Sp. locos, pl. of loco, lunatic. (O.E.D.)—2. In Australia, popularly but ... erroneously applied to insects belonging to two distinct orders', ciodas and grasshoppers: 1846. Morris.—3. A very extravagant person: Society (— 1809); ob. Ware. A resurrection of the C. 16-17 S.E. sense.


lodging-sluin. The stealing of valuables from high-class lodgings hired for the purpose: c. of ca. 1810–70. Vaux. See slum.


log-juice. Cheap port-wine: 1853, Cuthbert Bede; slightly ob. (O.E.D.)


—loger, —logy. See —ologer, —ology.

*loges. A pass or warrant: c.: early C. 17. Hence, feager of loges, a professional beggar with false passes. Rowlands.


[loggerhead, n. and adj. logger-headed, be at or come to loggerheads; S.E.]


logio.—Errorsome for loggia. (O.E.D.)—logograph, C. 19–20, for lographer. (S.O.D.)

logs. A lock-up; a minor prison: Australian coll. (—1888). 'Rolf Boldwood', 1888, 'Let's put him in the Logs', Morris, 'In the early days':—see G. Barrington, in his History of New South Wales —a log-hut, and often keeping its name when made a more secure place'. Ob. however, by 1910, † by 1930. Cf. the † U.S. log-box.—2. (Rare in singular.) 'Logs. Fines inflicted at sea ... officially logged by the captain': nautical coll.: late C. 19–20. Bowen.—3. (the Logs.) 'The timber pond in Portsmouth Harbour': naval: late C. 19–20; ob. Ibid.

—logy. See —ologer.


lol; occ. loll. A students' social evening or spree: Stellenbosch students: ca. 1895–1900. Pettman, who derives it ex Dutch 'lollen, to sit by the fire, to chat'.

loll, a favourite child, is ineligible; as abbr. lollipop it is s. but rare (see lolly). S.E., too, are loll, v., and its derivatives loller, lollipop (occ. loll).—2. See lol.

loll-shrub, —shrub. Clarét: Anglo-Indian coll.: from ca. 1815. Ex Hindustani for 'red wine'.

loll-tongue, play a game at. To be salivated for syphilis: ca. 1785–1850. Grose, 2nd ed. † ex panting from the effects of the treatment.

lollipop, lollypop. A sweetmeat: coll.: from ca. 1787. Grose, 2nd ed.; C. Selby, 'Our hearts we cheer, with lollypops.' † ex Northern dial. lolly, the tongue.—2. The membra virile: C. 19–20 (ob.); low. Also ladies' lollipop.—3. Fig., over-sweet writing: from ca. 1850; ob.: coll.—4. As an adj., from ca. 1835; coll. Cf.: lollipop dress. A 'stripy dress, generally red and white, suggestive of sticks of confectionery': theatrical coll.: 1884. Ware.


lollop. To lounge about: coll.: 1746, C. H. Williams, 'Next in lollipop'd Sandwich, with negligible grace.' Ex loll, v.—2. To bob up and down: coll.: from ca. 1850. Mayhew, 'Its head lolloping over the end of the cart' (O.E.D.).—3. To proceed clumsily by bounds: coll.: 1878, Lady Bracey, 'We lolloped about in the trough of a heavy sea.' But for date cf. lolling, adj., 2.


lollapping. 'A lazy, idle Drone *: a C. 17–18 coll. verging on S.E.]


*lolly, v.t. To give (a fellow cook) away to the police: c. (—1933). Charles E. Leach, On Top of the Underworld. Prob. abbr. lolly-shop by a grim pun on shop, to betray to the police.


lollypop. See lollipop.—lollipop. See lollipop.

lolly-worker. See lolly, n.. 3.

Lombard fever. The 'idles': coll.: 1678, Ray; † by 1870. A perversion of the S.E. † fever-lurden (cf. S.E. † lurden).


Lombard Street to a Brummagem sixpence, a China orange (the commonest form of a egg-shell, nineness. (Gen. preceded by all.) In C. 20, the second occ. > all China to an orange. A c.p. indicative of very heavy, indeed the longest possible odds; a virtual certainty: coll.: resp. 1826, G. Daniels, ob.: 1849, Lyttton; 1752, Murphy, †; 1819, Moore, ob. Ex the wealth of this London street. (See esp. Apperson.) Also Chelsea College to a sentry-box (1819) and Pompey's pillar to a stick of sealing-wax (1819, likewise in Tom Moore).


lomick; loamick. The hand: Shetland and Orkney islanders' a., not dial.: from ca. 1880. E.D.D. Ex Orkney dial. lomos, the hands.
LONDON

London, agree like the clocks of. To disagree at, and on all points: proverbial. C. 16-early 18. Nahe, Ray. The elder Diarielli ascribes it, tentatively, to some Italian clock-maker.


London, put or show or turn the best side to. To make the best display one can: coll.: 1873, Cassell's Magazine, Jan.; Baumann; Ware, 'Making the best of everything'. Cf. Humphrey's topers.

London fitting. See moonlight fitting.


London ivy; L. particular. A thick London fog (cf. pea-souper): coll.: both 1852, in Dickens's Bleak House; the former was ob. by 1920.—2. (Only London ivy.) Dust: Cockneys' (—1909). War.

London jury. See jury—hang half.


London Smash 'Em and Do for 'Em Railway. The London, Chatham & Dover Railway: late C. 19-20; now only historical.

London smoke. A yellowish grey: Society coll.: ca. 1860-90. Ware, 'Became once a favourite colour because it hid dirt.'

London Thieving Corps, the. The London Transport Corps (now the Army Service Corps): Crimean War military. F. & Gibbons.

London waggon. 'In the days of the Press Gang [abolished in 1835], the tender which carried the victims from the Tower of London to the receiving ship at the Nore': nautical: ca. 1770-1840.

Bowen


Lone duck or dove. A woman no longer 'kept': a harlot 'working' in houses of accommodation: low: from ca. 1860; ob.

Lone star. A second lieutenant: military officers': 1916; ob. F. & Gibbons. Because he has only one star, whereas a first lieutenant has two.

Contrast:


[Long. The foll. terms in F. & H. have always been S.E.:—long and (the) short of it, long-headed, long-robbed, long-tailed, long-tongued(d), and long-winded.]


Long. adv. Along: e.g. 'Come long, Bill!': coll., mostly lower classes' (—1923). Manchon.

Long life. Additional time in bed on certain days:

Shrewsbury School coll.: from ca. 1880. Desmond Coke, The Binding of a Twig, 1906. Cf. the Public School sense of round (see furlong) and alms, q.v.

Long, so. Good-bye: coll.: 1834. (S.O.D. and O.E.D.) In the Colonies, often pronounced soo-long. * Ex so long as you're away good luck!

Long, that. Thus or so long: low coll.: late C. 19-20. See that, adv.

Long, the. The summer vacation: university coll.: 1852, Bristed; Beadle, 1883.


Long attachment. One tall, one short (other-sex) person walking together: coll.: from ca. 1860; ob. In jocular S.E., the long and (the) short of it.


Long beer, drink. A large measure of liquor: coll.: 1859, Trollope. (O.E.D.)

Long Bertha. A variant of big Bertha. See Bertha. (F. & Gibbons.)


Long-bow, draw or pull the. To tell unlikely stories: coll.: in C. 20, S.E.: resp., from ca. 1868, C. 19-20. L'Estrange; Thackeray, 'What is it makes him pull the long-bow in that wonderful manner?'


Long bowls. See long balls.

Long chalk. See chalk, not by a long.


Long-crown. A clever fellow, esp. in the proverb, 'That caps long-crown, and he capped the devil': coll. and dial. (—1847); ↑ except in dial.

Long dispar(s). The loin: Winchester College. See dispar.

Long drink. See long beer.

Long-eared bastard or chum. See chum, long-eared. The former term, affectionate or neutral, the latter contemptuous. Cf. long-faced one.


Long eye. The female pudend: 'pigeon': from ca. 1850.

Long face. A solemn or a downhearted expression: coll.: from ca. 1785. 

Long-faced chum. A variant of the next. See chum, long-eared.


Long feathers. Straw; bedding stuffed with straw: military (—1870); ↑ by 1015.

Long fifteens. Some class of lawyers: C. 17. L. Barry, in Ram Alley. O.E.D.

long fork. A stick used as a toasting fork: Winchester College: ca. 1830-70.

long gallery. The act or the practice of trundling the dice the whole length of the board: ca. 1790-1860. Grosse, 3rd ed.


long glass. A very long, horn-shaped glass filled with beer on special occasions: Eton College s. > j.: ca. 1820-70. Brinley-Richards, *Seven Years at Eton*, 1883.

long-haired chum. A female friend or sweetheart: from ca. 1870: tailors' >, in C. 20, soldiers' and sailors'. See also at *long-eared chum*.

long hand. The Pickpocketry: e. (- 1823). Manchon. Theroin, a long, thin hand is useful.

**Long Harry.** Henry Wilkinson (1610-76), 'an Oxford Professor of Divinity and member of the Westminster Assembly' (ca. 1650). Dawson.

**long-head.** A 'shrewd-head' or very shrewd or cunning person: lower classes' coll. (- 1823). Manchon. Ex dial.

**long hogs.** A sheep's first growth of wool: coll.: ca. 1850-1900.

long home, one's. The grave: C. 14-20: S.E. >, ca. 1820, coll. Dickens.

**long hope.** Long expectations in studying for a degree: Oxford University: ca. 1820-40. Egan's Grosse.


long in the mouth. Tough: low coll.: from ca. 1850; ob.

**long in the tooth.** Elderly: from ca. 1910; (low) coll. >, by 1930, S.E.

jump, be up for the long. See *jump*, be for the long. jump, the. The transference of an air squadron to active service overseas: Air Force: 1918; ob. F. & Gibbons.

**long lady.** A farthing candle: late C. 18-early 19 coll.

**long lane.** The throat: C. 19-20; ob. See lane, 2.

**long lane, for the.** Of something borrowed without intention of repayment or restoration: coll.: C. 18-mid-19. *Ex the proverb it's a long lane that has no turning.*

long leg. A big difference in the draught forward and aft in a sailing ship: nautical coll.: mid-C. 19-20; ob. Bowen. Ex nautical j. *long-legged*; (of a ship); drawing much water.


**long Meg.** A very tall woman: late C. 17-early 19. B.E. Ex an actual woman, known as Long Meg of Westminster.

long nose, make a. To put a derisive thumb to the nose: 1868 (O.E.D.).


**long paper.** Paper for impositions: Winchester College: from ca. 1860.

**long pig.** Human flesh as food: 1852, Mundy, in *Our Antipodes*; nautical >, ca. 1895, S.E. Prob. ex Fijian phrase.

**long pull.** An over-measure of liquor, given (customarily or occasionally) to improve trade: publicans' coll. (- 1909). Ware.


*long shifting.** A drive 'from the Royal Exchange to the east corner of Catherine-street, in the Strand', Grosse: London hackney-coachmen's: ca. 1740-80.

**long ship.** A ship 'in which it is a long time between drinks': nautical: C. 20. Bowen.

**long-shore butcher.** A coastguardsman: nautical: ca. 1850-1905.


**long sight, not by a.** Not by a long way: coll.: late C. 19-20.

*long-sleeved top.** A silk hat: c. (- 1889); ob. *long-sleeved 'un.** A long glass (of liquor):

**Australian: from ca. 1890; ob. Ex.**

**long-sleeved.** The same: also the glass itself: Australian (- 1888). Morris.


**long suit, one's.** One's forte or speciality: C. 20: coll., now verging on S.E. Ex card-games.


**long-tailed bear, (that's) a.** You lie! non-aristocratic evasive c.:

**late C. 19-early 20.** Ware. 'Bears have no tails.'

**long-tailed beggar.** A cat: low (mostly nautical) coll.: from ca. 1830; ob. Marryat, in *Peter Simple*; H., 6th ed.-2. In e. (- 1823; Manchon), the same as:

*long-tailed finnip or 'un.** A bank-note of high denomination: c.: from ca. 1835. Brandon; Snowdon's *Magazine Assistant*. Cf. *Rimay*, q.v.

**long tea.** Tea poured from a high-held pot; urine: schoolboys': ca. 1850-1910.

**long togs.** A landman's clothes; esp. full-dress clothes; nautical: from ca. 1830. Also adj. in Marryat's 'them long-tog, swallow-tailed coats'.

**long Tom.** A large, long-range gun: nautical (also *long Tom Tuck*: Bowen) and military coll.: from ca. 1865. Cf. *long-winded whistler*, q.v. Also, a nickname for specific cannon.--2. Hence, a penis: low: from ca. 1898. (Whence an obscene riddle current during the Boer War.)

**long-tongued as Grammy.** Very apt to blab: coll.: ca. 1720-1830. Ex Grammy, an idiot (d. 1719) that could link his words up.

**long tot.** A lengthy set of figures for addition, esp. in examinations: from ca. 1885: coll. Ex tot (q.v.), itself abbr. *total.*

**Long Town.** London: Anglo-Irish (- 1823), *† by 1900. *Jon Bee.*
long trail, the. ‘In the China clippers, the homeward route round Australia’: mid-C. 18-20; virtually †. Bowen.

long un. See long legs and long one.

long vac. The summer holiday: at schools, some universities (cf. long, the), the law-courts: coll. late C. 19-20.


long word, a. A word indicative of a long time: coll. from ca. 1860. ‘Since I’ve been in London, and that’s saying a long word’, The Cornhill Magazine, Dec., 1861; ‘“Never” is a long word’, The Standard, July 28, 1883. O.E.D.


longs, the. The latrines at Brasenose: Oxford University: from ca. 1870; † by 1930. Built from funds donated by Lady Long. Still so called at Trinity College, Oxford: but because of their length.


*longs and shorts; also longs and broads. ‘Cards so manufactured that all above the eight are a trifle longer than those below it, F. & H.: card-sharpers’ e.; from ca. 1860. H., 3rd ed.—2. Orig. (−1823), longs and broads — cards. Egan’s Grose.


Lonsdale’s ninepins. Those nine boroughs for which Lord Lonsdale used to provide the members: Parliamentary: late C. 18 early 19. [loo (the game), n. and v., despite F. & H., is S.E., as are the following loo words: — look (for) babies or cupids in the eyes; look pricks: loon (while play the loon is Scots): loose (— wanton, dissipated and its compounds; on the loose; shake a loose leg.)

‘Loo, the. Woolloomooloo, a rough district of Sydney: Australian coll.: C. 20. J. C. Dennis.

‘Loo! Milk!: milkmen’s cry (−1823).’ ob. ‘Jon Bee’. Ex Fr. last.


looby. A fool: an idle, dull fellow: C. 14-20; S.E. till ca. 1820, then coll. and dial. Disraeli, ‘Her looby of a son and his eighty thousand a year’. Cf. loopy, q.v.—2. In C. 20, occ. as adj. in sense of loopy, q.v. (B. & F.)


lood, or looed, be. To be very short of money: nautical (−1923). Manchon. I.e. to be to leeward. Imm. ex: — looed. ‘beaten, defeated’, Barrière & Leland: coll. : from middle 1880’s; ob. fix the game of loo. (E.D.D.)


look. To look surprised; stare: C. 17-20: S.E. till ca. 1850, then coll.

look a gift-horse in the mouth. To criticise a gift or a favour: C. 16-20; coll. till C. 18, then S.E. ‘Hudibras’ Butler.


look as if butter would not melt in one’s mouth. See mouth.

look as if one had eaten live birds. To be unwontedly lively: from ca. 1867; ob. The Quarterly Review, xxxv, p. 231 (Apperson).

look at, cannot. To have no chance against: coll.: 1865 (O.E.D.). Ex cricket, where it appears as early as 1862: Lewis.

look at, have a. ‘To look at for the purpose of examining’: coll.: 1885. S.O.D.

look at him (it, me, you, etc.), to. Judging from his (my, etc.) appearance: coll.: 1846, Bentley’s Miscellany (vol. xx), ‘No one would think me more than five- or six-and-thirty, to look at me.’ O.E.D.

look at the maker’s name. To drain a glass: coll. from ca. 1860; ob. Also bite one’s name in the pot.

look at the place. (Of thieves) to examine a house, etc., beforehand, to see if there is anything unusual about it: C. 19-20: c. Vaux.


look big. See big.—l. blue. See blue.—l. botty.

look bony. See bony.


look down one’s nose. To look at despise: coll. C. 19-20; ob.

look down one’s nose at. To despise: coll.: from ca. 1840.

look for. A low coll. form of look you (C. 18-20) = mind this!


look goats and monkeys at. See goats and monkeys.


look in, v. ‘To use a wireless receiver adapted for television’: coll.: Aug. 1928. O.E.D. (Sup.)

look into the whites. To be about to fight: lower classes: from ca. 1885; ob. Ware. So. of each other’s eye.


look like nothing on earth. See nothing on earth.

look lively. To be drunk: low coll.: from ca. 1850.

look nine ways for Sunday(s). To squint: nautical: from ca. 1850; ob. Ex the C. 16–18 coll. look nine ways confused with the dial. look both (later alt) ways for Sunday.

look old. To be severe or cautious: streets' coll. (-1909). Ware.


look on the wall and it will not bite you. A derisive c.p. addressed to a person 'bitten with mustard', Ray: ca. 1670–1760.

look one way and row another. To do the opposite of what one seems to intend to do: coll.: ca. 1860–1880. Melbaoncé, 1883; D'Urfey: Spurgeon, 1889. (Apperson.)

look out, that is X's. That is X's concern or sole business: coll.: 1844 (S.O.D.).


look-see, v. See preceding, 1.

look sharp. To exercise great care or vigilance: S.E.—2. To be quick; to hasten: coll.: from ca. 1815. Cobbett, 'They shall look sharp if they act before I am ready for them'; Dickens; Manville Penn. O.E.D. Cf. the next two entries.

look simly. See look alive.

look slippery. To be quick: see slippery. (Ware, 1909, considers it essentially naval.)—look slippery. See slippery.


look through a glass. To become tipsy: low coll.: from ca. 1846; ob.

look through a hempen window. To be hanged: coll.: ca. 1826–1700.

look to, or watch, one's water (for him). To follow a person's movements, watch him very closely: coll. (semi-proverbial): from ca. 1540; in C. 19–20, dial. only. Heywood, 1646; Manley, The New Atlantis. (Apperson.)

look towards one. To drink his health: low coll.: 1848. Thackeray; ob. See also looks towards.

look-up; occ. look-in. A short visit: coll. (-1909). Ware. Ex seen 2 of:

look up, v. To improve: s. >, in C. 20, coll. (in C. 19, mainly commercial): 1822, The Examiner, 'Foreign Securities are generally looking up'; O.E.D.—2. V.t., to visit, gen. informally: coll.: from ca. 1835. Dickens, in Pickwick, 'He used to go back for a week, just to look up his old friends.'

look you! See look here!—looker. See good-looker.

looking as if he hadn't got his right change. Mad- or wild-looking: Cockney' (-1909). Ware.

looking as if one could not help it. Looking like a simpleton or a faint-hearted: coll.: late C. 18–20; ob. Grose.

looking-glass. A chamber-pot: ca. 1620–1830, then dial. (n.b. the E.D.D. entry). Beaumont & Fletcher; B.E.; Grose. Prob. ex the attention paid to it by physicians.

looking like a bit of chewed string. An elaboration of chewed string, q.v.


lookse. See look-see. looney. See loony.


loopy. Slightly mad: s. (or coll.): late C. 19–20. t ex looby, q.v., influenced by ironic allusion to Scots loopy, crafty. Occ. looby.


loose. To lose: coll.: C. 19–20. Often used by persons that should know better.


loose, have a screw. See screw.—loose, play fast and loose. See fast and loose.

loose, run. (Of a horse) to race unbacked: the turf: 1884, Hawley Smart.

loose, turned. (Of a horse) handicapped at a very low rate: the turf: from ca. 1880; ob. Cf. preceding entry.

loose a fiver. (To have) 'to pay extravagantly for any pleasure or purchase': proletarian (—1909). Ware.


loose end, at a († after or on a). Not regularly employed; not knowing what to do: from ca. 1850
LOOSE END, LEAVE AT A


loose French. (Gen. loosing F.) To use violent language in English: urban (mostly Cockney): ca. 1890–1915. Ware.

loose hold. To let go: coll.: from ca. 1695. Dryden. Cf. leave go, q.v.

loose-hung. (Of persons) unsteady: low coll.: from ca. 1830; ob.

loose-wallah. An occ. variant of loose-wallah, q.v. (B. & P.)


loot, v. To plunder: carry off as booty: from ca. 1840: military coll. >, ca. 1870, S.E. The same ascent characterises looter and looting.


[lop, to lounge, idle, is, like lop about, S.E., despite F. & H.; the same applies to topolly, a mere variant of lobolly, q.v.]

lope. To run; run away: from ca. 1570: S.E. till ca. 1890, then s. and dial. B.E.; Grose, ‘He loped down the dance.’—2. To steal: o. (—1874). H., 5th ed.

loper. Abbr. landloper, q.v.


lor (or Lor’)-a-mussy! Lord have mercy! (= surprise): low coll.: 1865 (prob. much earlier). Dickens. Cf. Lord-a-mercy!, q.v. (O.E.D.)


lord, drink like a. To drink hard: proverbial coll.: C. 17–18. Whence:

lord, drunk as a. Very drunk: from ca. 1670; coll. till C. 19, then S.E. Cf. emperor, q.v.

lord I, my. See Lord, 1.

lord, swear like a. To swear copiously and/or vigorously: coll. >, S.E.: C. 16–17.

Lord-a-mercy! (on us)! ‘The Lord have mercy (on us)!’ As an exclamation of surprise: low coll. when not col.: C. 18–20. Eleanor Smith, 1808, ‘Lord-a-mercy upon those that had a hand in such a business.’ O.E.D.


Lord Baldwin. See Queen Anne.

Lord Blarney. Lord Carnarvon: Anglo-Irish: 1885; very ob. Ware. On his appointment as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in 1885, he made many flattering speeches (see, e.g. comment in The Daily News, Nov. 14, 1885).

Lord Harry. See old Harry.

[Lord bless me! An oath so trivial as to verge on the coll.: from ca. 1790. Horace Walpole.]


Lord George, the. The Lloyd George old age pension: working-class sol.: from ca. 1917. (M. Harrison, 1935.)

Lord have mercy (up on me). The ‘illic passion,’ a ‘colic’ of the small guts: late C. 16–17 medical coll. used, according to Junius’ Nomenclator, by ‘the homelier sort of physicians’. (O.E.D.)

Lord John Russell. A bustle or dress-improver: rhyming s. (—1850): † by 1900.

Lord knows how or what or who, the. Some person or thing of unspecified but considerable potentialities; phrases indicative of irritation, wonderment, admiration, or, as gen., the completeness of one’s own ignorance. Coll.: late C. 17–20. The Gentleman’s Journal, March, 1891–2, ‘Here’s novels, and new-born adventures . . . and the Lord knows what not.’ In C. 20, usually—but, I believe, wrongly—held to be S.E.


Lord lumme or lummy! See lumme!

Lord Mansfield’s teeth. The spikes along the top of the wall of the King’s Bench Prison: ca. 1790–1830. Ex Sir Charles Mansfield (1733–1821), Lord Chief Justice.


Lord Mayor’s fool, like my or the. Fond of everything good: proverbial coll.: from ca. 1670. Ray; H. Kingsley in Geoffrey Hamilton; † by 1910. Often as the Lord Mayor’s fool, who likes everything that is good. Swift has like my Lord Mayor’s fool, full of business and nothing to do. (Apperson.)

Lord Minimus. Jeffrey Hudson, a famous Court dwarf of mid-C. 17. Dawson.

Lord Muck. See Muck, Lord.


lord of the manor. A ‘tanner’ (q.v.), i.e. six pence: rhyming s. (—1839). Brandon; H., 1st ed. This is the earliest record of a rhyming s. term; its inclusion in Brandon, moreover, significantly implies that ‘Ducange Anglicus’, 1857, was right in classifying all such terms as e. Lord Piccadilly. Another nickname of Old Q, q.v.

lords, the. The first cricket eleven: Winchester College: from ca. 1860: ob.

Lord's Own, the. H.M.S. Vengeance: naval: C. 20. Bowen. 'Vengeance is Mine, saith the Lord.'

lordsake. For the Lord's sake: Scots coll.: from ca. 1860. O.E.D.

lorry! or Lordy! Lord! (dial. and) low coll.: mid-C. 19-20. Cf. law! (laws), lor!, lor'. Abbr.: Lordy me! A (dial. and) low coll. corruption of Lord (hence) or help me: C. 19-20. Ware.

lorification is erroneous for lorication: C. 18-20. O.E.D.


loz! Lord!: low coll.: 1860. George Elliot. (O.E.D.) Cf. law!

lose. The act, or an instance, of losing (a horse-race): racing: ca. 1864. O.E.D.

lose, v. i. To be much superior to; overcome, defeat easily: coll.: C. 20.

lose one's hair. See hair.

lose one's legs. To become tipsy: from ca. 1770: ob.

lose one's number. To be 'crimed': military: C. 20. B. & P.

lose one's rag. See rag, lose one's.

lose out, v. i. To lose; be swindled or merely fooled: coll.: Australia: late C. 19-20. Perhaps ex the † S.E. lose out, recorded by O.E.D. at 1860.

lose the number of one's mess. See mess.

loser, a. As a billiards term, is S.E.—despite F. & H. —2. A handicap, obstacle, disappointment: low: from ca. 1920. James Curtis, The Girl Kid, 1936, 'It was a bit of a loser, feeling bored before the trial had started.'

lost a cart-load (or cartful) and found a waggon-load. See cart-load.

lost it, he's. He is in a bad temper: Charterhouse: C. 20. I.e. lost his temper.


lot. A group of associated persons, or of things of the same kind: from ca. 1570: S.E.: until ca. 1875, then (except for merchandise and live stock) coll. W. Benham, 1920. Their crew seem to have been a lazy lot.: O.E.D.—2. A person, gen. pejoratively as in a bad lot, or ironically as in a nice lot: from ca. 1846: coll. >, in C. 20, S.E. Thackeray, in Vanity Fair, (a propos of Miss Sharp) 'A bad lot, I tell you, a bad lot. ' Ex the auction-room (W.).—3. See lot, red.—4. See lot, the, 2.

lot, a; lots. A considerable quantity or number; adv., a good deal. Coll.: lots from ca. 1810, a lot from ca. 1838. Also with adj., as in a good lot (Kehoe, 1835), a great lot. Either followed by of or absolutely. O.E.D.

lot, hot. See hot lot.

*lot, red; white lot. Resp. a gold and a silver watch: c. (1833). Charles E. Leach. See *red and *white.

*lot, the; the whole lot. The whole of a stated quantity or number: coll.: 1887. Mrs. Henry Wood, 'He crunching the lot' (a quart of gooseberries). O.E.D.—2. See 'Moving-Picture Slang'; § 11.

*lot, white. See lot, red.

[Loteby (or Ludby) and Lothario, despite F. & H., are both S.E.]


lotherwine. Corrupt for lairewine (a fine for fornication or adultery): C. 10-17. (O.E.D.)


lots. See lot, a.


Lot's wife's backbone, (as) salt as. Extremely salt: lower classes—1809. Ware. Ex the Biblical story.


Lotties and Totties. Harlots: orig.—1855 and mainly theatrical. Ware. Ex the frequency of those diminutives in that class.

lotus, n. and esp. v. (To) locus: low rhyming a.: 1885. Ware. Influenced by locust.

loud. (Of dress or manners) showy: 1847. Albert Smith, 'Very loud patterns': coll. till C. 20, then S.E. (As strong-smelling: S.E.: ob. except in U.S.)


loudly. Showily, of dress or manners: 1849. Thackeray: coll. till C. 20, then S.E. (O.E.D.)


lounge-lizard. A sleek adventurer frequenting lounges in the expectation of women, their money and caresses: U.S. a. (1923), Anglicised by 1925; by 1935, coll. (Krapp's prophecy as to its lack of viability has been proved false.)

*lour, lour(e). (See also loaver.) Money; in C. 18. gen. of coin: c. : from ca. 1865. Harman, Head, Grose, Brandon, Richardson (author of The Police, 1889). Ex C. 14-16 S.E. lourer, a reward, recompense, itself ex Old Fr. louver, a reward; cf. Romny lour, to plunder, and looripen, plunder, booty.


[louse, care not a; not worth a louse. S.E., despite F. & H.]


louse, prick a. To be a tailor: coll.: C. 17-18. Hence louse-pricking, vbl.n., tailoring, also as adj.: C. 18-19, e.g. in Tolderry (O.E.D.)
and low-runners (C. 17-18), the latter being almost certainly o.

*low pad. A footpad: o. of mid-C. 17-19. Head, Grose, Ainsworth. Contrast high pad, q.v., and see also pad, n. and v.

**low-runners. See low men.

low tide or water, be at, in. To be in difficulties, rarely other than monetary: coll.: resp. late C. 17-early 19, late C. 18-20 (in C. 20, S.E.). B.E.; Dickens, 'I'm at low-water mark, only one bob and a magpie!' Nautical in origin: stranded by ebbing tide (W.).

*low toby and low-toby man. See toby.


† ex Hindustani.

lower. To drink (a glassful, etc.); low coll.: C. 19-20, low regions. Hell: from ca. 1870: coll. >, ca. 1915, S.E.

*lowing-(-)cheat or (-)chete. A cow: o.: ca. 1650-1700. Harman. See cheat.


*lower, lowre. See lour.—2. S. D. See at L.—

lubber, n. and adj., even in nautical sense, S.E. as is lubberland (the paradise of indolence).

Loyalists, the. The 81st Foot, in late C. 19-20 the Loyal (North Lancashire), Regiment: military coll.: from the mid-1790's. F. & Gibbons. Ex the regimental motto.

lozenge. (Gen. pl.) A revolver or pistol cartridge, more gen. bullet: military: 1915; ob. F. & Gibbons. Contrast cough-drop, q.v.

lubber's(-)hole: until ca. 1830, occ. lubber-hole. An opening in the maintop, preferred by tyros and timids to the shrubs: from ca. 1770; ob. by 1910: nautical s. >, ca. 1840, coll. >, ca. 1880, S.E. Captain Cook; Wolcot; D. Jerrold. 'Go up through the futtock-shrubs like a man—don't creep through lubber's-hole.' (O.E.D.)—2. Hence, any cowardly evasion of duty: nautical: (—1890); ob. H., 2nd ed.

luba. A woman: low pejorative coll.: late C. 19-20 rural Australian. Ex the 'standard' sense, a black woman, recorded first in 1834. Much less gen. than gin, q.v. (Morris.)

lubricate. V.i., to drink (—1896); v.t., ply with drink, C. 20. The Daily Express. 'His late employers ... had dismasted him for ...' lubricating the police'! (O.E.D.)

lubricated, well. Drunk; very drunk: C. 20. Cf. oiled, well oiled.


luck, do one's. (Gen. in present perfect tense.) To lose one's good fortune: Australian: C. 20. C. J. Derris.

luck, poor on (occ. in) one's. Unlucky; impoverished: from ca. 1848: a. till ca. 1920, then coll. Thackeray, 'When Mrs. C. was particularly down on her luck, she gave concerts and lessons in luck, fisherman's. The being wet, hungry, and 'fishless': coll. : from ca. 1855.

luck, greasy. A full cargo of oil: whalers': from ca. 1830.

luck, shitten. Good luck: ca. 1670-1830. Ex the proverb, 'shitten luck is good luck.' Ray, Grose. Cf. the belief that a bird's droppings falling on a person confer good luck on him.

luck!, worse. More's the pity !: coll. : 1861, Miss Yonge. O.E.D.

luck to (e.g. him, it) bad or good. A c.p., pejorative or approbatory (occ. ironically or jocularly congratulatory): coll. : C. 19-20.

*lucky. Plunder: o.: from ca. 1850; mostly U.S.: ob.

lucky, adj. (Of persons) handy: C. 18 coll. (The O.E.D. considers as S.E.)

lucky, cut (occ. make) one's. To decamp: low London: from ca. 1830; slightly ob. M. C. Dowling, 1834, 'You'd better cut your lucky.'


lucky bag. The female pudend: mid-C. 19-20; ob.: low. Funning the S.E. term.

lucky bone. The small bone of a sheep's head, this being considered a charm: (—1883). Sala in The Illustrated London News, Nov. 10, 1883.

lucky old sergeant-major, the. The (shaped like a crown) in the game of house: military: C. 20 F. & Gibbons. Ex the sergeant-major's badge: a crown.

lucky piece. An illegitimate son (occ. daughter) by a well-to-do father, generous enough to set up the mother in comfort: lower classes (esp. rural): late C. 19-20. Lit., a lucky coin.

[lucrative. See at note at gun, n. 3.]

**lud! A trivial ejaculation: coll.: ca. 1720-1850. Ex Lord!—2. In address to a judge (my Lud) or even m'Lud): a form so minced as to be coll. or, at the least, near-coll. † recorded in law before 1808, Besant, "My Lud," said Mr. Caterham, "my case is completed" (O.E.D.). In the House of Lords, the clerks used my Lud as early as 1830 (ibid.).

Ludgate, take. To go bankrupt: coll., mostly commercial: 1865, Higgins; † by 1790. Ludgate Prison was mainly for bankrupts and debtors. O.E.D.


luff, spring one's. To display agility in climbing: jocular nautical coll. (ex the S.E. sense). The term (slightly ob.) app. arose in the 1890's.

lug. An ear: standard in Scots; in late C. 18-20 Eng. a.—mainly jocular, cf. 'your clumsy lugs'; Moncrieff, 'He napp'd it under the lugs, too.—2. See lugs.—3. A pawn-shop: see lug, in.

lug, v. To pull violently, carry with effort, there being the implication of ponderousness in the object: without that implication, S.E.; with it,
coll. of mid-C. 17-20. Culpepper, Horace Walpole, Help. O.E.D. —2. V.I., to drink steadily, is †S.E., despite H. and F. H.


[lug in, lug out, like lug-loaf, blow in one’s lug, and lay one’s lugs, are, despite F. & H., ineligible: resp. S.E., S.E., &.; standard Scots, the same.]

lugger and the girl is mine !, once aboard the. A male, either jovial or derisively jocular, C. 20 c.p.; slightly ob. I ex a popular song: cf. A. S. M. Hutchinson’s novel, Once Aboard the Lugger—the History of George and Mary, 1908.

lugow. To fasten, place, put: Anglo-Indian coll.: from 1830’s. Ex Hindustani tagana. Yule & Burnell.

lugs. Affected manners, ‘airs’, ‘swank’. Hence, put on (the) lugs, put on style, be conceited.

Both low coll. from ca. 1890.

lugs !, if worth his. (Sc. he would . . .) If worth his while! Scots coll.: C. 14 20. Ex lug, n., 1.

*luke. Nothing: c. of ca. 1820-70. D. Haggart, 1821. Problematically ex dial. luke, a leaf (hence a trifle) or more prob. Northern dial. luke, a look (? not worth a look); H., 1864, describes it as North Country cant; also, note the earliest record.

[lull, ale, despite F. & H., is S.E. despite its semantic ingenuity.]

lullaby. The male member: low: mid-C. 19-20. († ob.)


*lully or lolly (q.v.). Wet or drying linen: c. of ca. 1780-1870. Grose. —2. Hence, a shirt: low: from ca. 1860. Ware.

*lully-prigger, -purguing. A stealer, stealing, of linen, esp. hanging on the fence or line: c. of ca. 1780-1880. G. Parker.


*lumber, be in. To be in detention; in prison: C. 19-20 c.; ob. Vaux. Cf. lumbered, Lombard Street, limbered and limbo, qq.v.

lumber, live. See live lumber.


lumme, lummy! Esp. as Lord I. / A low coll. exclamation: C. 19-20. Ex love me.

lummo(c) king, heavy, awkward, clumsy, is dial.]

lummy. See lumme 1-2. First-rate: low: 1838, Dickens in Oliver Twist; Miliken, 1892, ‘ ‘ardly know which is lumiested’. Prob. ex dial.: cf. the N. Yorkshire lummy lick, a delicious mouthful (E.D.D.).

lump, anything exceptional (gen. as to size): S.E., as is the sense, a party, an association. —2. (Also in pl.) A great quantity; adv. (a lump), a lot, greatly: s. (in C. 20, perhaps rather coll. and dial.): a lump from ca. 1710, lumps from ca. 1520. Skelton; Leigh Hunt; Farmer, ‘I like that a lump.’ —3. (Gen. the lump.) The workhouse: vagrants’ c. from ca. 1870. H., 5th ed. Also Lump Hotel. (Y. pan and spinisken, qq.v.

lump, v. To thrash: ca. 1780-1840, then dial. Grosz, 1st ed. —2. To punch, strike: low: ca. 1780-1830. Grosje. Like preceding sense, ex the S.E. meaning, to thresh. —3. To dislike, be displeased at: coll. orig. (1833), U.S.; anglicised ca. 1860. Dickens, 1864, ‘if you don’t like it, it’s open to you to lump it.’ (—4. As to take in a lump, drink at a draught, put in a lump sum, e.g. as a bet, it is S.E.) —5. To carry: Australian: C. 20 Prob. influenced by lump in the same sense.

Lump Hotel. See lump, n., 3.


lump of ice. Advice: rhyming s. (—1009). Ware.

lump of the jaw on, have a. (To be) talkative: low (—1890). Ware.


lump of school. A, rarely to, fool: rhyming s. (—1900). Ware.


lump the lighter. To be transported: c. of ca. 1780-1875. Grosje, 1st ed.; H., 5th ed. Perhaps lump here = strike, hit (as in hit the track), i.e. unpleasantly or forcibly meet with.


Lumpers, the. The Lifeguards: military: C. 19-20. F. & Gibbons. Ex their stature: lumping fellows!

lumping. Great; heavy, bulky; awkward, ungainly; coll. and dial.: 1678, lumping bar-
gains"; 1887, 'a lumping yokel'. Stigmatised by Johnson as "low".

Lumping pennyworth. A (great) bargain; coll.: ca. 1700–1890; then dial. Arubhnot. Hence: lumping pennyworth, get or have got a. To marry a fat woman; coll. verging on c.p.: C. 18–

[lumping, despite F. & H., is S.E.]

lump. See lump, n. 2.—lumps out of, knock. To command much applause: theatrical: ca. 1884–1892. Goun, Nutts about the Stage, 1885.
lumps (of. coll.) handsome; col.: 1844, Nickstone; ob. by scumplings out of lovely.

Lumps. See lump, n. 2.—lumps out of, knock. To command much applause: theatrical: ca. 1884–1892. Goun, Nutts about the Stage, 1885.

lumps. See lump, n. 2.—lumps out of, knock. To command much applause: theatrical: ca. 1884–1892. Goun, Nutts about the Stage, 1885.

Lumpish. Low; col.: 1872, cf. lumpish, lumpishly.

Lumpy. pregnant, is low coll. verging on S.E.; (of ground) rough, S.E.—2. Tipsy; from ca. 1810; ob. by 1910, † by 1930. Punch, 1845.—3. Costly: booksellers' ca. 1890–1915.

lumpy roast. A grandee, or a "swell of the first water": low London, ca. 1855–ca. 1860. Ware says that it may represent the Empereur Napoleon III, "who became popular in 1855 by his visit to England... and [by] his encouragement of English trade".

Lun. A harlequin; late C. 18–early 19; theatrical. Grose, 1st ed. By 'collision'—2. A clown; C. 19, mainly U.S. and theatrical. † a contraction of harlequin or, more prob., ex Shakespearean lunates, mad freaks, as in Winter's Tale, II, ii, 30. (Onions)

Lunan. A girl; vagrants' col.: from ca. 1835. Brandon. Ex. from Romany loobni (cf. Sampson at lubni), a harlot.


luncheon. Luncheon. 1829 (S.O.D.) coll. till ca. 1910, than S.E. Abbr. luncheon. For luncheon (and) its synonymy, see 'The Art of Lightening Work' in Words—2. A paper sold at lunch-time, esp. one giving the cricket scores; newsvendors' coll.: 1921.—3. Any meal other than breakfast; a large dinner, a heavy supper: Canadian coll. (—1932). John Beames.

lunch. (The v.i., always S.E.—) To provide lunch for: coll.: 1892 (S.O.D.).

luncheon reservoir. The stomach: low locular: from 1870; ob. Cf. broad-basket and victualling office. Cf.:


lunger. A person diseased or wounded in the lungs; coll.: 1893. Kipling. (O.E.D.)

Lungita. A lazy fellow, a loafar, is S.E., despite F. & H.

Lungia. A large and strong-voiced man; Johnson: coll.: 1860–1740.—2. An underworkman in the 'chymical art'; Johnson: ca. 1610–1750: coll. >, ca. 1700, S.E. Jonson, 'That is his fire-drake, his lungs, his zephyrus, he that puffis his coalas.'

Lunnon. London: (dia. and) low coll.: C. 18–
early 20.

luny. See loony.

lupituous. Lovely; delicious: late C. 19–20; ob. Ex. voluptuous + delicious. Cf. lumpishous and scumplings. (This type of 'made' words was common in the Victorian period; the vogue has waned.)

Lucer. See ler-so-am.

Lucer, a trick, a cheat, is S.E., as is the v. So too are give one a lurch and leave in the lurch, though the latter may possibly be a. in B.E.'s sense, 'Pawnd for the Reckoning.' All despite F. & H.]

lurcher, a rogue, is S.E., but lurcher or lurcher of the law, 'a bum bailiff, or his setter' (Grose, 1st ed.) is s. of ca. 1780–1840. Ex dial. lurch, to blink about.

[Lurcher, -en, a rogue, a loafer; lourdenny, roguey: S.E. and dial, despite F. & H.]

lure. * An idle pamphlet; B.E. ca. of ca. 1690–1750, when its † lure, q.v.—2. When used for a trap, a snare, it is catascethin; mid-C. 15–20 (O.E.D.).


Lurk. v. To beg with 'faked' letters; c. from ca. 1850; ob. Mayhew. Perhaps a corruption of dial. lurch, to blink about: cf. lurcher.—2. be lurked.

To be ordered to do some unpleasant job without a chance of avoiding it': nautical: mid—C. 19–20. Bowen. Cf. († ex) the † S.E. lurk, to shirk work.—3. V.i., to sell, on the move, to an occasional customer: grafters'; C. 20. Allingham. Ex n., 4 (q.v.).

Lurk. v. To go on or upon a. To get money by a lurk', q.v.: c. from ca. 1850; ob. Mayhew.


Lurking. n. and adj. Fraudulent begging; being a lurker 'sense 2': c. both from ca. 1850 and both in Mayhew's London Labour, vol. I.

Lurksman. See lurker, 2.

lurries. The more gen. form of:

lurry (Gen. in pl.) Money; c. of ca. 1670–1830. R. Head in The Canting Academy: Grose. In the pl., the sense is rather 'all manner of eolatha', Coles, 1670, or 'Money, Witches, Rings, or other Moveables', B.E. Prob. a corruption of lour(e), lour, influenced perhaps by dial. lurry, to pull, drag (E.D.D.)—2. As gabble, it is S.E. > dial.—3. As a variant of lorry (Collinson), it is rather Northern dial. (—1827) but a cogn.

luscious. Very pleasant; very fine: Bootham School (—1925). Synonymous is mellow: the two are frequently conjoined. Anon., Dict. of Bootham Slang, 1825.
London brewer, as F. & H. claims, or ex the City of Lushington (see lushington), or, as W. suggests, ex Sheilta lush, to eat and drink.—§. A dainty: Eton College: C. 19. Either ex lush, as above, or ex lush, S.E. adj.

**lush**, v. To drink, v.i.: from ca. 1810; ob. low. Lex. Bal. Also lush 1. from ca. 1830; ob. Cf. boose, lub, liquor, soak, see.—2. To drink, v.i.: low; perhaps from ca. 1810 (see Lex. Bal.); certainly from 1830, when used by Lytton in *Paul Clifford*, 'I had been lushing heavy wet'; Dickens, 1838, 'Some of the richest sort you ever lushed.'—3. To treat, ply with drink; low: from ca. 1820; ob. Haggart, 'We had lushed the coachman so neatly, that Barney was obliged to drive' (O.E.D.). Ex the n., first three senses. For an excellent synonymy of all three senses, see F. & H. at lush, v.

**lush**, adj. Tipsy: low: from ca. 1811; ob. Vaux. Also lushy, from ca. 1810. Lex. Bal., 'The rolling kiddies... got bloody lushy.' Either ex S.E. adj. lush or ex s. lush, n., q.v. above. (The lush, n., v. and adj., are now extant mainly in dial. in S.E. U.S.)—2. Erroneously used of colour: mid-C.19-20. (O.E.D.)

**lush at Freeman's Quay.** To drink at another’s expense. See Freeman’s Quay and Harry Freeman’s.

**lush cove.** A drunkard: c. (1839). Brandon’s definition (in ‘Dunciage Anglicus’), ‘public house’, is an error—prob. for ‘a frequenter of the public house’.


**lush-house.** The same: c. or low (1896); ob. F. & H., in lush-crib synonymy.

**lush it.** See lush, v., 1.

**lush-ken.** A public-house or alehouse; a gin-shop: c. from ca. 1810; ob. Potter, Vaux. Ex lush, n., 1. Cf. lush-crib and lush-ken.

**lush-out.** A drinking-bout: low (1822); † by 1920. 'Jon Bee.'

**lush-penny.** Same (1896) as lush-ken: c or low; ob. Cf. lush-ken; see penny.

[**lushborough, lushburg, a brass coin, is † S.E., despite F. & H.**]


**lushy.** See lush, adj., 1.


**lushing-ken.** A public-house, a drinking bar: c. from ca. 1880. L. Wingfield, 1883, 'Unable... to steer clear of lushing-ken' (O.E.D.)


**lushing-muzzle.** A punch on the mouth: boxing and nautical: ca. 1820-1900. Egan’s Grose. See lushing and muzzle.

**lushington or Lushington.** A drunkard: rather low; from ca. 1840; ob. The Comic Almanack, 1840; Mayhew: 'Rolf Boldrewod', 1890, 'The best dedicated chaps are the worst lushingtons when they give way at all.' (Cf. Admiral of the red, booser, gin-crauder, pot-wallower, soak(er), wetster.) Either ex lush, n., 1, and punning the surname Lushington, or ex Lushington the brewer, or else ex the City of Lushington, a convivial society that, flourishing ca. 1750-1810, had a 'Lord Mayor' and four 'aldermen' (O.E.D.). — cf. the next three phrases.

**Lushington, deal with.** To take too much drink: ca. 1820-90. Bee. Cf.: Lushington is concerned, Alderman. Applied to one who is drunk: low: ca. 1810-1900. Vaux, where also he has been voting for the Alderman. Cf.: Lushington is his master. He is apt to drink too much: ca. 1825-90. (The C.20 phrase is the boose has got him down.) See lushington.

**lushy.** See lush, adj., 1.

**lushy cove, a drunkard: c. (ob.): from ca. 1810. Vaux: Mayhew. Also lush cove.

[**lush**, despite F. & H., is † S.E. for an idler, as are F. & H.’s lush-proud, lusty Lawrence (wrencher), and lute (a literary euphemism).]

**luxaduck!** See love a duck!

**lux.** An excellent or splendid thing: Christ’s Hospital: from ca. 1840; ob. Prob. ex luxuriant, says Blanch, the Hospital’s annalist. Cf.: luxer. A handsome fellow: Winchester College: ca. 1850-1015. Either ex luxury, as Atlams suggests, or ex L. lux, a light.

**luxuriant** is often misused for luxurious: from mid-C.17. (O.E.D.)—2. In C. 17-19th, luxurious for luxuriant is S.E.; ca. 1830-1910, rare; after ca. 1910, a catachresis.

-ly omitted in advv. is a constant characteristic of sol. speech: ‘immemorial’.

**lyb-beg, lybega.** See lib-beg.

lyceum is erroneous for lyceum: late C.16-19. O.E.D.

**lyceum, the.** See Academy, the.

**lydford law.** To hang first and try afterwards; hence, any arbitrary procedure in judgement: late C. 14-20 (ob. by 1870, except in dial.); coll. >, by 1700, S.E. Langland, T. Fuller, ‘Molière’ Ozell, Kingsley. (Apperson.) Ex Lydford, ‘now a small village on the confines of Dartmoor... formerly the chief town of the stannaries’, O.E.D. Cf. Halfhax law, q.v., and Jedburgh justice, q.v.

[**lyer-by, lyerby, liver-bug, is N.K., despite F. & H.]

lying down, take it. See lie down.


**lymping law.** See limping law.

**lymp, the.** The Olympic theatre: theatrical (—1864); † by 1920. H. 3rd ed.

**lyp.** To lie down: c. of ca. 1600-1700. (Cf. lie, the gen. form.) Whence: **lyp-ken, lyppken.** See lib-ken and cf. libben and lobbikin.

**lyre-bird, be a bit of a.** To be (a little) apt to tell lies: Australia: C. 20; ob. Punning liar and (native to Australia) lyre-bird.

**lyribliring, warbling, singing, is prob. S.E. (long †). I have not discovered on what F. & H.’s ‘Old Cant’ is based. Cf. the jocular synonym, lyriblessing (recorded by A. H. Dawson in 1913), app. a blend of lyre + improvising.**
Macaroni Parson, the. Dr. Dodd, Shakespearian scholar and forger (executed in 1777).—2. John Horne Tooke, parson, philologist, and politician 1720-1812. Dawson.

macaroni-stake. A race ridden by a gentleman rider: ca. 1820-30. Bee. Prob. ex macaroni, 1, q.v. [macaroni, given by F. & H., is S.E.]

maccacco. See murkarker.—macaroni. See maccaroni.

*mace.* 'A rogue or mean character or a gentleman, or opulent tradesman, who under that appearance defrauds workmen, by borrowing a watch, or other piece of goods, till one [that] he bespeaks is done ' (i.e. swindled), 1785, Grose: c. of ca. 1780-1850. Parker, 1781.—2. Any dressy swindler of tradesmen: from ca. 1850; ob. H., 1st ed. —3. Swindling; fraudulent robbery: c. from ca. 1800.—4. A sham loan-office: c. (—1879); ob. Presumably ex mace, a club, a metal-headed staff.

*mace,* v.t., occ. v.i. To swindle, defraud, whether gen. or in sense of mace, n., 1.; from ca. 1790, when recorded by Potter (O.E.D.); 1821, Egan, in Life in London: c. Ex mace, n., 1—2. To Welsh: c. (—1874). H., 5th ed.

*mace, give it him* (a tradesman) on or upon the. To obtain goods on credit and never pay for them: c. (—1812); ob. Vaux; H., 1st ed. Cf. mace, strike the.

*mace, man at the.* An operator of a sham loan-office: c. (—1879); ob.


*mace, strike the.* The v.i. form of mace, v., q.v.; esp. as a variant of mace, give it on the, q.v.: c. from ca. 1810. Vaux.

*mace-cove, -cove, -cove, -man* (and macker, v.). A swindler: c. resp. from ca. 1810 (c.g. in Lox. Bal.); 1812, Vaux, *†*; from ca. 1780, and often spelt mackerman.—2. The third is also, from ca. 1870, a welsher, and, ca. 1880-1900, a 'swell moshan,' q.v. Ex mace, n., q.v.

*mace the rattler.* To travel in a train without paying: c. from ca. 1880.


machiner, a carriage, bicycle, etc., is S.E., as is *machiner, a coach-horse.* —2. The male, the female pudend: low coll.: c. 19-20; ob. Prob. ex Fr. machine, the male member. (Cf. thing and Fr. machin.)—3. A 'French letter': low coll.: c. 1790-1860. Grose, 3rd ed.

*macing.* See mace, v.—2. 'Severe, but regulated thrashing by fists:' non-aristocratic: mid C. 19-early 20. Ex *mace* Mace, a notable English pugilist.


mad, by the is occ. simply mack! A trivial. coll. asseveration: ca. 1560-1670. Anon., Mixagonus; Cotton. Ex by the Mass prob. influenced by by Mary. O.E.D.


macked steamer. Nautical, thus: "In the middle 19th century... a shoddily built... steamer" (Bowen): nautical. I.e., a 'made' steamer, in Northern dial.

MacKay, the real 'The real thing: the goods': coll.: from ca. 1929. R. C. Woodthorpe, The Shadow on the Downs, 1935. Margery Allingham, Death of a Ghost, 1934, spells it McKie. An adaptation of the U.S. McCoy, genuine, excellent: 'from the pugilist, 'Kid' McCoy, who was for some time at the head of his class' (Irwin).

MacGregor or MacKenzie, Mr. See Langtires.
mackerel, a pimp, is S. E., despite F. & H.'s inclusion of B.E.'s classification as c.—2. Adj., smeared; blurred: printers: from ca. 1730; ob. A corruption of macked, ex S.E. mackle.

macoon. A loose, mainly Australian variant of magpinoon. E.g. in Ion L. Idriess, Lasserre's Last Ride, 1931.


mad, adj. (Construction: mad at, with a person; mad about, about a thing or person.) Angry, vexed: C. 14 20: S.E. till C. 19, then coll. and mostly U.S. Nat Gould, 1891, 'My eye won't he be just mad.'—2. (Of a compass-needle) with its polarity disturbed: nautical coll.: late C. 19-20. Bowen. Suggested by erratic.

mad, like. See the entry at like a... mad !—you are of so many minds, you'll never be. A semi-proverbial c. of ca. 1670-1750. Ray, Swift. (Apperson.)

mad as a buck. Very angry; crazy: late C. 16-17: proverbial coll. Shakespeare, 'It would make a man mad as a buck to be so bought and sold.' Cf. dial. mad as a tup (ram).

mad as a hatter. Exceedingly angry (an ob. sense); crazy: coll.: 1837, Haliburton; 1849, Thackeray; cf. Lewis Carroll's ' (the) Mad Hatter'. F. & H. suggests hatter = alter = adder; but prob. hatter is a dealer in hats and there is prob. some topical reference. Cf. mad as a weaver.

mad as a March hare. (In late C. 14-15, e.g. in Chaucer. March is omitted.) Eccentric; mad: proverbial coll.: from ca. 1500. Skelton, 'Thou mad March hare.' Ex sexual excitement. Cf. mad as a weaver. Very angry; crazy: proverbial coll.: C. 17.

mad as May-butter. Exceedingly eccentric; madly excited: C. 17: proverbial coll. Fletcher, 1628. Ex difficulty of making butter in May.

mad as mud. Exceedingly angry: from ca. 1925. Richard Keverne, The Hawking Plot, 1928, 'Joan will be as mad as mud with me for telling.' Cf. mad, 1.


mad major, the. 'Any very eccentric or excessively daring officer, especially if... of that rank' (B. & P.): military coll.: 1914-18. Ex a legend about a foolhardy and bloodthirsty officer.


[ mad minute, rapid fire, is journalesque and inelligible.]

mad money. A girl's return fare, carried lost her soldier friend got ' mad', i.e. too amorous for her: New Zealand soldiers: 1916-18. Mostly a legend, and concerning only English girls.

mad on, have a. To be in an ugly mood: Canadian coll.: from ca. 1870. I.e. a mad fit. Ex mad, a fit of anger: same period and status. John Beames.

*mad Tom. A rogue that counterfeits madness: C. 17-18 c. Also Tom of Bedlam.

mad up, get one's. To become very angry: from ca. 1880; mostly U.S. ex (— 1847) Eng. dial. O.E.D.


madam, as a kept mistress, as a bold girl or artful woman, and as an ironical address, is, despite F. & H., certainly S.E.—2. A pocket handkerchief: c. (— 1879); ob. Perhaps because a mark of at least outward respectability.—4. Nonsense; line of talk: c. from ca. 1930. James Curtis, The Gil Kid, 1936. Perhaps suggested by the synonymous fanny.

madam-sahib. See mem-sahib.

*Madam Van. (In Grose, 1st ed., erroneously M. Ran.) A whore: late C. 17 early 19 c. B.E. [madcap, despite F. & H., is S.E., as is the ↑ mad-pash.]

madness is gen. misunderstood as = maddening (actually it there is a raving in far from the maddening crowd, itself a casual alteration of far from the maddening crowd's ignoble strife. (Gray's Elegy.) W. maddy. A large mussel: nautical coll.: C. 19-20. Bowen. Ex ob. (? ♀) Scots maddy, the same.

*made, stolten, see make, v., 1.—2. Lucky: tramps c. (— 1933). The Week-End Review, Nov. 19, 1933—anon. article entitled 'Down and Out'.

made beer. College swipes bottled with rice, nutmeg, etc., to recondition it: Winchester Coll. coll.: ca. 1840-90. Mansfield.

made in Germany. Bad valueless: late C. 19-20: coll. >, by 1915, S.E. (Wars.)


made up strong. Heavily yet effectively painted and powdered: (low) coll.: C. 20.


*madge-cope or -cull. A sodomite: resp. ca. 1820-60 (Bee) and c. of ca. 1780-1860 (Grose, 1st ed.).

madza. Half. Hence madza caroon, half a crown; madza sailee, a halfpenny; madza poona, half a sovereign; also madza-beargered, half drunk,
magpie

Magpie wore the beads, where, 'In the neck', i.e. disagreeably, disastrously: a c.p. of ca. 1905-25. W. (at neck). Cf. where the chicken got the axe.
magpie.

[maggot, a whim, a whimsical fellow, like maggot-pasted (or -headed) and maggoty, has always been S.E., despite F. & H.]

maggot, acting the. See acting the maggot.
maggot at the other, a fool at one end and a. A c.p. directed at an angler: late C. 19-20. Ibid.
magnum.


Magic Carpet, the. A fast goods-train 'not from Arabia, but Kidderminster, bringing tin' were to London's dores': railwaymen's; from ca. 1920.
The Daily Telegraph, Aug. 15, 1936. Cf. the Biscuit and the Bacco (q.v.).

[magistrand, despite F. & H., is S.E.]
magnet. The female pudend: low coll.: C. 18-20; ob.

Magnificat, correct. To find fault unreasonably and presumptuously: mid-C. 16-mid-18: coll. till C. 17, then S.E. Palgrave, Nashe, L'Esprance. Ex the idea of changing the Church service. (Apperson.)

Magnificat at matins, like or sing. (To do things) out of order: late C. 16-17: coll. soon. > S.E. Bishop Andrews, 1588; Urquhart, 1653.

[magnificent, high and mighty, is S.E.-2. In pl. 'a state of dignified resentment': 1846. Marryat, Jack walked his first watch in the magnificents.' Ob. by 1910, R by 1930.


magnify. To signify: from ca. 1710; after ca. 1870, dial. Steele, 'This magnified but little with my Father' (O.E.D.).

magniloquent, pompous, is a cacachresis. Kingsley, 1850. O.E.D.
magnolious. Large, splendid, magnificent; from ca. 1870; almost 7. Ex the splendidour of the magnolia.

[magnum is S.E., as is magnum bonum; both despite F. & H.]

magpies' nest. The female pudend: low coll.: C. 18-20; ob.

Magpies!

and magpie round the bull, half a pound of steak.

Partly: from ca. 1850. Ex K. mezzo, a half, via Liguia Francia, and gen. pronounced medzer.
magged, to rejoice wildly as a crowd, orig. s., rapidly > coll. and, by 1902, S.E. Ex the rejoicing at the relief of Majekeng (South Africa) on May 17, 1900. Revived in Nov., 1918, it is now moribund. (W. C. O.E.D.)
magees! is an occ. variant of magees.

*mag, on the. On the look-out for victims: c. of ca. 1845-60. 'No. 777.' Perhaps, via mag, n., 6, a perversion of on the make.


*mag-stake. Money obtained by the confidence trick: c. from ca. 1838; ob. See magman.


magazan is erroneous for magazan (a kind of broad bean): late C. 18-20. O.E.D.

[Magazine or Review when omitted from titles of periodicals gives them a coll. tinge, as in The English: C. 18-20.]

Magdalen armor. An unsatisfactory servant: Southwark coll.: ca. 1840-90. Ware, 'A servant from the Magdalen, a refuge for fallen women in the Blackfriars Road, which existed there until about the middle of the [19th] century. The women who went out as servants had been too often pampered there.'

[Magdalen, Magdalene, a reformed whore, is S.E.]
magery. See note at gun, n., 3.
magged. Irritable, irritated; (of a rope) frayed: nautical: late C. 19-20. Bowen. Cf. Bedfordshire magged, exhausted, itself prob. ex the very old dial. magge, to tease, to exhaust, itself perhaps cognate with L. mactare (to afflict or punish), as Joseph Wright seems to imply.

Maggers. See Memugger.
maggie, a girl, is Scots.—2. As maggie, 6, it is shooting s.: C. 20.—3. A magnetic detector: wireless operators': from ca. 1925. Bowen. Cf. mag, n., 7.—4. (Maggie.) H.M.S. Magnificent; the White Star liner Majestic: resp. naval (C. 20) and nautical (late C. 19-20). Bowen.


Maggie Bob or Rob(b). A bad halfpenny or wife: Scots coll.: C. 19-20.
mail up | A coll. e.p. "shout of joy and expectation when letters and parcels [have] arrived from home": military: C. 20. B. & P.

mailled flat. | Needleless threats; boasting: 1897—ca. 90. Satirical of the Kaiser's farewell speech to his brother Henry, when sent forth by him 'to conquer China with a fleet of two sail—all of which ended in leasing a coaling-station by China to Germany'. Ware.

mails. | Mexican railway shares: Stock Exchange: from ca. 1890. (F. & H.)

main, as dicing and cock-fighting term, is S.E., as is maris chance.—2. The main line: railwaymen's coll. (—1887). Baumann.

main, turn on the. | To weep: 1837, Dickens (O.E.D.): 'Cuthbert Bede', in *Verdant Green*, 'You've no idea how she turned on the main and did the briny.' Cf. turn on the water-tap(s).

main avenue. | The vagina: low: C. 19—20; ob.

main-brace, splice the. | To give out grog; hence, to drink: nautical: 1805 (O.E.D.). Perhaps ex the strengthening influence of good liquor (W.). Hence, with main-brace well spliced, thoroughly drunk.


*main toby. | A main road: o. of ca. 1800—90. See toby.


main, the. | A brothel: used by the Army in Germany: from late 1918; very oh. B. & P.

major, the. | The sergeant-major: military and marines' coll.: C. 20. Bowen. Also (major), as term of address.—2. For major and minor as used at Eton, see 'Eton Slang', § 3. See, further, ma, 3.

Major Grocer. | Incorrect for Major Groce, an Australian fruit: C. 19—20. Morris. 'Groce is, presumably, itself incorrect for (groce: see quotation in Morris at Major Baller, and Groce, V., p. 383.)

Major McCliffler: | Fluffy. A 'sudden lapse of memory, and use of words to call the attention of the inattentive prompter': theatrical (—1887).—2. Fluffy is also an adj. See fluffy, v.i. Ware gives an anecdotal origin.

major in. | To take (e.g. Latin) as a major subject: from ca. 1925: coll. —, by 1933, S.E. Ex major subject(s) or perhaps direct ex U.S. major, a major subject.

major sa(u)llée. | A corruption of madza sa(u)llée, q.v. at madza.

[majority, go over to, or join, the (great). | To die: S.E. despite F. & H.


*make. | A halfpenny: o. from ca. 1545; since ca. 1860, only dial. and Scottish and Dubliners'. Harman.—2. A successful theft or swindle: o. (—1748); † by 1910. Dyche, 6th ed.; H., 6th ed. (Cf. O.E.D. dating.—3. See make, on the.

make. | To steal: late 17—20. o. >, in C. 20, low (very common, e.g., among soldiers in G.W.). B.E. Cf. the exact synonym in Fr. o.: faire.—2. Hence, to appropriate: Winchester College: late C. 18 (20) (Wrench). Ex dial. The sense of unlawful acquisition was very common in 1914—18, as in 'We've made three shovels last night; that brings us up to correct.' B. & F., 3rd ed., p. 381.—3. The sense, 'to earn' is S.E.—4. With ellipsis of
Infinite: Coll. not recorded before, but prob. at least ten years earlier than, 1888, The Times, Aug. 11, 'The enemy will not play the game according to the rules, and there are none to make him' (O.E.D.).—5. To catch (a train, boat, etc.): from ca. 1885; in 1930's, verging on coll. Ex the C. 17—20 S.E. sense, orig. nautical, 'arrive at'.

[The following make terms (listed by F. & H.) are S.E.]:—make a House, make away with, make horns (report with being a cuckold), make it up, makestage, make-shift (a thief), make up (theatrical n. and v., to invent, an invention). makeweight.

*make, on the. In sense 'get on (badly, well)', it is S.E. of mainly U.S. usage, despite its coll. ring. See tail, make settlement in.

make them, as good, bad, etc., as they. As good, bad, etc., may be: from ca. 1870; coll. >, by 1920, S.E. George Moore, in Esther Waters: 'You are as strong as they make 'em'; Grant Allen, 'As clever as they make them'.


make up, v.i.; make up to, v.t. To make love (to a person): coll. : from ca. 1820. E.D.D.

make up one's leg. To make money: costermongers' (—1909). Cf. make leg, q.v. Ware.

make up one's mouth. To obtain one's living: low coll.: from ca. 1880; ob. Cf. S.E. sense, to finish a meal with something very delicious.

make yes of it. To agree; to accept: lower classes' coll. (—1923). Manchon.


making. As, and esp., in shy-making and sick-making. An adjectival suffix fathered, perhaps in derision of the German love of compounds, by Evelyn Waugh: the fashion (not yet quite extinct) raged in 1930—3. See esp. Evelyn Waugh's Vile Bodies, 1930. Rather s. than coll. and restricted almost wholly to the educated and/or the cultured, esp. in Society and near-Society; never very gen. outside of London.

makings, material: S.E. But as: (small) profits, earnings: coll.: 1837, H. Martineau (O.E.D.).


[Malady of France, like malingerer and malingerer, is, despite F. & H., S.E.]

Malay, Moharanmad. Western Province (South Africa) coll.: from ca. 1840. James Backhouse, A Visit to the Mauritius and South Africa, 1844. Ex the importation of Malacca slaves (whose religion was Mohammedianism) by the Dutch. Pettman. Cf. Cookie Christmas and Hindoost, q.q.v.

maleish or malish, or properly, ma'ish (pronounced marleesh). Never mind; 'san fairy ann!': Eastern Front military in G.W.; in Egypt since late C. 19. F. & Gibbons. Direct ex Arabic.

malkin. The female purdah: low Scotia: from ca. 1540; ob. Cf. pusey, q.v.


mail. Credit ('tick'): metal trades' (—1909). Ware. Possibly ex mail (or maul), a heavy hammer. maillet. Erroneous for mailard (the bird). O.E.D.


Malsey, despite Grosé, is S.E., as is mallworm.

Mals. 'Members of an amalgamated society'.
political coll.: 1897, Sidney & Beatrice Webb, Industrial Democracy (E.D.D. Sup.).
malt. To drink malt liquor: low coll.: 1813, Colonel Hawker (O.E.D.); 1835, Marryat, 'Well, for my part I malt.'
malt above the meal, water, wheat,—have the.
To be tipsy: Scots coll.: resp. C. 10–20; from ca. 1870; from ca. 1540, ob. Heywood, 1546 (wheat); Ray ( . . . water): Scott ( . . . meal). (Apperson.)
*mal'tooling. The picking of pockets in omnibuses: c. (– 1861); ob. Mayhew. Properly by a woman (mal - malt); and cf. tool, to drive.
mal'toot, mal'tout. A sailor, esp. in address or as a nickname: 1785, Grose; † by 1880. (After that, mal'to(u), q.v.) Fix Fr. matelot, a sailor.
malty. Tipsy: from ca. 1820; ob. 'Jon Bee.' Cf. malt, v., q.v.
mammiform is erroneous for mammiform:
C. 18–20. O. E.D.
[mammet, despite F. & H., is indisputably S.E.]
mammy. Mother: except perhaps when used by children, coll.: from ca. 1620. Skelton, 'Your mammy and your daddy Brought forth a godly babe!' (O.E.D.)
man. A husband, a lover: C. 14–20: S.E. till ca. 1830, then coll. and dial. Esp. in my or her man.
—2. In its university sense, it is S.E.—3. The 'head' of a coin in tossing: coll.: 1828, Bee. Contrast woman.—4. In the late or the present man: the former, the present holder of a post, an office: coll.: 1871, Beaconsfield. O.E.D.—5. As used in c., see -man, -s. —6. A C. 20 coll.: 'an exclamatory form of address in common use all over South Africa, employed often enough quite irrespective of either the age or the sex of the person addressed,' Pettman. Cf.—7. In English Public Schools (C. 20) as in P. G. Wodehouse, Mike, 1909, 'Awfully sorry, you know, man.' Coll.
man terms that, listed by F. & H., are actually S.E.—man about town and man of the world, man of Kent and Kentish man, a man or a mouse, man in black, man-root, mammish wood, and man's meat.)
man, get behind a. To endorse a bill: C. 19–20, ob.: mostly commercial.
man, go out and see a. To have a drink: C. 19–20. Et the excuse.
man,—if my aunt had been an uncle, she'd have been a. A derisive c.p. (in C. 19–20 occ. varied by the scabrous . . . she'd have had a pair of bees under her a***) applied to a ridiculous surmise: mid-C. 17–20. Ray. Cf. if pigs had wings, what lovely birds they'd make.
man, nine tailors make a. See ninth.
Man, the Sick. Turkey: journalistic: from ca. 1870; ob.
man alive! A term of address, esp. in surprise or reproof: coll.: ca. 1829, J. B. Buckstone. In C. 20, occ. as one word. Cf. Thornton.
man among the geese when the gander is gone, he'll be a. He'll be important if nobody of importance is there; also a gen. c.p. derisive of a man's ability: C. 18. Apperson.
man before his mother, he'll be a. See mother.—
man, feel one's own. See feel.
man-box. A coffin: ca. 1820–70. 'Peter Corcoran' Reynolds in The Fauny.
man-cheyove. See choyve.
man-eater. A horse prone to biting (people): coll.: 1879, Mrs. A. E. James (O.K.D.).—2. 'A particularly tough officer': (mostly Atlantic) sailing-ships': late C. 19–20; virtually †. Bowen.
man for my money, the. The right person: coll.: 1842, Lover (O.E.D.).
man Friday. A factotum: C. 19 20, ob.: coll. verging on S.E.
man in blue. See blue. (Contrast S.E. man in black, a parson.)
man in the boat, the little. The clitoris: low: mid-C. 19–20.
man in the moon, as a doll, is S.E.—2. 'A mythical personage who finds money, for electioneering, and for such electors as vote straight.' F. & H.: jocular coll., ob. 1866, John Bull, Sept. 1 (O.E.D.).
man in the street. The average person: 1831, Greville (O.E.D.): Nowmarket s. †, ca. 1840, coll. >, ca. 1890, S.E. Cf. U.S. man in the car and see 'Representative Names' in Words /
man of many morns. A procrastinatior: Scots coll.: C. 18–20; ob.
man (or Man) of Sedan, the. A political nickname for Napoleon III: coll.: Sept. 2, 1870–1873 (year of his death). Ware.
man of straw. See straw.—man of wax. See lad(o) wax.
man shall have his mare again, the. All will end well: a proverbial c.p.: late C. 16–19. Shakespeare, Addison, Creevey. (Apperson.)
man that's carrying the brick. A man at all religious: Regular Army's: from ca. 1908.
military coll.: 1916. F. & G. Gibbons. Cf. off the map, insignificant, obsolete (coll.: from ca. 1915), and on the map, important, prominent (coll.: from ca. 1915). O.E.D. (Sup.).

maple. 'In New Zealand, a common settlers' corruption for any tree called Mapau': C. 10–20. Morris.


mapsticks l., cry. I cry you mercy l.: low coll.: ca. 1750–90. Swift. (O.E.D.) Prob. mapsticks is a low version of both mappits and mappeis.


Marble Arch. The female pudend: low: from ca. 1850. Punning some such phrase as (al) the entrance to Hyde Park.


March. See dirty-shirt march.—March hare. See hare.—march in the rear of a whereas. See whereas.


Marchioness, a slatternly general maid, is allusive S.E. verging on coll. just as mare, a woman, is allusive S.E., as in grey mare proverb.

Marconi mast. 'The tall racing yacht's mast in which the top-mast is socketed instead of being fiddled. First seen in "Istria," whose owner was factiously said to have fitted it to wireless for more whiskey when supplies ran out": nautical: from ca. 1925. Howen.

Marcus Superbus: Marcus Superfluous. A grandee: theatrical: 1890–ca. 99. The former, ex 'the name given to himself by Mr. Wilson Barrett in his play, The Sign of the Cross (1860)'; the latter, coined by Miss Louie Freear, a burlesque actress, a few months later. Ware.

mare, Shanks's. See Shanks. (Cf. the Fr. s. par le train I.)

mare (to) go, money makes the. Money can do most things: proverbial coll.: late C. 16–20; ob. Florio, Breton, N. Bailey, Kingsley. Perhaps punning mayer.

mare or lose the halter, win the. To play double or quits: coll.: C. 17–18. In Northants dial., saddle for halter.

mare to market, go before one's or the. To do ridiculous things: ca. 1670–1830: coll.

mare with three (or two) legs; (two or) three-legged mare. The gallow's coll.: ca. 1655–1850. Ainsworth, in Rookwood.


[mare's nest and mare's tail, in F. & H., are exceptionally S.E.]

margarine mess. (Gen. pl.) A motor-car: Nov., 1897–8, mostly in London. Ex butter beauty, q.v. (W.H.)


Marie. See black Marie.


*mariner, fresh-water. See freshwater.

marines, tell that (tale) to the. [I don't believe it, whoever else does!]: o.p.: 1830, Moncrieff. Earlier (—1923) 'that I'll do for the mariners (but the sailors won't believe it), as in Byron. Orig. nautical: cf. the opinion held by sailors of marines implicit in marine, both senses.


*mark, v. To watch; pick out a victim: o.: from ca. 1800; perhaps, however, implied in Brandon, 1839, 'Marking—watching, observing'.

mark, bad or good. A man who does not or does, pay his employees regularly and in full: Australian: from ca. 1840; ob. R. Howitt, 1845. A good mark was the earlier. Morris. Cf. mark, n., 2, q.v.


mark, off one's. Having run away: Glasgow (—1934). Ex foot-racing.

mark, toe. See toe.

Mark Lane, walk penniless in. To have been cheated and to be very conscious of the fact: proverbial coll.: late C. 19–early 17. Greene. (Apperson.)

[mark of a mouth. Despite F. & H., this is clearly S.E.]


mark-off or tick-off or tick-down. The process of checking the entries in one set of bank account-books with those in another set: bank-clerks' (are) a. verifying on coll.

mark on . . . a. A person with a very pronounced fondness for something: dial. and a.: from ca. 1880; ob. Miss Braddon, 'Vernon was . . . a mark on strawberries and cream.'


[married man's cottoin is euphemistic S.E.; S. E. also, though given in F. & H., are narrow, marrow-bones and cleavers, martext, man-trunk, martinet.]

married on the carpet and the banns up the chimney. Living together as though man and wife: coll. somewhat low: C. 18-20: ob.

married the widow, have, to have 'made a mess of things':' C. 19. Ex Fr., with pun on the guillotine—'the widow'. Ware.

married to brown Bess. (Having) enlisted: military: late C. 18-19. Ex hug brown Bess. (Ware.)

Marrow Men. T. Boston the elder (1677-1732) and his followers, opponents of an Act of Assembly in 1720; they based their opinions on *The Marrow of Modern Dance* (ca. 1647). Dawson.

marmorbone(-and-cleaver), like marrow-pudding, is low for the penis, as obviously is a bellow of marrow-pudding, pregnancy: C. 19-20, ob.

marmorbone (occ. Marylbone) stage or coach, go in or ride by the. To walk: ca. 1835-1910. Prob. suggested by Marybone = Marylbone. Cf. Bayard of ten tos and Shanks's mare, q.v.

marmorbones, the knees, is fucular S.E., but as pugilista, C. 17, e.g. in Fletcher, 1825, and as fists (regarded as weapon), ca. 1810-1910, it is a...


[marmorwaking. The transposition of the initials of words as in *poke a eimspe, smoke a pipe*, with variant adj. and n. marrowksy or mourawksy; ca. 1860-1900. H., 2nd ed. In 1848 described by Albert Smith as *Gover Street dialect* (cf. medical Greek), it was affected by students of London University and constitutes *aepnoerium* before the letter. Perhaps ex the name of a Polish count, as the O.E.D. suggests. See esp. Slang at 'Oddities'.]

marr. See marrying.

marry! An exclamation: C. 14-mid-19. Orig. an oath, it soon > harmless. Ex (the Virgin) Mary. Often, in C. 16-19, with asseverative tags or with gip, wp, etc. Cf.: 

marry! come up, my dirty cousin. A c.p. addressed to one affecting excessive delicacy: from ca. 1670: in C. 19-20, dial. (Apperson.)

marry the mixen for the sake of the muck. To marry an undesirble person for the sake of the money: proverbial coll. from ca. 1730; since ca. 1850, dial. A mixen is a dung-hen; muck, q.v., is a pun. (Apperson.)

marrup. To bind or busy in marriage: coll. from ca. 1820. J. Flint, 1822: 'I believe that the girls there are all married up.' O.E.D.

marrup, vbl.n.; marry, v.t. Stockbrokers' a. (—1935), thus:—.'When a broker receives simultaneous orders to buy and sell the same security, he can marry the deal. I.e. he puts one bargain against the other.' (A correspondent.)

marriial is catachrestic when used for martial.


Marshland, arrested by the bailiff of. Stricken withague: coll. from ca. 1960; in C. 19-20, dial. 'Proverbial' Fuller, Grose (Provincial Glossary), Smiles. (Apperson.)
masoch. v.t., v.i. To have a passion for suffering, or to derive pleasure from inflicting pain on oneself or others. See masochism. 

masochism. n. A sexual perversion or fixation characterized by a strong desire to suffer and to be subjected to pain or humiliation. See masochist.

masochist. n. A person with a strong sexual attraction to suffering, humiliation, and pain.
*mason* a person, esp. a horse-dealer giving worthless notes in payment for horses; c. of ca. 1700–1800. The Discoveries of John Poultér, 1763. Ex-occupations regarding masonry. — 2. Also, v.i.

*masoner*. The same as mason, n., q.v. Poultér.

*masonies*. Secrets: Society coll.: mid-C. 19–early 20. Ware. 'From the secret rites of Freemasonry. Not that there are either secrets or rites in Freemasonry—at all events in England—where combined secrets are neither wanted nor expected.'


*mason's maund*. A sham sore that, above the elbow, counterfeits a broken arm; c.: late C. 17–early 19. B.F. Cf. maunld, q.v.

[maes*]. Frequently employed in oaths in late M.E. and early Mod. E.

*masse*. Mass. — 2. Also, mster:


*massy*. A corrupt, sole form of mercy, chiefly in exclamations, e.g. massa takes and Lord-a-massy: mid-C. 19–20; ob. O.E.D.

[mas-t-can*]. A chamber-pot, is ineligible because it is Scots dial.

*master* (of a person), get the. To become, or act the, master over: proletarian coll. (— 1887). Baumann.


*master of the wardrobe*. One who pawns his clothes to pay liquor: ca. 1780–1830. Grose, 2nd ed. Cf. two preceding entries.

*master-rein*, be hit on the. To take a man; to conceive: late C. 16–17. Greene. 'My faire daughter was hit on the master vaine and gotten with child,' O.E.D. Cf. master-piece.

*masterful* for masterly, though once S.E., is now a catchphrase. Fowler.


*mat*. Up on trial (from late 1890's); hence, in trouble (ca. 1815): military >, by 1920, gen. coll. F. & Gibbons; Lyell. Ex the small square mat on which the accused soldier stood in a barracks orderly-room.


*match and pocket the stake(s)*, lose the. (Of women only) to coll.: C. 19–20: low.

*match ! quoth Hatch* (or Jack or John) when he got his wife by the breech or when he kissed his dame,—a. A c.p. of ca. 1670–1750. Ray, 'Proverbial' Fuller. (Apperson.)

*matches*. Shares in Bryant & May, Ltd., the English manufacturers of matches: Stock Exchange: from ca. 1890.

*mate*. A companion, partner; comrade; friend: late C. 14–20: S.E. except in Greeno's Third Cony-Catching (1592), where it verges on c., and except when—from ca. 1450—it is used as a vocative, this being (in C. 19–20, somewhat low) coll.: orig. nautical. Stanyhurst, Miss Braddon. O.E.D. Cf. matey, q.v.

*mate*, the. The Astley the race-horse owner and famous sportsman of ca. 1890–95, and brother of Hugo Astley, well-known in the entertainment-world of ca. 1870–1900. Reginald Herbert, When Diamonds Were Trumps, 1908.

*mater*. Mother; one's mother: from ca. 1850: chiefly schoolboys' and undergraduates'. Hemyng in Eton School Days, 1864. Simply the L. word adopted in English. Cf. mater, q.v.


*maternal* A mother: 1897, Routledge's Every Boy's Annual, Dec.; ob. O.E.D. Either short for maternal parent or the adj. used as a n.


*mat(e)ny*. A mate, companion, comrade: from ca. 1830: eligible only as a term of address (for it is then coll.), as in H. Kingsley's Geoffrey Hamlyn.

"Matey," says L. (you see I was familiar, he seemed such a jolly sort of bird). "Mat'ey, what station are you on?" ' Slightly obs. Cf. mate, q.v.

*mat(e)ny*. Characteristic of a 'mate' (as imm. above); friendly, 'chummy': coll. (now verging on S.E.): from ca. 1910. Ex the preceding.

*mathe*. A coll. abbr. (orig. among schoolboys) of mathematics: from ca. 1875. At Dulwich College, it is math (Collinson).

*math* See *-y*, 2.


*matin bell*. A thieves' meeting-place: c.: C. 19–20; ob.

*matinée dog*. Mostly in try it on the matinée dog: theatrical: ca. 1885–1915. Ware. Satirico both of vivisection and of frequenters of matinées, at which the dramatic performance is gen. inferior to the acting done in the evening. Whence try it on the dog.

*matinée*. A frequenter of matinées: theatrical coll.: from either 1884 or 1885, the two years during which there was a rabies for matinées. Punning matineers. (Ware.)

*matilo(w)*. A sailor: from ca. 1880: mainly nautical and, in C. 20, military, and often as a nickname. Ex Fr. matelot, a sailor: cf. matelot, q.v. Philip MacDonald, Patrol, 1927.

*matric*. A coll. abbr. of matrículación: 1885, Punch, March 16. (O.E.D.)

*matrimonial*. Cotion in the usual position: occ. m. polka. Low: from ca. 1860; ob.
matrimonial peacemaker. The penis: mid.
C. 18-20. Grose, 2nd ed. It is doubtful whether
this is as sometimes thought an S.E. euphemism.
matrimony. A mixture of two drinks or edibles:
a. and dial.: 1813. O.E.D.
maus. (Virtually non-existent in singular.)
Trench 'duckboards': military: G.W. (F. &
Gibbons.)
matter, as near as no. Very near(ly) indeed:
coll.: from ca. 1800.
matter with ?, what is the. What troubles or ills
or the like? : coll.: 1715, Defoe, 'I
beseach what is the matter with you.' O.E.D.—2.
In late C. 19-20, it also = What objection is there to
when not S.E. euphemism: C. 18-19.
mauly. See mauly.
maukes, maux, mawkes. See mawkes.—maukin.
J. D. Doone. Possibly cognate with Aberdeenshire
mauly, abbr. mauffuf, a woman without energy, a
girl apt to make a fuss (E.D.D.); but prob. a cor-
rupution of mauley, q.v., for this latter form also
occurs in Australians in the sense of mauly.
B.E. Grose.
Manchon. Prob. suggested by:
mauley; oce. mawley or morley. A fist, the
hand: low: 1781, G. Parker, Moncrieff; Miss
Braddon. Hence slang or sting a person one's
mauly, to give a person one's hand, shake hands
with; tip a mauley, give a hand; fam. the mauley,
shake hands.—2. Hence, a finger; virtually always in
pl.: ca. 1845 in 'No. 77.' ob.—3. Hand-
writing, 'a fist'; a signature: low: from ca.
1850; ob. Mayhew. The term derives ex maul,
v.; or is perhaps 'a transposition of Gaelic lamh,
hand, used in tinker's a. or Sheil'ta, W., 'in form
malpa'; the Romany s. is myler.—4. See maudly.
maum, in phrase maume and gaum and gen. as
mauming and gauming. To 'paw' (a person): low
coll.: ca. 1745-1860 (O.E.D.). Perhaps cognate with
dial. malom, to besmear.
*maund. Bargaining; (with prefixed word) some
specified bargaining imposition: C. 17-early 19 c.
Rowlands, B.E., Grose (mason's maund, q.v.). Cf.
maunder.
*maund, v.t. and v.i. To beg to: o.c.: ca. 1655-
1800. Harman, Beaumont & Fletcher, B.E.
Prob. ex Fr. mendier or quimander influenced by
Romany mong. O.E.D.—2. To ask to: o.c.: ca. 1655-
1700. Harman.
*maund, mason's. See mason's maund.
*maund abram. To beg as a madman: C. 17-18
o. Rowlands. See abram.
*maund it. To go a-begging: o.c.: C. 17-18.
Ex maund, v., q.v.
Rowlands, Lytton. Ex maund, v.
*maunder, v. To beg: c.: ca. 1610-1770.
Middleton & Dekker; Dyche. Ex maund, v., o.f
which it is a mere extension, perhaps suggested by
Fr.
*maunder on the fly. To beg of people in the
street: o.c.: ca. 1850-90. H., 1st ed.
*maunder b. A professional beggar: o.c.: ca.
1810-1840. Middleton & Dekker; Ainsworth, in
Buckwood. Ex maund, v. Cf.:
D.U.N. 

*maundering, ppl. adj. Begging; given to
begging: o.c.: ca. 1610-1700.
*maund(e)ring-broth. A holding: late C. 17-
early 19. B.E. Ex maunder, to grumble.
*maunding. The, or an, act of begging: o.c.: 1610, Rowlands; † by 1850. O.E.D.—2. Adj.,
begging; given to or characteristic of begging: o.c.: ca.
1600-1720. W. Cartwright, 'Some counter-
feeling trick of such maunding people', O.E.D.
*maunding cove. A beggar; s.: C. 17-18.
Anon., Suck for my Money, ca. 1603.
*maiw, maive. An [or is even] mawwrom, while
mathewer (or maather) is dial.: but maw, mouth,
may perhaps, as applied to human beings (its S.E.
sense, in this connexion, is jaws or mouth of a
voracious mammal or fish), be considered c.—as
'Ducange Anglicus', 1867, considers it.)

maw !, hold your. Stop talking: coll.: C. 18-
19.

maw-wormy. Captious; peevish: coll. —
thematical, and non-astrophic: 1885, Entr'Acte,
June 6, Ware. (Stomach-worms cause peevish-
ness.)
mawkes. A whore: coll.: C. 17-18. Lodge,
'Strict Robberies Considered.'—2. A slattern, esp.
if dirty or vulgar: coll. verging on N.E. — late C. 17-
20; dial. after ca. 1829. Grose, 2nd ed.
mawkish. Slatternly: ca. 1720-70. A New
Canting Dict., 1725.
mawley. See mauly.—mawpus. See mopus.
max. Gin; properly, very good gin: low: ca.
1810-1900. Lex. Bul.; Byron, 'Oh! for a glass of
max'; Mayhew, Baumann. Abbr. maxima, -e,
-®- um. Cf.:
maxie. A great error, big mistake: Scottish:
1868, G. MacDonald, Robert Falconer, 'Horror of
horrors! a maxie!'; ob. E.D.D.
May. The college Easter Term examination,
says Bristed, 1652; more safely defined as the
college May examination: Cambridge coll. > j. >
S.E. O. E., Mays.
May-bees don't fly all the year long. A e.p. reply
to one beginning a statement with it may be: mid-
C. 18-20; ob. Grose, 2nd ed. In Swift, May-bees
don't fly now. Also this month. The Scots form is
maybes (or May-bees) are no eye honey-bees.
May-game of one, make a. To befoul a person:
coll. > S.E.: late C. 16-early 19. B.E., who
defines May games as 'Frolicks, Pleas, Tricks,
Pastimes, &c.'
Cf. bleat-marching and fleece-damming.
may God blind me. 'The original invocation —
† by 1909— of the guttering —: whence Gorbilme
(q.v.), etc. Ware.
May hill, to have climbed or got over (or up). To
have survived the late spring, gen. considered a
tricky month; proverbial coll.: from ca. 1690; ob.
Perhaps in allusion to an actual May Hill.
Apperson.
May-term. The Easter, i.e. the summer, term
at Cambridge: coll. (—1905) verging on S.E.
(O.E.D.)
Maypole. Countess Schellenburg, a mistress of
George I. Dawson. Ex her thickness.
Mays. See May.—2. The Cambridge May (now
held in early June) boat races: a. (—1790) > j. >,
by 1900, S.E. (O.E.D.)
mazard. See mazarz.

mazer. See mazarz.


mazzard: also mazzarz and mazer. The head: jocular coll. verging on S.E.: mazer, ca. 1850-1860; mazzard, C. 17-20, ob.—2. The face (not mazer): ca. 1760-1860: jocular coll. verging on sol. Horace Walpole, *His... Christian's mazzard was a constant joke* (O.E.D.). Sense 2 ex sense 1, which, as to mazzard, derives ex mazer, a drinking-bowl.—3. (Again, not mazer) the head of a coin: Anglo-Irish: C. 19-20; ob. Maria Edgeworth. (O.E.D.1.)

mazzard. To knock on the head: C. 17-18 coll. verging on S.E. (Not very gen.)

McKin, See Mackay, the real.

me. (As nominative, i.e.) I: C. 16-20: loose S.E. till C. 18, then, as subject, dial. and sol., as in Dickens's *Me and Mrs. Boffin* stood the poor girl's friend; predicatively, coll.—somewhat sense 1. verging on sol., as in Swift's *I can't be me*.—2. My: mid-C. 13-20: S.E. till C. 16, then dial. and, when not dial., sol. (Cf. dial. and slurred, almost sol. not, may.)—3. Myself: when deliberate, it is a literary affectation: when unintentional, it is coll. verging on sol. Baumann, *I turned me round.* (Not to be confused with the ethical dative, *I'll buy me a paper,* itself ob.)

me, and. Especially in view of the fact that I am...; low coll.: from ca. 1810. Maria Edgeworth, 1812, *Which would be hard on me and we a widow.* O.E.D.


me I. 'Used expletively in passages of a narrative character,' O.E.D.: in C. 17-early 19, low coll. verging on sol., in such phrases as *then say me I* (e.g. in Vanbrugh's *Kepo*) and *what did me I but.* (Not to be confused with, though perhaps generated in part by, the ethical dative.) O.E.D.

meacock, n. and adj., meal-y-mouthed, measure, n. and v., meat and drink, are all, despite F. & H., S.E.—and always been 1]


meat-mouth. 'A sly sheepish Dun,' B.E.: coll. or s.: late C. 17-18.

meat-sack, gen. sack. A stock of sermons: clerical: from ca. 1890; ob.

mealer. One pledged to drink intoxicants only at meals (ca. 1890). Barrère & Leland.—2. One who, lodging at one place, eats elsewhere: coll.: orig. (1883), U.S.; anglicised ca. 1887.

meat, disbelling, petty, (of a horse) vicious, is U.S.—2. The phrase to *feel meat,* to feel ashamed or guilty, is recorded by Marryat in 1839 as U.S., but it > anglicised ca. 1860 as s.; by C. 20. coll.

mean, v. 'To intend with determined purpose,' O.E.D.: coll.: from ca. 1840. E.g. *'Well, any- way, I mean to do it!* Eep. in mean business.

meat. (Always in negative or interrogative sentences.) To mean, to signify, by may be of importance: coll.: from ca. 1827. 'He doesn't mean a thing in my opinion.' (Lewis).


mean to say, I. A coll. tautological form, dating from the early 1890's, of *I mean,* itself verging on coll. when, as frequently, it connotes apologetic modification or mental wooliness. (The phrase occurs in Yorkshire and Cheshire dial. before 1900: E.D.D.)

meaning-like. In earnest: low coll. (— 1887). Baumann. (For meaningly.)

measle, v.i. To become pitted with measle-spots: coll.: from ca. 1880.


measly. Contemptible; of little value: 1864, Miss Bradson, *To think that the government... should have the audacity to offer a measly hundred pounds or so for the discovery of a great crime!*—2. Miserable-looking, *seedy*: ca. 1860-1900. H., 3rd ed.

measure is catastrophic when, as in C. 17-18, used, e.g. by Burney, to render *L. modus* as translation of Gr. τρόπος, ἀρμονία. S.O.D.

measure, be (a person's). To be just the person needed: low s. (— 1857), >, by 1880, non-aristocratic coll. *Ducange Anglicus*; Baumann, *He's our measure das ist wæter Mann.*

measure, get (late C. 18-mid-19) or take (late C. 17-early 19)'s. To get with; to marry: coll., the former sense being lost. Lacy, in *Sir Hercules Buffoon,* 'Gin I'd let him alone, he had taken measure o' th' inside of me as well as o' th' out.'

measure out. To knock down; to kill: low coll. (— 1891) verging on a.

measured, be. To be exactly suited, e.g. with a part written to one's fancy or ability: theatrical: 1859, Blanchard Jerrold.

measured for a suit of mourning, be. To receive a black eye: boxing: 1819, Moore in *Tom Crib's Memorial*; ob. by 1900; † by 1930.

meat. Something profitable or pleasant: coll.: from ca. 1885. The Westminster Gazette, Dec. 28, 1897, *There is a good deal of meat for the actors* (O.E.D.).—2. Generic for the human body (rarely the male) as an instrument of sexual pleasure; hence, for the female pudend and/or the male: low coll.: late C. 16-20; slightly ob. Gosson; Killigrew, *'Your bod is big enough for two, and my meat will not cost you much.*' Cf. muton, q.v., and the ensuing entries and meaty, 2 and 3. —3. 'The thickest part of the blade of a bat': cricketers' coll.: 1925, D. J. Knight (Lewis).


meat, cold. See cold meat.

meat, feed (a person). To supply with very rich and nutritious food: 1920, P. G. Wodehouse. O.E.D. (Sup.). Here, meat is opp. milk, the food of fancy.

meat, flash. To expose the person: late C. 18-20: low.


meat, hot. See hot meat.


meat, the nearer the bone the sweeter the. A mid-C. 19-20 low c.p. applied by men to a thin woman viewed as a bed-mate. Ex the old proverb, the nearer the bone the sweeter the flesh (mid-C. 16-20) Apperson.


meat-axe, savage as a. Extremely angry: U.S. coll., anglicised ca. 1905. (Thornton.)

meat-flasher, —flashing. An exposé, the exposure, of the person in public: low: C. 19-20. Ex meat, flash, q.v.

meat-bush. A (warm) meat-hash: Cockneys' (—1887) Baumann. Fr. farri.

meat-book. A curl on the temple (as worn by the London coterie): Cockneys' (—1887); slightly ob. Baumann.

meat-house. A brothel: C. 19-20; ob.

meat-market. A rendezvous of harlots; the female breeders; the female pudend; low: C. 19-20.


meat of, make (cold). To kill: orig. (1848), U.S.; anglicised ca. 1870.

meat-safe. A pugilistic variant (—1920, but already ob.) of bread-basket, q.v. W. —2. That oblong box-pew (gauze-fronted and curtain-sided) in which, at divine service, the condemned murderer sits in the prison chapel: c. (—1932) 'Stuart Wood', Shades of the Prison House.


meat-ticket. A variant of cold-meat ticket. Ibid. meatier. A cowardly dog (lit., one that bites only meat), hence a cowardly man: low (mostly Cockneys'): late C. 19-20. F. & Ware.


mebu. A 'pill-box': Army officers' lat. 1917-18. F. & Gibbons. Ex the Ger. technical name, 'maschiengeware-eisenbeton-understand'.

Meconen, Meconen. Incorrect forms of Medicen: mid-C. 16-20. Spenser. O.E.D. [mech is given by F. & H., has always been S.E.]

mechanical cow. See shorthand.

med, medic, medical, medico. A doctor, whether physician or surgeon or both combined; a student of medicine. Thus, med, orig. (1851) U.S., was anglicised ca. 1860 and in C. 20 is ob.; medic, as doctor, is C. 17-18 S.E., C. 19 rare coll., and as medical student is a., orig. (1823) U.S. and very rare in Great Britain, where it is ob. in C. 20; medical is coll. in both senses, and, though recorded first (1823) in Hawthorne, it may be orig., as it is mainly, English (Halley, 1834; Masson, 1864); medico, student, is C. 19-20, but the more gen. sense of doctor arises in late C. 17, is S.E. till ca. 1850, and thereafter coll. See esp. O.E.D. and F. & H. med lab. Medical laboratory: medical students' coll. (—1933). Slang, p. 190.


medal (or medals) to-day, you're wearing your; or medal showing! Your fly is undone; you have a fly-button showing: mid-C. 19-20: jocular c.p. verging on eurhythmistic S.E. medder, medow, sol.: col.: C. 19-20. Baumann.

meddlers, rear-overs for. See rear-overs.

meddling duchess. An 'aging, pompous woman who fusses about and achieves nothing': lower classes: ca. 1880-1915. Waro. See the corresponding sense of duchess.

Medes and Persians. Jumping on a boy when he is in bed: Winchester College: ca. 1840-1910.

medic and medical. See med.

medical Greek. 'Marrow-skying', q.v.: coll. verging on S.E.: from ca. 1800; ob. H., 2nd ed. Also known as Gower Street dialect.

medicine. Liquor: from ca. 1850; ob. Mayhew. Cf. poison, q.v.—2. Sexual intercourse: from ca. 1855; ob. Hence take one's medicine := to drink; to copulate.

medicine, take (to a). To take a purgative: coll.: 1830, Southey. (O.E.D.)


medico. See med.

Medics, the. The Army Medical Corps: military coll. (not very gen.): 1914-18. F. & Gibbons.

Mediterranean Greya, the. The 50th Foot Regimen: military: 1793 and for a few years after. Ex 'the elderly look of all ranks' stationed at Gibraltar in that year. (F. & Gibbons.)

medium. A person engaged by a squatter, part of whose "run" is offered by Government at a land lottery 'or ballot. 'The medium takes lot-tickets ,.., attends the drawing, and, if his ticket is drawn before his principal's land is gone, selects it, and hands it over on payment of the attendance fee.' F. & H.: Australian coll.: from ca. 1880: coll. >, ca. 1900, S.E. —2. In the happy medium it is catastrophic (—1887), the happy mean being the correct phrase. Baumann.


medza, medzer. See madza. Cf.


meech, meecher, meeching. See miker, etc., and mooch, etc.


meerschaum. The nose: boxing (—1801); ob. Sporting Life, March 25, 1891.


[meeter, meeting is a. S.E., as are these others in F. & H.: meg, roaring, megrim, (to smell, melt (sexual verb), member (penis), merchant, (play the), mercury, mercury-woman, mercuorial, meridian, merkin, mermaid, merry (wanton), merry-andrew,
merry-begot, merry dog, merry Greek, merry-man, merry pin, (in a), merry thought, mess-mate, messel (properly messel, misunderstood by F. & H.), and mettlestone. Whereas meg, a wanch, and Meg's diversions are dial.]

*meg; ooc. megg. A guinea: c., ca. 1865-1820. Shadwell. Cf. mag (coin).—2. In late C. 19-20 dial. and till ca. 1860 in c., a meg *is a halfpenny; in the U.S. C. 19-20 underworld, me(g) is a five-cents piece. t etymology.—3. See Meg of Westminster.


Meg of Westminster, as long as. Very tall (esp. if of a woman): coll.: late C. 16-18. The Life and Pranks of Long Meg of Westminster, 1582; Grose. In C. 18, long Meg was a nickname for any very tall woman. Ex a 'legendary' character.

*megg. See megs, n.


*megman. See megsman.


melancholy, as... as. Appanner (to whom praise be it) cites the following four coll. similes: as melancholy as a (gen. gib) cat, ca. 1650-1840, e.g. Lyly, Shakespeare, D’Urfey, Lamb; as m. as a collier’s horse, ca. 1650-1750; as m. as a sick monkey, from ca. 1830 (ob.), as in Marryat’s Midshipman Easy; and as m. as a sick parrot, ca. 1880-1840, as in Mrs. Behn.

*mell. The nose: c. of ca. 1720-1850. t ex the ↑ S.E. sense, a mace or club.

mell, dead as a. Quite dead: Scots coll.: late C. 18-20; ob. Cf. preceding.


mellow. Almost drunk: C. 17-20: coll. till C. 18; then S.E. Cotgrave, Garrick.—2. See lusacious.

melon. A new cadet: Royal Military Academy: from ca. 1870; ob. Ex his greenness, as is 2, the Australian and New Zealand sense (late C. 19-20), a simpleton, a fool.—3. Abbr. paddy-melon, a small kangaroo: Australian coll.: from ca. 1845.

melon-cutting. A sharing of spoils or profits: Stock Exchange: 1908. O.E.D. (Sup.). Cf. melon:—2. To be in the mouth, look as if it were but not. See beak—beak, twill not cut better when it is hot or. See butter.

melted butter. The same virile: low: C. 18-20.

melter. He who administers a sound beating: boxing: ca. 1820-1900. Bee. Cf.:

melting. A sound beating: pugilistic: ca. 1820-1900. Ex melting, says ‘Jon Bee’: much more prob. ex Scots melt, to knock down, orig. by a stroke in the side, where lies the mel or spleen (Jamieon).


melton. Dry bread: tailors: from ca. 1860; ob. Prob. ex Mellon (cloth), a strong smooth cloth with close-cut nap.

Melton hot day. A melting hot day: sporting and clubs: June 3, 1886, and for a week or two later. The Derby, run on that day, was won by Melton. Ware.

mem. A low coll. form of ma’am, q.v.: 1700, Congreve (O.E.D.).—2. A memorandum: of which word, as of memendo (Baumann, 1887), it was orig. a mere written abbr.: coll., 1818, Moore (O.E.D.). Cf. memo, q.v.


mem-sahib the. One’s wife: Anglo-Indian (orig. Bengal Presidency) coll.: late C. 19-20. Adoption of the Indian alteration (itself dating from ca. 1857) of ma’am, madam, S.O.D.; Yule & Burnell. Cf. (the now ob.) madam-sahib, the form used at Bombay, and burra bet(e)be, q.v.

member. A person: C. 10-20: S.E. till mid-C. 19, then s. and dial. Gen. as hot m. (q.v.), warm m., etc. Ex mem of the community.


member for Cockshire, the. The penis: from ca. 1840; ob. Funning male (or privy) member and cock.


memor. Orig. (1889) a mere written abbr. of memorandum, it was by 1895 a gen. accepted coll.; by 1930 it may well have > S.E. Cf. mem, 2.


Memugger, Maggers’. The Martyrs’ Memorial: Oxford undergraduates: from late 1890’s. Ware. (’Oxford -er’.)

men. See man for all senses and phrases.

menagerie. The orchestra: theatrical (—1850); ob. H., 1st ed. Ex the noise.


mend. To bandage: lower classes’ coll.: mid-C. 19-20; ob. Ware.—2. To produce (e.g. a story) better than (somebody else): coll.: from ca. 1870; earlier, S.E.

mend as sour all maids in summer. To become worse: from ca. 1840; coll. till C. 19, then dial. ’Proverb’ Heywood, Wither, Swift. (Apperson.)

mend or correct the Magnificat. See Magnificat.

mending, vbl.n. Something to be repaired; nautical for repairing (as in mending wood): col.: from ca. 1860. (O.E.D.)
Mendingham. See Banagahem.—manjar(l)y.
A rare variant of mangar(l)y.

menah, I don't. Don't mention it! a lower-middle-class c.p. : C. 20.

mental. A person mentally deranged, mad: coll. : 1913 (O.E.D. Sup.). Ex mental case or m. defective. (The adj. is S.E.)

mention it, I don't. A phrase in deprecation of apology or thanks: coll. : 1854, Wilkie Collins (O.E.D.). Prob. an abbr. of don't mention it, for it's a truth.


mephit is incorrect for mephitis: C. 18-20. O.E.D.

Mere or Merce. A Mercedes motor-car: Society: from ca. 1920. (M. Lincoln, Oh! Definitely, 1933.)

mercer's book, the. Proverbal coll., ca. 1590-1602, for debt, the debts of a gallant. Nashe, 'Divers young Gentlemen shall crepe further into the Merchers Bookes in a Moneth, then they can get out in a yere': Jonson. O.E.D.

merchant. A fellow, 'chap': S.E. in mid-C. 16-early 17, lapsed till ca. 1860, then revived as a coll. (esp. among actors) verging on n. Cf. customer and client. (play the merchant: S.E.)

merchant of capers. A variant of caper-merchant, q.v.

merchant of eel-skins. No merchant at all; semi-proverbal coll.: ca. 1540-1670. Aschem, in Toxophilius; A. Brewer, 1655. (Apperson.)

merchantable. See scruff, n.

mercy, cry (one). To cry mercy: beg a person's pardon: coll. when i is omitted: late C. 16-18. Shakespeare, 'Oh, cry you mercy, sir, I have mistook.'


Merica or -ka. Rare spellings of Merrika, q.v.

meridian. A drink taken at noon: app. ca. 1816-1910: Scots coll. verging on 'standard.' E.D.I.

merino(e)s, pure. (Members of) the 'very first families': Australian, esp. New South Wales: from ca. 1825; ob. Peter Cunningham, 1827. 'The pure merino is the most valuable sheep,' Morris.

merits. Ca. 1820-50 as in 'Jon Bee,' 1823. 'High flash—I.e. fashionable a—' for the extreme of a thing, used negatively in general; as, 'Sir, you do not enter into the merits of—the wine, the joke, etc.'

Merrika(or-er); Merrican, -kan, -kin. America: sol. (ca. 1887). Baumann.

Merry Andrew. Andrew Boorde, an early C. 16 traveller and author. (Dawson.)


merry as . . . One of the following similes listed by Apperson, all or nearly all must orig. have been coll. —fancy as a cricket (mid-C. 16-20); m. as a Greek (mid-C. 16-18); m. as a grr (from ca. 1650; in C. 20, dial.); or m. or happy as a king (mid-C.16-mid-19); m. as [mag]pie (late C. 14-early 17); m. as beggare (ca. 1650-1750); (who so) m. as he that hath nought to lose (?)(ca. 1660-1780); m. as mice in snab (ca. 1630-1890); m. as the maids (ca. 1630-90); m. as three chips (ca. 1540-90); m. as tinkers (ca. 1650-1700).


merry bout. A copulation: ca. 1780-1830. The Newgate Calendar, 1780. O.E.D.

merry CAIN. See CAIN, raise.

merry dancers. The Northern Lights: from ca. 1715; coll. and dial. Also (the) dancers.

Merry Dun of Dover. A legendary ship—drawn from Scandinavian mythology—so large that, passing through the Straits of Dover, her flying jib-boom knocked down Calais steeples; while the fly of her ensign swept a flock of sheep off Dover Cliff. She was so lofty that a boy who went to her mast-head found himself a grey old man when he reached the deck again,' F. & H.: nautical: ca. 1840-1900. H., 3rd ed.

merry-go-down. Strong ale: ca. 1470-1620 (Golding, Nashe): then dial. Not c., though described as such by F. & H.; see esp. Apperson.


merry-go-up. Snuff: ca. 1820-50. Figan, 1821. 'Short but pungent like a pinch of sniff.'


merry man of May. Currents caused by the ebib-tides: nautical: C. 19-20; ob.

mervousness. Fear of Russia: political (ca. 1887); † by 1916. Ex Mere, a Russian city, + nervousness. Baumann.

mess. Myself: S.E. in C. 9-16; coll. in C. 17-mid-18; then low coll. till ca. 1830; then sol. except in dial. (Myself > grn. in C. 14.)

meene tenant is cattachrestio for one who holds property from a mesne lord: from ca. 1850. S.O.D.

Mesop. See Mesopot.

Mesopotamica. A destination on the Eastern Front, it not being certain whether Mesopotamia or Salonica was intended: Army officers': 1916-18. F. & Gibbons.


Mesopotamia ring, the true. Pleading, high-sounding, and incomprehensible: coll. : ca. 1880-1910. Ex the or that beloved word Mesopotamia, itself almost eligible on the same count, with the same meaning, and arising ex a plausible ascription of spiritual comfort.


mess. A difficulty, notable failure, muddle: 1834, Marryat (O.E.D.): coll. till ca. 1890, then S.E. Hence, make a mess of, to bungle; clear up the mess, to put things straight; get into a mess, to involve oneself in difficulties. J. W. Palmer, 'What a mess they made of it!'—2. Its use at Winchester college (see Mansfield) is hardly eligible; the same holds of middle mess.

mess. To interfere unduly; gen. as vbl.n. mess-ing, applied to police interference: low coll.: from ca. 1870; ob. Also mess about, extant.

mess! A proletarian exclamation (ca. 1923). Manchester. Euphemistic for shit /
MESS, BE SCRATCHED OUT OF 518

MESS. To be scratched out of one's. A variant (Baumann, 1887; now ob.) of:

MESS, lose the number of one's. To be killed: naval (—1887). Baumann. Manchon's be
struck of one's mess I believe to be an error for the
preceding. F. & Gibbons cite put out of one's mess:

courageous

military: G.W. In the Boer War, a military
variant was lose one's number, as in J. Milne, The

Epistles of Livia, 1902.

MESS about. See mess (v.).—2. To take
(sexual) liberties: low coll.: from ca. 1873. V.t.
form, mess about or m. a. with.—3. V.t. and t., to
play fast and loose; swindle, put off: low coll.: from
c. 1890.

MESS clout. The duster supplied weekly to each
mess: Conway cadets' coll. (—1891). J. Masefield,
The Conway, 1933.


MESS, make a. See mess, n. 1.—2. To defeat
utterly, overcome easily or signally: from ca. 1910.

MESS-Pot. See Mespot.

naval, coll. (—1887); ob. Baumann. Here

traps = odds-and-ends, 'things'.

MESS treat. A 'tip given by an old boy to his
former mess to provide a special feed (usually at
tea)': Conway cadets' coll. (—1891). John
Masefield, The Conway, 1933.

MESS-up. An elaboration, or perhaps merely a
稍稍enly derivative, of mess, n., 1.: coll.: from ca.
1916, when I remember hearing it at Pozieres.—2.

MESS-Up. See Mespot.

MESSER. A bungler, muddler: coll. (slightly
low): from ca. 1905.

Messian's horn. A hungry man: naval:
C. 20. Bowen. The messman thus loses his
'perks'.

MESSOLINI. Mussolini: from Sept., 1935. In
Australia he is Muzz, while in the U.S. he is often
called Musco-insaki.

METS, the. The Metropolitan music-hall: London
(—1806); † except historically.—2. The Met-
ropolitan Railway: London coll.: late C. 19–20.—
3. In pl. (Mets), stocks and shares therein: from
c. 1886: Stock Exchange a., >, by 1910, coll.
Baumann.

METAL. Money: coll.: C. 19–20, ob. (Cf. S.E.
usage for precious metal, gold.) Ex precious
metal.—2. See mettle.—3. Sweetmeats: Anglo-Indian
(—1864); nearly †. H., 3rd ed.

METAL Rule. An oath; an obscenity. Also as v.,
in you be metal-rul'd, you be damned! Printer's:
from ca. 1860; ob. Ex the dash (—) in print.

METAL, or as gen., mettle to the back. Constantly
courageous and/or energetic: coll.: ca. 1850–
1870. Shakespeare; Coffey, 1733, 'The girl is
mettle to the back.' Apperson.

METALLIC. A makerbook: racing: ca. 1870–
90. H., 5th ed. Ex bookmakers' use of metallic
pencils and even books. Cf.: metallics.

An elaboration of metal, 1.

METALS. Rails: railwaymen's coll. (—1887).
Baumann.

METEORS. The Meteorological Service at the

METON, the. See ometer.—2. A term of abuse in
the Army: late C. 19–20. Ex Hindustani: lit., a
scavenger.

METHO. Methylated spirits, esp. as drunk by

Methuselah. Esp. in old as Methuselah.
Methuselah: mid-C. 17–20; always corrupt; in
mid-C. 19–20, low coll. Cowley. Influenced by
Jerusalem. (O.E.D.)

Methuselir or -lier. A member of the Aus-
tralian Remount Unit: Australian: 1916. F. &
Gibbons. Ex Methuselah on fustier: most of the
men were over military age.—2. A member of the
Volunteer Training Corps (special constables, etc.): 
mostly Anglo-Irish: from 1916: ob.

METRO, the. The underground-train system of
Paris; hence o.c. that of London: C. 20. Fr.
(le) métro (abbr. Métropolitain), itself often loosely
used.

METS or METS. See Met, the, 3.

Mettle. The semen virile: low coll.: C. 17–20;
late C. 19–20 term, esp. in the Colonies, is epunk.
Ex S.E. mettle, (of animals) natural arour and
vigour)—2. Hence, fetch mettle, to masturbate:
See metal to . . .

METHZES. See medzies.

Mew-mew! Tell that to the marines: tailors:
from ca. 1860; ob.

Mi. See ma, 3.

MIA-MIA (pron. mi-mi); occ. miam, mimi or
mi-mi. An aboriginal hit: Australian coll. (—1845)
>, ca. 1870, 'standard'; in 1871 and later, applied
to any hit: coll. >, by 1880, 'standard'. Ex
Aboriginal. Morris. Cf. gunyah and hump(e)y, 
q.v.

MICE-FOOT 'O. Make: To destroy utterly: Scots
coll.: C. 18–19.

MICE, like MousEs, is sol. except when jocular:
C. 18–20.

MICH (—e, —e-, —ing), now dial., michael (m man),
middle, middle-gate or -kingdom. midget, miff, v.
and adj., mightily, mithch-cow, mild, milk (to
plunder or drain), milk and water, milk-livered,
milksp, milk (bring grist to); also put through
the mill), mill-round, mine of pleasure, mingle-
mane, minckins, minikin, mint of money, minx,
miraculous cairn, mishmash, miss, miss, v., 
mizmaze (also dial.), are S.E.: while, again despite F. & H.,
midge and mint-naff are dial.]

Michael, your head's on fire. (Often preceded by
kip.) A c.p. addressed to a red-headed man: mid-
C. 18–19. Grose, 2nd ed.

MICHAELM aN, M. Micken raymid noon, spend
(one's). To spend money that should be laid by
for a definite purpose: proverbial coll.: ca. 1800–
1860. Camden. (Apperson.)

MICHING, malecho or MALLECO in Shakespeare's
Hamlet is prob. s.: meaning and etymology are alike
uncertain, though miching prob. = skulking, per-
haps = a dirty trick (O.E.D.). Note too, Romany
maleco, false (Smart & Crofton), and Welsh Gypsy
maleko, look out for yourself! (Sampson). More-
over, Ware states that in April, 1805, he 'heard a
man in the gallery at the Palace of Varieties (Lon-
don), after several scorrnful phrases, say derisively,
"Oh—ah—minchin maleego ": I believe that the
phrase may = our modern 'dirty dog!', for the
Romany maleco is prob. cognate with Turkish Gypsy
maleko, spotted. (mammaw.)

Mick; micky or misky; occ. mika. (Or with
capital initial.) An Irishman: orig. (—1869),
U.S.: anglicised ca. 1860: more gen. in Canada,
Australia, and New Zealand than in Britain. Ex
Michael.—2. Hence, an Irish seaman (nautical): late
mick, do a. See mike, do a.
mickle and muckle are mere variants, therefore many a muckle makes a muckle is erroneous. Fowler.

**Micks, the.** The Irish Guards: military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Ex mick, 2.
micky. See mick.—2. A young bull running wild: Australia: from ca. 1880. Grant, 1888, ‘There were two or three mickies and wild heifers’. Prob. ex ‘the association of bulls with Irishmen’, Barrère & Leland. (Morris).—3. A New Zealand corruption (—1809) of Maori mingi, orig. mingi-mingi, a shrub or small tree (cyathodes acoeca). Morris.—4. (Also Mikey) Sick, esp. after liquor: low: late C. 19—20. Ex Bob, Harry and Dick, the same: rhyming s.: 1868. Ware.

microacoustic is incorrect for micracoustic: mid-C. 19—20. O.E.D.

micturition is catharsis when made to = an act of urination (for properly it = a morbid desire to urinate): 1799, O.E.D.


mid-Vic. (The adj. is exceedingly rare.) A mid-Victorian: cultured s.: from ca. 1932; already very ob.

mid vire. A middy 'wire' or telegram, ‘giving last prices in the coming-on races’: sporting men’s, orig. (— 1909) and mainly in Paris; ob. Ware.


middle. A social, literary or scientific article for the press: 1862; coll. till C. 20, then S.E. Abbr. middle article. Hence middle(-)man, a writer of such articles; ob.—2. A finger: c.: C. 18—mid-19.—3. A middle-weight: boxing coll.: 1902, P. G. Wodehouse, 'The Code of the Shenchanters'.

middle-cut, an old Winchester College word, is virtually S.E.

middle finger or leg. The male member: low: C. 19—20.

middle hills. See morning hills.
middle-watcher. The slight meal snatched by officers of the middle watch (about 2.30 a.m.): nautical coll. (—1867). Smyth.

**Middlesex clown** (gen. pl.). A native or an inhabitant of Middlesex: jocular coll.: mid-C. 17—early C. 19. Fuller; Grove, in the Provincial Glossary. (Apperson.)

**Middlesex jury.** See London jury.

**Middlesex mongrel.** A C. 18 variant of Middlesex clown. (Lord Hailes, 1770.)

midling. Moderately large: late C. 16—20; S.E. till ca. 1860, then coll. (somewhat low) except in midding size, stature, degree. Blackmore, 'A middling keg of hollands, and an anker of old rum': O.E.D.

midling, adv. Moderately, tolerably: C. 18—20: S.E. till ca. 1830.—2. Fairly well (success, health): coll.: 1810, W. B. Rhodes, 'We are but middling—that is, but so so.' O.E.D.

midlingish, adv. Somewhat: moderately: (low) coll. and dial.: 1820. O.E.D.

middy. A midshipman: coll.: 1833, Marryat. Ex mid, q.v.


**Midlands, the.** The female pudend: low jocular: from ca. 1830; ob.

midnight's aree-hole, as white as. Black as pitch: low coll.: ca. 1550—1640. Anon., Jacob and Evan, ca. 1557 (in Dodsley's *Old Plays*).


midshipman's nuts. Broken biscuit, esp. and properly if hard (as dessert): nautical coll.: from middle 1840's; ob.


midshipmen's parade. The lee side of the quarterdeck, the weather side being reserved for seniors: naval: ca. 1820—60. Bowen.


midsummer, be but a mile to. To be somewhat mad: coll.: ca. 1460—1570. The English Chronicle (O.E.D.) Cf.:

**Midsummer noon.** Madness. Gen. as 'tis Midsummer noon with you, you are mad: late C. 16—mid-19. Cf. Shakespeare's midsummer madness, midsummer noon, popularly associated with lunacy, and the old proverb, when the moon's in the full, then wit's in the wane. (Apperson.)

miff. A petty quarrel; a tantrum, a fit of anger: coll. and dial. (since ca. 1850, mainly dial.): 1623, C. Butler, '... Last some of the bees take a miff.' Cf. miffy and miffly, q.v.

miffiness. A tendency to take offence: coll. and dial.: 1845, Ford's *Handbook of Syntax*. O.E.D. miffly. The devil: (low) coll.: C. 19. 'Ex miffy. Also in dial.; the E.D.D. derives it ex Old Fr. manfr, devil.

miffy, adj. Easily offended: coll. and dial.: C. 18—20. Gibber, Blackmore. Whence miffiness, q.v. Also:

miffy. Apt to take offence: late C. 17—18. B.E. Like preceding, ex miff, q.v.

might, subjunctive, 'is often used collog. (a) with gress. inf. to convey a counsel or suggestion of action, or a complaint that some action is neglected; (b) with perf. inf. to express a complaint that some not difficult duty or kindness has been omitted': the former, Meredith, 1864; the latter, Manville Fenn, 1894. O.E.D.
mighty. Very considerable in amount, size, degree: late C. 16-20; S.E. till ca. 1840, then familiar S.E. rapidly > coll. Borrow, 'mighty damage'. O.E.D.
mighty, adv. Very greatly: C. 13-20; S.E. till ca. 1700, then coll. Johnson, 'Not to be used but in very low language'. (In C. 19-20, often ironical.)
mighty!; mighty me! Coll. interjections:
Scott: from ca. 1865. (Also in dial.)
mighty, high and. See high and mighty.
Mike or Mike. An Irishman, esp. if a labourer: coll.: from ca. 1873. Cf. mick, q.v., and, like that term, ex Michael.—2. A wasting of time; idling, esp. in do, or occ. have, a mikes, to idle away one's time; low: 1825. Ex. Prob. Ex. S.E. mitch(e), to akulk. O.E.D. Cf. mite, v.—3. A microphone; from ca. 1927.—4. A microscope: medical students' (—1933). Slang, p. 190.
mike, v. To 'hang about', either expectantly or idly: low: 1850, H., 1st ed. Where tramps are concerned, the gen. wur is mooch, mooch. Ex S.E. mitch(e).—2. A variant (C. 20; F. & Gibbons) of sense 2 of:
mike, do a. See mike, n., 2.—To decamp; to evade duty; military and low (—1914). F. & Gibbons. Also do a mick.
miker. A loafer; a 'scrounger' (q.v.): low: from ca. 1880. Ex mike, v. Cf. milking, q.v.
mikey. See Micky, q.
miling, n. and adj. Idling; skulking; 'scrounging'; low: from ca. 1880. Ex mike, v.
milk-kine. (The singular, milk-cow, is very rare.) Applied by gaolers to their prisoners, who, when they 'bleed' freely, will 'have some favour, or be at large', B.E. c.: late C. 17-early 19.
milk, draw it. See draw it mild.—mild-blower. See blower.
milksop. Pitted with smallpox; euphemistic (—1923) for poxed. Manchon.—2. A synonym of manely and moudly, q.v.: from ca. 1920; ob. Ibid.
mile. (With a plural numeral) miles: late C. 13-20; S.E. till C. 19; ca. 1850-60; coll. since ca. 1850, dial. and low and coll. Dickens, 1850, I'd go ten thousand mile.' O.E.D.
mile of an oak, within a. Near enough; somewhere (derisively): late C. 16-18; coll.; sometimes a c.p. Porter, 1950, 'Where be your tools? ... Within a mile of an oak, sir'; Apha Behn; D'Urfe; 'Your worship can tell within a mile of an oak where he is'; Swift. (Apperson.)
miler. Also myla. A donkey; vagabond c. from ca. 1850. Ex Romnyy meila, occ. mola, prob. ex. dial. moli, moyle, a mule, and perhaps ultimately ex L. mulus. Cf. Roman Micro Meleto gen., lit. donkey's town, i.e. Doncaster. (Smart & Crofton).—2. A man or a horse specially trained or qualified for a mile race: sporting: from ca. 1886. Baumann.—3. —miler. A journey, esp. a walk, of a stated number of miles: coll.: 1856. Dickens, 'I went out this morning for a 12-miler' (O.E.D. Sup.).
Mike's boy. See Ralph. ('Jon Bee,' 1823.)
milestone. A yokel, a country booby; low
(† orig. c.): from ca. 1810; ob. by 1890, † by 1910. Vaux, 1812. Cf. milestone-monger.
milestone, let run a. To cause a die to run some distance; gaming: 1860, Cotton; † by 1890.
milestone-monger. A tramp: coll.: from ca. 1860; ob. Cf. milestones, q.v.
military. Porter (the drink): taverns': ca. 1885-1900. Ware. Ex its strength.
milk, v. To cause sexual ejaculation; low coll. bordering on S.E.: C. 17-20; ob. Jonson, in The Alchemist; D'Urfey. —2. To beat against one's own horse knowing that it cannot win; to keep (a horse) a favourite at short odds when he has no chance or may even be scratched: sporting: ca. 1860-95.—3. To obtain possession, or sight, of by trickery or artifice: from ca. 1860; coll. till ca. 1910, then S.E. E.g. milk a telegram, to see it before the addressee does. Prescott, Electrical Inventions, 1860, '... a wire could be milked without being cut or put out of circuit.'—4. V.l., to withdraw part of one's winnings before a session is finished; gamblers': from not later than 1923. O.E.D. (Sup.). Ex the S.E. sense in 'That cow milked well.'
milk, Bristol. See Bristol milk.
milk, cry over split. See split milk.
milk, give down one's. To pay: coll. almost S.E.: ca. 1500-1800. Marlowe, L'Estrange.
milk boiled over, (e.g.) his. (R.G.) he was careless: proverbial coll.: ca. 1730-1800. 'Proverbial. Fuller. (Occ. in other persons but rarely in other senses.)
milk-fever. See pénail-fever.
milk-fowler. 'The hole formed by the rouk (q.v.) under a pot (q.v.)': Winchester College (—1904); ob. F. & H.
milk, hot. See hot milk.
milk in the coocnut, no. Silly; mentally deranged: low: from ca. 1850; ob. Cf. the U.S. account for the milk in the coconut, to solve a puzzle (1853, says Thornton).
milk-jug or -pan; also milking-pall. The female pudend: low: C. 18-20; ob. Ex milk, n., 1.
milk off one's liver, wash the. To rid oneself of cowardice: coll.: C. 17-mid-18. Cotgrave.
milk over the fence. To steal milk from neighbours' cows: from ca. 1870. Gen. as vbln. phrase, milking over ... The Milk Journal, Sept., 1871.
milk-shop or -walk. The female breasts: low: C. 19-20; ob. Cf. milky way, q.v.
milk the pigeon. To attempt an impossibility: coll.: mid-C. 18-20; ob. Grove, 1st ed. The corresponding S.E. phrases are milk the bull or the ram.
milk-en. A variant of milk-en, q.v. ('Dunage Anglious.')

**miller’s calf.** A mother’s child, esp. if a boy: Australian rural (1888); ob. “Rolf Bolderwood.” Ex standard sense, a calf still with the cow.

**milking.** Vbl.n. of *milk*, v., 2. q.v. The Times, Jan. 2, 1862.

**milking-pail.** See *milk-jug*.

**milking-pail, carry or work the.** Racings: ca. 1860–95. For meaning, see *milk*, v., 2.


**milky way.** The female bosom: from ca. 1820; poetical S.E. till ca. 1800, after which it rapidly > low s. ob. *Cf. milk* (shop or) -walk.


**mill, go or pass through the.** To have (severe) experience: S.E.—2. Hence, to go through the bankruptcy court: coll. or from ca. 1840; ob. —3. To go to prison: c. (1889). The *Daily News*, July 4, 1889.

**mill, safe as a thief in a.** Not safe or honest at all: coll. ca. 1860–1780. With allusion to ‘a Miller, who is a Thief by his Trade’, B.E.

**mill** a good. To break out of gaol: c.: (—1753; † by 1890. Poultzer.

**mill-clapper.** The tongue, esp. of women: late C. 17–20; ob.: coll. B.E.

**mill doll or M.D.** A prison: ca. 1780–1830; ob. Messink, Bee.—2. According to Vaux, 1812, it is ‘an obsolete name for Bridewell house of correction, in Bridge-street, Blackfriars, London’.

**mill doll, v.** To beat hemp in prison: c.: ca. 1760–1840. Fielding. Also *mill dolly*, recorded in 1714 in Smith’s *Lives of the Highwaymen*. (O.E.D.)

**mill . . . *glaze.* While one a or the glass is to break open a, the window (late C. 17–mid-18, B.E.), m. one’s is to knock out his eye (C. 18–early 19, Grosé): both are c.


**mill pond.** The Atlantic, esp. the part traversed by ships going from England to Canada and the U.S.; jocular S.E. bordering on coll.: 1885, Grant Allen. O.E.D.)

**mill-tag, -tag, -tag, -twig.** A shirt: c.: resp. from ca. 1850 (Mayhew), 1835 (Brandon), 1745 (B. C. Carew), and 1820 (Haggart, Egan; Scott c.): all these are ob. Perhaps ex *mill*, n. 6. Cf.概念 and mash, q.v.

**millwash.** Canvas for lining of waistcoats and coats: tailors: from ca. 1860; ob.


**miller (also *miller’s thumb*), drowm the.** To add too much water, esp. to flour or to spirits: coll. from ca. 1815; in C. 20, rare except in dial. Also put out the *miller’s thumb*, 1767, and put out the *miller’s eye*, 1768, Ray, and 1834, Esther Copley (O.E.D.).—2. (Only drowm the *miller*.) To go bankrupt: Scotts coll. ca. 1800–80. A. Scott, 1855. and:

**miller, give (one) the.** To peil with flour, etc., in thin paper bags, which naturally burst immediately on contact: coll. (—1864); ob. H., 3rd ed.; Hindley.

**miller’s daughter.** Water (n.): rhyming a. late C. 19–20. B. & P.

**miller’s eye.** (See Miller, drowm the, 1.) A lump of flour in a loaf: coll. from ca. 1830; ob.

**miller’s mare, Bess a.** Clumetry. C. 17; coll., semi-proverbial. Beaumont & Fletcher; Killigrew. A miller being no trainer of good horses. (Apperson.)

**miller’s waistcoat (that takes a thief by the neck every day), as stout as a.** C. 18–early 19 c.p., which glosses the proverb many a *miller* many a thief and that of miller, tailor and weaver in a bag. (Apperson.)

**miller’s shop.** The female pudend: low from ca. 1840; ob. *milling. A beating, a thrashing: 1810, Combe, ‘One blood gives t’other a milling’; ob.—2. A fight; fighting: 1815, The *Sporting Magazine* (O.E.D.); Moore; ob.—3. Robbery; theft: c.: ca. 1660–1840. Harman. (For the origin of these
mind one's book. (Of a schoolboy) to be diligent in one's studies; coll. : from ca. 1710; ob. Addison, 'Bidding him be a good child and mind his book'. O.E.D.

mind the grease! Let me pass, please! : lower classes', presumably rhyming s. (—1909). Ware.

mind the step! See step 1, mind the.

mind to, have a. To be disposed (to do something). With the infinitive suppressed, it is coll. : from ca. 1850. Mrs. Stowe, 'I don't need to hire . . . my hands out, unless I've a mind to.' Prob. ex such sentences as 'enquire what thou hast a mind to', 1671. O.E.D.

mind your eye! Be careful! : coll. : 1737, Bracken (O.E.D.). Cf.:


mind your P's and Q's. See P's and Q's. Minden Boys. The 20th Foot Regiment, since ca. 1881 the Lancashire Fusiliers: military; latter C. 18-20; ob. Ex their bravery at the battle of Minden, 1759. (F. & Gibbons.)


minijer; mindyer. Mind you: the former is even more illiterate than the latter: C. 19-20. Baumann.

mine arse. See handbox.


mine in a Portuguese pig-knot. 'Confused, not knowing where to begin a yarn': nautical: late C. 19-20. Bowen. The key is in yarn.

mine-jobber. A swindler: City coll.: from ca. 1880. Ware. Ex the frequent flotation of worthless companies.

mine uncle(s). See uncle.

mine's. Mine is: coll. : C. 19-20. E.g. 'Mine's a gin.'


mingy. Misery, mean; hence (from not later than 1915) disappointingly small: coll. Thinned ex mingly (W.) and prob. influenced by stingy. App. first 'lexicographed' by W., 1929, but (as 'mean') definitely remembered by the author at least as early as 1910.

minikin, tinkle (the). To play the lute or violin: coll.: ca. 1600-40, mostly by the dramatists with a sexual innuendo (minikin, an endearment for a female). Marston (?), 'When I was a young man and could tinkle the minikin . . . I had the best stroke, the sweetest touch, but now . . . I am fallen from the fiddle, and betook me to [the pipe].' O.E.D. minikin. A diminutive of Queen Mary's Nursing Service: naval: 1914-18. F. & Gibbons. Cf. mark one, q.v.

minnie. A German trench-mortar: from 1915: military.—2. Hence, the projectile it propels: from not later than March, 1916. Ex Ger. minenwerfer, lit. a mine-thrower. See B. & P.
Minnie P. play. A play in which a little-maid variety-actress has the chief part: theatrical coll.: 1885-ca. 1900. Ware, 'From Miss Minnie Palmer's creations, chiefly in My Sweetheart'.

Minnie's husband. See Carl the caretaker. Ex minnie, q.v.

mimy lowering. A variant, perhaps rather the orig., of minnie, both senses; rare after 1916.


mint. While mint of money is prob. to be considered S.E. mint (money), which dates from C. 8, is S.E. till ca. 1560, coll. till ca. 1850, then low s. Harman, Jonson, Grove. In C. 10–20, gen. mini-sac, q.v.—2. Gold: mid-C. 17–18 c. Coles; B.E.; Grove.

mint, adj. Absolutely as new; clean and with leaves uncut: esp. in a mint copy: booksellers's. (—1927) >, ca. 1932, j.


minus. (Predicatively) without: short of: coll.: 1813. (Baumann, however, dates it from mid-C. 18.) As in 'minus one horse', 1840, or 'He was considerably minus at the last Newmarket meeting' (1813). Rarely [minus] of. O.E.D.—2. As an adj., lacking, non-existent: from ca. 1850: coll. Bristed, 1852, 'His mathematics are decidedly minus.' O.E.D.

miracle. A corrupt form of merel, a game: C. 17–18. (O.E.D.)


mischief, ruin or a mischievous person, is S.E., but the mischief, the devil, is coll.: 1863, Holly-band, 'What the mischief is this ... ?'; Beaumont & Fletcher, ca. 1016, 'In the name of mischief ... '. O.E.D. (But with a mischief is S.E.).

mischief, go to the. To go to the bad: coll.: 1818, Susan Ferrier, 'Boys may go to the mischief, and do for something—if girls go, they're good for nothing I know of.

mischief, load of. A wife: C. 18–early 19: coll. bordering on S.E. Grove, 'A man loaded with mischief, ... with his wife on his back'. Revisted by Ashley Dukes in 1924–5.

mischief, play the. (V.t., with.) To play havoc: coll.: 1867, Trollope, 'That butcher ... was playing the mischief with him.' O.E.D.


miserable as a bandicoot. An Australian coll. synonym (C. 20) of:


miserables, the. A splitting headache after the night before: proletarian coll. (—1887); ob. Baumann.


misery, street. See streak of misery.

misery-bowl. Relief-basin—at sea': tourists' (—1900); slightly ob. Ware.

Misery Junction. 'The angle forming the south-west corner of the York and Waterloo Roads ... From the daily meeting here of music hall "pros" who are out of engagements, and who are in this neighbourhood for the purpose of calling on their agents, half a dozen of whom live within hail' (Ware): theatrical: ca. 1880–1914.

mish. A clumsy man, tailors': from ca. 1850.

mish-topper. A little-maid's hat: from ca. 1865.

mish-topper, have or meet with a. To give birth to an illegitimate child: coll. and dial.: C. 19–20. Mrs. Carlyle, Marryat. Hence, mish-topper, a bastard: from ca. 1860. Carlylo. O.E.D.


*mish-topper. A coat; a petticoat: ca. 1670–1850: c. Coles, 1876; B.E.; Grove. Lit., that which 'tops' or goes over a 'mish' (q.v.).

mis. See mizzle.

Misleading Paper, the. The Times: a nickname: 1876–ca. 1890. Ware, 'Given ... when it began to lose its distinctive feature as the "leading paper" in Liberal policy'.

misl. See mizzle.


miss, give (e.g. it) a. To avoid doing something or seeing some person or thing; cease doing something: coll.: from ca. 1912. Ex billiards, give a miss in bulk ('avoid hitting the object ball', S.O.D.), itself often used in the same way. 'P. G. Wodehouse, 1907, 'And James ... is giving this the miss in bulk!' miss a tip. To have a fall: circus-men's: mid-C. 19–20. Seago. See also tip, n.

Miss Adams is an occ. variant of sweet Fanny Adams (see Fanny Adams).


miss is as good as a mile, a. A narrow escape serves as well as an easy one; a failure by however little is still a failure': proverbial coll.: from ca. 1820. Scott. Earlier, an inch in a miss is as good as an ell.


Miss Molly. See molly.


miss of, feel the. To feel the lack or the loss of: from ca. 1855: S.E. till ca. 1880, then (low) coll. George Eliot, 1860; Baumann, 1887; 'Rita', 1901, 'Tia now you'll feel the miss o' your mother.' O.E.D.
moll-buzzer (unreality, a month, poached eggs and sauce), mollish (adj.), mollishly (adv.), mope (an endearment, a grimace, a fool), mop (n. and v.), moped, moppet, mopsy, morning-star, morsel and dearest morsel, moss-rose, mossy cell or face or vale, mother as hysteria and as term of address, mother's son, mount (to wear), mountain, mount of Venus, mounts of lilies, mouse (an endearment; to bite), mouse, mouth (v.) and give mouth, mouth-blows, mouthing; mundungus; mollie, mon, (a statute fair), mort (large quantity or number), are dial—awl despite F. & II.


modestines. An incorrect form of modestness:
ca. 1540–1640. O.E.D.

modicum. An edible thirst-relish: 1600, Dekker; soon †. O.E.D.—2. The female pudend: low: ca. 1660-1840. Cotton. (Cf. † S.E. jocular sense, a woman; † bit, piece, qq.v.)

mods or Mods. The first public examination for B.A. degrees: Oxford University: coll.: 1858, J. C. Thomson, 'Between the "little-go" and "mode" he learns nothing new' (O.E.D.). Ex Moderations.


moll-buzzer. See moll-buzz.

mofussil. Rather provincial; countrified: from ca. 1840; coll. >, ca. 1890, S.E. Ex the n., which (the Mofussil) is standard Anglo-Indian for the country districts or anywhere out of a capital city. Ex Hindustani. See esp. Yule & Burnell. Hence: mofussilie. An inhabitant of a rural district: Anglo-Indian coll.: from ca. 1845. Ex preceding term.


mogue, v.t. and i; n. To mislead; joke, gammon: low and tailors': 1870, Bell's Life, June 19. Whence no mogue, honestly, and moagin, n., gammon. † cognate with mug, a fool.


moah. See moah.

moahair. A civilian; a tradesman: military: 1785, Grose; ob. by 1870, † by 1890. Ex the moahair buttons worn by civilians; soldiers have metal buttons.

Mohammed Ali. A regimental institute: coll. among regular soldiers in India: from ca. 1920. Such institutes are often supplied by a merchant so, or analogously, named.

mok, mokock (a frenzied Malay), is catachrestic: C. 18–early 19. O.E.D.—2. See mohock.


mohock; occ. mohack or mohawk. (2r with capitals.) An aristocratic ruffian night-infecting London, ca. 1710–16. From 1711: coll. > S.E.; ob. by 1760, except historically. Ex Mohawk, a member of a Red Indian tribe. Swift, 'A race of rakes, called the Mohocks, that play the devil about this town every night'.

moiety, a part, a share, is loose S.E.—2. A wife: coll. > S.E.: from ca. 1735; ob. Fanning better half.

moira. A drink of any kind; esp. beer: mostly New Zealanders': in G.W. Ex Arabic.

moiré. n., for moire, is catachrestic: from ca. 1850. O.E.D.

moist one's clay. To drink: from ca. 1830. In C. 20, gen. moisten ...


moisien, v.i. To drink: from ca. 1840; ob. Also moisten one's chaffer (—1864) or clay (q.v.).

moke. An ass: s. and dial.: 1848, J. L. Tupper (O.E.D.); Thackeray. † ex mogyo, q.v., or perhaps Romany moila, an ass (cf. miler, q.v.), or rather ex Welsh Gypsy mokxo or -a, a donkey: Sampson supports the third origin and notes that mokyo existed at least 50 years before the first recorded instance of moko; moreover, Brandon, in 1839, records mok as a c. word of Gypsy origin and, at that time, mainly Gypsy use. Cf. mokus.—2. A fool: orig. (1871), U.S.; anglicised ca. 1880; ob.—3. A very inferior horse: Australia: 1888, 'Rolf Boldwood', 'I am regular shook on this old moko.' Cf. sense 1—4. A variety artist that plays on several instruments: theatrical (—1890). Century Diet.


molinet is an incorrect form of molinet: mid-C. 17–mid-18. O.E.D.


Molly Cutpurse. Mary Frith (d. 1649), notable pickpocket and the heroine of Dekker & Middleton's The Roaring Girl, 1611. (Dawson.)

moll-hunter. A man 'always lurking after women': low: late C. 19-20. Ware. See moll, 1 and 3.

moll Patley's, or—prob. erroneously—Patley's, gig. Copulation: C. 18-early 19: low. Budgell, in The Spectator, 'An impudent young dog bid the fiddlers play a dance called Moll Patley.' Ex moll, 1, probably allusively to some whose surnamed Patley or Molley.


moll-shop. A brothel: low: 1923, Manchon; but in use before G.W. Also Molly-shop.

Moll Thompson's mark. 'M.T.' = empty. 'Empty packages are said to be so marked,' F. & H.: ca. 1750-1890. Gros; 1st ed. H.; 2nd ed.

moll-toller. A female pickpocket: c.: from ca. 1808; ob. H., 1st ed.

moll-wire. A pickpocket specialising in robbing women: c.: from ca. 1865; ob.

*molled; gen. molled up. Sleeping with a woman not one's wife: c.: 1851, Mayhew.—2. Accompanied by, esp. arm in arm with, a woman: low: from ca. 1860. Both senses ex moll, but resp. ex sense 1 (or 2) and sense 3.

*mollisher; more gen. mollisher. A—gen. a low—woman; a thief's mistress: c.: from ca. 1810; ob. Vaux (—ish), Mayhew (—ish). Ex moll, 1.

moll's three misfortunes, a. In the B.M. copy of the 1st ed., Gros; has written: 'Broke the [chamber-]pot, best—t the bed and cut her a—se.' But this low c.p. of ca. 1786-1820 was included in no ed. whatsoever.

molly. An effeminate man: a milkshop: coll. >, in C. 20, S.E.: 1870, L. B. Walford (O.E.D.), though possibly existing a century earlier: the entry in Gros; (1st ed.) is ambiguous. Ex Miss Molly, q.v.—2. A sodomite: coll.: 1709, E. Ward; ob. Cf. paney. But ca. 1890-1914, a merely effeminate fellow was often called a Queese; in C. 20, esp. after the G.W., a sodomite is a nancy, a Nancy-boy, or a cissy (skey), this last also applying to a milkshop.—3. A wench; a harlot: coll.: 1719, D'Urfe: 'Town follies and Cutties, And Molleys and Dollys, for ever alioe.' Ob. (As a country lass, it is dial.) All ultimately ex Mary: cf. moll, q.v.

Molly, Miss. A milkshop, an effeminate fellow: from ca. 1750; ob.: coll. >, ca. 1890, S.E. Gros. Cf. moll, all senses, and Miss Nancy, q.v. (But Miss Mollyism, C. 19-20 (ob.), is S.E.)

molly-head. A简单ton: from ca. 1900; ob.† origin U.S. Ex moll, 1.

Molly Maguire. An Irish secret society that, ca. 1843, aimed to intimidate bullits and their like: app. not recorded before 1867 (W. S. Trench); coll. quickly > S.E. Ex their usually dressing in women's clothes and ex Connor Maguire, a noted C. 17 conspirator, says Dawson.

molly-mop. An effeminate man: coll.: 1829, 'Marryat; ob. Ex moll, 1. (O.E.D.)

*molly-puff. A gambler's decy: ca. 1625-70:† c. Shirley, Thou molly-puffer, were it not justice thou begat guts out? ' (Perhaps ex moll, 3 + puff, to advertise.) But F. & H.'s definition is prob. wrong, for Shirley's term is, likely enough, a mere variant of mulilpuff (q.v. in O.E.D.), a fuzz-ball, used as a term of contempt.)

molly-shop. See moll-shop. (Manchon.)

mollygrubs. See mulilpuffs.—mollyhawk. Incorrect (from ca. 1880) for mollymawk = mallemuck. O.E.D.

molly's (or Molly's) hole. The female pudend: low: C. 19-20; ob. Ex moll, 3.


*mo-lecker. A renovatcd hat: trade (—1892); ob. Ex molo(cker), v., to renovate an old hat by ironing and greasing: trade (—1863). Sala. ? ex the inventor's name.

molrower. A wencher, esp. a whoremonger: low: from ca. 1860; very ob. Ex:


mompus. See munipius.

monacholic, like monalice, a 'blundered form', is almost catachrestic for monolalice: C. 15. O.E.D.

monaker, monarch, etc. A sovereign (coin): from ca. 1865; ob. low. Orig. (—1851), a guinea. Mayhew—2. The ten-eared boat: Eton College: ca. 1890-1915.—3. A name or title: orig. tramps c., it >, in all extant forms, gen. though somewhat low s. ca. 1900. The forms are these monaker, from ca. 1860 (though Baumann implies from mid-C. 18), not very gen.; monarch (—1879), ob.; Macmillan's Magazine, 1879, vol. XI; monarcher (cf. monarcher, big, q.v.), app. first in P. H. Emerson, 1893; moneeker, 1851 (Mayhew); † monaker, from ca. 1852, while monaker arises ca. 1855; monica, from ca. 1880; monnaker (cf. monaker), from ca. 1865; mon(ie)cer (—1885), as in The Times, Nov. 11, 1885, † by 1914; mon(n)cker, a frequent form, from ca. 1890; and mon(n)ker, the most gen. form of all (—1874), H., 5th ed. The etymology is mysterious: /. proposes Ste Monica, Monica deriving from L. monitor, an adviser, ex monere, to advise, to warn; Ware asserts that it derives 'from Italian ligno for name, Monica being the Italian for monk'; I suggest monarch, a king, hence that which rules and determines, hence that which, by designating, partly rules a man's life; W., however, thinks that it may be a Shellta word, and gives the meaning as 'sign'; but recent opinion 'favour' monogram, which, I freely admit, is supported by:—4. A signature (—1859). H., 1st ed. This sense, however, causes me to wonder if the term be not a blend of monogam + signature; and this sense possibly be earlier than sense 3. monarcher etc., tip (a person) one.' To tell one's name: low: from ca. 1860. (Manchon.)

monarcher. See preceding.—2. monarcher, big. An important person: tramps c. (—1893); ob.

monas or monas. Isle of Man Railway shares: from ca. 1890: Stock Exchange.

Monday, adj. An intensive: from ca. 1890; very ob.: low. Kipling, 1892, in Winkleys, 'You may lay your Monday head! 'Twas juicer for the niggers when the case began to spread.' † by misunderstanding or by corruption ex molly, q.v.

Monday, black. See black M.. M., bloody. See bloody M. See Monday M.

Monday miss. The numerous black eyes seen that morning after the week-end drinking: London streets: late C. 19-20; slightly ob. Ware.

Monday pop. One of the celebrated popular
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MONKEY AND THE NUT


monake(sr) ; monkeur (very rare). See monaker, monarch, 3.

money. Money's worth; a way of investing money: coll.: 1851, Mayhew, "In February and March . . . green fruit's not my money"; ob.—2. A (gen. very young) girl's private parts: low: from ca. 1780; ob. Grosé, 1st ed.  

money, a pot—or pots—of. A large amount of money; a fortune: coll.: from ca. 1870. Mrs. H. Wood 1871, pots; Trollope, a pot. (O.E.D.)


money, hard. Coin, as soft money is notes: coll.: from ca. 1848.

money, it's like eating. This is a costly business: semi-proverbial coll. c.p. (= 1887). Baumann.

money, not (a person's). Not to one's taste or choice: coll.: late C. 19–20. Esp. as in Manchon, 'You ain't everybody's money.' Prob. suggested by (the) man for my money, q.v.


money, Spanish. Fair words and compliments: late C. 17–18. B.E.

money, the man for (e.g.) my. See man for my money.


money burns in (e.g.) his pocket, (e.g. his). He cannot keep money; is impatient to spend it: from ca. 1550: coll. till ca. 1860, then S.E. Mora, Cornwallis (1901), Farquhar, T. Hughes. (Apper son.)

*money-dropper. A swindler who, dropping counterfeit money, gets good change from some 'flat': e. o.: 1748, Smollett; Grosé, 2nd ed. † by 1905. Cf. ring-dropper.

money for jam, (it's). (It is) sure money or, more gen., money easily obtained or earned: coll.: C. 20. Manchon. Cf. jam, n., 3.—2. Hence, (it's) too easy! from ca. 1910. B. & P.


money makes the mare to go. See mare to go.

money talks. Money is very powerful: semi-proverbial e.p. bordering on S.E.: 1588, Pettie, 'The tongue hath no force when gold speaketh'; 1866, Torrion, 'Man prates, but gold speaks'; 1916, P.G. Wodehouse, 'The whole story took on a different complexion for Joan. Money talks'; A. Palmer, 1925, in The Sphere, 'Money talks . . . So why not to listen to it?' Cf. the late C. 16–18 what will not money do? (Apperson.)

mongar(l)ey. See mungar(l)ey.


*monio or monick. A mainly e. variant of monaker: late C. 19–20.

monies, monick, monicker, moniker. See monaker, monarch, 3.

monied, monies. Incorrect for moneyed, moneys: from before mid-C. 10.

moniker. See monaker.


Monk Lewis. M. G. Lewis, author of The Monk, a famous work (1796).

*monkeyry, on the. See monkey, 4.


monkey, suck the. To drink liquor, esp. rum, from a cask with a straw through a gimlet hole (of. admiral, tap the, q.v.): nautical: 1785; ob. Grosé, 1st ed. Cf. monkey, 3; perhaps it is a telescoping of the idea expressed in sense 3.—2. To drink liquor from a bottle; hence, to tipple: gen. s.: 1797; ob.—3. To drink rum out of coco-nuts, from which the milk has been drawn off: nautical: 1833, Marryat; ob. —4. A monkey.—5. 'They're off', said the. A c.p., applicable esp. to a race; lower classes': C. 20.

monkey and the nut, a or the. 'The Cunard houseflag with its lion and globe': nautical: C. 20 Bowen.
MONKEY-BOARD

monkey-board. The conductor's or the footman's place on an old-style omnibus or on a carriage: coll. : 1842, Mrs. Trollope (O.E.D.); J. Greenwood. † by 1895.

monkey-boat. A small boat used in docks : 1858 (O.E.D.).—2, A long, narrow canal boat: 1864, H., 3rd ed. Both senses are nautical s. >, ca. 1890, j.; 1923.

Monk's Tarde is 'often applied derisively to an ugly face' (Collinson): from ca. 1910. Ex that well-known Lever Brothers' advertisement in which a monkey gazes at itself in a frying-pan.

monkey-cage. A grated room from which a convict sees his relatives and friends; low: from ca. 1870. Cf. Pr. parloir des singes.

monkey-coat, jacket. A close-fitting, short jacket, 'with no more tail than a monkey': nautical: 1830: s. >, ca. 1890, j.; N. Dans, 1830; R. H. Dans, 1840,—both monkey-jacket, app. orig. U.S.


monkey is up. See monkey up.—monkey-jacket. See monkey-coat.


monkey-monk. (Applied to persons.) An int den of monk or a pejorative of monkey: 1934, Richard Blaker, Night-Shift.

monkey-motions. Physical drill: military: ca. 1890—1914. (Ware.) Also naval: late C. 19—20; ob. (Bowen.)

monkey off one's back, take the. (Gen. in imperative.) To calm oneself: low (—1837). Bumann. See monkey up.

monkey on a gridiron, sit like a. To be a bad, or very ungraceful, horseman: coll. (—1229). Manchon.

monkey on a, gen. one's or the, house; monkey on or up the chimney. A mortgage on a house: mainly legal: 1875; ca. 1885. Ob. Cf. monkey with a long tail, q.v. 'Prob. suggested', says the O.E.D., 'by the initial m. of mortgage.' monkey on or up a stick. A thin man with jerky movements: coll.: ca. 1880—1920. Ex the now seldom seen toy so named (1820).

monkey on a wheel. A bicyclist: from ca. 1880; ob.


monkey on one's back, have a. Ca. 1880—1910 variant of monkey up, q.v.


monkey-pump. The straw in monkey, suck the, i., q.v.: nautical (—1867); ob. Smyth.

monkey-shines, monkey-like antics or tricks, is U.S. (1847) and has never been properly anglicised, though it was occ. heard, ca. 1875—1906, in Britain.

monkey-tail, hold on by somebody's. To take someone's word for a story: nautical (—1857). Baumann. Filling tale; cf. monkey about, (S.E. for) to play the fool.

monkey up, get one's. To make, but gen. to become, angry: s. (—1859) and dial. H. 1st ed. Also, in predominant sense, one's monkey is up (1863, O.E.D.) or † have or the monkey on one's back (—1864). Anon., 1877, Five Years' Penal Servi-
tudes, 'My monkey was up, and I felt savage': Rolf Boldrewood, 1888. The mare, like some women when they get their monkey up, was clean out of her senses.' 'Perhaps alludes to animal side brought uppermost by anger', W. Cf. back up, q.v.

monkey up, put one's. To anger a person: from ca. 1865. Cf. preceding entry.

monkey up the chimney. See monkey on a house and:

monkey with a long tail. A mortgage: legal (—1866); ob. Cf. monkey on a house, monkey up the chimney, q.v.


monkey's allowance. More rough treatment than money: 1785, Grose; Marryat, 1833, 'When you get on board you'll find monkey's allowance': s. >, ca. 1840, coll.; ob.

monkey's grease, (as) useless as. Useless: C. 18: coll. 'Proverbial' Fuller. (Monkeys are thin.)

monkey's island. An occ. variant of monkey island, q.v. (F. & Gibbons.)

monkey's money. Payment in kind, esp. labour, goods, or, most of all, fair words: ca. 1650—1800: coll. Urquhart, 1653, 'Paid for in court fashion with monkey's money': Cf. money, Spanish, q.v.

monkey's orphan. '19th century naval name for the disappearing ship's fiddler', Bowen.

monkey's parade. A (length of) road frequented by lads and lasses, esp. with a view to striking an acquaintance ('clicking'): (low) urban, esp. London: C. 20. Also monkey-parade (Addenda).


monkey is an occ. early variant of monkey (q.v.). Mayhew.

monk's rhubarb. Catachrestic when used of garden rhubarb: from ca. 1730. O.E.D.

Monmouth Street finery. Tawdry clothes, furniture, etc.; pretence, pretentiousness: ca. 1850—80: low coll. Mayhew. Monmouth (ca. 1890 > Dudley) Street was long a well-known market for second-hand clothes.

monnaker, monnaker, monnicker, monniker. See monnaker, monarch.


monodelph, (etc.) for monadelph, (etc.) is incorrect: from ca. 1828. As is monograph (e.g. in Albert Smith, 1849) for monogram. O.E.D.

monos. The 'King's schollar who at 4 p.m. announces, in Latin, the finish of the day's work': Westminster School (—1909). Ware. The Gr. word for 'alone'.

monosyllable. The female pudend; either polite s. or a vulgarism; ob. by 1880, † (except among the cultured) by 1915. Anticipated in Lucas's The Gamesters, 1714, thus, "Perhaps a bawdy monosyllable;—i.e. c*4t, — such as boys write upon walls", but app. first 'dictionaries' in 1788, Grose, 2nd ed. (which, by the way, has been shamefully neglected by lexicographers), as 'a woman's commodity' (see commodity). Omitted by O.E.D., as is c*4t (q.v.), the word both connote and denoted by the monosyllable, of which 'Jon Bee' remarks, in 1823, "of all the thousand mono-
syllables in our language, this one only is designated by the definite article; therefore do some men call it "the article", "my article", and "her article" as the case may be. For a fuller treatment, see my edition of Grose. (Lee says, 'Described by Nat Bailey as pudenda multeria'; I find it in neither the 1st ed., 1721, nor the supplementary volume, 1731.)

† l. mons, a mountain, or an abbr. of monster or monstrous.—2. (Gen. Mons.) A catastrophic abbr. of monsieur: C. 18-20; ob. ('Regarded in Fr. as intentional impertinence', W.)

Mons, gassed at. See gassed.—Mons, on the wire at. A variant of the preceding. F. & Gibbons. (There was no 'wire' at Mons.)

† ex the C. 15 gun in Edinburgh Castle.

[Monsbray. See 'Westminster School slang.]

monstrous, adj. An intensive (very great, iniquitous, etc.): coll.: ca. 1710-1840. Swift, 'We have a monstrous deal of snow'; F. Burney, 'this monstrous fatigue'; Cobbett, 'Here is a monstrous deal of vanity and egotism'. O.E.D.

monstrous, adv. A general intensive (cf. awfully, bloody, q.v.): coll.: ca. 1850-1850. Shakespeare, 'monstrous desperate'; Congreve; Mrs. Trollope, 'monstrous good friends'. (O.E.D.)

monteigh. Incorrect for monteith (C. 17-18), as monticole (C. 10-20) is for monticule. O.E.D.

month, a bad attack of the end of the. Shortness of money: jocular coll.: from ca. 1870. I.e. waiting for the month's salary to be paid.


month's end, an attack of the. See week's end.


mooch. An idling, 'scrounging', skulking, hanging about, looking for odd jobs. Hence, on the mooch, adj. and adv., engaged in one of these 'activities' in Wiltshire dial., shufflingly. H., 1st ed., 1859; The London Herald, March 23, 1867. Also mooch. (Cf. mike, q.v.) Ex the v.—2. See sense 5 of:

mooch, v. (Also mooch; cf. mike, q.v.) To idle, skulk, hang about (often with about); slouch (with along): low: ca. 1851, Mayhew. Also dial. Prob. ex mike, v., influenced by Fr. mucker, to hide, skulk.—2. 'To sponge, slink away and allow others to pay for your entertainment', Barrre & Leland: ca. 1855-1910. 'Ducange Anglicus.—3. V.t., to steal, pilfer: 1861, Mayhew (to steal things one finds lying about); ob. prob. c. > low s. and dial. O.E.D.—4. To be a tramp: tramp's c.: late C19 as a moolching. Cf. —5. 'To walk round and round the decks in company': Conway cadets (—1911). Also come (or go) for a mooch. John Masefield, The Conway, 1933. mooch, do a. See do a mike.


Moocheries or Muckeries, the. 'The Inventories' (Inventions Exhibition), held at South Kensington, London, in: 1855. Ex mooch, v.; Muckeries being a jocular perversion.


mooching, mouching. Vbl.n., see mooch, v.—2. Adj., from ca. 1860. Also dial.

moochy. See Mouchey, 2


mooé, mooey. See moey.


mooi. Fine; handsome: South African Midlands coll.: from ca. 1890. Ex the Dutch mooi (handsome, pretty, fine), which, among the Cape Dutch, 'has to do duty for almost every shade of appreciation', Pettman.

*mooon. A month's imprisonment: c.: 1830, Moncrieff, 'They've lumbered him for a few moons, that's all'. Hence, long moon, a calendar month. Cf. drag.

mooon, v. (Gen. with about, along, or around.) To idle, lounge, or wander, as in a dream: coll.: 1848, Albert Smith (O.E.D.); Charlotte Yonge, '... When you were mooing over your verses'.—2. Occ. v., with away, as in Besant & Rice, 1877, 'I might have mooed away the afternoon in the Park.'

mooon, a blue. See blue moon.

mooon, find an elephant in the. To find a mare's nest: ca. 1670-1830. Butler, The Elephant in the Moon. Ex the C. 17 Sir Paul Neal, who thought that a mouse in his telescope, as he looked through it, was an elephant in the moon.

mooon, shoof (occ. bolt or above) the. To depart, with one's valuables and, if possible, furniture by night without paying the rent: coll.: 1823, Egan's Grose, above († by 1870), c.; bolt, † by 1905, occurring in 1825, and shoof in 1837. O.E.D.

mooon-curer. A link-boy, esp. one that lights his clients into a pack of rogues: c.: 1873, Head; † by 1840. (In dial., a ship-wrecker.)

mooon-eyed hen. A squinting wench: ca. 1780-1890. Grose, 1st ed. (m.e. itself is S.E.).


mooon, God bless her I,—it is a fine. A proverbial c.p. greeting the new moon: from ca. 1670; ob. Aubrey. (Apperson.)

mooon is made of green cheese, make believe the. See cheese.

mooon, knows about Sunday, know no more about it than the. To know nothing about it: coll. (—1887); slightly ob. Baumann.

MOON-RAKER

coll. Shakespeare (moon's man); 1832, Sherwood, who defines as a brigand (O.E.D.).

moon-raker. A Wiltshire man: from ca. 1765; coll., slightly ob. Grose, 2nd ed., says that some Wiltshire rustics, seeing the moon in a pond, tried to rake it out: Wiltshire people prefer a more complimentary legend. The Moon-Rakers are the 62nd Foot, in late C. 19–20 the Wiltshire Regiment (military: late C. 18–20; ob.)—2. Hence, ca. 1820–1900, a smuggler: dial. (mostly) and coll.—3. A blockhead: from ca. 1840; ob.: coll. >, ca. 1900, S.E. Ex sense 1–4. A sail above the sky-sail, also an imaginary sail above the 'sky-scraper', q.v.: nautical, resp. (–1867) j. and (–1896) s.

moon-raking, vbl.n. and ppl.adj.: from ca. 1865; ob. Coll. >, ca. 1895, S.E. See moon-raker.

moon-shooter. See moon, shoot the. From ca. 1890.

mooner. A dreamy idler, lounging wanderer: coll. = 1848, Albert Smith. In C. 20, S.E.

moon-rise. A variant spelling of moon, q.v. Baumann, 1887.


moonlight. Smuggled spirits: from ca. 1809; > ob. ca. 1890. Scott. (O.E.D.) Ex the night-work of smugglers: cf. moonshine, q.v. (As v., S.E.) moonlight flit, flitting. A removal of household goods by night without paying the rent; resp. dial. (–1824) >, ca. 1865, s.; s. (–1721) >, ca. 1880, coll. O.E.D.; F. & H., where the occ. late C. 19–early 20 variant, London flitting, is recorded.

moonlight wanderer. One who does a 'moonlight flit' or 'London flitting': ca. 1820–70. "Jon Bee." See preceding entry.

moonlighter. A harlot: from ca. 1850; ob. (–The Anglo-Irish sense is S.E. as is moonlighting, n. and adj.)

moonraker. See moon-raker.—moon's man. See moon-man.

moonshine. A native teacher of an amanuensis in languages. This sense (1776) is prob. to be rated as 'standard': but as = a learned person (–1864), moonshine is coll. (H., 3rd ed.), as is 'Indian interpreter': military: late C. 19–20 (B. & P.). A so moonshee, munshi, munshee. (O.E.D.—Yule & Burnell).

moonshine. Smuggled spirits: 1785, Grose: coll. >, ca. 1890, S.E. Often with a specific sense: white brandy, in Kent, Sussex: gin, Yorkshire. Cf. U.S. o. shine.—2. In C. 20, it occ. = adulterated alcoholic liquor ('Lyell) and is, in this sense, to be considered coll.


moonshine, a mustard pot for it (in the). Nothing: coll.: ca. 1830–1700. Gen. preceded by one shall have. Cf. S.E. moon(shine) in (the) water. (Apperson.)


moonish is a variant (–1914) of mush, 4 (B. & P.); also of mush, 2.

mootch. See moonish.

mop. See Modern Babylon, list at.—2. A drinking-bout. Hence on the mop, on the 'drunk' or the drink. Low: from ca. 1860, ob. as is.—3. A drunkard, same period. Cf. lushtongue, q.v.; see also lushe.—4. Hair: lower classes' coll. (–1935).

Ex mop of hair.

mop, v. To empty a glass or pot: ca. 1670–1810. Cotton. Cf. mop up, 1.—2. To collect, obtain, appropriate: coll. from ca. 1850; † by 1905. Cf. mop up, 2.—3. (Gen. in passive.) To defeat heavily: 1910, P. G. Wodehouse, Psmith in the City, "This is pretty rocky... We shall get mopped." Cf. mop up, v., 7.—4. V.l., to hurry: Post Office telegraph-messengers' (–1935). Cf. mopping up the miles.

mop, chew the. See chew the mop.

mop down. To empty a glass, etc.: a C. 20 variant of mop up, v., 1. Gen. in form mop it down, to drink freely. See song in B. & P. at p. 40.

mop-eyed. See mop-eyed.

mop out. (Cf. wipe out, q.v.) To floor, kill; ruin (–1892); † by 1910: low. Gen. in passive. Millikin, 1892, in his Arty Ballads. Cf. mop up, v., 5.


mop-stick. A ninny, a simpleton: low (–1887); slightly ob. Baumann. Also mopstick.

mop (or wipe) the † earth, floor, † ground with one. (Occ. with up after mop.) To knock a person down (–1897).—2. Hence, in C. 20, to overcome easily. Cf. mop up, 7.

mop-up. A severe trouncing, in single fight or, gen., in battle: C. 20; ob. Conan Doyle, 1900, ‘Better six battalions safely down the hill than a mop up in the morning.’ O.E.D. The military mopping-up, not used before July, 1916 (if memory serves me aright,—though F. & Gibbons may be correct in dating it at Feb., 1917), is applied to the work done by the parties sent on after, or by the men left behind from, the attacking troops to clear the captured lines of a lurking foe and of obstructions. Also as adj., as in mopping-up party or, occ., wave: early 1917. By the end of the G.W., it had > j.

mop up, v. To empty (e.g. a glass): from ca. 1810. Lex. Bal. Cf. mop, v., 1, and mop down, qq.v.—2. Also, to eat: rare before ca. 1850.—3. To collect, obtain, appropriate: from ca. 1850. Mayhew.—4. V.l., to stop talking, gen. in imperative (–1887); ob.: Low. Walford, The Antiquarian, April, 1887.—5. To kill, slaughter: mainly military and naval (–1887). Baumann; Rider Haggard. Cf. the n., q.v. Cf. wipe out, q.v.—6. V.i. (absolute) and v.t., to capture or subject isolated machine-gun, bombing, and other posts after the main body of an attack has moved on: military: G.W.+. See B. & P. at mopping-up and cf. mopper-up,—7. Hence, or ex sense 5, to defeat utterly: s. (from ca. 1918) >, by 1930, coll. Lyell. 8. See mopping up the miles.

mope-eyed (occ. mop-eyed) by living so (or too) long a maid, you are. A proverbial coll. or o.c.p. of ca. 1645–1720. Herrick, Ray, B.E. (Lit., mope-eyed = purblind.) O.E.D.; Apperson.
moper. A deserter: military (— 1887); virtually †: Baumann.

mopes, these. Low spirits, esp. if shown: from ca. 1825: coll. till C. 20, then S.E.: Hone, ‘I have got the mopes’; Thackeray, O.E.D.

moph. A variant (Bee, 1823) of muf, a fool.


mopping-up, n. See mop up, n.—See mop up, v., 6.—Adj. to latter of these.

mopping up the miles, vbl.n. Speeding: motorists’ coll. (— 1936). Ex mop up, v., 2.

* mopy. Drunk: c.: from ca. 1829; † by 1915: Egan’s Grose.

mops, in the. A perversion, ca. 1830–1910, of in the mopes. See mopes.

mops and brooms, feel all. To be full of bitterness and sorrow: low (— 1887): Baumann.

mops(e)y. A (gen. short) homely or, esp. dowdy woman: late C. 17–20: coll. till ca. 1830, then S.E.; † by 1910: B.E., Grose. Ex mopsey, an endearment.


morai. Incorrect for marae or marai (human-sacrificial altar): from ca. 1780. O.E.D.

moral. Likeness; counterpart. Rare except in the very moral of: low coll.: 1757, Smollett; G. Parker, Smedley, ‘Rolf Boldrewood’. Slightly ob. Perhaps ex the † S.E. sense, a symbolical figure, but prob. by a sol. for model.—2. A ‘moral certainty’, which it was orig. and still mainly racing in 1861, Whyte-Melville; 1869, J. Greenwood, ‘Everything that is highly promising becomes, in the slang of the advertising tipster, a moral.’ (O.E.D.)

moral Cremorne, the. The Fisheries Exhibition of: 1883: Society, Ware, ‘So named because there had been no illumination fêtes since the closing of immoral Cremorne Gardens’.


Moral Surface, the. Sir Robert Peel (d. 1860). Bestowed by his enemies in allusion to hypocritical Joseph Surface in Sheridan’s School for Scandal.

Moray coach. A cart: from ca. 1805; ob.: Scots jocular call.

morb. get the. See got the morses.

morses, get the. More unnecessarily preceding comparative of adj. and adv.: in early Mod. English, permissible; since ca. 1720, only in poetry and when unintentional, hence sol. Cf. most.—2. The more, as in ‘more fool you!’: coll. (— 1834): Ainsworth; Baumann.—3. No more, as in ‘more she ain’t’; sol. (— 1887): Baumann.—4. Moreover: coll.: from ca. 1930. E.g. in The Daily Telegraph, Oct. 10, 1935 (boxing notes).


more sauce than pig, ca. 1670–1750, like more squeak than wool, C. 18, indicates greater show than substance. Proverbial coll.: resp. B.E. Swift; North. Cf. the C. 10–20 dial. more poke (bag) than puddling. Apperson.

more so, adv. An intensive, so representing the omitted part: coll. till C. 20, then S.E.: 1876, Besant & Rieke, ‘The English servant was dressed like his master, but “more-so”’ (O.E.D.). Often only more so (Milliken, 1892).

more than the cat and his skin, you can’t have. A semi-proverbial, non-aristocratic c.p. (— 1887); ob. A variant of having one’s cake and eating it. Baumann.

more war. A Cockney c.p. directed at a street quarrel, esp. among women: 1898. In reference to the Spanish-American War. (Ware.)

more wind in your jib! The c.p. of sailors in a ship with foul wind on meeting another with a fair wind: mid-C. 19–20: Bowen. (Thus will the wished’s ship gain a fair wind.)

moriah (occ. more-iah); moriah. That makes one desire more: coll.: from ca. 1706, though not in print till 1738. Swift, ‘Lady S. How do you like this tea, Colonel? ’ Col. Well enough, Madam; but methinks ’tis a little more-iah.

mopork (kind of a fellow). A ‘dull dog’; a fool: Australian coll.: from ca. 1840; very ob. R. Howitt, 1845; ‘Rolf Boldrewood’, 1890. Ex the bird named more properly mopoke. Morris, morgan-rattle. ‘A caw or stuck with a knob of lead at one or both ends, and short enough to be carried up the sleeve’: low s. (— 1902) ex dial. (— 1866); † by 1910, E.D.D. Prob. ex a man’s name. Cf. cosh and nedsy in analogous senses.

morgan, morgue. Erroneous for morgue (C. 19–20) and morga (C. 19–20). O.E.D.


*mork. A policeman: c. (— 1889): ob. Clarkson & Richardson. Prob. a corruption of Romany moi(o)k(4)er, a constable.
morley. See mauley (Borrow’s spelling, W.) morning. An early drink: 1718, Ramsey (O.E.D.); 1854, R. W. Van der Kiste: mostly Scots: coll. till ca. 1860, then S.E. Also, from ca. 1890, morning-rouser.—2. (morning!)} Good morn-

morning or morning to you !, or the top of the morning to you ! (Cheerily) good morning !: from ca. 1870: orig. and still mainly Anglo-Irish: col.

morning after the night before, the. A coll. c.p. applied to the effects, or to a person showing the effects, of a drinking-bout : C. 20, esp. Australian.


morning hills. † Winchester College term.

Mansfield, 1806, ’ On holidays and Remedies we were turned out for a couple of hours on to St. Catherine’s Hill . . . once before breakfast (Morning Hills), and again in the afternoon (Middle Hills).

morning-rouser. See morning, 1. Cf. eye- opener, q.v.

*morning sneak. One who robs houses or shops while—before the household is up or the staff arrived—the servant or the shopman is cleaning steps, windows, etc. c. (— 1812); ob. by 1890, † by 1920. Vaux.—2. In C. 18 c., the morning sneak is ’to walk about the Streets in a Morning bottime, and ’sping [sic] any Body to go out of Doors, then immediately the Thief goes in,’ as The Regulator, 1718, has it.

morning’s morning. A variant (ca. 1805-1914) of morning, 1.


moron. A half-wit: orig. (ca. 1922); U.S.; anglicised in 1929 as a coll. Norah James in Sleeveless Errand, Feb., 1929. (See O.E.D. (Sup.) and Mencken, The American Language.) Ex the technical sense, ’one of the highest type of feeble-minded’ (U.S.: 1910), itself ex Gr. μούπος, foolishly stupid.

morone. Incorrect for maroon: from ca. 1830. O.E.D.


morphology. See morphosis.

morris, morris. To be hanged: c. of ca. 1720-70. A New Canting Dict.—2. (Often with off. Grosse, 1st ed.) To decamp; depart: from ca. 1760; ob. Cowper, 1765; Grosse; Dickens; Grenville Murray, ’The follows . . . flit with them, and morris off to town in spring for better amusement.’—3. To move rapidly: sporting: ca. 1825-60. O.E.D.

morris (? morris) (? morris) do a. A variant (? from ca. 1770; ob.) of morris, 2.

Morse (or Mosse) caught his mare, as. Asleep.

seeing, catch.

*mort; occ. morse (early). A woman: c.: ca. 1530-1600. Awdelay; B.E., ’a Wife, Woman, or Wench’; Daresell.—2. A harlot; a near-harlot: from ca. 1565; c. † by 1910. Harman.—3. A yeoman’s daughter: c.: late C. 17-18. B.E.; Grosse. Also, late C. 18-19-20 only: Araban Burton. All senses prob. cognate with or ex Dutch mort as in mot-huye, a brothel (Hexham): note, however, that Dr. John Sampson, in The Times Literary Supplement of June 21, 1928, derived mort ex amoretta. (See Modern Babylon list.)

*mort, autem-, dimber-, kinchen. See autem, dimmer, kinchen.


mortal. Very great; ’awful’: coll. : from ca. 1715; ob. Countess Cowper, 1716, ’[They] take mortal pains to make the Princess think well of the Tories’; Dickens.—2. ’As an emphatic expiative (with any, every, or a negative)’: coll. : 1860. Jonson, ’By no mortal means (!): ’every mortal thing’, 1843. Cf. ’no earthly chance’—3. Tedi- ously long: 1820, Scott, ’Three mortal hours’; Stevenson, ’They performed a piece . . . in five mortal acts.’—4. Short for mortal drug (cf. at mortally): from ca. 1808: Scots and Northern coll. and dial.; ob. Jamieson’s Dict.; Stevenson & Osbourne. (For all four senses, O.E.D.)

mortality, adv. Excessively; ’deadly’: C. 15-20; ob. : S.E. till ca. 1750; then, as in Warburton, coll. till ca. 1820, after which it is low coll. (as in Thackeray’s ’mortal angry’) and dial. O.E.D. Cf.:


mortar-board. A treacher-cap, worn at universities and some Public Schools: coll. : 1863, ’Cuthbert Bede’, ’I don’t mind this ‘ere mortar-board’.


mortar. Eroncous for mourtry (C. 16-17); as mortne, mortné, for morté (C. 18-20). O.E.D.


1801. moschkenner. See moekkenner.

Moses !: by the holy (jumping mother of) Moses !; by the piper that played before Moses !; holy Moses !; walking Moses ! (A (low) coll. assurance: resp. from ca. 1858, ob. : 1876, Hindley (in full), ob. : 1890, Hume Nisbet, † : 1855, Strang; from before 1923, when in Manchon.


Moses, stand. Ca. 1790-1920: ’A man is said to stand Moses when he has another man’s bastard child fathered upon him, and he is obliged by the parish to maintain it,’ Grosse, 3rd ed. Contrast dial. say Moses, to make an offer of marriage (E.D.D.).—2. Hence, absolutely (of a man only). To adopt a child: lower classes; mid-C. 19-20. (Neil Bell, Crocus, 1938.)

mossey; occ. mosey off. To decamp; depart; quick: orig. (1838), U.S.; anglicised ca. 1890. (The other U.S. sense, to hasten, be ‘lively’, bustle about, has not been anglicised.) See esp. Thornton. * etymology.

mosey along. To jog along: orig. (— 1877), U.S.; anglicised ca. 1890; slightly ob. Kipling, 1891, ’I’ll mosey along somehow’ (O.E.D.).
most of you! all there but the. A low c.p. applied to copulation: from ca. 1860; † ob.

mot, mot. A girl: c.: 1785, Grose; ob. by 1880, † by 1915, except in Ireland, where it has, since late C. 19 (if not earlier), been used in low a., not necessarily pejoratively. But mot of the ken (Mayhew) = matron of the establishment. A thinned form of *mot. — 2. A harlot: c.: from ca. 1790; ob. Grose, Vaux, Maginn, Henley. A variant of *mot, q.v.


mote, v.i., with vbl.n. moting. To drive or ride in a motor-car: coll.: 1890–ca. 1907. A prospectus of June, 1890 (moting); The Westminster Gazette, Jan. 18, 1898, ‘Leaving London about midday we shall mote to Ascot.’ O.E.D.

moth. A harlot: from ca. 1870; very ob.: low. Either ex the attraction of night-lights or ex † S.E. sense, ‘vermin’.

Mother. A Western Front nickname for various big howitzers (O.2’s). F. & Gibbons. A 12-inch was gen. called grandmother; a 15-inch, great-grandmother (B. & F.).

mother. See list at Modern Babylon.— 2. A female bawd: low coll.: late C. 17–20, but in C. 18 gen., and in C. 19–20 only, applied to the keeper of a brothel. B. & C. Grose. Also, in reference, the mother. Also mother abess (C. 18–mid-19; see abess), m. damnable, q.v., m. midnight, q.v., mother of the maids, q.v.—3. Abbr. (— 1809) mother and daughter. Ware.

mother F, did you tell your mother. See mother know...

mother, he’ll be a man before his. A derisive c.p. either in retort or, more gen., in comment: from C. 17; ob. Not in polite circles.


mother know you’re out? does your. A derisive c.p. addressed to a person showing extreme simplicity or youthful presumption: 1838, in Bentley’s Miscellany. ‘ “How’s your mother? Does she know that you are out?” ’ (O.E.D.) Baumann, 1887, has what will your mother say? and did you tell your mother? — 2. Also in more gen. circumstances (— 1880). Both uses, slightly ob. by 1915; now moribund.
mother makes it, like. Very well cooked; extremely tasty; lower classes' coll.: late C. 19-20. Collinson. Prob. with allusion to many married men's stock complaint, 'Umph! not like (my) mother makes it.'


mother of all saints or souls,—of masons,—of St. Patrick. The female pudend: low: resp. G. A. Stevens, 1785; Grose, 3rd ed. (say 1791), likewise ob.; ca. 1810-70; 'Jon Bee': Lex. Bal., 1811. Anglo-Irish and ob. All are low.


Mother of the Modern Drama. A certain English actress that, in 1884, 'took up high matronly ground in a lecture...at Birmingham': theatrical: 1884—ca. 1910. Ware. She spoke of retiring at the age of forty: she had already passed that age.

mother sold her mangle?, has your. An urban (mostly London) o.p. of no special application; somewhat low: ca. 1870-1900.

mother or grandmother to suck eggs, teach one's. See eggs.

mother's blessing, or M.B. Proterarian (—1861; ob.), as in Mayhew, 'My husband's bedridden, and can't do nothink but give the babies a dose of 'Mother's Blessing' (that's laudanum, air, or some sick stuff) to sleep 'em when they's squally.'

mother's meeting. 'The captain's address to a ship's company': naval (bluejackets') from ca. 1912. F. & Gibbons.


mother's (or mothers') ruin. Gin: late C. 19-20. Perhaps it is rhyming s.

mother's white-haired boy. A mother's darling: coll., gen. derivative: from ca. 1895.


*not. See mock,—motte, the mons veneris, is very doubtfully eligible.

mote. 'Name given to the motor carriage on its very first official appearance in London on Lord Mayor's Day, 1896': Cockneys: 1896-8 (or 9). Ware. motting, vbl.n. Wenching; whoring: C. 19-20 low; ob. Ex mot, v., q.v.

mot, dull, boring; disgusting: from ca. 1929; very ob. A. A. Milne, Two People, 1931 (see quotation at throw up).


mouch, moucher, mouching. See resp. mooch, moocher, mouching.


mought, v. Might: once (C. 18-17) S.E.; now only dial. and sol. (O.E.D.; Manchon.)

moulder. 'A lumbering boxer, one who fights as if he were moulding clay,' Bos, 1823: pupil's: ca. 1820—1900.

mouldies. Old clothes: mould the mouldies, get rid of, change, one's old clothes: Cockney: 1895, James Greenwood, Inside a Bus. i.e. clothes going mouldy. Cf. moudly, adj.—2.


mouldly-grub. (Gen. in pl.) A travelling showman: an open-air mountebank: low: from ca. 1860; ob. H., 3rd ed. Hence, vbl.n., mouldy-grubbing, the work of such persons. In S.E., the term is ‡ for multigrube.

mouldly one or ‡. A copper coin: low: from ca. 1850; ob. Ex colour.


mouche-present (as in Awdelay). See mouch-present.

mousser or Moureuse. A Frenchman: mid-C. 17-20: S.E. till C. 19, then (low) coll. when not jocular S.E.; ob. W. S. Gilbert, e.g. in Ruddigore. Cf. mousoo, q.v. Baumann, 1887, has the nautical Mousser Cockools, which was ‡ by 1930.


*Mount. the, London Bridge: o. (—1718); ‡ by 1900. C. Hitchin, The Regulator. In approaching it, one mounts a raise.

Mount Pleasant. The *muns veneris*: low; from ca. 1880; ob. Ex the London district and the public eminence. Cf. Shooter’s Hill.

**mount the ass.** To go bankrupt; coll.; late C. 18–mid-19. Ex the old Fr. custom of mounting a bankrupt on an ass, face to tail, and leading him through the streets.

**mount the cart.** To be hanged; lower classes’ coll.; C. 19–early 19. Ware. The victima proceeded in a cart to the place of execution.

**mountain-dew.** Scotch whiskey; 1816; Scott; coll.; >, ca. 1860, S.E. Bee, 1823, defines it, however, as contraband whiskey.

**mountain of piety; climb the.** To pawn some of one’s effects; jocular coll. (— 1891); ob. By itself, *mount(ain)* of piety is S.E., C. 17–20, ob.

**mountain-pecker.** A sheep’s head; low (— 1898); † by 1910. H., 1st ed. Cf. *jemmy*, b., q.v.


*mounter.* A swearer of false evidence, a giver of false bail; c.: from ca. 1780; ob. Implicit in G. Parker, 1781; Vaux. Ex mount, v., 4.

**Mounties, the.** The Canadian *Mounted Police* Portal: from ca. 1890; Canadian a., >, ca. 1930, coll. Occ. in singular, a member of that force. See esp. the cinema.—2. Hence, the Camel Corps in Egypt: coll. (— 1931). O.E.D. (Sup.).

**Mournful Maria.** ‘The Dunkirk syren, employed to give warning of enemy air attacks and long-range shelling’: military: 1916–18. F. & Gibbons.

**Mournful Monday.** The day (Oct. 30, 1899) of the British defeat by the Boers at Nicholson’s Neck: journalistic coll. > S.E.; late 1899–ca. 1905. O.E.D.

**mourning.** The adj. (bruised) is S.E.—2. As n., two black eyes. Hence, *half-mourning*, one black eye. Gen., however, in *mourning*, bruised, black, either (of eyes) to be in *mourning* or (of persons) have one’s eyes in *mourning*; mostly pudglistic: 1814 (O.E.D.), *The Sporting Magazine*; 1820, John Corcoran Reynolds. See also *Blackwall*.—3. Both w.h. forms are likewise, from ca. 1890, applied to dirty finger-nails.

**mourning,(full) suit of.** Two black eyes (— 1864). H., 3rd ed.

**mourning-band.** A dirty, esp. a black, edge to a finger-nail: from ca. 1880.

**mourning-coach horse.** ‘A tall, solemn woman, dressed in black and many inky feathers’: London middle classes: ca. 1850–90. Ware.

**mourning shirt.** As an unlaundered shirt, it is jocu.r S.E. (C. 17–19).—2. A flannel shirt, since it requires comparatively infrequent laundering (— 1908). O.E.D.

**mouse.** A raised bruise; pudglistic: 1854, ‘Cuthbert Bede’; ob. Ex the blush colour.—2. Hence, a black eye (cf. *mourning*, q.v.): from ca. 1860. H., 3rd ed.; 1885, *The Westminster Gazette*, ‘A black eye in true cockney slang is known as a mouse’. F. & H. says that it is also — the face, the mouth: prob. this is fleeting s. of the 1890’s, but I find no other record of these two senses.—3. The penis; low: C. 19–20; ob.—5. A woman, esp. a harlot, arrested for brawling or assault: London police’s: ca. 1780–1800. R. King, 1781 (O.E.D.).—6. A barrister; occ. a solicitor (cf. the c. sense of *mouthpiece*): ca. 1888–1910; low (? orig. c.). Nat Gould.

**mouse! Be quiet, or talk low!; softly! low:** C. 19. Mostly U.S.

**mouse, (as) drunk as.** Very drunk: C. 14–20; ob.: proverbial coll. Orig. (as) drunk as a drowned mouse.


**mouse-foot i, (by).** A mild coll. oath: ca. 1560–1640. A. Dent, 1801, ‘I know a man that will never swear but by Cooke, or Pie, or Mouse Foot. I hope you will not say these be oaths.’

**mouse-hunt.** A wenchers; coll.: late C. 16–mid-17. Shakespeare. † also mouse-hunter.


**mouse-piece or -buttock.** (In beef or mutton) that part immediately above the knee-joint: coll. and dial.: C. 19–20; ob. In S.E., mouse.

**mouse tied with a thread, as sure as a.** Very far from sure: proverbial coll.; ca. 1540–1600. ‘Proverbs’ Heywood. (Apperson.)

**mouse-trap.** The mouth; low: C. 19–20; ob.—2. The female pudend: low: from ca. 1850; ob.—3. A sovereign: low: ca. 1855. Ex a fancied resemblance of the crown and shield to a set trap’, F. & H.

**mouse-trap, the person’s.** Marriage; late C. 17–19. B.E.; Grosse, 1st ed.

**mouser.** The female pudend, the cat (q.v.); low: C. 19–20; ob.—2. A battalion man, because, like a cat, he remains in quarters, to watch the mice; militia: C. 19. C. James, in *His Military Dict.*, 1802 (O.E.D.).—3. A detective (— 1863; ob.): low (? orig. c.). O.E.D.

**mouses.** See mice.

**mouseron, a C. 18 error for *mouseron*, a white mushroom. O.E.D.**

**mouth.** See list at Modern Babylon.—2. A noisy, prating, ignorant fellow; late C. 17–mid-19; anticipated in Shakespeare. Dyche. Cf. mouth *almighty*, q.v.—3. A dupe (Cotton, 1680); hence, a fool (1753, Poulter): c. >, as in H., 3rd ed., old s.; ob.—4. Spoken impudence (cf. cheek and esp. lip, q.v.): C. 19–20; ob. Not very gen.—5. The dry or furry mouth caused by a debauch: low coll.; from ca. 1870. ‘He has a mouth this morning.’ Cf. hot copper.

**[mouth, down in the, the dejected, is S.E. (C. 17–20); since ca. 1800, almost coll.]**

**mouth, occ. face, laugh on the wrong (occ. other side of one’s, is S.E., but sing on the ... is coll.; from ca. 1760.**

**mouth, shoot one’s.** See shoot off one’s mouth and shoot one’s mouth off.

**mouth i, shut your.** Stop talking!; low coll. (— 1893). Cf. Fr. ferme !


**mouth and will drain a lip, you are a.** A low, abusive c.p. of ca. 1890–93. H., 3rd ed. Ex mouthy, n., 2, (esp.) and 1.

**mouth-bet.** A verbal bet: the turf; from ca. 1860; ob.

**mouth half cocked.** A person gaping and staring
MOUTH LIKE THE

ignorantly at everything he sees; coll.: late C. 17–early 19. B.R., Grose (1st ed.).

mouth like the bottom of a bird-cage or (Manchon) parrot-cage, have a; or one’s mouth feels like the bottom, etc. To have a ‘mouth’ after drinking: from ca. 1920.

mouth-organ. A Stokes-mortar bomb: military: 1916; ob. F. & Gibbons. From the sound made by the air passing through the holes round the base of the shell as it starts.

mouth-piece. A feminine secluding or wrangle; Cockneys’ (—1909). Ware.


mouth that cannot bite or says no words about it. The female pudend: C. 18–mid-19: low coll.; occ. euphemistic S.E. D’Urfey (latter form).

mouth wide, open one’s. To ask a high price: coll.: from ca. 1850. C. Roberts, 1891, ‘To use a vulgarian, he did not open his mouth so wide as the other’ (O.E.D.). In C. 20, often of things other than money and occ. open one’s mouth too wide.

mouther. A blow on the mouth: boxing: 1814 (O.E.D.); slightly ob.

mouchloul. A long word, esp. a name, that ‘fills’ the mouth: coll.: 1884. O.E.D. Cf.: mouchoul, say a. To say something important or arresting: U.S. (ca. 1920), anglicised in 1929. (O.E.D. Sup.)

mouldful of moonshine, give one s. To feed on fair words: late C. 18–mid-19: coll. Ray, ed. of 1813. (Apperson.)


movables. See moveables.

move, a (gen. clever or sly) action or movement, is S.E., but flack to (e.g. every move), 1812, was perhaps orig. c. (? by 1900), fly to... (see fly) is low s.; up to (—1859), perhaps orig. coll., is S.E. in C. 20.

move, v.i. To depart, make a start; move away or off: mid-C. 15–20; S.E. till ca. 1760, then coll. Toldervy, Haliburton. O.E.D.

move off. To die: coll.: from ca. 1760; ob. Foote, Whether from the fall or the fringe, the Major mov’d off in a mouth’ (O.E.D.). Cf. go off.

move on, get a, v.i. To hurry; make progress: coll.: orig. U.S.; anglicised ca. 1907. (Lyell.)

move the previous question. To speak evasively: Society (—1909); ob. Ware. Ex Parliamentary j.


move(s)ables is S.E. except ca. 1690–1830 in the sense of swords, jewellery, watches, small objects of value, which is c. B.E., Grose.

move, merely move. Of the cinema: from ca. 1914: c. coll. Esp. in a movie star. Ex:—2. A moving picture: coll., orig. (1906 or 1907) U.S., anglicised ca. 1913. Much less gen. than the derivative:

movies. Moving pictures: the cinema: U.S. (—1913), anglicised as a coll. ca. 1917. W.,

MOUTH LIKE THE MOVING-PICTURE SLANG

"Slang" the "Movies" Have Made", reprinted—with many thanks to the proprietors and the editor—from Tit-Bits, March 31, 1934, date, in England, from ca. 1930:

The visitor to a foreign country expects to hear the natives speaking a tongue, which is unlike his own, but it comes as a surprise to a visitor to a modern studio to find the technicians and artists speaking one of the strangest languages ever evolved.

1 Every trade and profession has its own jargon, but the film world has a colourful compilation of expressions unlike those in other walks of life.

2 “Niggers” are not men of colour, but blackboards used to “kill” unwanted reflections from the powerful lights. The latter, however, are not called lights but “inks” (short for incandescent), or “sun arcs” (searchlights), or “baby spots” (powerful lamps giving a very narrow beam), or “broads” (lights which give flat, over-all lighting). “Spiders” are the switches into which connections are plugged. When it is bristling with cables on all sides it is not unlike a giant spider. The "organ" is not a musical instrument but a control panel which enables the technicians to start up the cameras and sound-recording apparatus, switch on red warning lamps outside the doors, and cut out all telephones.

3. "Turpentine" is not a young lady, but a giant steel crane, with a camera at its head, which enables shots to be taken of players going up staircases or along balconies. "Dollies", too, have nothing to do with femininity; they are the low trucks, with pneumatic-tyred wheels, on which cameras follow stars as they hurry through hotel foyers or along the decks of liners.

4. Here are some more studio terms. "Juicers" are electricians; "lens hogs" are stars who are over-anxious to hold the dead centre of the picture. A "wild" scene has nothing to do with Hollywood parties, it is the terse description for scenes, usually of cars, aeroplanes or trains, which have appropriate fake sounds added in the laboratory after they have been photographically recorded.

5. When a film is completed it is "in the can". Every time a scene is successfully "shot" it is called "a take"; the whole of the day’s "takes" are then assembled and shown to the producer in a private projection room, but are then known as "the rushes" or "the dailies". Exposed film is "staff"; unexposed film is "raw stock". If too much film has been shot on a scene, the surplus is known as "grief". The chemicals in which film is developed are known as "soup".

6. But not all studio terms are coined; as in other walks of life, many of the expressions used today over nothing to slang and everything to tradition.

7. For instance, a broadly funny situation is known as "a Mack Sennett"; a film cheaply and hurriedly made is known as "A Poverty Row Picture", in commemoration of the days when Gower Street, Hollywood (nicknamed Poverty Row), was the home of small independent companies turning out pictures quickly and cheaply.

8. "To do a Gaynor" means to smile upwards through eyes swimming with tears, a tribute to Janet Gaynor’s ability to switch on the “sunshine through the tears”.

Moving-Picture Slang. Most of the terms in the following short article, *It Is Said in Filmland:*

1 The paragraph-numbers are not in the original. (Editor.)

2 This is S.E. (Editor.)
mow. To copulate with: Scots and Northern dial, or coll.: C.18—early 19. The word, occ. as a n., survived in low s. till late C. 19. Scots, either dial, or coll., is mowdikwark or -wort, the penis.

Coles, 1676. Ex the drovers' habitat of sleeping on hay mows (Grose, 2nd ed.).

*mower. A cow: c.: ca. 1670—1830. Coles, 1676. From the version of moor, q.v.


moxsy. Judy; cf. Swatchell, Punch. Showmen’s: from ca. 1890. \( \text{via} \) Lingua France ex It. moglie, wife.

Mr. See mister.—Mr. and Mrs. Wood. See Wood in front.—Mr. Burton’s Night School. See Cæs, the.—Mr. Ferguson, Knap, Mackenzie, Nash, Palmer, Pullen, Right, Smith. See each name.

Mr. Whip. See Billy Blue.

Mrs. An occ. written form of missis (missus), q.v. \( \text{—See Modern Babylon list.} \)


Ex Mrs. Gamp and her imaginary friend Mrs. Harris in Dickens’s Martin Chuzzlewit and the way those inter-uppealing newspapers had of pretending to be independent.

Mrs Green. See sleep with Mrs Green.

Mrs Jones. A water-closet: low: from ca. 1890; ob. H., 2nd ed. Gen. as exist or go to see Mrs. Jones. Cf. my aunt’s and Sir Harry.

Mrs. Kell(s)aya l, you must know. A c.p. ‘with no particular meaning’, gen. addressed to ‘a long-winded talker’: London: 1898—1905. Ex a ‘phrase used for two years at all times and places by Dan Leno’. Ware.

Mrs. Langtry. See Langtries.

*Mrs. Lozky Props. A female brothel-keeper: tramps’ c. (—1896); ob.

Mrs. Partington. ‘A personification of impotent and senile prejudice’: 1831; ob.: coll. >, ca. 1890, S.E. Sydney Smith.—2. Also, ‘a kind of Malaprop’, F. & H.; coll., in C. 20 verging on S.E. but very ob. Besant & Rice, 1872, ‘As Mrs. Partington would say, they might all three have been twins.’

Mrs. Suda. A washerwoman, a laundress: 1757, Foote; ob.: coll.

M’shall we make. To be drunk, esp. walk unsteadily, printers: from ca. 1860.

M’s or MSS (earlier MSS\( ^1 \)), as a singular, is catachrestic. Written only.


much? how. See how much.

much!, not. Not likely or certainly not! coll.: from ca. 1885.


much of a . . . , with a negative. A great . . . .

. . . of a noteworthy quality or to any great degree. Coll.: from ca. 1840. Dickens, ‘He don’t lose much of a dinner.’ In C. 20, gen. of persons, e.g. ‘not much of a scholar’, O.E.D.

much of a muchness. Of much the same size, degree, value or importance; very much alike; coll.: 1728, Vanbrugh (O.E.D.): 1860, Punch; 1876, G. Eliot, ‘Gentle or simple, they’re much of a muchness.’

much wit as three folks—two fools and a madman. Always preceded by as; gen., also with base. (To be) tolerably clever or cunning; also (to be) a fool. A derisive c.p. bordering on the proverbial. Mostly Cheshire. Ray, Lyttton. (Apperson.)

[muchly is jocular S.E.—S.E. also are much (money), muck-worm (a miser), muckender or -inder, muckender or mokerer or mucker (a miser), muddle, n. and v., muddle away, muddle-head, muff- or muffle-cap, muggy (of weather), muggle, mule (obstinate person), mull, a cow (also dial.), mum (see mum), mum-budget, mumble-crust, mum-bumbo, munciance, munning-show, (beat to) a mummy, mumpish, mumps, mumpsimus, mundungus or -go, n. (tobacco: verging on coll.) and adj. (sinking: ditto), mushroom (upstart), muss (an endearment), (dead as) mutton, mutton-head, (return to one’s) muttons, muddle (the mouth; to kiss); muzzard like muddle, to coot with (a woman), and mugger, a hawk, a Gypsy, is dial. —All are wrongly listed by F. & H.]

mucidine is an error for mucidin(e): from ca. 1870. O.E.D.

muck. In run a muck = run amuck, muck is catachrestic: 1867 (S.O.D.); rare in C. 20.—2. A very unditary, an uncleanly condition: (low) coll.: 1766, Goldsmith, ‘She observed, that “by the living jingo, she was all of a muck of sweat.”’


Ware.—8. A heavy fall, lit. or fig.: from ca. 1892; ob. Abbr. mucker, q.v.; see also mucker, go a.—9. A failure: Public Schools’ coll.: late C. 19—20. D. Coke, The Bending of a Twig, 1906, ‘Make a muck of it.’ Cf. sense 6 of:

muck. To make dirty: from ca. 1830; S.E. till ca. 1885, then coll. (increasingly low).—2. F. & H.’s ‘to spend’ is almost certainly an error for, and caused by the quotation below;—3. To excel; beat: low: from ca. 1850; ob. Mayhew, ‘He’d muck a thousand!’—4. Hence, to ruin (a person): low: from ca. 1890. Milliken, ‘I’m mucked, that’s a moral’—5. To fail in or at: 1899, Kipling, ‘I shall muck it. I know I shall’ (O.E.D.). Cf. muck up, 2.—6. See;
MUCK!

[Muck, mucker, mucking, have from ca. 1915 represented "f*ck", etc. Except when used jocularity, these are mere printers' words; and even when jocular, they derive from these letter-equivalences of the actual vulgarisms and are deliberate. Frequent in War books of 1929-30, and since. A century hence, some curious errors will arise in respect of muck = "f*ck", etc.]

muck, chief. (Of a person) a trump: low (1887); ob. Baumann. Cf.: Muck, Lord. A person unjustifiably, or in the speaker's opinion unjustifiably, important or esteemed: (low) coll.: from the 1890's. Prob. suggested by the preceding term.

muck about. To fondle or caress very intimately: low, mostly costers': from ca. 1860. Stronger than mess about, q.v.—2. V.i., wander aimlessly; potter about: s. >, ca. 1915, coll.: 1896, Kipling, 'Our Colonel . . . mucks about in 'orsipal' (O.E.D.).

muck and halfpenny after. A bad, pretentious dinner: lower-middle classes' (1909); virtually ↑. Ware.

muck and truck. Miscellaneous articles: commerce (1898); ob. O.E.D.

muck-cheap. 'Dirt-cheap': coll.: from ca. 1870; ob. Ex muck, n. 3. Cf. the Fr. saléenct bon marché (Manchon).

muck-fork. A finger; occ. a hand: low: from ca. 1850.


muck in, v.i. To share rations, sleeping quarters and certain duties; an informal method and group, this social unit of the Army was arranged by the men themselves and respected by N.C.O.'s; it protected and furthered its own interests. Military (rare outside of English units): 1915-—. See esp. though passim, Frederick Manning's Her Privates W'e, p. 1930; and B. & P. at mucking-in (3rd ed., p. 141).—2. Hence, v.t., muck in with. F. & Gibbons.

muck of, make a. A coll. variant of muck up, 2: from late C. 19.

muck out. To clean out (of money); ruin: low: from ca. 1855. H., 1st ed.


muck-smoke. A foul-mouthed Talker: low: from ca. 1870; ob.


*muck toper feeker. An umbrella-maker: Scots c.: ca. 1820-80. Egan's Grose. Prob. the form should be muck-topper feeker: see muck and mush-faker.


muck up. To litter: late C. 19-20: (low) coll. Mrs. Caffyn, 'Mucking up my rooms' (O.E.D.).—2. To spoil, ruin, e.g. a person but esp. a plan: from ca. 1885. Cf. muck, v., 4. Baumann.—3. Hence, as n., a complete failure; confusion or muddle.


mucker. (See the muck, mucker, mucking entry.—) 2. A heavy fall: from ca. 1850. Esp. in come or (ob.) go a mucker: often fig., come to grief. Kingsley, 1852, 'Receiving a mucker' (lit., of a horse); J. Payn, 1876, 'A regular mucker' (fig.). Because frequently caused by road-filth or muck. O.E.D.—4. A quartermaster: military: ca. 1885-1910.

mucker, v. To have a heavy fall; hence fig., come to grief: from ca. 1860; ob. Kingsley.—2. V.t., to ruin (one's chances): 1869, 'W. Bradwood' (O.E.D.). Ob. . .

Muckeries, the. See Muckeries, the. muckhill at one's door, have a good. To be rich: proverbial coll.: ca. 1670-1720. Ray. Here, as in next, muckhill = dung-heaps. (Mostly rural.)

'muckhill on my trecher', quoth the bride,—'you make a'. A c.p. of ca. 1670-1750 and = you carve me a great heap. Ray, Fuller. (Apperson.)


mucking-about. A 'messing about': s. >, coll.: from ca. 1905.—2. An intimate fondling: low (mostly costers'): from ca. 1880. See muck about.

mucking-togs; muckintogs. A mackintosh: low perversion: 1842, Barham; ob. mucking-in, vbl.n. and ppl.adj. See muck in.

Muckle Flugga Hussars, the. 'The ships on the Northern Patrol of the 10th Cruiser Squadron': naval: 1915-18. Bowen. Ex Muckle Flugga, the most northerly of the Orkneys.

mucko. Orderly man: military: C. 20. B. & P. He did the dirty work.


mud, clear as, (very) obscure, is S.E., but sure as mud, absolutely certain, is school s.: 1899, Eden Phillpotts (O.E.D.): slightly ob. mud, mad as. See mad as mud.

mud, one's name is. One has been heavily defeated; one is in disgrace: from ca. 1820. "And his name is mud!" ejaculated upon the conclusion of a silly creation, or of a leader in the Courier", 1823, 'Jon Bee'. See also mud: the sense has changed, for in C. 20 mire, not a dull fool, is understood to be the origin.

MUD-GUNNER

1838, in Bentley's Magazine; referred to by C. Dickens, Jr., in Household Words, May 1, 1866. Ca. 1860-75, was rarely used for other than the British Association for the Promotion of Science, esp. at the universities: H., 2nd to 5th edd. Coll.: † by 1890.

mud-gunner. (Gen. pl.) A machine-gunner: military, mostly Australian: 1916; virtually †. Rare and possibly ex a mis-hearing of mug-gunner, q.v.

mud-head or mudhead. A stupid person: coll.: 1838, Haliburton; D. C. Murray, 1883, 'That old m.-h.' The adj., mud-headed, 1793, is S.E. but likewise ob. O.E.D.


mud-hole. A salt-water lagoon in which whales are captured: F. & H.: 'whalers' (— 1893); coll. †; ca. 1910, J. Ex the churning-up of the water.


*mud-lark or mudlark. A waterside thief that, hiding under a ship at low tide, receives small stolen packets from the crew: o. (— 1760). By 1820, a sea-shore scavenger, who often waded out to his, or her, waist. The first in Colquhoun's Police of the Metropolis, the second (also mud-larker, or mudlarker) in Egan's Grose and in Mayhew; the first, ob. by 1890, the second > s. by 1850, coll. by 1880. Suggested by skylark:—3. A man that scavenges in gutters, esp. for metal, e.g. horse-nails: o. or low: ca. 1820-50. Bee.—4. Hence an official cleaner of common sewers: coll. (— 1869); ob. H., 1st ed.; Ogilvie.—5. A street arab: coll.: 1895, The Saturday Review, July 4. O.E.D.—6. A member of the Royal Engineers: military coll. (— 1878). O.E.D.—7. Any person that, belonging to bank, counting-house, etc., has often, in the course of his work, to be out in the open air: City (London): from ca. 1860; ob. H., 1st ed.—8. A hob: ca. 1870-1830. Grose (1st ed.), who does not, as stated by F. & H., father, 


mud-major. An infantry major: military (— 1896); † by 1915. Because, on parade, he was on foot. Cf. mud-crusher and mud-picker, q.v.


mud-pick. 'The pilot who takes a ship from Gravesend to the entrance of her dock': nautical: late C. 19-20. Bowen.


mud-player. A batman fond of a wet wicket: cricket: ca. 1890-1914.

mud-plunger. An infantryman: (mainly) military: from ca. 1890; ob. Cf. mud-crusher, q.v., and see 'Soldiers' Slang of Three Nations' in Words.

*mud-plumbing. A tramping through mud in search of alms: tramps' o. from ca. 1880. The Daily Telegraph, Feb. 8, 1883.

mud-pusher. A crossing-sweeper: urban lower classes': from ca. 1870. Ware.

Mud-Salad Market. Covent Garden: low London: from the late 1870's; ob. Punch, Aug. 14, 1880, 'Mud-Salad Market belongs to his Grace the Duke of Mudford [1]. It was once a tranquil Convent Garden.'

mud-show. An outdoor show, esp. an agricultural one: Society (— 1890); ob. Ware.

mud-slinger; —slinging. A slanderer; slander: coll. (orig. low): from ca. 1890.


mudding-face. A fool; a soft fellow; low: ca. 1870-1915. Presumably ex mud, a fool, and prob. by a pun on pudding-face.


muddle on. Though half-drunk, to continue drinking: coll.: late C. 17-18. B.E.

muddler. A clumsy horse: turf coll.: from ca. 1886; ob.


mudlark. See mud-lark.—mudlarker. See mudlarker.

muff. The female pudend, outwardly: late C. 17-20; ob.: orig. o.; by 1920, low. B.E., who quotes the toast, to the well-wearing of your muff, mort.—2. 'A foolish silly person': Vaux, 1512: orig. o. > by 1880, gen. s.; ob. Ca. 1850-75 it occurs, connoted weakness of mind: H., first five edd. H., 2nd ed., 'muff has been defined to be "a soft thing that holds a lady's hand without squeezing it."' Perhaps (cf. sense 1) ex (the softness of a) muff, the covering for female hands; Vaux less prob. suggests that it is a perversion of mouth, 3.—3. Whence, orig. in athletic sport, a clumsy and/or a stupid person: 1897, Dickens, 'Now butter-fingers' "— Muff", and so forth' (O.E.D.); s. >, ca. 1880, coll.—4. A failure: 1871, Punch, Feb. 25, of a book; ob. Esp. (1896), anything badly bungled. Coll. Ex the v.—5. See muff, not to say.—6. A buff, i.e. a muffling-pad attached to a clapper: bell-ringers' (— 1901). H. Earle Bulwer, A Glossary of Bell-Ringing, 1901. Abr. muffler.

muff. To bungle, physically or otherwise, esp. at games: 1846, 'Muffed their batting' (Lewis); 1897, G. A. Lawrence, 'I don't see why you should have muffed that shot.' V. >, to fail in an examination: 1884, Julian Sturgis: orig. Eton College s. >, ca. 1890, gen. coll.; ob.
muff, not to say; say neither muff nor mum. To say not a word: mid-C. 16-20: coll. till C. 18,
then dial. Stapylton. Ex muff, an echoic word 'representing an inarticulate sound', O.E.D.


muffin-counselman or -face. A hairless one, says F. & H.; an expressionless one, says the O.E.D. with reason: resp. 1823, ob. and 1777 (I. Jackman). Whence:

**muffin-faced.** Having an expressionless face: C. 19-20, ob. Boe, however, in 1823, implies that it indicates a face with protruding muscles: † by 1890.

**muffin-fight; muffin-worry.** A tea-party: coll. resp. ca. 1885-1910 and 1890, H., 2nd ed. (also in Ouida, 1877). O.E.D. Cf. bun-worry, tea-fight.

**muffin-puncher.** A muffin-baker: Cockney's (— 1909). Ware.

**muffin-wallower.** (Gen. pl.) A scandal-loving woman delighting to meet others at a tea-table: London middle classes: ca. 1890-1914. Ware.


**muffiness.** The quality of being a muff, 2, 3, q.v.: coll. ca. 1858, Farrar (O.E.D.).

**muffism.** Foolishness; an action typical of a muff, 2, 3, q.v.: coll. ca. 1858, Lady Lyttton: coll. ob. by 1900, almost † by 1930. (O.E.D.)

**muffle.** A boxing-glove, is prob. S.E. (ca. 1810-40).

So, perhaps, is:

**mufflers, in the same sense:** mid-C. 18-20; ob.—2. A stunning blow: boxing: ca. 1820-1905.—3. A crape mask: 1838, Glassock: ℹ; ob. Ex the much earlier S.E.

**muffling-feast.** A napkin; a towel: ℹ of ca. 1590-1840. Harman; Grose, 1st ed.

**mutti.** Plain clothes worn by one who, at work, wears a uniform: 1816: a. > ca. 1890. coll. > ca. 1910, S.E. 'Quiz': Marryat, 1833. 'In a suit of a mutti: the post-1830 form being in muts.

O.E.D. Perhaps jestingly ex muts, a Moham- median priest, via the theatre, which, in early C. 19, represented officers off duty wearing 'flowered dressing-gown and tasseled smoking cap', W.—2. A chaplain on a man-of-war: naval: ca. 1830-50. Marryat, in his King's Own.


I.e. something into which one can pour anything.—5. An examination: from ca. 1893; ob.: university and school.—6. Hence, one who studies hard: from ca. 1880.—7. See mugs.—8. A mist, a fog: s. and dial.: the former (as in Ash's Dict., 1778), ca. 1770-80; the latter, extant, with further senses, a drizzle, gloomy damp weather.

**mug.** v. To grimace: theatrical >, ca. 1880, gen.: 1865, Menken, 'The low comedian had "mugged" at him . . . fifty nights for a wager' (O.E.D.). Slightly ob. Cf. mug up. Prob. ex mug, to put: see sense 7, this paragraph.—2. To strike, esp. punch, in the face: boxing: 1818 (O.E.D.); ob. Ex mug, n., 1. —Hence, 3, (— 1859), to fight (v.t.), chastise, thrash: H., 1st ed.—4. To bribe with liquor: s. (†) and dial.: 1830 (O.E.D.). Also, in s. and dial., v.t. and v. reflexive, to get drunk: from ca. 1840.—5. Hence, to swindle, to rob (esp. by the garrotte): low; from ca. 1840; ob. Mayhew.—6. V.i., to study hard: 1848: mostly school and university. (V.t. with at.) Perhaps ex the theatrical sense. Occ. mug away or on. (O.E.D.)—7. Also v.t., to study hard (at): from ca. 1880. More gen. mug up.—Hence, 8, to take pains with (e.g. a room): Winchester College: from ca. 1870; ob. 'He has mugged his study and made it quite cud' (i.e. comfortable), F. & H.—9. (Gen. with together), v.i.; to crowd in a confined space (— 1878). E.D.D.—10. See mug oneself, 2.—11. To pout; to sulk: s. (ob.) and dial.: from ca. 1730. Collins the poet. Perhaps ex dial. mug, v.i., to drizzle, rain slightly. O.E.D. Cf. sense 1.—12. To kiss (gen. v.t.): low Australian (— 1916). C. J. Dennis. Ex mug, n., 1.

**mug away or on.** See mug, v., 6: resp. 1893, 1878. (Prob. years earlier) O.E.D.


**mug-gunner.** A machine-gunner: Australian military: 1916. Ex initials and the dangerous (mug's) job.

**mug-hunter.** A robber of drunken men, esp. at night: c. (— 1887) >, ca. 1900, low.

**mug in together.** A lower classes' post-G.W. corruption of muck in, 1.


**mug oneself.** See mug, v., 4.—2. To make oneself coy: low: from ca. 1880; ob.

**mug-trap.** A duper or swindler of fools: 1892, Milliken: low. Cf. mug-hunter, q.v.


**mugger.** One who studies hard: mostly schools' (— 1883). James Payn.—2. (Also mug-faker, 1887, Baumann.) A comedian specializing in grimaces: theatrical: 1892 (also prob. earlier), The National Observer, Feb. 27, 'None had ever a more expressive viscount than this prince of muggers.'—3. (Also mugger, muggar.) A crocodile: Anglo-Indian: 1844: coll. or, more prob., S.E. See O.E.D. and Yule & Burnell. Ex Hindustani.

[muggling. Recorded for 1607 in Middleton and for 1617 in T. Young, this word is perhaps a 'Origin and meaning obscure', says the O.E.D., but the O.E.D. quotes lead me to hypothesis 'sweetheart' in Middleton and 'girl' in T. Young, with etymology in It. *moglia,* a woman.]

*muggled.* An adj. applied to cheap goods offered for sale as contraband: c.: from ca. 1850; ob. Mayhew. A perversion of smuggled.
muggur. See muggar, 3.
mugger. Sunk; low; from ca. 1858; ob. H., 1st ed. Ex dial. muggly, damp.
mug's corner. The fielding position at mid-on; that at short leg: cricketers': ca. 1890–1910. (The *Observer,* March 10, 1935.)
mugster. One who studies hard (i.e. 'mugs'); schools' (—1888); ob.

A mugwump: A great man; an important one: from ca. 1830, and orig. and mainly U.S.: perhaps orig. col., but certainly soon S.E. Ex the Red Indian for a chief.—2. The v. and the derivatives are certainly S.E.
muklin. See muckin.
mule. A sexually impotent man: low coll.; from ca. 1870. A mule being unable to generate.—2. A day hand in the composing room: printers': from ca. 1890; ob.
mulga, a lie; mulga wire, an unfounded report, usually incorrect; it came over the mulga, a c.p. applied to a tale of doubtful authenticity: Australian: C. 20. Cf. the S.E. bush telegraph.
mull, v. To spoil, muddle; orig. and mainly athletes: coll.: 1862, *Sporting Life,* June 14, 'Pooley here "mulled" a catch (O.E.D.).' Ex the n., 1.
muller, v.t. To cut down a tall hat into a low-crowned one (occ. called a puller): trade: 1864–ca. 85. The *Builder,* Nov., 1864. The hat was also called a 'Muller-cut-down.' Ex Muller, a murderer that attempted to disguise himself in this way.
mulligrubs; in C. 19–20, occ. mollygrubs.

Colic: from ca. 1615: S.E. till C. 19, then coll. Fletcher, in *Monseur Thomas* 'Cuthbert Bede', 1853. O.E.D. Ex —2. (Esp. in be in one's mulligrubs.) Depressed spirits (cf. muffle-fubbles): C. 17–20 (anticipated in 1599 by Nashe's muligrums, which persists in dial.): S.E. till C. 19, then coll. Scott (of a drink), 'Right...as ever washed mulligrubs out of a moody brain'. Both senses, esp. the latter, are ob. A fantastic formation, perhaps on mousy grubs.

Mullinger heifer. (A development from the Lcton *Balatronicum's* *Monser heifer,* q.v.) A thinn-ankled girl: Anglo-Irish: from ca. 1860; ob. H., 3rd ed.

mulloch. Rubbish; a worthless thing: Australian coll.: from ca. 1890. Ex the mining-j. senses, rock without gold, refuse of gold-workings, ex Eng. dial. Whence the next two entries.
mulloch, poke. (v.t. with at.) To tease; to deride: Australian: C. 20. C. J. Dennis. Ex preceding. Cf. poke borak (see borak).
mulloch over. To shear incompletely or very carelessly: Australian shearers': from ca. 1890. The *Age,* Sept. 23, 1893. Morris. Ex mullock, q.v.
mum as a quasi-adv. (strictly silent), esp. in to stand mum, is coll.: C. 16–19. Archais except in dial. R. Bridges, 1894, 'Don't stand there mum,' O.E.D.
mum your dubber! Silence: from ca. 1780; ob.: o. G. Parker. See dubber.
mumble-crust. A coll. nickname for a toothless person: ca. 1550, 1620.
mumble-news. A tale-bearer: 1588, Shakespeare, 'Some mumble-news, some trencher-
MUMBLE-PEG

MUNGO

knighth, some Dick' : coll. >, in C. 19, S.E.; ob. by 1890, † by 1900.

*mumble-peg. The female pudent: low C. 19. 2 ex the game.

*mumble-sparrow. 'A cruel sport practised at wakes and fairs', a handicapped man (gen. with arms tied behind his back) attempting to bite off the head of a handicapped cock sparrow. Coll. > S.E.: ca. 1780-1820. Grose.

*mumble-tepeg, mumbledepeg, mumblety-peg. Erroneous forms of mumble(-the)-peg. Mid-C. 17–19. O.E.D.

*mumbo-jumbo. Meaningless jargon: coll. from ca. 1880. Ex the S.E. sense: an object of senseless veneration, itself ex a West African word.

*munchanchar that or who was hanged for saying nothing, look or sit like. A c.p. applied to a silent, glum-looking person; late C. 17–mid-19. B.E., C.G. The Cheshire substitutes mumphazard and stand. Apperson.

*mummer. An actor: contemptuous s.: 1840, Carlyle. Ex the S.E. sense, an actor in a dumb show or in a mumming. Whence mummerdom, rather S.E. than unconventional.—2. The mouth: low, esp. boxing: ca. 1780-1870. Grose, 1st ed. Ex mun(s) and mums, q.v.


*mummifying-boat. 'A wandering marquee in which short plays are produced': theatrical coll. late C. 19–20; ob. Ware.

*mummy. Mother, esp. as term of address: orig. (†1700), dial., > coll. ca. 1880 and 'in recent years fashionable in England', O.E.D., 1908. Ex mother or mummy, q.v.

*mump. To deceive, overreach, cheat: ca. 1650–1740: s. >, ca. 1710, coll.; very gen. until ca. 1705. Fuller, Wyckerly, Nor. Ex Dutch mompen, to cheat. (2) To disappoint: coll. ca. 1700–40. Kersey. Both senses constructed with (out) of.—3. V.t., to beg, be a parasite: from ca. 1670; ob. orig. c. >, ca. 1750, low s. Head, Macaulay. —4. V.t., to obtain by begging: from coll. ca. 1670; ob. F. Spence.—5. (V.f.) To call at (a house) on a begging round: from ca. 1865: c. >, ca. 1890, low s.; ob. (For these five senses) O.E.D.—6. To talk seriously: low (†1857); ob. 'Dugance Anglous.'

*mumper. A beggar: from ca. 1670; ob. o. >, by 1720, low s. Until ca. 1720, a gentee, then any beggar (witness Head, 1673, and Grose, 1758), and often also as dial.—2. Hence, a spoker: ca. 1720–1830. Macaulay, 1849, 'A Lincoln's Inn mumper was a proverb.'—3. A half-bred Gypsy: ca. 1870-1900: c. Hindley.

*mumper's (or -ers') hall. A beggar's ale-house: late C. 17–mid-19: c. until ca. 1720, then low s. B.E. (a pertinent description); Grose, 1st ed.

[Mumpers' talk is tramps': c. Thus 'No. 747', The Autobiography of a Gypsy, speaks of 'that strange mixture of thieves' Latin and mumpers' talk which he says often done duty for Romanimms' (Romany.)

*mumping, vbl.n. and ppl.adj. Begging: resp. from ca. 1690 (o. > low s.) and from ca. 1825 (low s., ob.): n. in Motteux, adj. in Lytton. Cf. the dial. *Mumping Day, Boxing Day: C. 19–20; ob. (Prob. S.E. is C. 16 mumping(s), alms.)


*mumps. A perversion of mumping, q.v.


*mum: often mum, (early) mumne. The mouth: C. 14–20; s. († by ca. 1880) and dial. E.D.D. Ex Norwegian dial. mum, the mouth. Cf. muns, q.v. Also muns (q.v.) and mund. —2. One of a band of London street ruffians ca. 1870: coll. ca. 1864, 1691 (O.E.D.). Cf. scowrer, mohock. 7 etymology if not ex mum, the mouth: perhaps they were very loud-mouthed fellows.


*Munching House. Mansion House (London): City (—1885); slightly ob. Ware. 'From the lusty feeding going on there'.—2. Hence (m.-h.), a cheap restaurant; lower classes': c. 20. Manchon.

*mund, munds. A C. 19 variant of mum, 1, and muns, q.v.


*mundificative. Incorrect for mundificative, a cleansing medicine: late C. 16–20. O.E.D.

*munduc. 'The seaman left to take charge of the boat on the pearl fishery, while the others are diving': pearl-fishers': late C. 19–20. Bowen. Prob. ex the Malayan munduk, a mole: a sense that accords well with nautical humour.

[mundungus, both n. and derivative adj., are S.E. verging on colloquial. (O.E.D.)


*mungo. An important person: a 'swell': 1770, Colman, in The Oxford Magazine: soon †, presumably s. † ex Mundo, a common name for a Negro (1768). O.E.D.
munge, n. Dark; darkness; c.: C. 18. C. Hitchin, The Regulator, 1718. Origin?
munitionette. A female worker on munitions; coll.: 1915, The Daily Sketch, Nov. 19. O.E.D. (Sup.). Ex:
munitions. The production of munitions; munition-work; coll.: from late 1915. The Ministry of Munitions was created in mid-1915. (O.E.D. Sup.)
munjari or -y. See mangaree. The -y form occurs in Philip Allingham’s Cheapside, 1934.

mumps. See muns.
mumps or, better, mumpyns. The teeth: C. 16–mid-16: coll. Lydgate. Lit., mouth-pins (see mun 1). Also many synonyms (as in Lydgate) and mumpynge (as in Skelton). The O.E.D. considers it S.R.
mumps; in C. 17–early 18, occ. mums; in C. 19, occ. muns. The face: from ca. 1660: o. >, ca. 1720, low s. Head, Grose. See mun, 1–2. Occ. the lips (cf. mums, q.v.), the mouth (—1823), the jaws: C. 18–20, ob. Footo, 1760, ‘Why you jape, ... must have a smack at your muns’; Bee. munsel, See moonse.


mur. Rum: back s. (—1850); very gen. in G.W. among soldiers. H., 1st ed.
murder, cry blue. To make an excessive outcry: 1887, ‘John Strange Winter’; O.E.D.
munster-house, a military hospital: military (other ranks’): from ca. 1920.
murder is out, the. The mystery is solved: C. 18–20: S.E. >, ca. 1830, coll. Ex the proverbial murder will out (late C. 13–20, Apperson.

Murdering Thieves, the. The Army Service Corps: military: C. 20; very ob. F. & Gibbons. For origin, cf. Make Train, q.v.

murine is a C. 17 error for marine, v., = marine. O.E.D., ‘or misprint’.
murkier or murkier. A monkey: ca. 1850–90; low coll. seldom heard outside London. H., 1st ed. Ex Jacko Macaco or Maccoco, a famous fighting monkey of ca. 1840–5 at the Westminster Pk. In S.E. maccoco is any monkey of the genus Macacus. Also maccoco.
murky. Containing secrets, ‘shady’; sinister, discretable: esp. in (e.g. his) murky past: from ca. 1920: jocular coll. Ex the late C. 18–20 senses, very dark (of colour) and dirty, grimm. Richard Keve, The Man in The Red Hat, 1930, ‘I felt pretty sure she was terribly worried ... But, by God! I’d no idea things were quite as murky as they are.’ The sense is anticipated in P. G. Wodehouse, Love among the Chickens, 1906, ‘I was ... thinking about my wretched novel. I had just framed a more than usually murky scene.’
murph, but gen. murphy. A potato: from resp. ca. 1870, ca. 1810. Let. Bal., Thackeray. Ex the very common Irish surname: cf. donovan, q.v.—2. Morpheus, i.e. sleep; sol. 1749, Smollett, in Roderick Random: H., 2nd ed. (Only Murphey.)

Murphy’s countenance or face. A pig’s head: from resp. ca. 1810 († by 1890) and ca. 1860. Vaux in Dict. and Memoirs (1812, 1819). Cf. murphy, 1.

[murrain is frequent in C. 16–early 18 cursings. Lit., a plague.]

Murray’s Bucks. See Lacedemonians.—Murrumbidgee whaler. See whaler.
muse. Incorrect for murre, C. 17–20. O.E.D.
muscle-grinder. See leg-grinder.
muscle in. To intrude, by violence, on another’s ‘rack’; American c. anglicised ca. 1928 and, by 1935, > gen. s. = to poach, fig., on another’s preserves. (G.O.D., 1934 Sup.) Abbr. muscle one’s way in.


mush, mush, and lush. ‘Mean interested criterion—critiques paid for either in money or favours’: authors’ and journalists: ca. 1844–1905. Ware.
mush-faker, *mush-top(perm)arker, mushroom-faker. A mender of umbrellas: resp. low (—1851),
mush-rat: Musk-rat: Canadian sol. (and English dial.): late C. 19–20. (John Beames.)
musca. An interjection connoting strong feeling: from ca. 1830: Anglo-Irish coll. >, by 1870, S.E. Lover. Ex Irish maisisedh, if it be so. S.O.D.

mushiness. See mushy.
mushroom-faker. See mush-faker.
mushy. Insipid: a mushily: call a man a cashage, ... an odd fish, an unaccountable muskin'. O.E.D. t a perversion of the C. 16 endearing mushin.

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Mutton, Bow-Wow.—2. Sexual pleasure; the female pudendum; the sexual act: from ca. 1670; ob. E.g., *in fond of his mutton, fond of the act.* Almost solely from the man's stand-point. Rochester; H.—3. A sheep: late C. 16-20: in C. 19-20, jocular but (except as used at Bootham School) still S.E.—4. See muttons.

Mutton, bow-wow. See bow-wow.

Mutton, cut one’s. To dine: lower, bordering on col.: from ca. 1850; ob. Ex the S.E. eat or take a bit of, or one’s mutton with, to dine with (C. 18-20, ob.).

Mutton, give (a person) the cold shoulder of. A non-aristocratic punning elaboration (— 1887; ob.) of give the cold shoulder. Baumann.


Mutton?, who stole the. A c.p. of ca. 1830-50 addressed jeeringly to a policeman. Brewer. Ex the Force’s failure to detect the culprit in a theft of mutton.


Mutton-chopper. A mutton-chop (sc. whisker): ca. 1890-1900: mostly Cockney. Milliken. N.B. mutton-chop, in this sense, is S.E.


Mutton dressed as lamb or (ob.) lamb-fashion. An old woman dressed like a young one: low: mostly Cockney: from ca. 1890. Cf. the older form, an old ewe dressed lamb-fashion, q.v. at old ewe.

Mutton-eyed. ‘Sheep’s-eyed’, q.v.: from ca. 1850; ob. Mainly jocular.


Mutton-head. A dull or stupid person: coll.: 1804 (O.E.D. Sup.). Ex the well-known stupidity of sheep. Ex:

Mutton-headed. Dull; stupid: s. (1788) and dial. Grose. Ex the well-known stupidity of sheep.


Mutton-tugger. (Prob.) a ‘mutton-monger’, q.v.: presumably s.: ca. 1600. ‘The nurseries of wickedness, the nests of mutton tuggers, the dens of fornal droanes’ (O.E.D.).


Muzzer. See -uvver.

Muzz; occ. muz (†). One who studies hard, reads much and studiously. The Tripper, No. 5, 1788, ‘The almost indelible stigma of a Muz’; 1899, W. K. R. Bedford. Ob. (O.E.D.) Ex:


Muzzed. Fuddled; stupidly tipsy: 1787, see quotation at muzz, v. 2.

Muzz; occ. muzze. A charm; work the muzz (or -d), to sell charms; grafters’: C. 20. Philip Allingham in Cheapside, 1934, postulates a Yiddish origin.

Muzzing, vbl.n. To muzz, v., all senses.—2. Ppl.adj., studying hard; given to intent study: 1793, J. Bereford; ob. O.E.D.

Muzzle. A beard, esp. if long, straggly, and/or dirty: ca. 1680-1850. B.E.; Grose, 1st ed. Ex S.E. muzzle, the mouth. — 3. See muzzle.

Muzzle, v. To strike on the mouth: low, esp. pugilistic: from ca. 1850; ob. Mayhew, 1851, ‘Just out of “stir” (q.v.) for muzzling a peeler.’—2. Hence, to fight; to thrash: low: (— 1859); ob. H., 1st ed.—3. Hence, to throttle, garotte: e.:
from ca. 1860; ob. H., 3rd ed.—4. To drink to
excess: s. from ca. 1850 ex (—1829) dial.; ob. a.s.
Also, v.t. to fuddle: s. (from ca. 1860; ob.) ex dial.
(1800, 'Rolf Boldrewood'), Australian > gen. ca.
1866; ob. Barrière & Leland, 2nd ed. Prob. ex
S.E. muzzle, put a muzzle on. O.E.D.

(muzzled) bull-dog. A main-deck gun: naval:
ca. 1805-1905. Admiral Smyth, 1867.—2. The
great gun which stands housed in the officers' ward-
room cabin': ibid.: ca. 1805-80.
muzzled. A blow on the mouth: from ca. 1810:
boxing. Lex. Bal.—2. A dram; a (quick) drink;
low: from ca. 1850; ob. H., 5th ed. Ex muzzle,
the mouth.—3. A strong head wind: from the
middle 1870's: nautical coll. >, by 1910, S.E.
Bowen; O.E.D. Cf. nose-ender, 2.
muzzling, vbl.n. Hitting on the mouth: boxing:
1819; ob. O.E.D. Cf. muzzler, 1.
muzzy. (Of places) dull, gloomy; (of weather)
overcast: ex. coll. and dial.: 1727, Mrs. Delany, who
speaks it muzzy; 1824, Coleridge, 'This whole long-
lagging, muzzy, misly morning.' Prob. ex dial.
moisy, hazy, muggy.—2. Stupid, hazy of mind,
spiritless: coll.: 1728, Mrs. Delany; Keats, 1817,
'I don't feel inclined to write any more at present
for I feel rather muzzy'; Thackeray. Cf. muzz, v.,
2. Perhaps ex dial. moisy, stupefied with liquor, or
ex bemused.—3. Stupefied, more gen. stupid, with
liquor; coll. and dial.: 1775, Thomas Campbell;
Blurred, indistinct: coll.: from ca. 1830. Wash-
ington Irving, 1832. Ex sensee 1, 2, and cap. 3.
O.K.D.

my! ; oh my! A (low) coll. exclamation: 1707,
J. Stevens, 'Such . . . Sayings are a Discredit . . .
As for Instance . . . my Whither dy ye go' ; 1849,
Mrs. Carlyle, 'Oh, my! if she didn't show feeling
enough.' O.E.D. Abbr. my God (!—2. o(h) my
is an abbr. of o(h), my Gauk, a sword: late 19-20.
B. & P.

my for me occurs in street oaths and asseverations,
e.g. in s'elp my bob for s'elp me, bob for so help me,

my area See area in (or on) a hand-box.
Cf. giddy aunt, my

my aunt (Jones). A water-closet: low euphemis-
istic: from ca. 1850; ob. H., 1st ed. (my aunt).
The longer form (H., 5th ed.), ca. 1870-1905, gen.
dispenses with my. Cf. Mrs. Jones

my blaster. See blaster.

my boy, I believe you. See I believe you, my
boy—my colonial oath! See colonial oath, my
exclamation of surprise, wonderment, or admiration:
slightly ob. Moore, 1819, 'My eyes! how prettily
Tom writes'; M. E. Braddon, 1876, 'My eye,
ain't I hungry!—2. my eye, all. See all my
eye.—3. my eye and Betty Martin. See Betty
Martin.

my giddy aunt! See giddy aunt.—my gracious!
See gracious.—my hat! See hat!—my land! See
land!, my.—my. Lord. See lord.—my. Nabs. See
nabs.—my oath! See my

my oath, Miss Weston! On my word of honour:
naval: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Ex the respect felt
for Miss Agnes Weston, the naval philanthropist.

my pippin. See pippin.—my stars (and garters)
See stars!—my tulip. See tulip.—my uncle. See
uncle.—my watch. See watch, his.—my wig. See
wigs.—my word! See word!

*myla. See miler, 1.

myliner. An occ. C. 19-20 form of mauley, q.v. at
end of entry.

*myll. See mill, n. and v.—mynt. See mint.

[myrrhion, a constable's attendant or assistant,
is S.E.—despite B.E.'s designation as c., Grose's
inclusion as s., and F. & H.'s listing.]

myrtyle. A low London term of address:

mystery. A sausage: somewhat low: from ca.
1886; ob. More gen. is bag of mystery, as in Henley,
1887, and much more gen. is mystery bag, as in The
Sportman, Feb. 2, 1889.

mystery ship. A Decoy Ship or Q Boat: 1916,
Alfred Noyes (O.E.D. Sup.) : coll. >, almost imm.,
S.E. Bowen; B. & P.

—n' for —nd: sol.: since when? E.g. han', hand.
—2. Occ. for —nt, as in don't, won't, won't, and
'Can' [can't] you come ter-morrer?': sol., esp.
Cockney: also immemorial.

'n. Than: a coll. abbr. pronounced either as a
final n or as very short en; e.g. more's = more or
In : on. coll.: C. 19-20. More gen. in dial. and in
U.S. than as a coll.; the person that uses 'n for
in, gen. uses it also for on. (See passim the books by
C. W. Thurlow Craig.)

'n: And: another coll. and dial. abbr.,
similarly pronounced: late C. 17-20. (Cf. yn, q.v.)
In familiar speech, esp. 'more'n more' and
'bread'n butter'—2. (By itself, n': in composition,
'a or n). Not: mostly dial., but occ. sol.
occ. dial.: mid-C. 18-20. E.g. 'I didn't care',
'doesn't

n.a.d. Shaming: military hospitals' (—1909)
ob. Ware. Ex the initials of no appreciable
disease. Cf. n.a.d. (q.v.) and p.u.o., which latter

was a G.W. confession as to the unknown origin
of that pyrexia which was trench-fever.

n.b.g. or, as in the other 'initial' words, more
Contrast n.g.

n.c. 'Nuff cod. i.e. enough said: from ca. 1870.
(Ware states American origin.) Cf. o.k., q.v.

n.c.d. (N.C.D.). See no can do.

n.d. (Of a woman) trying to look young: Society:
late C. 19-early 20. Ware. Ex librarians' n.d., no
date.

n.e. or N.E. See north easter.

n.f. A smart or cunning tradesman: printers':
from ca. 1869; ob. Abbr. no frills.—2. Among
artisans (—1909), it means no fool. Ware.

n.g. No go; no good: orig. (1840), U.S.,
anglicised ca. 1890; ob. Thornton.

N.H. A bug: from ca. 1875; ob. Abbr.
Norfolk Howard, q.v.

n.n. A necessary nuisance, esp. a husband:
Society (—1909); † by 1919. Ware.
n. (or N.) wash. See notegul wash.

n.y.d. Drunk: military hospitals’ (—1909); ob. Ware. i.e. not yet diagnosed. Cf. n.d., q.v. 

nap poo. See napoo.—Naaff. See Naft.

*nab; occ. nabbe or nabbe. The head: c. of ca. 1660—1750. Harman (as nabe); Head. Cf. nab and nappy, q.v.—2. The head of a stick: c.:

*nab; occ. nabbe or nab. To catch; to arrest: ca. 1686: c. >, ca. 1860, low s.; F. Spence, Shadwell. Cf. nap and notble, q.v.—2. It soon > a gen. c. v. of action: see nab the rust, the
stikes, etc.—3. Linking senses 1 and 4 with the former, c. >, c. 1800, n.s. senses 3, is B.E.’s ‘I’ll Nab ye, i.e. I’ll have your Hat or Cap’.—4. To seize; to steal: low s.; ca. 1814. The Sporting Magazine, 1814, ‘All was lost, what would have saved nabbe’d to pay the cost’ (O.E.D.).—5. To cog (a die): ca. 1830; c. or low s.; in its orig. form, nap (B.E.), it was certainly c. — 6. V.I., to snatch at something: ca. 19—20; ob. low s.—7. (Cf. senses 1, 4.) To detect (an incident): Shrewsbury School: ca. 1819—20. E.g. in Desmond Coke, The House Prefect, 1908.

[nab, to bite gently, is dial., as are nall (disposition), off at the nail, (possibly) Nalle, Narrowdale noon, nary, nashet (impertinently), nation as adj.; whereas the following are S.E.—naboh, nag (a whore), nail or right nail on the head, (hit the), nail to the corker, narkedness (the private parts), namesless, the; or name-it-not; both euphemistic), Nants, nap (a short sleep), nappy, n. (strong ale) and adj. (heady; drunk), nasty (see the entry), nation as n., natural as idiot and natural wig, nature (the generative organs) and nature’s garb, naughtiness (immorality), naughty (loose-moralled; obscene), naughty dream (a sexual one), naughty man (a whoremonger), naughty pack (a wanton; as = an endearment, dial.), navigator (a navvy) (to deny), nay-word (a proverb).]

nab a penthouse. A large hat: c. or low s. of ca. 1750—1820.

naball; also naball(l). A fool: early C. 17 s. > coll. Rowlands.—2. As a churl or a miser, C. 17–
20 (ob.), is S.E.

*nab-cheat or -cheite. A hat or cap: c. of ca. 1630—1830. Copeland, B.E. See cheat.

*nab-girder. A bridle: c. of ca. 1670—1870, though ob. as early as 1820. Coles, B.E., Grose. Also sob-girder. Ex nab = nōd, the head, + girde perverted.

nab at (on the dial). To receive a blow (on the face): low: from ca. 1820. But nab it, like nap it, also = to receive (gen., unexpected) punishment: low and dial: C. 19—20.

nab the bib. To weep: from ca. 1830: low. Earlier (—1812), nap the bib, which, recorded by Vaux and used by Egan, was prob. c. and later (1860 +), with variant nap one’s bib, which also meant to have one’s point, or weeping, then by any similar means (H., 3rd ed.)

*nab the regulars. To divide a booty: c.: from ca. 1840.

nab (or, in C. 19—20, nap) the rust. To take offence

(cf. rusty, q.v.): from ca. 1850; low and dial.

* nab the snow. To steal linen, esp. from hedges: c.: from ca. 1780. Grose, 2nd ed.

*nab the stifees. To be hanged: c.: C. 19—20; ob. See stifies.

*nab or nap the stoope. To stand in the pillory: late C. 18—early 19 c. Grose, 1st ed.

*nab or nap the teize. To be whipped, privately. in prison: late C. 18—mid-19 c. Grose, 1st ed

† ex tease, for in C. 19, it is often spelt teas.

nabb; occ. nabbe. See nab, n. and v.

nabber. A bailiff; a constable: low: from ca. 1810; ob.—2. A thief, esp. a piller: low and

*nabbing-cheat. The gallows: c. (—1719); by 1850. ‘Captain’ Alexander Smith.


nabby. A Scottish form of nobby, adj., q.v.—

*nabman. See nab, n. and v.


*nabs; in C. 19, occ. knabs. (Mainly North Country) c. >, ca. 1830, low s.: from ca. 1700; ob. Potter. His nabs, he; (rare) your nabs, you; but my nabs, either I, myself, or my friend (cf. C. 16 my nobs, my darling). O.E.D. Cf. watch, q.v. Perhaps a corruption of neb, a nose, a face: for semantics, see nobs, which is a variant.

*nabs, queer. See queer nabs.

*nabs on. A hall-mark: c. (—1880); ob. Ex nab = head.

*nace. See nase.

nack = knock, a trick, is S.E.—2. A horse: c. (—1889). Ex nag, q.v.

nackers. Properly knackers: low and dial.

C. 19—20. The testicles.

nacky is a mere variant (ob.) of S.E. knacky, ingenious.

naf. The female pudend: ? back s. on fan, abbr. fanny, q.v.: from ca. 1845. If not obscure dial. of independent origin—ex or cognate with naff(f), the navel (—1860), or with naff(f), the hub of a wheel (—1796), E.D.D.—then this is perhaps the earliest of back-s. terms. Halliwell.

Naft or Nafti; properly Naft; loosely Nafty (though pronounced thus by Indian Army officers). The canteen: naval and military: from ca. 1930. Ex the ‘Navy, Army, and Air Force Institute’.


*nag. To scold or persistently to find fault (v.t. with at): orig. (—1828), dial. >, ca. 1840, coll. >, ca. 1890, S.E. Orig. sense, to gnaw.
naggie. To toss the head stiffly and affectedly: coll. († by 1910) and dial.: from ca. 1840. Halliwell. Cf. S.E. naggie, to haggle, quarrel. 
naggy or naggie. A pony; a very small riding horse; coll. and dial. from ca. 1780. Blackmore. 'Then the naggie put his foot down.' O.E.D. 
nail. Of an over-reaching, imposing disposition —i.e. a 'shrewdy,' a crook —is called a nail, a dead nail, a nailing rascal,' Vaux, 1812: low: ca. 1810-1815. Ex the v., senses 2 and 4. — 2. 'The central scone at the east and west ends of the school were so called,' Adams's Wykehamia: from ca. 1840. Winchester College. Whence stand up under the nail, to stand there throughout school time for having told a lie; later he received a 'biber' or was 'bibbled,' Mansfield.—3. (Gen. pl.) A cigarette: military: from ca. 1910. F. & Gibbons. Abbr. coffin-nail. 
nail v. To catch or get hold of or secure: 1760. Foote, 'Some bidders are shy . . . but I nail them.'—2. Hence, to rob or steal: low: from ca. 1810. Vaux.—3. To catch or surprise (a person) in a fix, a difficulty: 1766, Goldsmith, 'When they came to talk of places in town, . . . I nailed them' (O.E.D.).—4. Hence, in late C. 19-20 c. > low s.: to arrest (a person).—5. To strike smartly, to beat: Scots s.: from ca. 1805; ob.—6. Hence, to succeed in hitting: Dowden, 1886 (O.E.D.), but prob. very much earlier. In Scots at least as early as 1785 (E.D.D.)—7. To overreach; to cheat: low: ca. 1810-30. Vaux.—8. To back-bite: printers': from ca. 1870. Also brass-nail; cf. nail-box, q.v.—9. 'To impress for any kind of flagging. Also, to detect: Winchester College (—1850). Ex sense 1: 
nail, naked as my. See naked.—nail, dead as . . . See door-nail. 
nail off the. The tipsy: Scots coll.: from ca. 1820. Galt, 1822, 'I was what you would call a thought off the nail.' Cf. Scots off at the nail, mad. 
nail on the. At once: late C. 16-20: coll. >, ca. 1870, S.E. Nashe (upon, as is gen. till C. 18); Gay. Ex hand-nail and a drinking custom: see supernacular and cf. Fr. payer rubis sur l'ongle (W.).—2. Under discussion: coll.: ca. 1850-1910. W. T. Stead, 1886. (O.E.D.) 
nail-bearer. (Gen. in pl.) A finger: C. 18—mid-19: 18 S.E. or coll. 
nail in one's coffin. A drink of liquor: coll.: from ca. 1820. Egan's Grose. Gen. as here's another nail in your, occ. my, rarely his, coffin.—2. Scots: 19-20; coll. till C. 20, then S.E. 1789, Wolcot anticipated, thus: 'Came to our coffin adds a nail, no doubt' (O.E.D.).—2. To hasten or advance a project, a piece of work: S.E. 
nailed-up drama. Drama dependent upon elaborate scenery: theatrical: ca. 1881-1914. Ware. First used in reference to just such a drama, The World. 
nailer. An exceptionally good or marvellous event, thing or person (esp. a hand at . . .); a gen. term of excellence: 1818, Macneill (O.E.D.); ca. 1890, Marshall in 'Pomce' from the Pink 'Un,' 'At gawzing the whole lot were nailers.' Cf. the ob. U.S. nail-driver, a fast horse.'—2. An extorter, a usurer, ca. 1889-1926. Ex nail, v., 2—3. See nailor. — 4. 'An obvious, gross lie': late C. 19-20. Lyell. Ex dial.—5. (the nailer.) See boy with the boots.—6. See nailers (Addenda). 
nailor: more correctly nailer. (Constructed with on.) A prejudice (against): o: (—1887), by 1900, low. Baumann. 
nailrod. See nail-rod. 
nails often occurs in late C. 14—early 17 oaths and asseverations. E.g. (by) God's nails.—2. See nail, n., 3. 
nails, hard as. In good condition: from ca. 1860: coll. till ca. 1906, then S.E.—2. Unyielding, harsh, pitiless: coll. (—1889) >, ca. 1920, S.E. 
nails, right as. Perfectly fit: coll.: from ca. 1890. Ex preceding, sense 1. 
nails on one's toes, before one had. Before one was born; long ago: coll.: C. 17. Shakespeare, in Troilus and Cressida, 'Whose wit was mouldy ere your grandfathers had nails on their toes.' Cf. before you come up, q.v. 
nair. Rain: back s.: from ca. 1870; ob., as, except among cowers, is all back s. see Slang at 'Oddities.' Cf. nire, q.v. 
naked, n. Raw spirit: somewhat low: from ca. 1860; ob. Ex the adj. 
naked similes were prob. all coll. in origin, but their very force soon made them S.E. and proverbial. The chief non-dial. ones are: —naked as a cuckoo, C. 17-50, latterly dial. and in Dekker as naked as the cuckoo in Christmas; naked as a needle, mid-C. 14-20 (ob.), in P. J. Bailey, 1868, nude as a needle; naked as a sham sheep, C. 17-18 (Gayton, 1854); naked as a stone, C. 14-16; naked as a worm, C. 16-16; naked as one's (gen. my) nail, ca. 1530-1700 (Heywood, 1533—Masinger, — Phraseologia Robertson; naked as truth, C. 17 (suggested by the late C. 16-20 S.E. the naked truth), 'Less it strip him as naked as truth,' in the Somers Tracts. For all: Apperson. 
nale, an ale-house, is Scots (prob.) coll.: C. 18-early 19. Extant in Gloucestershire. 
nale or nael, neel. Lean: back s. (—1859). H., 1st ed. (Often adj., rarely v.)

nam; (not before C. 16) nam. Am not: C. 9–16: S.E. till ca. 1600, then coll. Gascoigne, 1676, 'I nam a man, as some do think I am.' O.E.D.

namase. See namamous.

namby-pamby. Affected; effeminate: from ca. 1746: coll. till ca. 1780, then S.E. Ex. Carey's, Pope's, and Swift's name (1726 +) for Ambrose Phillips, poetaster (d. 1749).

name. To get a (very) bad name: coll.: C. 20. E.g. Denis Mackail, 1625, 'If they weren't jolly careful, their beloved house would be getting what is known as a 'name.'"

name I, give it a; name yours! Invitations to drink: coll.: late C. 19–20. Lyell. See how will you have it.

name, lose one's. 'To be noted for punishment' (F. & Gibbons): military: C. 20. La. to have one's name taken.

name, to one's. Belonging to one: coll.: 1876, Whyte-Melville (O.E.D.).

name in vain, take one's. To mention by name: coll.: C. 18–20. Swift. Ex the Biblical take the name of the Lord in vain.

name into it, put one's. To advance a matter greatly: tailors: from ca. 1860; ob. Ex putting the tailors' name on a garment.

name is mud, his. See mud.

name of, by the. Having the name (of): from ca. 1670: S.E. till ca. 1830, then coll. and U.S. Thackeray, 1841, 'A grocer . . . by the name of Greenacre', O.E.D.

name of . . . (in the). Some of these asseverations are C. 19–20 coll.: e.g. name of goodnes, which is also dial. E.D.D.

name (or number) on, have one's. (Of a bullet) that hit a soldier: military coll. in G.W. F. & Gibbons. Cf. addressed to, q.v.

name to go to bed with, a nice. An ugly name: dial. >, by 1887, coll. Beumann. Cf. the Fr. a un nom à couche dehors (Manchon).

name yours! See name I, give it a.

nameless creek, the. 'A lucky place whose whereabouts is for that reason untold', F. & H.: anglers: >, coll.: from ca. 1890; ob.


*namus, namalous. See namamous.

Namur, the. The Royal Irish Regiment, earlier (C. 19) the 18th Foot: military: from ca. 1810. Also, from ca. 1850, Paddy's Blackguards.

Nam. See namamous.


nain ! What did you say !?: mid-C. 18–20; coll. (e.g. in Foote) till ca. 1810, then dial., where ob. by 1850. Ex can, anon. O.E.D., E.D.D.


Nana; Nana-ism. Outraged; indecent: club-men's coll.: late 1880–ca. 85. Ware. Ex Zola's Nana, that novel which, dealing with a 'swell' courtesan, owes its best scene to Otway.


Nance. A variant (C. 20) of the next. Norah Hoults, Youth Can't Be Served, 1933.


Nancy Dawson. Grog: naval: C. 19–20; very ob. Bowen, 'Men were summoned to draw it by that popular old air.'


nanna. An occ. variant of sensō 3 of:


nanny-goat, play the. To play silly tricks; behave like a fool: coll.; from ca. 1905. Ex slightly earlier dial: see E.D.D. Cf. goat, play the.

Nanny-Goats, the. The Royal Welsh Fusiliers, orig. the 23rd Foot Regiment: military: mid-C. 19–20. Also, the Royal Goats. Ex the goat as mascot. (F. & Gibbons.)

nanny(-)hen, as nice as a. Very affected; delicate; prim: C. 16–17; coll. The nanny-hen is merely nun's hen (see nice as a nun's hen) and may, in fact, have rarely been used: see Apperson as nice.

nanny-house or shop. A brothel; low coll.: resp. late C. 17–19 (B.E.; Grose); C. 19–20, slightly ob. (and not recorded before 1825; O.E.D.). F. & H. give an imposing synonymy: e.g. academy, case, flash drum, knocking-shop, molly-shop, number 9, pushing-school, trugging-hen, whoe-case, whoe-shop. 'nannetie; nanti (rare), nancy. No; not, or nor, any. Also absolutely: I have none; I shut up!' (abbr. nannetie-palaver, q.v.); stop I (e.g. 'Nanny that whisking !') from ca. 1850: Parlyaree and o. > also, by 1900, gen. theatrical. Maybeon. Among grafters: beware! (Allingham, Cheapside, 1934.) Ex It. niente, nothing, via Lingua Franca as is most Parlyaree.—2. Hence adj.: of no account: Parlyaree (—1909). Ware.

nannetie meddies or nanny meddies. See meddies.


nannetie palaver! Hold your tongue !: from ca. 1850. Lit., no talk. Cf.:

nannee panarly! Be careful !: from ca. 1850. See nantee.

nant, nancy. See nanteer.


*nnap, v. See the n., 1, and 2.: same period and status. The infection is gen. conveyed by nap it (B.E., Grosz). The etymology, like the relation to nab, is vague; cf. the cognate S.E. knap. — 2. To seign, catch; arrest: c.: from ca. 1670; ob. Head, 'If the Cully naps us. And the Lurries from us take'; D'Urfey (O.E.D.). In John Poulter, 1753, the sense weakest: 'Nap my kelp (hold my hat).'-3. Hence, to steal: c.: from ca. 1690; ob. B.E., Vaux. E.g. nap the wager, steal the handkerchief. — 4. To receive severe punishment (prob. ex. sense 1.): gen. as nap it: low: from ca. 1815; ob. except in dial.—5. To cog (a die): late C. 17-18 c. cognate with sense 2.; both prob. ex. knap.—6. Hence, v.: and t., to cheat: c. of ca. 1870-1780, Coles.—7. A low variant of S.E. knap: late C. 17-20.—8. The horse-racing v. is j., not s.


*nnap a winder. To be hanged: c.: C. 19. Lit., catch something that winds one.


*nnap on. To cheat, try a cheating trick on: ca. 1870-1780: c. Head.—2. Also, however, it means to strike or to strike at: C. 17-early 19. (See, e.g. the O.E.D.'s quotation from Head & Kirkman, where the sense is ambiguous.) Here, nap (cf. Greene's 'worse than nabbing on the necks to Connies') is prob. S.E. knap corrupted.

nap on, go. To bet, everything one has on: from the 1880's: racing coll. ↑, by 1900, S.E. (O.E.D.)

nap or nothing. All or nothing: clubmen's: 1868-ca. 1914. Ware.

*nap, v. The nib, the regulars, the rust, the teasor or teas. See nab the bib, etc.

nap the rent. See pew, stump the: with which it is contemporaneous as well as synonymous.

nap too for yam. To get the worst of it, esp. in

fisticuffs: low: ca. 1820-70. 'Jon Bee.' ↑ ex Gr. vocco, interest. See tooo.

napkin, be buried in a. To be asleep: half-witted: C. 19-20, ob.: coll.

napkin, knight of the. A waiter: C. 19-20, ob.: coll. bordering on S.E.


napkin-smoothing. The stealing of handkerchiefs: ca. 1820-60: low or c. Egan's Grosz, i.e. napkin under one's chin, stink a. To eat a meal: from ca. 1750; ob.: coll. Foot. (Like napkin, take . . ., above, this phrase verges on S.E.)

napoo; rarely napooch. Finished (eep, empty), gone; non-existent; dead; 'nothing doing it!'; 'it's no use arguing any longer', '(it)'s no good': orig. and mainly military: 1915; ob. Ex Fr. s'y en a plus, there is none left, in reply to inquiries for drink.—2. Hence, also from 1915, v., to finish; occ. to kill.—3. As adj., the term does not exist except in The Pall Mall Gazette, Feb. 15, 1917, cited by W. For senses 1 and 2, see esp. B. & P. and cf. an fair amy, q.v.


*nnap. See nap, n. and v.


*napping. Cheating: from ca. 1870; ob.: c. until C. 19, then low s.—2. See nap, v.

napping, as Moss (in late C. 18-19, often Morse, as in Grosse) caught his mare. Asleep; by surprise: a coll. proverbial c. of ca. 1639-1870; in C. The allusions to this saying and song in C. 16-17 are very numerous,'Apperson. App. one Moss caught his mare by feeding her through a hurdle ('Apperson, quotation of 1697).

*napping, catch or take. To take by surprise or in the act: 1682, Pilkington (O.E.D.); Grosse, in the elaborated form (see preceding entry): coll. till C. 19, then S.E. Lit., to catch asleep.


nappy, adj. (Of a horse) that has these here little lumps along the neck and withers about as big as a nut: ('No. 747') horse-copers: mid-C. 19-20.

naptha. Sci. ↑ for ph. Never. Only if spell thus is it low coll. and dial. (C. 18-20), for obviously it represents and is pronounced in the same way as ne'er.

*Nafy. See Nafy.


*nar. A police spy; a common informer: c. (1864).—No. 747; H., 2nd ed.; Arthur Morrison, in Mean Street: Other copper's nar, i.e. nose (q.v.). Ex Romany nar, the nose. Cf. nar, v.—2. Hence, in C. 20 low s. a. spoil-sport; a spiteful or nagging person. C. J. Dennis. Influenced by nar, v., 4.-3. Hence, rancour; a spite (against a person): low: (~ 1923). Manchon.


*nark it*! 'Shut up!' be quiet!: military and low: from ca. 1912. F. & Gibbons. Prob. ex nark, v., 3.


*narp*. A shirt: Scots, either c. or, less prob., low s. (— 1839). Brandon. Origin ?


*narrow*. Never (a): not (a), not (one): coll. and dial; 1750, Fielding, 'I warrants me there is narrow a one of all those warrant officers but looks upon himself to be as good as arrow a squire of £500 a year.' Ex ne’er a.—2. While it is S.E. as = mean, parsimonious, close(ly investigating or made), (very) small, it is low coll. or s. as = stupid, fooliah, ignorant: from ca. 1850: ob.—3. The bowing sense. 'When the Bias of the Bowl holds too much,' B.E., is either j. or coll. of late C. 17— 20; ob.—4. For narrow squeak, see squeak.

*narrow, ’tis all*. Said by the Butcher’s one to another when their Meat proves not so good as expected’, B.E.: late C. 17— 18 c.p.

*narrow lane, the*. See lane, 2.


Perh. ex ne’er a. Cf. narrow, q.v.


*nase*. Also nose, nase, nazie, nazy. Drunken: (of liquor) intoxicating: c. : from ca. 1830; fl. till ca. 1690 as nase; then only as nazy, nazy, or nazy; see nazy. Copland (nace), Harman (naze), B.E. (nazzi), Grose (nazie). † ex nose, Fr. nez. See also nazy.

*nash*. To go away from, to quit, person(s) or place: c. of ca. 1810— 50. Vaux, 'Speaking of a person who is gone, they say he is nash’d.’ Ex Romany nash, nasher, to run.

*Nash is concerned, Mr*. C. of ca. 1810— 50: Vaux, see quotation, preceding entry.

*nate* (Coles, 1767). See nazy.

*nask* or *naskin*. A prison: c. of ca. 1670— 1830. Coles, 1767 (naskis); Higden, 1896, Juvenile (18th Series) naskin; ca. 1890, B.E., nask and nazie; Grose, id.: † ex Scotch dial. nask, a withe + c. ken, a place, nask being an abbr. Whence, the Old Nask, the City (London) bridewell; the New Nask, the Clerkenwell bridewell; and Tuttle (in Grose, Tothi-
natty, adj. Orig., and in c., app. clever, smart with the hands: see natty lad.—2. Smartly neat, spruce: from ca. 1785 (implied in the adv., q.v.): s. till ca. 1890, then coll.; in C. 20, S.E. Surr. 1806, 'A natty spark of eighteen'.—3. Of things, very neat, dainty: s. till ca. 1860; coll. ca. 1890–1910; then S.E. 1881, Wolcot, 'Thy natty bob'.—4. Hence, of persons, daintily skilful: from ca. 1820: s. >, ca. 1860, coll.; in C. 20, S.E. Prob. ex natty lad, q.v. For etymology, cf. the ↑ S.E. netty, nettie (e.g. in Tuseer, 'Pretty ... fine and ... nettie'), but prob. a corruption of neat (W.) or perhaps ex Fr. net. N.B., the other parts, nattily, nattiness, mid-C. 19–20, were, prob., orig. coll., but they soon > S.E. (O.E.D.)

natty, adv. Nattily, i.e. smartly, daintily, neatly, hence skilfully: from ca. 1785: s. >, ca. 1860, (low) coll. G. Parker, 1789, 'A kind of fellow who dresses smart, or what they term natty'. Ex the adj.


natural, for (or in) all one's (gen. my). For or in all one's life; ever: C. 20: s. >, by 1930, coll. As in the next entry, sc. life after natural; as also there, perhaps an allusion is understood to the term of his natural life.

natural, not on your. Certainly not! C. 20. See preceding entry.

naturally! Of course: coll.; late C. 19–20. (Strangely, not in O.E.D.)


naughty, do the. To play the whore; tocott (of women only): from ca. 1850: low coll. Also, ca. 1860–1910, occ. go naughty: ordinary coll.

naughty, the. The female pudend: mid C. 19–20.

naughty house, if used by the prim, is S.E.; if by the lewd, a coll.: C. 19–20.

nautical triumvisetta. 'A singing and dancing nautical scene by three persons, of whom two are generally women': music-halls' (—1909); very ob. Ware. Perhaps a blend of triumvirate + set, with an Italianate suffix (a).

nav. Abbr. navigator, q.v.


naval police, Her or His Majesty's. Sharks: nautical: mid-C. 19–20; ob. Ware. They are sharp deterrents of desertion at sea.

[naves. Jocular S.E., not coll., spelling; fathered and popularised by Gilbert; late C. 19–20.]

nave, gall one's. To grow wanton: C. 18 coll.; of the same form.

nave, proud below the. Amorous: coll. bordering on S.E., as in Davenant's Albovin, 1629, 'Whenever I see her I grow proud below the nave.'


Gen. they have tied their navels together, as in Ray's Proverbs, ed. of 1677.


nave-verage. A catachrestic form of navfrage: C. 17(2–18). O.E.D.


Navvies. See sense 3 of:


navy, thank God we've got a. A military c.p. muttered when things are going wrong: C. 20; esp. in G.W. F. & Gibbons, 'Said to have originated in a soldier's sarcastic comment when ... watching a party of the old Volunteers marching by one Saturday night'. I suspect, however, that it is a very old c.p.; Evan John in his arresting Charles I (published in 1933) suggests that it was originated by Sir John Norris, temp. Charles I.

Navy Office, the. The Fleet Prison: low: ca. 1810–40. Lax. Bal. Whence, Commander of the Fleet, the warden there. 1b. Ex the old name for the Admiralty building (see Pepys's Diary, July 9, 1690: O.E.D.)

Navpost, Mr. A foolish fellow: late C. 17–18: c.p. coll. B.E.; Grose, 1785. Presumably, one foolish enough, if hungry, to gnaw a post.

Nay, stay! quoit Stringer when his neck was in the halter. A c.p. applied to one speaking too late: ca. 1670–1760. Ray, Fuller. (Apperson.) Ex a topical instance, perhaps of an innocent man.

Nazarene foretop. 'The foretop of a wig made in imitation of Christ's head of hair, as represented by the painters and sculptors', Grose, 2nd ed.: ca. 1785–1820: on the border-line between S.E. and coll.

naze. See naze.

Nazi-scammer. An actor or actress that, because of Jewish blood, he left Germany to perform, permanently, in another country: theatrical: 1935, The Daily Express, Sept. 20. See scrum.

nazie. See nazy.

nazold. A silly person; a vain fool: 1607, Walkington: coll. till ca. 1840, then only as dial. Cf. S.E. nazzard, which app. = dial. azzard and, significantly, azzald, which may be cognate with aaz. (nazy); occ. nazy. Drunken: from early 1679: c. (ex nazy, q.v.); from ca. 1800; then low; from ca. 1830, dial. (coll. in C. 20); Cole, 1876 (nazy); B.E. (as nazie); A New Canning Dict., 1725, nazy-cove and -mort, a male and a female drunkard; Grose (nazie, 1785; nazy, 1788); Robinson's Whitby Glossary, 1855 (nazzey). Cf. *nazy-nab*. A drunken coxcomb: c.: C. 18. A New Canning Dict., 1725. Ex preceding.

ne'. Never: a clipped, slovenly coll. of the upper classes and of drunks: since when? John Carrick, The Eves of Words, 1934, 'His daughter and my son—hurumph, ne mind.'

*ne-dash*. See nedash.

nazes; nazer. See Sneaks!

[near, parsimonious, or on the left side, is S.E., as are neat (undiluted), neb, necessary (a privy: now
NECK OR NOTHING


neck; occ. brass-neck (Manchon), Impudence; very great assurance: C. 20. Ex Northern dial. — see E.D.D. Cf. cheek and lip.

neck, v. To hang; coll.: C. 18–mid-19. Cf. S.E. senses, strike on the neck, behead; imm., however, prob. ex the neck hanging phrases.—2. To swallow, drink; coll.: from ca. 1820; ob. ca. 1900–20, but then (witness O.E.D. Sup.) revived. Cf. the C. 16 coll. usage: Barclay, 1514, ‘She couthe well ... necke a mesure ...: she made ten shlyngye [i.e. little] of one barel of ale,’ which, pace the O.E.D., is clear enough.—S. See necking.

neck in the. With unpleasant results: severely; U.S. (ca. 1890), anglicised by H. G. Wells in 1908: a., >, by 1935, coll. Esp. with get it. Cf. where Maggie wore the beads and where the chicken got the axe. W.; O.E.D. (Sup.)

neck, lose or win by a. To lose or win by very little: from ca. 1800; coll. till C. 20, then S.E. For origin, cf. neck and neck.

neck, put it down one’s. See neck, wash one’s. Cf. the U.S. slot in the neck, drunk.

neck, talk through (the back of) one’s. To talk extravagantly, cattastically: 1904 (O.E.D. Sup.).—2. Hence, to talk nonsensе: from ca. 1920. Both senses had, by 1930, > coll.

neck, wash one’s or the. To drink: low: ca. 1820–1900. *Jon Bee*; Baumann. In C. 20, put it down one’s neck (Manchon).

neck and crop. Violently: all of a heap; entirely: 1816. Home; coll. >, ca. 1890, S.E. Hardy, 1872; Hall Caine in The Manxman, 1894. (Apperson.)

neck and heels. Impetuously; whole-heartedly; coll. (— 1887). Baumann.

neck and neck. Almost equal; close: from ca. 1835; coll. till C. 20, then S.E. Ex horses running almost level in a race. W. S. Landor to Browning, Feb. 11, 1880, ‘You and your incomparable wife are running neck and neck, as sportsmen say ’: H. C. Minchin’s Walter Savage Landor, 1934.

neck as long as my arm, I’ll first see thy. I’ll see you hanged first; you be hanged! A mid-C. 17–mid-18 c.p. Ray, 1678. (Apperson.)


neck-beef, coarseness; S.E.; as coarse as neck-beef; S.E. bordering on coll.; ca. 1770–1920. Cf. Sedley’s ‘She is very pretty, and as cheap as neck-beef,’ 1878 (O.E.D.).

neck-cloth. A halter: low coll.: ca. 1815–70. Cf. necktie, q.v.

neck is, unable to. Lacking moral courage: low coll.: from ca. 1840; slightly ob. Ex neck v., 2. Cf. the S.E. swollow = to tolerate.

neck-coll. Liquor; esp. beer; low coll.: from ca. 1830. H., 2nd ed.; Ware. Cf. neck v., 2.

neck or nothing. Despair(ingly); from ca. 1875; coll. till ca. 1850, then S.E. Ray; Gibber; Swift, *Neck or nothing; come down or I’ll fetch you...


neck-weed. A halter (cf. gallows-grass, q.v.): ca. 1860–1830: coll. >, ca. 1860, S.E.

neckchief on the way to Bedriff, the Devil’s. The halter: the gallows: low coll.: ca. 1810–60. Notes and Queries, 1886.


necklace. A halter: C. 17–mid-19: coll. soon > S.E. Cf. neck-cloth, and:


Ned. The inimitable nickname, from the 1890’s, of Australian men surnamed Kelly. Ex the notorious bushranger, Ned Kelly.


A life-preserve: c.: 1845 in ‘No. 747’ (p. 423); 1857, ’Ducange Anglicus’; 1850, H.; 1864, The Cornhill Magazine. Also billy, cash, q.v. According to Brewer, ex one Kennedy, whose head was smashed in a pocker; prob., however, somatically ex sense 2 above. — 5. A large quantity; plenty: Anglo-Irish: from ca. 1800; ob. H., 3rd ed.

neddyran (or N.), The chief, leader, conqueror: street boys (mostly London): late C. 19–early 20. Ware. A corruption of Ned (the head) of all.

nece peers. ’An E.C. [East London] or city [rather, City] bride of little or no family, and an immense fortune, both of which are wedded to some poor lord or baronet’: Society (— 1909); ob. Ware. Lit., an E.C. peeress.

neeful, the. Ad hoc money: coll.: 1771, Fosaic. ’Then I will set about getting the needful’; The Comic Almanack, 1836. ’Needy men the needful need’; Dickens, The Free Lance, Oct. 6, 1900.


Needingly, it comes from. It is worthless or inferior: coll. c. 17. John Clarke, 1639. Cf. proceeding: another topical allusion on the borderline between S.E. and coll.

*needle. A sharper; a thief: c. of ca. 1780–1860. Potter, 1790. Abbr. needle-point, q.v.: ex the notion of extreme sharpness. — 2. The penis: both low coll. and, in C. 18, S.E. (E.g. in Nabb, Dorset, Rochester).— 3. With the irritation; nerveness: 1887, Punch, July 30, ’It give ‘im the needle . . . being left in the lurch this way’; 1900, G. Swift, The nervousness sense, which is mainly athletic, esp. rowing. O.E.D. Prob., as W. suggests, influenced by needle (e.g. up get the needle, become angry), but imm. ex cop or get the needle (see needle, cop the >). Hence (without the), ill feeling: 1890, Clarence Rook, The Hooligan Nights, ’It was a fight with the gloves. But there was a bit of needle in it. It was all over Alice.’

*needle. V. To irritate, annoy: 1881, G. R. Sims, Also get or give the needle, below. Ex cop or get the needle (see next entry). — 2. V.l., to haggie over a bargain and if possible gain an advantage: c. of ca. 1810–50. Vaux. Ex the n., 1, q.v.; but cf. n., 3.

needle, cop, get, or take the; needle, give the. To become annoyed; to annoy; resp. (— 1874), 1898, 1897, 1887. H., 5th ed.; cf. needle, n., 3, and v., 1. Ware classifies it as, orig., tailors’; ’Irritated, as when the needle runs into a finger’.

needle and pin. Gin; rhyming s.: late C. 19–20. B. & P.

needle and thread. Bread; rhyming s. (— 1859); ob. H., 1st ed.


needle-dodger. A dressmaker: from ca. 1860; ob. > on devil-dodger.

needle-fight. ’A boxing match in which the combatants have a personal feeling or grudge against each other’: sporting coll. (— 1831). Lyell. Ex the S.E. sense, one ‘that arouses much interest and excitement’ (O.E.D. Sup.), prob. influenced by needle, n., 4. Cf. needle-match.

needle- jerker. A tailor: from ca. 1805; ob. O.E.D. Cf. needle-dodger.

needle-match. A dispute: Glasgow (— 1934). Ex the needle-match (a very important one) of sporting j., on needle-fight, q.v.


*needy. A nightly lodger; a beggar; a tramp: c. verging on low s.: ca. from 1850. H., 1st ed.; P. H. Emerson. Ex:

*needy mizzler. A very shabby person; a tramp that departs without paying for his lodging; tramps: c.: from ca. 1810; ob. Vaux; H., 2nd ed. See mizzler.

*needy-mizlling. C.: from ca. 1820. Temple Bar, 1888. ’He’ll go without a shirt, perhaps, and beg one from house to house.’ Ex proceeding.

neel. See nale, second entry.
ne'er a face but his own. Penniless: low; late C. 17-18. B.E. Obviously alluding to the heads and faces on coins. Occ. nate;... often never.
ne'er-be-hold. Nothing whatever: Scots coll.: from ca. 1870. The Encyclopaedic Dict., 1885. "Nothing which could be licked by a dog or cat'.
H., 1st ed.
nestewit, nestexis, nestirth, nestrotr. See nest-wit, nestis, nesteth, nestrot. [Negatives used catachrestically — See Fowler.]
negielidee; negielidie or gée. Negilgie, 'a woman's undressed gown' (Grose); low coll. when not a sol.: mid-C. 18-early 19. Shebbeare; Grose, 2nd ed. (N.B., negiligé comes later.)
Negro, wash a. To attempt the impossible: coll.: C. 17. Middleton & Dekker; Barrow, in Sermons, ca. 1877, 'Therefore was he put to wash Negroes... to reform a most perverse and stubborn generation.' O.E.D.
negro-nosed. Flat-nosed: late C. 17-20; ob. Coll. (e.g. in B.E.) till C. 19, then S.E.
Neill's Blue Caps. See Blue Caps. Neither. Either: sol.: C. 15-20. (Gen. erroneously after a negative). E.g. in The Humorist, Dec. 23, 1933, 'You ain't picked the best one to come out with, neither.'
neither... or. Neither... nor: catachresis; immemorial. A certain writer of detective 'thrillers' perpetrated this in 1832, 'Looking neither to the right or the left.'
neither sugar nor salt. Be. Not to be delicate; esp. not to fear rain: proverbial coll.: C. 18-20; ob. Swift. Ex sugar melting in rain. (Apperson.)
Neptune's Bay, S. Dwyack. The Royal Marines: military: ca. 1850-1910. Also the Admiral's Regiment, the Globe-Rangers or Trotters, the Jollies, and the Little Grenadiers.
nervet. A 'pick-me-up' drink of strong liquor; a tonic: Cockney (—1887); ob. Baumann.
nerves, get on one's. See get... nerving an illicit tampering with a horse to make it more spirited and saleable: horse-copers': mid-C. 17-20. Cf. nervet. 2.
nervy. Very impudent; impudently confident: 1897: middle 1890's; slightly ob. Ex S.E. nery, boldly brave.—2. 'Jumpy,' having bad nerves; excitable or hysterical: coll.: 1906. S.O.D.
nescio, sport a. To pretend not to understand anything, esp. in an old university custom: universi-ty: ca. 1810-50 (perhaps 150 years earlier: of next). Lex. Bal.
-nees. Much used in mod. jocular formations, e.g. Why this thonnaes?', W., 1820.—2. A suffix frequently substituted by the illiciter, esp. Cockneys, for other abstract suffixes; almost im-memorial. Edwin Pugh, in The Cockney at Home, 1914, has romanticness and sarcasticness; the -nees is gen. added to the adj.
nest; gen. nest in the bush. The female pudend: low coll. when not euphemistic S.E.: C. 18-20; ob. G. A. Stevens (longer form), Burns (the shorter).
nest, v. To defecate: C. 17-early 18: t coll. or dial. (Scota) or S.E. (P. & H.)
nest-egg. A sum of money laid by: late C. 17-20: coll. till C. 19, then S.E. Orig. (as in B.E.), gen. as leave a nest-egg. Ruskin.
nestling, keep a. To be restless and/or uneasy: late C. 17-18 coll. B.E. Ex the restlessness and anxiety of a mother bird for her chicks.
net, all is fish that comes to. All serves the purpose: proverbial coll.: mid-C. 17-20. In late C. 19-20, rarely without my, his, etc., before net.
netgen. A half-sovereign; the sum of ten shil-lings: back s. (—1859). H., 1st ed. Composed of net, 10 + gen, a shilling (q.v.)
nettile, to have pised on a. To be pervious, ill-tempered; very uneasy: mid-C. 16-18 coll., then dial. Hoywood; Greene, in The Upstart Courier; B.E.
nettile in, dock out. A phrase implicative or indicative of sickness of purpose; or of senseless changing of order: proverbial coll.: mid-C. 14-18. B.E.
nettile stuff. 'The special rope yarn used for making hammock clows': nautical coll.: mid (?) C. 19-20. Bowen.
nets. An incorrect form of net, niece, the fist: early C. 17. O.E.D.
NEVER, on the. On credit; by wrangling: military (1915) >, by 1919, gen. B. & P. From ca. 1925, often on the never-never. Prob. abbr. on the never-pay system.

Never (or ne'er or nare) a face but his own. See ne'er a face ...


Never-mind! See mind I, never.

Never never; or with capitals. Abbr. never never country or land, the very sparsely populated country of Western Queensland and Central Australia: Australian coll.: 1900, H. Lawson, "I rode back that way five years later, from the Never Never" (O.E.D.). Because, having been there, one swears never never to return; the derivation ex an Aboriginal word for unoccupied land is prob. invalid.—2. Also with country or land: the future life, esp. heaven: Australian coll.: from ca. 1888; ob. 'Rolf Boldrewood'.

Never never, on the. See never on the.

Never never policy, the. The late Mr. Cook's ... much-parodied ... slogan, Not a penny off the pay, not a minute on the day. (The General Strike, May, 1926)' political coll.; now only historical. Collinson.


Never out, the. The female pedunc: low: C. 19-20; ob.


Never-too-late-to-mend shop. A repairing tailor's: tailors': from ca. 1860; ob.

Never trust me! A c.p. oath — never trust me if this doesn't happen: (mostly low) coll. and mostly London: late C. 16-20; ob.


Never-waker. (Rarely of things.) One who never was a success: orig. (ca. 1890) circus a.s., ca. 1905, gen. The Sportsman, April 1, 1901. Cf. has been, q.v. (In U.S., often never-was: O.E.D. Sup.)

Neve(s); more gen. nevis. Seven: back s. (—1859). H., 1st ed. Whence:

*nevis-stretch. Seven years' hard labour: c.: from ca. 1890. Ex preceding.


New. A fresh arrival: Britannia training-ship (—1909). Ware. (Cf. new fellow, q.v.) Whence never, new, /, the cry of a senior cadet wanting something done by a youngster: Bowen.


New Billingsgate. 'Gorgonzola Hall', q.v.: Stock Exchange (—1887); ob.

New brat. The Bootham School form of the next. Anon., Dict. of Bootham Slang, 1925.


New chum; new-chum. A new arrival, esp. if from Great Britain or Ireland: Australian coll. (in C. 20, S.E.), often slightly contemptuous. T. L. Mitchell, 1839, 'He was what they termed a "new chum", or one newly arrived'; R. M. Præd, 1855; Mrs. H. E. Russell, 1882. Whence the rare new chumhood (1883, W. Jardine Smith). Morris. See also chum.

New collar and cuff. To refurbish an old sermon: clerical: from ca. 1870; ob.

*New College. The Royal Exchange: c.: late C. 17-early 19. B.E. (as College, perhaps carelessly): Grose. See also college.—2. Whence New College students', golden scholars, silver batchelors, and leaden masters'; Grose, 1st ed.: which, as James Howell's Proverbs, 1659, makes clear, is a c.p. flung at the gradual dulling of their intelligence.

C. 17-early 19.

New drop. 'The scaffold used at Newgate for hanging criminals; which, dropping down, leaves them suspended', Grose, 1788: ca. 1785-1850: perhaps orig. c.: certainly never better than low a.


new guinea, a or the. The first possession of an income: Oxford University: ca. 1820-40. Egan's Grose, 1823 (where 'can't obviously = slang).


new head, give a. To supply a new title and a few lines of introduction to old matter, to deceive the reader into thinking the whole article or 'item' new: journalistic coll.: late C. 19-20.


New knock, the. A C. 20 c. variant of new drop, q.v. Edgar Wallace in The Squeaker, 1927.


New pair of boots, that's a. That's quite another matter: middle-class coll.: 1883, Entr'Acte, March 17; ob. Ware.

New pin, bright or clean or neat or nice or smart as a. Extremely bright, etc.; very smart; first-class: coll.: from ca. 1880. R. L. Stevenson, 1882 (clean ...); J. W. Elworthy, 1886 (neat); P. H. Emerson, 1893 (smart ...). Obviously, however, as a new pin often merely = wholly; it dates back at least as far as Scott, 1829, 'Clear as a new pin of every penny of debt'. Apperson.

New plates. See plates.


Newcastle, carry or send coals to. See coals.


Newcastle programme. ‘Extreme promises, difficult of execution’: political coll.: 1804–ca. 1900. Ware. Ex ‘a speech of extreme Radical promise made by Mr. John Morley at Newcastle’.

Newgate, specifically, from C. 13, the prison (demolished in 1902) for the City of London, was by 1690, ‘a common name for all prisons’ (Nashe). (Cf. Newman’s, q.v.) Whence the following; of which it is exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to determine the exact status:

Newgate, as black as. Frowning; soiled (dress); low coll.: ca. 1820–80. Bee. Cf. Newgate knocker, black or dark as.

Newgate, may soon be afloat at Tyburn,—he that is at a low ebb at. A c.p. of ca. 1600–1810: condemnation at Newgate might well end in a hanging (one’s heels afloat) at Tyburn; also fig. Fuller in his Worthies, Grose in his Provincial Glossary. Apperson.

Newgate bird or nightingale. A gaol-bird; a thief, a sharper; bird, C. 17–19 coll., e.g. in Dekker (see also bird); nightingale, C. 16 coll., e.g. in Copland.


Newgate frisk or hornpipe. A hanging: c. or low a.: resp. ca. 1830–90; ca. 1825–80. Esp. preceded by dance a. Maginn has ‘toeing a Newgate hornpipe’.

Newgate knocker. ‘A lock of hair like the figure 6, twisted from the temple back towards the ear’, F. & H.: low coll.: from ca. 1840; ob. Mayhew. The fashion was at its height ca. 1840–55. Cf. appoggiaturas, q.v. and Newgate ring.—2. (Cf. Newgate, as black as.) As black, or dark as, Newgate knocker, extremely black or (esp. of a night) dark: coll.: from ca. 1880; ob. Apperson.

Newgate ring. Moustache and board worn as one, without whiskers: s. or low coll.: ca. 1820–90. Cf. Newgate collar and Newgate knocker.

Newgate saint. A condemned criminal: ca. 1810–80: c. or s. or low col. Coll.

Newgate seize me (if I do, there now)! Among criminals, an asseveration of the most binding nature: o. of ca. 1810–80. ‘Jon Bee’, 1823.

Newgate solicitor. A pettigrowing attorney: o. or s. or low coll.: ca. 1785–1840. Grose, 2nd ed.

Newgate steps, born on. Of criminal, esp. thievish, extraction: late C. 18–mid-19: c. or low a. or low coll. Bee, 1823, ‘Before 1780, these steps... were much frequented by rogues and who was connected with the inmates of that place.’


Newland. See Abraham Newland.

*Newman’s. In C. 17, Numans; in C. 18, no record; ca. 1805–50, Newman. Newgate: o. The New of Newgate + mans, q.v., a place. But while Numans stands by itself, Newman’s is rare except in the following combinations:—

*Newman’s lift. The gallows: o. of ca. 1805–50. Ibid. Contrast:

[newmarket, as a method of tossing coins, is prob. to be considered as S.E.] Newmarket Heath, a fine morning to catch herrings on. A c.p. = the C. 20 a fine day for ducks. C. 17–mid-18. John Clarke, 1639. (Apperson.)


news I, tell me. Often proceeded by that’s ancient history. A c.p. retort to an old story or a stale jest: C. 18–20; ob. Swift. Cf. Queen Anne’s dead.


next as—the. (As any adj.) as possible: coll.: late C. 19–20.

next of skin. See skin, next of.

Next Parish to America. Arran Island: Anglo-Irish coll.: (— 1887). Ware, ‘Most western land of Ireland’.

next way, round about, is at the far door. You’re going a long way round: a C. 17 proverbial c.p. John Clarke, 1639. (N.b., next = nearest = shortest.)

N.F.; N.G.; N.H. See at beginning of N.


[nias in F. & H. is S.E., as are nice (simple); squeamish or precise), nisch, nick (a dent; the critical instant), nick, v. (four senses), knock a nick in the post, nick with nay, nick-nack, nickname, nickummpo and nickoommpo, middicko, middipol, midget or nigg, niece, nig (to trifle, e.g. as an artist), night-bird, night-cap (drink); halter); gear, -hawk (etc.),-house, -hunter, -jury, -mistake, -man and -farmer, -rail or -vale, -shade, -sneaker, -walker (except perhaps as a bellman, C. 17), nilly-willy, nimble, nimrod (sportsman), nine-eyed, nigle, niny-(-hammer, a fool), nip (a pinch; a sip, a drink; a taunt), nip, v. (in corresponding senses), nip-cheese (a miser: also dial.), nip in the bud, nipping, in (a slice of egg; dial. are nimnify and nipknot, play.)

*Nib. A gentleman: from ca. 1810; ob.: c. until ca. 1880, then low. Vaux. (Also from ca. 1840, nib-cove). Whence half-nib(s), one who asp gentlemen. ✠ ex the C. 17 Cambridge, esp. King’s College, nib (either s. or j.), a freshman. More prob., as W. points out, a thinned form of nob, q.v. of
nab and (his) nabs; see nabs.—2. A fool: printers: from ca. 1860; ob.

*nab, v. To catch; arrest: from ca. 1770: c. until ca. 1850, then low s.; ob. Ex nab, q.v.—2. To nibble: C. 17–20; S.E. until C. 19, then low coll. (†) and dial. Ex nibble.

*nib-cove. See nib, n. 1.

*nibbing coil. A (petty) thief; occ. a fraudulent deal: c. ca. 1770–1820.


nibble, get a. To obtain an easy job: tailors: from ca. 1850; ob.


nibby. A late C. 19–20 low variant (Manchon) of and derivative ex.

*niblike. (See also nibsome.) Gentlemanly: from ca. 1830; ob. c. until ca. 1860, then low s. Ainsworth, 'All my togs were so niblike and splash.'

*nibs. (See also nabs.) Self: my nibs, myself; your nobs, you or, as term of address, 'friend'; his nobs, the person mentioned; also (—1880), the master or a shabby gentled (cf. nib, n., 1, q.v.), or, among tailors (—1928), a well-dressed workman. From ca. 1820: c. >, ca. 1840, low s. >, ca. 1890, gen. s. Haggart, 1821; Mayhew; Chevalier, 1883, in his song, Our Little Nipper. Ex nabs. There is prob. some connexion with nib, n., 1: cf. his lordship, jocularly applied to anyone, with which cf. his royal nobs, him, in A. Adams's Log of a Cowboy, 1893 (O.E.D.). Note also the analogous nose-watch, q.v.—2. Delicacies: protestarian (—1923). Manchon. Ex nibble.

nibso. A ca. 1890–1915 variant of the preceding, l. low.

*nibsome. Gentlemanly; of (houses) richly furnished, etc.: from ca. 1835; ob. c. >, ca. 1860, low s. G. W. M. Reynolds, 1839, 'Betray his pals in a nibsome game'.

nice. (See entry at nias.)—2. Agreeable; delightful: coll.: 1763, Miss Carter, 'I intended to dine with Mrs. Borgrave, and in the evening to take a nice walk'; Jane Austen; Mary Kingsley. O.E.D. (Often with an ad hoc modification.) Cf. nice and, q.v.

nice, not too. A Society coll.: from ca. 1870. Ware, 'First degree of condemnation—equals bad'.

nice and. Nicely, in sense of 'very': coll.: 1846, D. Jerroll, 'You'll be nice and ill in the morning.' It is the phrase only which has coll. force; nice, by itself, however ironical, is S.E.: witness Jerroll'd 'A nice job I've had to nibble him.' O.E.D.; Fowler.


close as nip. Precisely what's needed; exactly: Northern and Midlands coll.: from ca. 1860. See e.g. F. E. Taylor's Lancashire Sayings, 1901. (Apperson.)


close joint. A 'charming, if over-pronounced, young person': urban, mostly Cockneys' (—1909); ob. Ware.

close place to live out of, it's a. A c.p. (—1909) indicating unpleasantness; ob. Ware.

close thin job. The 'mean evasion of a promise': lower classes' coll.: 1895–ca. 1914. Ware.

close to know, not. (Only of persons) objectionable: coll., mostly jocular: C. 20 (D. Sayers, Murder Must Advertise, 1933.)

niches-cock. The female painter: low coll.: C. 18–20; ob. (By itself, niche is S.E.)

(niches or) nichis in a bag or in nine holes, nooks, or pokis. Nothing whatsoever: late C. 16–20: coll. till C. 18, then dial. R. Scott, 1584 (in a bag, † by 1700); Fuller; Bailey. 'Nichis are ... debts ... worth nothing.' Ex L. nich. Apperson.


Nicholas, clergyman or clerk or knight of St. Or as St Nicholas's clergyman, etc. A highwayman († ever in the singular): ca. 1570–1820 (knight not before late C. 17): coll. †>, by 1600, S.E. Foxe, Shakespeare, John Wilson, Scott (clerk); R. Harvey, 1598 (clergyman). Ex preceding entry, perhaps by a pun on † S.E. St Nicholas's) clerks, poor scholars.

Nicholas Kemp. A proverbial coll., only in the phrase quoted by Quiller-Couch in Troy Town: 'Like Nicholas Kemp, he'd occasion for all.' From ca. 1880; ob.

Nicholls. A complete riding habit: Society coll.: from ca. 1860. Ware, 'From the splendid habits made by Nicholls, of Regent Street', London.


nick. To cheat, defraud (qf): coll.: late C. 16–20; very ob. Taylor the Water Poet. (O.E.D.)—2. To catch, esp. unwares: from ca. 1820. Fletcher & Massinger. In C. 20, occ. to get hold of, as in Galsworthy, The White Monkey, 1924, 'Wait here, darling; I'll nick a rickshaw.'—3. Hence, in C. 19–20, to arrest: low s. or perhaps ex. The Spirit of the Public Journals, 1806, 'He ... stands a chance of getting nicked, because he was found in bad company,' O.E.D.—4. To steal; purloin: 1826 (E.D.D.). 1869, Temple Bar, 'I bolted in and nicked a nice silver tea-pot'; c. †, by 1880, low s.—5. To
nightly. See nighties.—nigle; nigger; nigling. See nigle, nigger, nigling.
nimenog. See nimenog.—nig. See nig, n. 1. Also pl. nippers, q.v.
L., lit. 'nothing to the purpose'.
nikin; occ. nickin; also nippy, i.e. nick(e)y; also n(e)y, nissey or nizzie. A soft simplistic coll.: late C. 17-18. B.E., Grose. The -iny terms are prob. ex N., the -is- and -is-, ex Fr. nizie, foolish.
—2. (Only nikkin, nickin, n(n)k(ey).) Abbr. Animac; C. 17-19.
"nim; occ. nym. A thief; c. of ca. 1620-40.
Taylor the Water Poet. Ex: nim; occ. nym. (Whence Shakespeare's Nym.) To steal pilfer (v.i. and v.t.): C. 17-20; low a. till mid-C. 17. Then c. from ca. 1800, still c. but archaic. John Day, 1606, in his Isle of Galle; 'Hudibras' Butler; Gay, in The Beggar's Opera; G. P. R. James, The Gipsy. Ex A.S.-nimas to take.
nimak; occ. nimma(e); Salt: Regular Army's: late C. 19-20. Ex Hindustani. Cf. muckin.
nimble as similés are coll. —(as) nimble as a cat (up)on a hot backbone, late C. 17-early 19 (backbone, occ. backwards in C. 19), the gen. C. 19-20 form being (up)on hot bricks; (as) nimble as a bee in a tar-barrel, C. 19-20, ob., a cognate phrase being toumble like a bee in a tar-tub; . . . as a cow in a cage, C. 19-20 (ob.) jocular; . . . as a new-gelt dog, C. 19-20 (ob.), mainly rural; . . . as an eel (wriggling in the mud; in a sandbag), C. 17-20, being in C. 19-20 mainly dial.; . . . as ninespence, from ca. 1890, also dial., prob. ex the proverb, a nimble ninespence is better than a slow shifting (C. 19-20; latterly dial.), with which cf. the late C. 19-20 Gloucestershire a nimble penny is worth a slow sixpence. Apperson.
nimble-hipped. (Gen. of women.) Active in the amorous congress: C. 19-20; ob. Coll. verging on S.E.
"nimbles. The fingers: early C. 17. Josson, 1617. Using your nimbles [In diving the pockets]; O.E.D. The S.E. adj. nimble-fingered is recorded the same year.
nimnimmer; nimmimmer. A surgeon, doctor, apothecary, or any one that cures a Clap or the Fox'; B.E.; c. late C. 17-early 19. Grose, 1st ed. Ex nim + ?
nimma(e). See nimak.
nimming. Theft; thieving: see nimm, v., for period and changing status.
nimrod. The penis: low: C. 19-20; ob. Because 'a mighty hunter'. Cf.: 18th ab. A cat; low: C. 1870; ob. ?A corruption of Nimrod, or is it a mere coincidence that the wordable may = nim, to take, + shoik or sho'eky, Romany for a rabbit. Not ex dial.
nincom-noodle. A noodle with no income: jocular London: ca. 1820-40. Bee. Baumann has nincom, a noodle.
nine-bob-square. Out of shape: C. 19-20; coll. († by 1902) and dial. In dial., cf. nine-bobble-square and nine-bobble-square: ?lit. 'nine-cornered-square'.
nine corns. A small pipeful, a half-fill, of tobacco: mid-C. 19-20; coll. († by 1902) and dial. (ob.; mostly Lincolnshire). See esp. E.D.D.
nine lives and (or but) women ten cats' lives, cats have. A mid-C. 18-19-20 c.p. Grose.
nine nile nuts. 'Anything to eat or drink very sustaining. From the nutritious qualities of chestnuts—especially in Japan': Japanese pidgin English (—1909); slightly ob. Ware.
"nine-tail bruizer or mourser. The cat'-nine tails: prison c.: ca. 1800-1910. Nine-two is the coll. form of S.E. nine-point-two (gun): military: 1914; ob. B. & P.
nine ways or nine ways at thrice or nine ways for Sunday(e), look. To squint: coll.: resp C. 18-20 (ob.), as in Udall; C. 17, as in G. Daniel (O.E.D.); and C. 19-20.
nine words at once, talk. To speak fast or thickly: C. 17; coll. Cotgrave. ninepence, bring one's noble to. See noble to ninesence.
ninesence, grand or neat or nice or right as. Extremely neat, nice, right: coll.: C. 17-20 for neat (e.g. Howell, 1650), C. 19-20 for the three others: grand, Dickens; right, Smollet, 1850; nice, T. Ashe, 1884, but implied in H., 2nd ed. See also neat as a bandbox.
ninesence, nimble as. See nimble as.
ninesence, right as. A coll. variant (from ca. 1885) of nimble as ninesence, q.v. Baumann suggests an influence by ninepins.
ninesence, the devil and. See devil and . . .
ninesence to nothing, as like as. Almost certainly: coll.: C. 17. Ray.
ninesence to nothing, bring (one's). To waste or lose property: C. 18-20: coll. till ca. 1850, then dial. In C. 16-17, bring a shilling to ninesence.
Apperson.
nines (rarely nine, ?), to or up to the. To perfection; admirably: coll.: late C. 18-20. (Ca. 1870-80, up to the nines also = up to all the dodges; H., 5th ed.) Burns, 1897, to the nine, as also Reade in Hard Cash; T. Hardy, 1876, up to the nines, a form that appears to be recorded first in 1859, H., 1st ed., in the phrase dressed up to the nines. ?Ex nine as a mystic number connoting perfection (W.). Also got-up to the nines.

nineteen to the dozen. See dozen.
nineteenth hole, the. The bar-room of a golf club-house: golfers: from not later than 1927. (O.E.D. Sup.) A golf-course has 18 holes.
nineteenth dog; always in form: 90 dog. A pug-dog: streets. (1908). Ware, 'Referring to aspect of tail.'
ninety-eight out of, have. To get one's own back on (a person): tailors: late 19–20. E.g. in The Tailor and Cutter, Nov. 29, 1928.
ninety-nines, dressed up to the. An elaboration of dressed (up) to the nines: coll. (–1887); ob. Baumann.
nineteen-seventy (gen. 97) champion frost. A lower-class' c.p. applied in 1897–9 to motor-cars, which, in 1896–7, were something of a 'frost' or failure. Ware.

ninmified. Foolish: coll.: C. 20. James Spen-

*innny. 'A canting whining Begger', B.E.: c.
of late C. 17–mid-18. Ex S.E. sense, or perhaps imm., as prob. the S.E. is, from an innocent, as the O.E.D. suggests.

ninth, occ. in C. 18 tenth, part of a man. A tailor: C. 18–20; ob.: coll. Foote, 1763, 'A journeyman-
taylor ... this whey-faced ninny, who is but the ninth part of a man.' Ex the proverbial nine tailors make a man (late C. 16–20): in C. 17 also two (Dokker & Webster) or three (Apperson). 

*nip. A thief, esp. a cut-purse or a pickpocket: c. of late C. 16–18. Greene. 'ex the v. — 2. A cheat: c. late C. 17–early 19, when it was the prevailing c. sense, a cut-purse gen. being a bang-nipper, q.v. B.E.: Grose, 1st ed.—3. S. of ca. 1820–60; Passengers who are taken up on stage-coaches by the collusion of the guard and coachman, without the knowledge of the proprietors, are called nips,' De Quincey, 1823 (O.E.D.)—4. See nips.

*nip, v.; also nip(s), nyp. To steal, esp. to pick pockets or to cut purses: c.: ca. 1570–1830. (V.i. and v.t.) Harman (the stock phrase, nip a b(o)ung, to cut a purse), Greene, Cleveland: B.E., 'To Pinch or Sharp anything'. Ex the S.E. sense, to pinch (cf. s. pinch, q.v.), and ex.—2. To catch, catch, seize neatly, take up smartly (also with quasi adv.: up): from ca. 1560: chieflly dial (earliest record) and a. H. Scott (dial), F. Godwin, C. B. Berry. O.E.D.—3. To 'pinch', i.e. arrest: c.: from ca. 1560. R. Edwards, ca. 1566, 'I go into the city some knaves to nip'; Mayhew. O.E.D.—4. (Prob. ex preceding sense.) To move, to go, almost always quickly or promptly: orig. (–1825), dial. > c. ca. 1880. Often with out (The Daily Telegraph, Jan. 2, 1883, 'I nipped out of bed') or up: nip in to slip in, nip along to depart hurriedly or rapidly, to move with speed. E.D.D.—5. To cot with (a woman): low (–1923). Manchon.—


E.g. in D. Coks, The Bending of a Twig, 1906. Cf. sense 2.
nip, as white as. As white as snow: proletarian (–1887); slightly ob. Baumann. Ex dial. (–1861) and the herb cat-mint, 'covered with a fine white down' (E.D.D.).
nip along—in—out—up, etc. See fourth sense of nip, v.
nip and tuck, adj., adv., and adj., occ. as virtual n. (a neck-and-neck race). Neck and neck; almost level or equal(ly): coll.: orig. U.S.; anglicised ca. 1890. In U.S., nip and tuck, 1833; nip and tuck, 1836; nip and chuck, 1846; nip and tuck, 1857: an illuminating example of semantic phonetics or, rather, phonetic semantics. Thornton.
nip-cheese, a miser, is S.E., as are nip-cake, -crust, -farting: the last, like nip-cheese, is also dial.; sololy dial. are nip-corns, currant, fig., prune, -ramein, -scored, -skin, -skiller (E.D.D.). But nip-
cheese, a ship's purser, is nautical a. 1785, Grose; Marryat; 1867, Synth; Bowen. Ob. by 1907. Ex some purser's 'pinching' part of the cheese and other food.
nip-house. A tailor: low: from ca. 1860; ob. Cf. nip-shred, q.v.
nip-lug. A teacher: Scots s. or coll.: C. 19–20; ob.
nip-lug, at: at loggerheads: Scots coll.: C. 1920; ob.

Nip or Nyp Shop, the. The Peacock tavern in Gray's Inn Lane: London: ca. 1786–1810. 'Because Burton Ale is there sold in Nypsa', Grose. MS. note of 1786 in B.M. copy of The Vulgar Tongue (1st ed.)—a note incorporated in the 2nd ed. (1788).
nipp, nippe. See nip, v., 1–3.
nipped l., before you. Before you went to school (see nip, v., 4): a military c.p. (1915–18) addressed to a younger man or newer soldier and implying that the elder man was already performing some military work or duty years before. F. & Gibbons.
nippence, no pence, half a great wanting twence.

nipple, a great being fourpence: a C. 17 rhyming c.p. Ray, Fuller. (Apperson.) Cf. if we had eggs, q.v.

*nipper. A thief, esp. a cut-purse or a pickpocket: c.: ca. 1580–1830. Fleetwood, 1856, 'A judicial Nypper' (O.E.D.), i.e. a very skilful one, this being a stock phrase (see Grose at nypper); John Day; Grose. Ex nip, v., 1—2. 'A boy who assists a cowsermonger, carter, or workman', O.E.D.: low coll. (and dial.): from ca. 1850; ob. by 1951. Prob. because he 'nips' about, therefore presumably dial. orig. (see nip, v., fourth sense).—3. whence, a boy, a lad (in C. 20, esp. if under say 12): from ca. 1859. H., 1st ed.; The Daily News, April 8, 1872 (O.E.D.); 1888, The Referee, Nov. 11, 'Other nippers—the little shrimps of boys ... '; Chevalier in The Idler, June, 1892, 'I've got a little nipper, when 'e talks I'll lay yer forty shiners to a quid! You'll take 'im for the father, me the kid, which rather bears out the O.E.D.'s quotation from Williams's Round London, 1889, 'The mind of the East End "nipper" is equal to most emergencies.'—4. whence (l), a boy or 'ead': Marlborough School: from ca. 1875; ob.—5. See nippers.—6. A frosty day: coll. (–1887); ob. Baumann.
A cabin-boy: sailing-ships: from ca. 1805; slightly ob. Bowen.

*nipper, v. To catch; to arrest: c. (≥, ca. 1830, low s.): ca. 1820–50. 'Jon Bee': Egan (1824, in vol. IV of *Boziania*). Ex nipp, v. 3, q.v.


nippiness. See nippy, adj., 2.

nipping, n. and adj. See nip, v., 1: same period and status. Esp. in Greene.

nipping Christian. A cut-purse: low s. of ca. 1800–60. F. & H.


nippliate: -ato,atum,-aty (occ. -ati). Strong, prime liquor, esp. ale: ca. 1576–1700. The O.E.D. considers both the n. and the derivative adj. as S.E., prob. rightly; F. & H. thinks it may have been c. Lanscham, Stubbes, Nashe, Oliffe, Urquhart. Etymology obscure: but cf nip, v., 2.

*nips*. See nippy.


nippy, adj. As = mean, stingy, or curt, nappish, it is familiar S.E. → 2. Lively, nimble, active, sharp or prompt: 1853, Surtees; Burleigh, 1898, 'He . . . liked to see them keen and "nippy" at every solidly task.' O.E.D. Hence, in C. 20, nappiness. → 3. Well-dressed; smartly fashionable: lower classes (−1923). Manchon. Just possibly influenced by Fr. nippé, 'togged up' (Kastner & Markman, 1914).


nips in(to), put the. To ask a loan (from a person): Australian and New Zealand: from ca. 1908. Cf. sting, q.v., and put the hard word on.

nipsitata. A C. 17 variant of nippitata, q.v.

Davenport, 1839. O.E.D.


nisy or nisy. See nikim and nizzy.

niz. (See list at nias.)—2. 'Wine that is brisk, and pour'd quick into a Glass', B.E.: coll.: late C. 17–mid-18. ? ex ū nīz.* full of air bubbles.→ 3. As a wanton, it is Scots: rather dial. than col.→ 4. A military policeman: military: 1915; ob. F. & Gibbons. Cf. the fig. sense of *louay*.

nit, dead as a. Quite dead: coll. and dial.: late C. 18–20. Ob. except in dial. Wolcot, 1759; Hardy, 1874. ['The Sheep'] will all die as dead as nits.' O.E.D.

nit, keep. See keep nit.

nit-squeezger, i.e. nit-squeezger. A hair-dresser: low: 1788, Grose, 2nd ed.; ob.


nits will be, gen. become, lice. A proverbial o.p.: > in C. 18 a proverb, applied to 'small matters that become important', B.E.: mid-C. 17–18. Isaac D'Israeli ascribes it to Oliver Cromwell.


*nix; nicks*. Nothing; occ., in mid-C. 19-20 but ob., nobody. Orig. c. >, ca. 1815, low s., >, ca. 1860, gen. s. G. Parker, 1789. 'How they have brought a German word into it I know not, but nicks means nothing in the cant language': prob. ex coll. Ger. nix (= nichts) via coll. Dutch, as the O.E.D. implies. Also nix my doll, q.v. Cf. nix-nie. → 2. (nix.) A master (or mistress): Bootham School (−1925). Anon., *Dict. of Bootham Slang*. Perhaps because he 'nicks' delinquents.

nix! A warning, esp. among schoolboys and workmen, of somebody's approach. Esp. in keep niz, to keep watch. Ob. H., 2nd ed., 1891; Routledge's *Every Boy's Annual*, 1896. Also (recorded in 1883) nix, e.g. lads, buttons! / Prob. ex Romany nisser, to avoid, influenced by niz my doll, q.v.

*nix my doll. Nothing: c. of ca. 1810–30. Vaux. A mystifying elaboration of niz, q.v., when the latter began to > well known.

*nix my doll. Never mind! ; prob. a mere variant of nix my doll, nothing (to worry about): 1834. Ainsworth, 'Nix my doll, pals, fake away,' in a popular song that popularised the phrase, which soon >, as it may orig. have been, merely 'literary' c.: certainly > by 1890 and ob. by 1860. nix-nie. Nothing at all: South African (−1913). Elaboration of niz, q.v. Pettman.


nizey, nizi, nizzy, nizzie, nizzy. (Also nizey, nizy.) A dunce, simpleton, fool: coll.: mid-C. 17–early 19. (The rare nizy, only C. 17; nizy only C. 16.) Either ex Fr. niais, foolish, etc. S.E., nizy, S.E., nice, foolish. Coles, 1676; Ned Ward; Johnson, 'a low word': — 2. A coxcomb: late C. 17–early 18: coll., I think, though B.E. says o. See also nikim. no. Any: sol. (−1878). Baumann, 'I didn't want no tellin'.' → 2. For stylistic improprieties, see Fowler. → 3. See there's no — .

[In F. & H., the following no-terms should have been omitted as S.E. −:* (the) noble art = pugilism, nod = a fool, nod, v., nodock or nodook, noddipol or noddypol, noddy (a fool; a buggy), noddy the adj., Knavy Noddy (the knife of trumpets), noddy-headed (witless), noddy-pate or peak(e), noddgecock, nog or (k)nooggin (a measure; a mug), nohow the adj., noise, n. and v., make a noise at one, noll-
me-tangere, a repellant person, no-man's-land, nonplussed or -ast, nonsense (a trick), nonsuch (something unequalled), nonjuror (a term), noodlely, noodkery, noose = to marry, nose, v. (except in o. sense), nostrum, notch, the v., notional, notionate; whereas nobby, a fool, and nog = noggin, are dial.]

no. 1. See number one.

no baity. Not worth while, no good; printers': from ca. 1870; ob. Because not worth fighting for or because there's no fight to see.

no bon. See bon.

no-beyond jammer. A 'perfectly beautiful woman' = low (-1909); virtually †. Ware. Lit.: as 'jam', incomparable.


no catch(, it's, etc.). (It's) very hard work, very disappointing, unpleasant, dangerous: coll. late C. 19–20. See catch, n., and the equivalent no cop at cop.

[no catchy no havy. If I'm not caught, I can't have a being or come to any harm: mid-C. 18–19. Negro saying quoted by Grose, 2nd ed. But unless such terms and phrases are taken up by the British, they are ineligible.]

no chicken. See chicken.—no class. See class.


no cop. See cop, no.

no earthy. See earthly, not an.—no end. See end.—no error, and. See mistake, and no.—no fear. See fear.

no files ; also (see H., 5th ed.) no- (iffy. Artful, designing: printers': from ca. 1870. Also n. f., q.v. In C. 20, there are no fills on (so and so), he's no fool, he's a good sound fellow: which appears to come from the U.S.A. (Thornton.)—2. 'An emphatic addition made to an assertion ... It really means "no error" or "no mistake" ... as a "jolly fine girl, and no files!"' — H., 5th ed. (1874).


no fool. See fool.

no go, it is, etc.). No use!; it's impracticable or impossible: 1830. Moncrieff. 1852, Notes and Queries, Jan. 17, 'My publisher coolly answered that it was no go'; 1896, Farjeon, 'But it was no go'.

no goody-la. The opp. of goody-la, q.v.

no gusse! An engineer's c.p. (= 1900) imputing lack of polish or manners. Ware.

no-how, no-howish. See nohob, nohobish.

no kid. No mistake; lit., without deception: from ca. 1890. P. H. Emerson.

no mistake, and. See mistake, and no.

no more wit than a cook (, have). (To be) stupid: C. 16 coll. Apperson.

no moss! No animosity!: tailors': from ca. 1870; ob. Cf.

no name, no pull. If I don't mention names, there can—or should—be no offence, no libel action: tailors': from ca. 1870; ob. Cf.

no names, no pack-drill. The soldier's equivalent of the preceding: C. 20 c.p. (Drill with a heavy pack up is a very common military punishment.) B. & P.

no number nines. See what! no number ...

no odds! It doesn't matter; never mind: coll.: 1855. Dickens.

no. one or 1; no. two or 2. See number one; number two.

no possible probable shadow of doubt, no possible doubt whatever is a c.p., either independent, or in retort on, or confirmation of, of that there is no possible doubt. Late C. 19–20, among the cultured. Ex Gilbert & Sullivan. (Collinson.)

no rats! A proletarian c.p. (=—1909; ob.): 'He (or she) is Scotch.' Ware, 'A Scot is always associated with bagpipes, and ... no rat can bear ... that musical instrument.'

no repairs. See repairs.

no return ticket! A London lower-classes' c.p. (=–1909): He, or she, is mad! Abbr. he's going to Home! (lustic asylum) and has no return ticket. Ware.

no Robin Hood. No bloody good: rhyming s., esp. military: from ca. 1910. B. & P.

no sir! ; no sir-ree. (Accent on the last syllable.) This emphatic negative, recorded in U.S. in 1847, has in post-War England > a c.p. (Thornton.)

no such. Catastrophic for none such: late C. 19 (1 earlier)-20. Freeman Wills Crofts, The Cask, 1920, 'You can't have seen a letter from me, because no such exists.'

no two ways about it. (There's) no alternative; no room for a difference of opinion: coll.: C. 20. Ex. U.S.


Noah's doves. 'Reinforcements at sea when Armistice was signed': Australian military: late 1918; now only historical. F. & Gibbons. Cf. rainbow, q.v., and olive-branch.

Noakes. See John o' Noakes and, for secondary sense, Nokes.

nob. (In C. 18, also nobb.) The head: from ca. 1690: c. >, ca. 1750, low s. >, ca. 1810, gen. s. B.E.; K. O'Hara, 1733, 'Do pop up your nob again. And egad I'll crack your crown': Barham. Cf. (? ex) nab, the head, q.v.—2. A blow on the head: from ca. 1810; very ob.: orig. sporting.—3. In cabbages, 'the knave of the same suit as the turn-up card, counting one to the holder', O.E.D.: 1821, Lamb. See also nob, one for his.—4. A person of rank, position, or wealth: 1809 (O.E.D.): Lex. Brit., 1811; Westmacott, 1825, 'Nob or big wig'; Dickens, Thackeray; Anstey. (In the C. 19 Navy, a lieutenant: Bowen.) Earlier in Scots dial. as nab or knab(): 1742, R. Forbes (E.E.D.). These Scottish forms militate against abbr. nobility; this sense prob. derives ex sense 1: cf. the heads, important persons.—5. Hence, a fellow of a college: Oxford University: ca. 1820–60. Westmacott, 1825.—6. Abbr. knob-stick, q.v.: workmen's coll.: from ca. 1865; ob. J. K. Hunter, Life Studies, 1870 (O.E.D.).—7. A sovereign (coin): ca. 1840–90. Ex the head.—8. The game of prick- (or cheat)-the-garter: c. of ca. 1750–1800. John Poulter, 1753, 'We got about three pounds from a buttermen at the Bolt or Nobb.'—
9. The nose: Scottish and North Country a.: 1796

nobby, n. Always the nobby. The smart thing: 1869, E. Farmer; ob. (O.E.D.)—2. Nobby, adj. 2. Inevitable nickname (see nobby) for any man sur
named Clark(e): late C. 19—20. Also, the naval nickname which, originally given to Admiral Charles Erwart on account of his dapperness, has spread to all Ewarts and Hewets (Boven): C. 20. Nobby also a loose variant of Knobby (Addenda).
Clarks are Nobby because clerks used, in the City, to wear top hats, i.e. nobby hats.—S. The ship Nobe was V.O.T. (V.O.T. = V.O.T. = V.O.T.)
nobby, adj. Very smart, elegant, or fashionable.
(Cf. nifty, q.v.) Of places or things: 1844, C. Selby, ‘My togs being in keeping with this nobby place’; 1862, ‘The noisiest way of keeping it quiet’.
Ex Scots knabbie or knabby (1785, Picken, ‘Mony a knabbie laird’, O.E.D.); see also nob, n. 4. Mainly in Scotland.
nob, mainl. girlf., chiefly school-girl, coll. of approbation for persons or things, esp. in that’s (very) noble of you: C. 20. Ex aristocratic connotation.
noble blood to market and see what it will bring, send your. A C. 18 e.p. addressed to one boasting about or trading on his high birth. Apperson.
noble to ninepence, bring a or one’s. To dissipate money idly or wantonly; semi-proverbial coll.: from ca. 1820; by 1820, except in dial. Fulwell, 1568, ‘For why Tom Tootse, since he went hence, hath increased a noble just unto nine pence’; Bailey’s Colloquies of Erasmus; 1914, R. L. Gales in Varieded Country Folk, ‘As a child I remember “Their noble has come to a ninepence” as the commonest of sayings.’ Apperson.
Nobody’s Own. The 13th, also the 20th, Hussars: military: mid C. 19–20. F. & Gibbons, ‘As not being allowed in their title to any Royal personage or other person of distinction, as with other cavalry regiments outside the Household Brigade’; R. J. T. Hills, Something About a Soldier, 1934.
Knock. (As the posterioris, esp. the breech, it is S.E.: but see nockandoro.)—2. The female pudend: low: late C. 16–18. Florio, Cotton. Lit. a notch. Cf.: nock, v. To ‘occupy’ a woman, gen. v.t.: low coll.: late C. 16–18. Florio; Ash in his Dict. In C. 19–20, knock, which was prob. suggested by this.
Nod, land of. (Occ. with capitals; always preceded by the.) Sleep: C. 18–20: coll. till C. 19, then S.E. Swift, ‘I’m going to the land of Nod’; Grose; Scott, 1818, in The Heart of Midlothian. Punning the Biblical place-name.
nod is as good as a wink to a blind horse, a. A semi-proverbial c.p. applied to a covert yet comprehensible hint, though often stupidity in the receiver is implied. C. 19–20. Dorothy Wordsworth, Journal, 1802. (Apperson.)
noddle. The head: coll. (orig., perhaps jocular S.E.): 1864, Butler, ‘My Head’s not made of brass’; As Eras. Bacon’s noddie was; L’Estrange, Thackeray. Ex the S.E. sense of C. 15–mid-17 noddle (cognate with noll): the back of the head.—2. The head as the seat of intelligence—or the lack of it. Coll.: often playful, often derisive: 1759, Tomson; 1611, W. Baker, ‘The wit enamoshed in thy noddell’; Dickens, O.E.D.
nohow; occ. no-how. The adj. (= indistinct) is S.E., as is the adv. (by no means, in no manner). Preceded by all, it = out of sorts, and is coll.: from ca. 1850. Dickens.—2. In soloeistic speech, often with a superfluous negative, e.g. in Reade’s ‘That don’t dovetail nohow’ (O.E.D.)
noise, a big. See big noise.
noise like a(n) . . . make a. To pretend to be a (thing); (momentarily) to suppose oneself to be an (animal; occ. a person): a c.p. location: from ca. 1920. Dorothy Sayers, Unnatural Death, 1927. ‘And now we’ll just make a noise like a hoop and roll away.’
noisy-dog racket. The stealing of brass knockers from doors: c. of ca. 1810–60. Lex. Bal. | ex the accompanying barks of a provoked dog or simply ex the noise the operation was apt to make.
nokes; Nokes. A Ninny or Fool, B.E.: coll.: ca. 1690–1890.—2. See John-a-Nokes.
Nokkum. (Gen. pl.) A Scottish Gypsy tinker: their own word: mid-C. 19–20. The reference in ‘No. 747’ (p. 49) is valid for 1865.
(noli me tangere (or hyphenated). Syphilis. Scots coll.: C. 17–early 19. Perhaps, however, merely a specific instance, for all other senses are S.E. Lit. (in L.), touch me not!).
noll; occ. nol, nolle, nolles, these three being † by 1750. The head: C. 19–20: S.E. till C. 18, then coll. till ca. 1820, then (except as jocular archaisms) dial.—2. A person, esp. as a simpleton, gen. with dull or drunken: late C. 14–mid-17: S.E. verging on, indeed sometimes actually, coll.—3. Noll, Old. See Old Noll.—4. Noll. Oliver Goldsmith. (Dawson.)
nominate. See poison.—nommu(o)us. See nunnous.
Manchon.
non-coll. A group of pupils exempted, or the rule by which they are exempted, from the practice of writing 'columns' (q.v.): Bootham School (—1826). Anon., Dict. of Bootham Slang.
(orig. military): from ca. 1862. H., 3rd ed. (1864); J. S. Winter, 1885, 'Well-tipped quartermasters and their favourite tools among the non-coms.' Cf. the Fr. s., sous-off = sous-officier (W.).
non-con., Non-Con., Non-Con. A Nonconformist: coll.: from ca. 1850; ob. Flatman; Grose, 1st ed.
non est. Absent: coll.: 1870. Brewer. Lit., he is not (so found, L. inventus). Abbr.: non est inventus, adj. Absent: coll.: 1827, De Quincey, Murder as One of the Fine Arts; ob. by 1890, † by 1915. Ex legal 'S.E.'
non-husky. See husky.
non-lit., adj. Illegal; esp. unbefitting a Wykhamist: Winchester College: from ca. 1890. 'Don't sport non-lit. notions,' Wrenn, The Win-
chester Word-Book, 1891. Ex the legal S.E.
nom me. A lie: lower classes, mostly Cockneys': 1820–ca. 30. Ex Queen Caroline's trial, whereas the Italian witnesses said non mi ricordo (I don't rem-
ember) to every important question. Ware.
non-plus, catch (a person) on the. To catch at
unawares: coll. (—1887); ob. Baumann.
non-stop. A big shell passing far overhead:
ilitary: 1916; ob. F. & Gibbons. Ex a non-
stop train.
non-e. Understanding, as in 'There's no nonce
about him': sol. (—1887); ob. Baumann. A perversion of nuance or a confusion of nous and
sense, or of nonsense and sense.
nonsense. A boy in the middle school: cer-
tain Public Schools': late C. 19–20. In the same schools, squeaker (see sense 3) and dook (last sense): Ian Hay, David and Destiny, 1954.
Go seek at None-such.' Ex Nonsense, near Ipsom in Surrey. O.E.D. Cf.:
Nonsense, he's a Mr. He's very conceited: o.p. of ca. 1885–1910. Baumann.
nonsense-nonsense. A meaningless refrain useful esp.
for palliating obscenity: C. 16–18; extant only as an archaism. Perhaps coll. rather than S.E. F. &
H. give it as = a simpleton: but is this so? I find
no support.
nonsense. Nonplus; occ. nonplussed: sol.
nonsense. 'Melting butter in a wig', Grose, 3rd ed.: late C. 18–early 19.—2. Money: c. or, more prob., low.s.: from ca. 1820. Egon, 1821, 'Shell out the
nonsense: half a quid Will speak more truth than all your palavers.' By antiphrasis.—3. A
small division of the Third Form: Eton College:
nonsuch. See nonsuch.
noodle, a simpron (from ca. 1750): perhaps
orig. coll.; otherwise, always S.E.—2. 'A man
belonging to the Northumberland Yeomanry or
Volunteers': Northumberland a.: 1891; ob.
E.D.D.
noodles, the House of. The House of Lords: ca.
Manchon; James Curtis, The Gilb Kid, 1930. Origin ?
nomony. Pneumonia: Canadian sol. verging on (lower-class) coll.: C. 20. John Beamus, Gate-
way, 1932, 'You'll get the noomony one of these
days, goin' on the way like you do.'
nose, noose. To hang: from ca. 1670; ob.: ?
orig. c.; certainly low s. till C. 10, then coll.
Head, Grose. (—2. V.h., to marry, late C. 17–20, is
ejocular S.E.)
nope. A blow, esp. on the head, from ca. 1720:
a. († by 1870) and Northern dial. A New Canting
Dict., 1725; Grose. Cognate with C. 16 nope,
of equally obscure origin: cf. culp, q.v.—2. This U.S.
pronunciation of no, the semi-exclamatory adv., has,
esp. since 1918 and as a low coll., gained ground in
the British Empire. ('Gaput', Out of Exit, 1932.)
—3. A slovenly, unc. jocular, 'collusion' of no
hope: low coll.: C. 20, but rare before the G.W.
Noper force, the. The North Persian Force,
operating in the latter half of 1918: military.
B. & P. Prob. with a pun on nope, 3.
nor. Than: dial. (from C. 15) and, in C. 19–20,
low coll. Thackeray, 1840, 'You're no better nor
a common tramper,' O.E.D.—nor = north is S.E.)
nor an 'un. Not a single one: sol. not very
Nor' Loch trout. A joint or leg of mutton:
Scots s.: ca. 1770–1810. Jamieson. 'This was the
only species of fish which the North Loch, on
which the shambles were situated, could supply.'
nor'-western. A glass of potent liquor: nautical
coll.: 1840. Marryat; ob. O.E.D.
Noras. Great Northern Railway deferred ordinary
stock: Stock Exchange: from ca. 1885; ob.
Atkin, 1887, 'For we have our Saras and Claras,| Our Noras and Doras for fays.'
Norfolk boy, the. Porter's nickname at Eton—
and after. Dawson.
Norfolk capon. A red herring (cf. Glasgow magis-
trate, q.v.): coll.: from ca. 1780; ob. Grose, 1st
ed. Smith, The Individual, 1836, 'A Norfolk
capon is jolly grub.' Cf. also Yarmouth capon, q.v.
Norfolk dumpling. An inhabitant, esp. a native,
Beegar, 1600; Ray, 'This refers not to the stature
of their bodies; but to the fare they commonly feed
on and much delight in'; Grose, 1st ed. True,
Mr. Ray; nevertheless, this dish does tend to make
children and even adults round and fat. Apperson.
Cf. Norfolk turkey, q.v.
Norfolk Howard. A bed-bug: coll.: from ca. 1883;
ob. H., 3rd ed. Ex one Joshua Bug, who, in June,
1862, changed his name to Norfolk Howard.
Norfolk Howards. The Norfolk Regiment (in
C. 19, the 9th Foot): military: from ca. 1870. Ex
the preceding, in the jocose way of soldiers.
[Norfolk nog. A kind of strong ale: ca. 1720-60: coll. rapidly > († always was) S.E. Vanbrugh, 1726. 'Here's Norfolk nog to be had at the next door."

Norfolk turkey. An inhabitant, esp. a native, of Norfolk: coll. : C. 19–20; ob. Anon., Ora and Julian, 1811. 'The boorish manners of those Norfolk turkeys' (O.E.D.). Cf. Norfolk Dumping, q.v., and Norwich, and note the C. 16–30 (ob.) proverb Essex stiles (Diddles), Kentish miles, Norfolk miles, many men beguiles, with variants; glance also at Yorkshire and at north, sense 1.


norp, gen. v.i. To insert phrases apt to 'fetch' the gallery, i.e. to 'gag to or for the gods': theatrical: from ca. 1870; ob. Perhaps ex Yorkshire dial. (at least as early as 1869: E.D.D.): norp or nesp, to hit the mark, to succeed, ex. the much earlier norp, nesp, to strike, e.g. with a stick, gen. on the head.


north, adj. Intelligent; mentally and socially alert; cunning: from late C. 17; ob. Rare except in too far north, too clever or knowing, as in Smollett, 1748, and Mrs. A. M. Bennett, 1877 (O.E.D.); Ashton, in his Social Life in the Reign of Queen Anne, quotes however this illuminating passage: 'I ask'd what Country-man my Landlord was? answer was made, Full North; and Faith 'twas very Evident, for he had put the Yorkshire most dammably upon us.' Cf. the C. 19–20 dial. to have been as far North as anyone, to be no more of a fool than the next man (E.D.D.).—2. Strong, gen. of drink: nautical: from ca. 1860. Hence, due north, neat, without water, and too far north, drunk; contrast this phrase in sense I. The Glasgow Herald, Nov. 9, 1884. Cf. another point, (steward), q.v.

north and south. The mouth: rhyming s.: from ca. 1880.

North Castle. See Holloway Castle.

North Country compliment. An unwanted gift of no value to either the donor or the recipient: coll.: from ca. 1870; ob. H., 5th ed.


Northhallerton. (Rare in singular.) A spur: coll.: ca. 1790–1890. Grose, 3rd ed., 'That place, like Rippon, being famous for making them'.

Northen-spell. A corrupt form of knur(r) and spell (a game): C. 19–20. O.E.D.


northo-rigger. Gen. pl. 'In the late Victorian and Edwardian Navy, ratings who had entered as youths instead of through the harbour training ships. Now seldom heard', Bowen, 1927. Also hurricane-jumper.

Northumberland's arms, Lord. A black eye: mid-C. 17–20: s. >, ca. 1680, dial. († except in Northumberland). Grose, 2nd ed. Either from the dark-colour fluids [i.e. light muskets] carried by the Percy's retainers or from the black and red predominant in the spectacles-resembling badge 3 of this powerful family (E.D.D.). [1. Note as relevant the heraldic sense of fuel.]

Norway neck-cloth. 'The pillory, usually made of Norway fir', Grose, 1st ed.: ca. 1784–1830.

Norwegian house-flag. One of the windmill pumps that used to be compulsory in Norwegian sailing ships: nautical: ca. 1850–1910. Bowen. I.e. as inevitable as a house-flag.

Norwicher. One who drinks too much from a shared jug, glass, etc., i.e. an unfair drinker: ca. 1860–1900. H., 3rd ed.; The Athenaeum, Aug. 15, 1866 († relevant). (Not in E.D.D.) Origin obscure: but see Norfolk flags in the 'Cf.' part of Norfolk turkey. These territorial amenities are common enough (cf. Yorkshire).


nose, v. (See entry imm. after no.—2. To bluster, to bully: this is a 'ghost' sense fathered by Johnson and copied by (e.g.) Ash and Grose. See O.E.D.—3. V.t., to inform to police; to burn king's evidence: c. ca. 1860: ob. Lex. Bal.: 'His pal nosed, and he was twisted for a crack,' i.e. hanged for burglary. Cf. nose upon, q.v.—4. Hence, v.t., to spy on, keep under police observation; to watch (a building): c. C. 20. Edgar Wallace passim: e.g. Room 13.

[nose phrases. Such as are not recorded hereinafter—and they are fairly numerous—are S.E.: see esp. F. & H. at IV, 67–8, and the O.E.D., at nose, 215–17.]

nose, at one's (very). Very close: from ca. 1620: coll. and dial.

nose, † candles or dewdrops in the. Mucus depending from the nose: low: late C. 18–20.

nose?, follow your. A C. 17–20 c.p. 'said in a jeer to those that know not the way, and are bid to Smell it out', B.E.; Swift; Grose. In C. 19–20, often follow your nose, and you (or for it) can't go wrong.


my (‘Duongue Angliques’, 1857) is itself ex nose-my-kicker, q.v.: mid-C. 19—20; ob. Also nose em, nose ‘m.

nose of. To cheat, swindle (a person) of (something): ca. 1650—90. O.E.D. gives as S.E., but the O.E.D.’s quotations (Brome; Brian, Pies-Prophe) indicate coll. Cf.: nose of, wipe one’s. To deprive or defraud (one) of (something): late C. 16—mid-18. Again the O.E.D. gives as S.E.; again I suggest coll. Bernard, 1698. ‘... Who wipes our noses of all that we should have’; Cibber, 1721, ‘Thou wilt wipe this foolish Knight’s Nose of his Mistress at last’ (O.E.D.), which, by the way, recalls ‘He’ll wipe your son Peter’s nose of Mistress Delia’ in anon.’s Wily Beguiled, ca. 1606. Cf. nose-wiper, q.v. nose of war; or wazen-nose († by C. 18). Anything, esp. any person, very pliable, exceedingly obliging or complaisant or easy-going: coll. v.erging on S.E.: ca. 1830—1830. Scott, 1815, ‘I let... the constable... manage the business his ain gate, as if I had been a nose o’ wax.’ Apperson. *nose on. To give information to the police about (a person); e.: C. 20 (and prob. earlier). Edgar Wallace passim. Ex nose upon, q.v., or perhaps ex nose, v., 3. nose-paint. Alcoholic drink: South Lancashire jocular s. (— 1905), not dial. E.D.D. (Sup.). nosebag. A pocket-handkerchief: from ca. 1835: low. Halfburton. Cf. nose-wiper. nose swell, make one’s. To make a person jealous or envious: coll.: from ca. 1740; ob. State Trials, 1743, ‘He heard Lord Altham say, ... my wife has got a son, which will make my brother’s nose swell,’ O.E.D. Cf. the S.E. put one’s nose out of joint, of which it is prob. a jocular elaboration, and the C. 18 († S.E.) variant, make one’s nose warp (Ray). nose to light candles at, a. A (drunkard’s) red nose: coll.: late C. 19—20; ob. Nashe. ‘Their noses shall be able to light a candle.’

nose up my a*ve l, your. An expression of the utmost contempt: mid-C. 19—20. Cf. the milder ast† mine or my o*ve l, q.v.

nose upon, v.t. To tell something of a person so that he be injured and, if possible, one’s self profited: low coll.: from ca. 1810; ob. Vaux. Whence perhaps nose on, q.v. nose-warmer. A short pipe: from ca. 1880.

nose-watch. I; me: o. of ca. 1570—1630. Cf. nobs (esp. my nobs), which affords a very significant analogy. Harman, ‘Cut to my nose watch... say to me what thou wilt.’ See watch.

nose well down, (with). In a great hurry: military coll.: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Ex marching with head down.


nose-wiper. A pocket-handkerchief: from ca. 1894. Lord C. E. Paget, 1896, ‘Charged with my relay of nose-wipers, I was close to his Majesty on the steps of the throne,’ O.E.D. Ex nose-wipe, n., q.v.

nosebag. See nose-bag.—nosegent. See nose-gent.—noseender. See nose-ender.

nosegay. Mrs. Abington (1737–1815), the actress. Her name as a flower-girl. Dawson.

**nosegay** to him as long as he lives, it will be a. A mid-C. 17–early 18 semi-proverbal c.p. applied to one who has a very big and/or long nose. Ray, 1678. (Apperson.)


noseall or -coll. A horse given to kicking and/or other vicious behaviour: London farriers': late C. 19–20. Perhaps cf. dial. nozzle, to strike violently, to do things vigorously.

nosy. See nos(ey).

not, either repeated or with another negative where only the one is understood: from C. 15: S.E. till ca. 1665, then a vulg. when not dial.—2. With dependent clause omitted, as in E. P. Oppenheim, 1907, 'She is coming back ...' 'The chambermaid thought not, sir': coll. prob. from as early as the 1890's. O.E.D. (Sup.).

[not phrases. See the key n., adj., or adv. Cf., however, next few entries].

not all there. See there, all—not a sixpence to scratch with. See scratch with.


not many likely. See also-bloody-lutely.—not likely! See likely, not—much much! See much I, not.

not half, adv. Much, very; as in 'not half screwed, the gent was': (mostly Cockney) ironic coll.; C. 20.—2. As exclamation, esp. of emphatic assent: as in ‘Did you like it?’ ‘Not half!’ id.: from ca. 1905. For both senses, see B. & P. and Lyell.

not if I am in orders for it! A military c.p. of refusal: from ca. 1930. I.e. I wouldn't do it even if I were, in Daily Orders, instructed to do so.

not Jack all of doors nor yet gentleman. One not quite a gentleman; one of ambiguous status: C. 17 semi-proverbal coll. John Clarke, 1639. (Apperson.)


not out. See innings, have a long. not so as (or that) you'd notice. See notice, not ... not so old nor yet so cold. A late C. 17–mid-18 semi-proverbal c.p. of doubtful and perhaps dubious meaning. Swift, *Polite Conversation*. (Apperson.)

not worth a ... These similes all have a coll.—

several, indeed, a s—ring. Some will be found at the key n., but for convenience I summarise Apperson's masterly forty, and add one:—not worth a bands' end, mid-C. 19–20 dial.; bean, late C. 13–20, but in C. 19–20 only = penniless; button, C. 14–20, ob.; cherry, late C. 14–16; chip, C. 17; cobbler's curse, late C. 19–20 dial. (cf. tinker's curse); cross, C. 14–15; hence, curse, C. 19–20; doodle, do(l)ikin, or doit, from ca. 1650, ob.; fart, C. 19–20, low; farthing, C. 17–20; &; fly, C. 16–20; flea, C. 15–17; fly, late C. 13–20, ob.; gnat, late C. 14–16; gooseberry (Shakespeare); groot, C. 16–early 19; haddock, C. 16; hair, early C. 17; haw, late C. 13–16; hen, late C. 14–mid-16; herring (cf. haddock), C. 13; leek or two leeks, C. 14–mid-17; louse, late C. 14–20, latterly dial.; needle, C. 13–15; nut, late C. 13–mid-14; pea or pease, late C. 14–early 17; pear, C. 14–16; pin, from ca. 1530, ob.; point or blue point, ca. 1540–1680; potato ( Byron, *noneuse*); rush, occ. bulrush or two rushes (cf. leek), mid-C. 14–20, ob.; sloe (cf. haw), C. 13–14; straw, late C. 13–20; tinker's curse, mid-C. 19–20, orig. dial.; rotten apple, mid-C. 15–early 16; eg. C. 15–19; ivy leaf, late C. 14–mid-15; onion, C. 16; shoe-buckles, C. 17; three halfpence, mid-C. 17–early 18. (Apperson's *not worth hiring, who talks of tiring is irrelevant*; and in late C. 19–20, farthing is gen. brass farthing.)

not worthy to. Most of these are to be found at the key vv.; most of them deal with the tiring of another person's shoe-laces or the cleaning of another's foot-wear, even as early as ca. 1410. See Apperson at not worthy: I go into no further detail here, for the phrases unrecorded herein are hardly unconventional.


note. 'Intellectual signature, political war-cry': Society coll.: from ca. 1869; ob. Ware quotes *The Daily News*, Nov. 18, 1884, 'Culture is the "note" of Boston.'

note, change one's. To tell a (very) different story: late C. 17–20; coll. till ca. 1850, then SE. Ex modulated singing.

[not*note-blanker*. See jitter.]


notergal wash; osc abbr. to n. (or N.) wash. Grubiness: lower classes': 1857–ca. 80. Either ex no wash at all or ex Nightingale wash, Florence Nightingale having stated that a person could, if necessary, keep himself clean with a pint of water per day. Ware.

nother. Another: slovenly, when not nursery, coll.: since when? (Denis Mackail, *Summer Leaves*, 1934.)


nothing below the waist. _No fool_: tailors' c.p. (— 1928). See the quotation at rub about.

nothing but. Nothing else; anything else but, anything but, anything except. Both of C. 20.; the former being col., the latter catachrestic. E.g. John G. Brandon, _The One-Minute Murder_, 1934, 'As far as that poor devil's concerned...it's accident and nothing but,' i.e. nothing but an accident.

nothing but up and ride? A semi-proverbial c.p. = Why, is it all over?; is that the end? Ca. 1650-1750. Howell, 1659; Ray; Fuller, 1732. Apperson.

nothing doing! See doing, nothing.

nothing in my young life. See life, nothing...nothing like leather. A c.p. applied to anything that smacks—esp. if one-sided or tendentiously—of the doer's or the speaker's trade (orig. that of a currier); late C. 17-20. L'Estrange, 1832; Mrs. Gaskell, 1855. In C. 20, esp. from ca. 1829 and prompted by the competition of Uiskide and its similars, the phrase has > a leather-sellers' and shoemakers' slogan, which has in its turn re-popularised the c.p. The anecdotal 'etymology' is that a cobbler once extolled leather for its value in fortifications. Apperson; W.

nothing on earth, feel (or look) like. To look or feel wretched or ill: coll. (— 1927) >, by 1933, S.E. (Collinson.)

nothing to do with the case! That's a lie!: a polite c.p. dating from W. S. Gilbert's _The Mikado_, March 14, 1885; ob., though we still, occ., hear the original, _The flowers that bloom in the spring, tra-la_, have nothing to do with the case, words sung with alluring vivacity by George Grossmith. Ware.

nothing to write home about. Unremarkable; unusual; mediocre: coll.: late C. 19-20. During the G.W., Australian soldiers preferred nothing to _tale home about._

nothing to make a song about. See song about.

nothing. See -ink.

notice, not so as (occ. so that) you'd. Not so much—or to such an extent—as to be noticeable; from ca. 1929. In addition to its being a c.p., the phrase is coll. by its very structure.

'notice to quit.' Danger of dying, esp. from ill-health: from ca. 1820; c. until ca. 1860, then coll.; ob. Egans's _Grose_. Esp. bake notice to quit, 'to have a fatal illness and to know that it is fatal' (Lyell).

notion. A term or a custom peculiar to: Winchester College (— 1891). Wrench.


Nottingham Hussars, the. The 45th Foot Regiment: military: ca. 1850-80. F. & Gibbons. They came from Nottinghamshire.

Nor'ham lamb. See lamb.

nottub. A button: back s.: late C. 19-20. Ware.

nought. Anything: sol.: C. 18-20. Baumann, 'I don't see nought of him.'

nouns! A C. 18-18 oath = (God's) wounds; coll. Earliest as Cock's or Od's nouns, nouns by itself being unrecorded in print before 1808. O.E.D. _nourishment, sit up and take_. To become alert or healthy or to apprehend or illness: from ca. 1890; coll. till ca. 1920, then jocular S.E. Ex the sick-room + S.E. _take notice_, (esp. of babies) 'to show signs of intelligent observation', Dickens, 1846 (O.E.D.).

nous. Intelligence; esp. common sense: coll.: 1706, Baynard, 'A Demo-brain'd Doctor of more Note than Nous', O.E.D.; 1729, Pope, who, as still sometimes happens, writes it in Gr. characters (vs): Barham; Read. 'Curiously common in dial.', W. Ex the Gr. philosophic mind or intellect, as in Cudworth, 1678.—2. App., ca. 1820-40, it = uppishness. Bee; therefore London fashionable s.—3. Ex sense 1, _the rare nous_, to understand: from ca. 1858; ob. H., 1st ed. _nous-box_. The head: 1811, _Lex. Dal._: s. >, ca. 1880, coll.; ob. Ex preceding.

nouse. Wolcot's and H.'s—spelling—which has no justification—of _nous_, q.v.

nova. Nine, gen. in sums of money: from ca. 1890, but much less gen. than _nubba_, q.v.: Parlyare. P.H. Emerson, 1893. Ex _It. nova._


novelty, the, the female pudend. C. 18-20 (ob.). may be euphemistic S.E.

novi. (Pl. novis.) A new boy: several English Public Schools': late C. 19-20. Ex _L. novi_ (hominem), the newcomers, the new rich.

now. Really, truly, indeed: coll.: mid-C. 19-20. E.g. R. Keverne, _Menace_, 1935. "I damned near went to my own funeral._ " Did you now?" said Mr. Harris with zest._

now or never. Clever: rhyming s. (— 1909). Ware.

now then, only another nineteen shillings and eleven pence three farthings to make up the pound before I begin the service. A military c.p., from ca. 1908, by 'anyone desirous of raising a loan or of starting a "bank", ' B. & P.

now then, shoot those arms out! You wouldn't knock the skin off a rice-pudding! A drill-sergeant's, esp. a physical-training instructors', c.p.: from ca. 1916. B. & P.

now we shall be sha'n't. A jocular perversion of _now we sha'n't be long_: a non-aristocratic c.p.: Dec., 1896—ca. 1900. Ware.

now we sha'n't be long. See _sha'n't be long._

now we're busy! A c.p. implying action: 1888; ob. Ware, _'Also an evasive intimation that the person spoken of is no better for his liquor, and is about to be destructive': a c.p. dating from the 1880's_; ° by 1920.

nowhere, be. To be badly beaten, hopelessly outdistanced: 1755. From ca. 1820, often figurative. In gen. use from ca. 1850; in C. 20, coll. (O.E.D.) J. Greenwood, 1866. The brave Panther when he has once crossed the threshold of that splendid damsel...is, vulgarly speaking, nowhere._ Con- trast the U.S. sense, utterly at a loss, completely ignorant.

nowheres. See somewheres.
nuzzle. The nose; mainly pejorative: 1755, Johnson (E.D.D. = Grove, 1st ed.); Meredith, in "Harry Richbald," 1 Uncork his claret ... straight at the nostril." Ex S.E. sense, a small snout, etc., the word itself being a diminutive of nose.

nuzzle, v.t. To shrink (gen. clothes): tailors': from ca. 1870; ob. Prob. ex steaming-process.—2. Hence, to pawn; also tailors': from ca. 1875.

nuzzler. A blow, esp. a punch, on the nose: mostly pejorative: 1828 (O.E.D.).

nub, vesp. to the nubs or nub plus one or 1. To the utmost, excessively: 1852, Smollett, 'Minerva was ... starched to the nub,' O.E.D.: coll. till ca. 1910, then S.E.: largely, university and scholastic. Less gen. (except in S.E., i.e. lit. usage), n² power, n° degree.

[nu-] terms listed wrongly by F. & H. are these:—S.E., numps (a doll), nunnskull(ed), nundance, nupson; nurse (wet-nurse; the billiard v.), mut (the pope's eye), nut-hook, nut to crack; nuts (small round balls). B.E. = nut: a harum-scarum ass.]

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*nub, v.t. To hang (a person) by the neck: c. of ca. 1670–1840. Head; Fielding. ? Origin, the earliest dates of n. and v. being somewhat hazy.


*nubbing-cheat; ooc., in C. 19, -chit. The gallows: c.: ca. 1670–1840, then only as an archaism. Head, B.E.; Grove, Maher, ca. 1812 (nubbing-chit), Ainsworth. Cf. nubbling-chit. See cheat, chete. F. & H. gives a brave synonyman: e.g. Brilley's ball-room, crap, hanging-cheat, (the) queer-em, (the) stiffer, Tyburn cross, wooden-legged mare, quin, etc.


*nubbling-chit. A corrupt, rare variant of nubbing-chit (see nubbing-chit): C. 19 only. Martin & Ayton in their piecesque Bon Cauliflower Ballads, 1841.

nubly. Smutty: late C. 19–20; ob. Galsworthy, The Silver Spoon, 1926, "He spent some time in making a list of what George Forsythe would have called the "nubly bits"." An extension of sense ex S.E. nubly, knobby.


nudi is a C. 17–18 error for nodule. O.E.D.

nuff. Enough, esp. in to have had one's nuff, to have had more than enough, drink; to be drunk: military: ca. 1880–1910.

nuff cried or said. See n.o.


nugget, v. (Gen. v.t.) To appropriate (usually one's neighbour's) unbranded calves: Queensland s., ca. 1900, gen. Australian s. Mrs. C. Praed, 1885 (O.E.D.); R. M. Praed, 1887. Ex nugget, n., 1. (Windsor vbl. nuggeting: 1887.)

nuggets. Money, esp. cash: coll. from ca. 1800; ob. Milliken, 1892.


*nnull-groper. One who sweeps the streets in search of nails, old iron, etc.: c. of ca. 1820–60. Egan's Grove. Prob. nail-groper perverted.


*nunnams. Newgate: c. 17 c. Rowlands. I.e. New + mais (qv.) Later Neumans, Neuman's, q.v. [Number. For wrong use of, in pronouns, see e.g. their, them, they.]

number. A bed-room in hotel or large boarding-house: coll.: C. 20. O.E.D. (Sup.). Ex the fact that it has one.


number nip. The female pudend: low: C. 19–20; ob. number of one's mess, lose the. See lose the number.—number on. See name on.

number one. One's self or one's own interests, esp. in look after, or take care of, number one. C. 18–20: S.E. until C. 19, then coll. T. Pitt, in Diary, 1704–5 (O.E.D.); Dickens; July 29, 1871,
If a man doesn’t take care of No. 1, he will soon have 0 to take care of.' Cf. one, 1.—2. Urination; ooo., a chamber-pot: children’s: late C. 19–20. Manchon, ‘I want to do number one.’ Cf. number two, 1.—3. The cat-o’ nine-tails; punishment therewith: prison j. and prison c. (—1889); ob. Cf. number twoo, 2.—4. The first lieutenant: naval (1909). Ware.—5. See number ones.—6. A close crop of the hair, according to Service regulation: military coll.: 1915. F. & Gibbons, —7. For the Fenian sense, see A/1, 2.—8. (Cf. sense 3.) ‘No. 1 diet, with close confinement,’ George Ingram, (Stir), 1933; prisoners’ c. : from ca. 1920.

number one (or 1) chow-chow. (Of a meal) exceptionally good; (of an object), utterly worthless: Anglo-Indian coll. (—1882). Yule & Burnell. See chow-chow.

number one (or 1), London,—be at. To have the menstrual discharge: low; mid-C. 19–20; ob. Cf. number one, 2.


number six. See Newgate knocker.—number sixes. See sixes.


number up, have one’s. To be in trouble; dead: military: C. 20.—2. one’s number is up, however, = he won’t live (being destined for death) or, less often, he is sure to be detected: the former a gen. coll.; the latter, military s. C. 20. B. & P., p. 338.

number was dry, before your. A military c.p. of 1916–18. (F. & Gibbons.) See dipped I, before you. I.e. before the ink first used to write down his regimental number had dried.


numbers: the waves, he. (Other persons, rare.) He was in his time or engages in an impossible task: late C. 18–mid-19 semi-proverbial c.p. Ray, 1813. (Apperson.)

[Numerals are coll. in a twelve, a fifteen (etc.), a motor car of 12, 16 h.p.: motorists and motor trade’s: from ca. 1910. (Richard Blake’s novel of a garage, Night-Shift, 1934.)]

numus. A courtesan; a harlot: from ca. 1770, ob.: S.E. >, ca. 1810, coll. or s. Foote, Egan. (Perhaps much earlier: see nameyry.) Cf. abesse.

nunkey (occ. nunkey); nunks. Coll. forms of f. S.E. nuncle, an uncle: resp. late C. 18–20; from ca. 1840 (ob.). Charlotte Smith, 1798, ‘nongkey looks upon you as still belonging to him’ (O.E.D.); The Cook’s Almanack, 1841, ‘Come, nunks, one game at Billiards’-buft’.—2. A Jew more or less a money-lender: lower classes’ (—1923). Manchon. Cf. uncle, q.v.

nunny. A brothel: late C. 18–20; ob.: S.E. till ca. 1780, then s. Nash; Fletcher, in The Mad Lawyer, 1617 (O.E.D.); Grose, 1st ed.; Egan. Cf. nun, q.v.


nuntee (or —y). An occ. variant of nantee.


nupence. No money: from ca. 1835; ob. Ex no pence after nupence.


nurse, v. To cheat (gen. out of): either e. or s.: from ca. 1780; ob. Grose, 1st ed.—2. (Of trustees) to eat up property: from ca. 1858. H., 1st ed. Cf. nurses, be at, q.v.—3. To cheat a rival company’s omnibus of passengers by keeping close to it; gen. by having one bus before, one behind: 1858: omnibus drivers’ and ticket-collectors’.—4. To hinder a horse in a race by hemming it in with slower ones: the turf: from ca. 1892. P. H. Emerson, 1893.

nurse, be at. To be in the hands of (esp. dishonest) trustees: ca. 1780–1840. Grose. (Cf. nurse, v., 2, q.v.) Gen. of the estate.


nursed in cotton, be. To be brought up very, or too, tenderly: late C. 18–mid-19 coll. Ray, 1813. (Apperson.)


nursery business. The playing of successive cannons: billiards: from ca. 1890. (As a series of cannons made by keeping the balls close together, nursery is S.E.)


nursy, nurse. A coll., mainly children’s, form of nurse, n.: from ca. 1810. (O.E.D.).


**crack** a. To drink a (gen. silver-mounted) coco-nut shell full of claret: Scots coll.: ca. 1820–80. Scott; *Notes and Queries*, 1889 (7 S., viii, 437).

**do one's**. See **do one's nut**.


**sweet as**. See **sweet as a nut**.

**work one's**. To think hard; to scheme: orig. (— 1902), dial.; ↑, ca. 1905. a., esp. in Australia. Also work one's head: of head-worker. Cf. **nut out**, q.v.

**at, be a**. To be extremely good at (e.g. a game): from ca. 1900. Whence **nut**, a dandy.

**cracker**. Nut-crackers (the instrument): from ca. 1570: S.E. till C. 19, then low coll. (S.O.D.)

**Crack Night**. Hallowe'en: coll. (C. 18–19) and dial. (C. 18–20; ob.). Brand, 1777. Because nuts were, in C. 18, flung into the fire. O.E.D.


**cut**. Roguish, mischievous: ca. 1860–1914.

**nut-em**. Mostly as nutted 'em, / an exclamation c.p. when the ponies turn up two heads in 'two-up'- Australian and New Zealand: C. 20. Ex **nut**, the head.

**nut out**. To consider; work out: military from ca. 1908. F. & Gibbons. 'I've got to nut it out.' Prob. ex **nut**, n., 2, and **nut work one's**, q.v.


**worker**. A schemer; a shirker; a malingerer; military: from ca. 1906. F. & Gibbons. Ex **nut**, work one's.


**nuts**. A delightful thing, practice, experience: from ca. 1589 (Apperson): S.E. until ca. 1780, then coll. until ca. 1850, then s.; ob. Fletcher, Cotton, Lamb, Milliken. (O.E.D.) Almost an adj., as in Grose, 1st ed., 'It was nuts for them; i.e. it was very agreeable to them.' (A particularly good example occurs in Head & Kirkman, 1764, 'It was honey and nuts to him to tell the guests,' Apperson.) Prob. ex C. 16 nuts to, an enticement to, 'recorded in a letter from Sir Edward Stafford to Burghley (1587)'. W. Cf. **nut**, v., 2, q.v.—2. The (gen. human) testicles: low coll.: late C. 18–20. Perhaps suggested by the ↑ S.E. sense, the *glena penis*—3. Barcelona Tramway shares: Stock Exchange: from ca. 1900. Ex Barcelona **nut**.


**nuts, for**. (Always with a negative, actual or implied.) At all: coll.: 1895, W. Pett Ridge in *Minor Dialogues*; 1899, *The Times*, Oct. 25, 'They can't shoot for nuts; go ahead' (O.E.D.)

**nuts on or upon, be**. To set high value upon; to be devoted to; fond of or delighted with (person or thing): 1785, Grose: on not before ca. 1840; upon rare after ca. 1870. *Punch*, 1882 (LXXII, 177), 'I am nuts upon Criminal Cases, Pericle News, you know, and all that.'—2. Hence, to be very clever or skilful at: from ca. 1880.—3. Hence, to detest: 1890, *Punch*, Feb. 22. Ex cleverness or skill directed against some person or thing. Cf.:

**nuts on or upon, be dead**. The same as the preceding in all three senses: from ca. 1890, though 1894 is the earliest O.E.D. record. Orig. an intensive, it ↑, by 1910, merely the more gen. form of be on *nut*. Anticipated in 1873 by William Black's 'My aunt is a weak nut on Marcus Aurelius.'

**nutted**, pplt.adj. Deceived or tricked by a friend: low: from ca. 1860; ob. H., 2nd ed. Ex **nut**, v., 2, possibly influenced by sense 1, and **nuts**, 1.—2. See **nut'em**.

**nutty**. Amorous; with (upon) fond of, in love with, enthusiastic about: 1821, Egan. 'He was so nutty upon the charms of his fair one.' Slightly ob. Ex **nuts on**, to be, q.v.—2. Not quite right in the head: The * Pall Mall Gazette*, May 27, 1901 (O.E.D.). Semantically ex sense 1: cf. S.E. be mad about a girl. (In Glasgow, since ca. 1850, it has had the nuance, 'romantic', as Alastair Baxter, the begetter of *A Survey of the Occult*, 1936, puts it.)-3. Sprung; smartly dressed or turned out: 1823, Byron (of a girl), 'So prim, so gay, so nutty, and so knowing'; ob. Perhaps ex **nuts**, q.v.; cf. **nut**, n., 6.—4. Whence, agreeable: ca. 1890–1920. Milliken, 1893, 'Life goes on nutty and nice.'—5. Spicy; piquant: 1894, *Sala in London up to Date*, 'The case, he incidentally adds, promises to be a nutty one'; slightly ob. Ex the nuts in a cake via the idea of fullness of detail.—6. Dandyish: 1913 (S.O.D.). Ex **nut**, n., 6.—7. (Nutty.) The inevitable nickname of men surnamed Cox: naval and military: late C. 19–20. F. & Gibbons. Prob. ex sense 3 or sense 4, but perhaps ex **nuts**, n., 2, by indelicate association.

**nut**. The object in view; the 'lay' or 'game': c., orig. and mainly North Country: from ca. 1880; ob. H., 3rd ed. ↑ ex *L. nuts, a nut, hence a nut to crack.*

**nuggle**. See nuggle.—**nym**. See **nim**.

**nymph**. See **nim**.—**NYP**. See **Nip**.—**NYP Shop**. See **Nip Shop**.—**Nyp**. See **Nipper**.
[Under o, F. & H. lists the following ineligibles.
S.E.—oaf (a lout), oatbarm, oafish; oat, easterm; ocean greyhound; October (ale); odd (strange), old man out, oddity, odd; odour (repute) (off, in cricket; off-chance; bold, to examine, consider, and corresponding ogler; oil (of man) and oil, to flatter; old shoe; old song; old trots; old woman (a man of womanly habits); olive branches, children; Oliver, give a Roland for an omnibus, a man of all work; open house; oppidan; optimist; optic, an opera- or spy-glass; optime; organ-pipes (in dress-making); orifice (the female pudendum); ornament (the same); out, in cricket and in politics; stand out; out and out, adv. and adj.; out- Hero; out of countenance, cry, (at) elbows, (of) frame, hand, heart, (at) heel, (of) pocket, temper, out of the way (uncommon; see, however, c. sense); outer (in rifle-shooting); outrider, a highwayman; outsider, an ignorant or a person unattached or (virtually) unknown; overdo; overs, amount in excess; overshot or overswitched or overwhipped housewife, a whore; owl, a person much about at night; owl, to sit up at night; owlet, dusk. Dial. — o*ing (an apprentice's coming of journeyman age). o or O. Overseer: printers (— 1909). Ware. o*, preposition; in C. 16—17, occ. o. Of: late C. 16—20: S.E. until C. 19, then coll. and dial. Shakespeare; Browning, 1864, 'Just a spirit' O. the proper fiery acid.' (O.E.D.), though here it is prob. to be considered poetic licence. Esp. in o'clock, John o' Groats, Jack o' lantern. 'Formerly in many others, as Inna o' Court, man o' war, Isle o' Wight, but in these of is now usually written, even when o is familiarly pronounced . . . It is usual in the representation of dialectal or vulgar speech,' O.E.D.—2. On, as in o' nights; M.E. onwards; S.E. till ca. 1810, then coll. and dial. W. A. Wallace, 1890, 'He went to church twice o' Sundays.' O.E.D.

o was orig. incorrect in such words from Sp. and It. as ambuscado, bastinado, esivo (of artillery). W. — 2. A frequent adj.-ending among Britons and Americans in Paraguay and the Argentine, owing to the influence of Sp. e.g. tremendo, tremendous. See C. W. Thurlow Craig, passim. — 3. As a suffix-tag (e.g. in all alive-o), it is a C. 19—20 coll. derivative ex the метро-tag common in songs. Often jocular or affectation, as in on his owny-o. See, e.g., all alive-o, billy-o, logro.


o (or oh) be easy, sing. 'To appear contented when one has cause to complain, and dare not', Grose, 3rd ed. Coll.: ca. 1785—1830.

o (or more gen, oh) be joyful. A bottle of rum: nautical: ca. 1850—1910. H., 3rd ed.—2. Earlier (1759), of brandy or any other good liquor; † by 1860. Grose (1799).

'ot (or oh) 'be joyful! on the other side of his mouth, make one sing. (Gen. I'll make you . . . your mouth.) A e.p. threat: mid-C. 18—early 19. Grose, 2nd ed.

o begga me, ex the alternative o Bergami! You're a liar!: London lower classes: ca. 1820—30. Ex Bergami, a lying Italian witness at Queen Caroline's trial. W. & A. & C. & F. & O. & O. & W.

O.C. Grease. The master cook: military; from ca. 1916. Cf.:


O.D. An ordinary seaman: nautical: C. 20 Bowen. (Cf. ord.) Whence:


o.d.v. or O.D.V. Brandy: jocular (— 1887): virtually f. i.e. eau-de-vie. Baumann.

o. ; gen. O.K. All right; correct; safe; suitable; what is required; comfortable, comfortably placed: orig. U.S. s.; >, ca. 1880, Eng. s. and ca. 1895, Eng. coll. (For its use by 'the great Vance', see Addenda.) Thornton records it at 1826 and gives an anticipation (likewise by Andrew Jackson) at 1790: but on these two instances the O.E.D. throws icy water and gives 1840 as the date. It is either full (or orl) korrekt (or k'rect) or is a Western U.S. error for order recorded (Thorton inclines to the latter origin); or again—the fashionable (but not the O.E.D. Sup.'s) view of the 1930's—it may represent the Choctw (h'ock), it is so, for Jackson presumably knew the Choctw word and it was his opponents who, wishing to capitalise his well-known illiteracy, imputed (so it is held) the k'rect origin to the phrase's first user. The Graphic, March 17, 1863, 'It was voted O.K., or all correct'; 1889, Answers (No. 56), 'John Jenkins . . . was O.K. with Matilda Ann at Williams Street'; the label on bottles of Mason's 'O.K.' Sauce—cf. oke, q.v. (Such fanciful etymologies as aux Cayos and och eye! can be summarily dismissed; o.k. is an evergreen of the correspondence column.)

o.k.; O.K., v.i. and, more gen., v.t. To pass as correct: orig. (— 1850), U.S.; anglicised as a coll. ca. 1900. E.g. to o.k. as account, a document.


O.K. by me!, it's. I agree, or approve: an Americanism anglicised by 1933.

O my. See my!, 2.

o.p.; O.P. Opposite the prompter. (Cf. p.s., prompt side.) Theatrical s. (— 1823) >, ca. 1870, coll. >, ca. 1900, j. Both in Egan's Grose, 1823.— 2. Earlier (ca. 1800—20, though recorded later), old price(s), in reference to the demonstrations at Covent Garden Theatre, London, in 1808, against the proposed new tariff of prices', O.E.D. Byron alludes to it in a letter of June 12, 1815, to Moore.— 3. (Of spirits) over-proof; j. when lit.; when fig., it is coll., as— to borrow from the O.E.D.—in Walch, Head over Heels, 1874, ' "Fahaw," cried Sandy (Clan MacTavish) in his beautiful O.P. Scotch—which, you'll admit, is neat, as well as being adumbratory of the 1933—4 not, 'What matter if your English be bad so long as your Scotch is good!'.—4. The booksellers' use of the term for 'out of print' dates from ca. 1870: j. rather than coll. (H., 6th ed.) Cf. out of print, q.v.
o.p.h.; O.P.H. Off, as in 'Dammit! I'm off.'

Jocular: late C. 19–20. (Obviously, off is perverted to oph; but the pronunciation, gen. slow, is O—P—H.—2. Old Parliamentary Hand: political: 1888; ob. First applied, by The Times, to Gladstone. (Ware.)

O.P.T. Other people's tobacco, a favourite 'bromid.' esp. smoke O.P.T.: jocular coll.: C. 20. Also O.P.

O per se o; or with capital o's. A cliché: early C. 17 c. Dokker.


o.s. or O.S. Very large; 'outside' from ca. 1590. Ex drapers' J. George Joseph, in Everyman, Jan. 6, 1824, of an imagined performance of La Bohème: 'An O.S. Mimi loved by a C.3. Rudolph.'

O.T. (or O.T.), its. It's (very) hot: non-aristocratic: from ca. 1880. Ware.

O.v. or O.V. The oven, or that open space below the stage in which the Jeepper's ghost illusion is worked: showmen's and low actors: ca. 19–early 20. Coll. V.W.

O. Y.O. A low phrase listed by Ware with the remark, 'Quite inexplicable. No solution ever obtained from the initiates.' Perhaps it's just as well.

o yes! A jocular perversion of oyez: from before 1887; slightly ob. Baumann.


oak close as. Very retentive of secrets; secretive: semi-proverbial coll.: C. 17–18. Shakspere; Colman, 1763, 'I am close as oak, an absolute free-mason for secrecy.' Apperson.


oaks, falling of. Sea-sickness: C. 17 coll. Jocular, as Withals (1608) shows in his Dict.; ex vomiting upon the oak of a ship.

oakum, pick. To be in a poor-house: lower classes' coll. (—1857). Ex the same phrase in S.E. (to be in prison). Baumann.

oar in every man's boat, occ. † large, have an. To be concerned in everyone's affairs: mid-C. 16–20, ob.: coll. >, ca. 1650, S.E. Uddal, Florio, Howell. Cf.:

oar in, put or shove an or one's. To interfere: resp. coll. from ca. 1730, as in Moncrieff, 1843; a. from ca. 1870, as in Mrs. Henry Wood (1874). Coffey, 1731, 'I say, meddle with your own affairs; I will govern my own house, without your putting in an oar.' Ex preceding; there is, however, the transitional put an (or one's) oar in every man's boat, as in Brethwait, 1830. Apperson.

D.U.M.

oars. A waterman: C. 17–19; either coll. or S.E. As = oastman, certainly S.E.

oars, first. A favourite, esp. in be first oars with: coll.: 1776. C. Dibdin's song, The Jolly Young Waterman, 'He was always first oars when the fine city ladies | In a party to Ramelagh went, or Vauxhall | Whence the origin. O.E.D.

oars, lie or rest (upon) one's. To take things easily: resp. 1728, Shelfoeve, and † by 1850; 1836, Lady Granville: both coll. till ca. 1850, then S.E. O.E.D. Ex leaning on the handles of one's oars.

oat. An atom or particle, but esp. in have not an oat, to be penniless: from ca. 1870 (ob.): low. H., 5th ed. Perhaps suggested by groot, but more prob. as H. suggests, ioda corrupted.


oath, Highgate. See Highgate, sworn at.

oath, my. A mild expletive: mostly Australian and New Zealand: late C. 19–20. Ex the more trivial senses of S.E. oath. See also colonial oath.

oath, take an. To drink (liquor): low: C. 19; mostly U.S.

oatmeal. (Gen. in pl.) A profligate roisterer (one of a set): coll.: ca. 1620–40. Ford, in The Sun's Darling, 1624; see also Naras. Semantics obscure.

oatmeal, all the world in (gen. not). Everything is delightful: proverbial coll.: ca. 1540–1700. Uddal, Swetam. (Cf. beer and skittles.) ex oatmeal as food.


oats, earn a gallon of. (Of horses) to fall on the back and roll from side to side: provincial coll.: C. 19. Halliwell.


oats, feel one's. To get humptious or very high-spirited: orig. (ca. 1840). U.S. >, ca. 1905, anglicised as a coll.; now verging on S.E. Ex a horse feeding on oats.

oats, have one's. To sow one's wild oats (see oats, wild); to 'enjoy' a woman: low (—1923). Manchon.

oats, off one's. Indisposable: coll. (—1923). Manchon. Ex a horse off his oats, i.e. eating too little. Cf. off one's chump, q.v.

oats, wild. A dissolute young man: coll.: ca. 1660–1820. Gen. a nickname. Becon (d. 1670), 'Certain light brains and wild oats'. Prob. ex. though recorded some twelve years earlier than, sow one's wild oats, to commit youthful follies, while to have sown . . . indicates reform: coll.; in late C. 19–20, S.E.: 1758, Newton, 'That willful . . . age, which . . . (as we say) hath not sowed all they yewl Oastes' (F. & H., checked by O.E.D.). Ex the folly of sowing wild oats instead of good grain; cf. Fr. folle avoine (W.).


oats and chaff. A footpath: rhyming s. (—1857); ob. Ducange Anglicus.


See obit itself.

ob and sol. Scholastic, hence any subtle disputa
tion: late C. 16–17. coll.: 1820. 'Very skilfull in the learning of ob and sol.' Also obo and sols, as in
Burton, 1621; oe. sole and obs. Abbrev. objection and solution in C. 16 books of 'Theology.' The derivative ob-and-soller, a subtle disputant, is either a nonce or a very rare usage. O.E.D.  

**Obadiah.** A Quaker: Q. 18–mid-19; coll. Ex the common Quaker name.  


obaid, obry. A corrupt form of upraised: C. 16. O.E.D.  

Obelum, the. The name of a latrine at Cambridge: Cambridge University; from ca. 1890; ob. Ex Oscar Browning, popularly reputed to be its propagandist. On obelum, a hall for the playing of music. Cf. O.B., the, q.v.  

obfuscasset; obfuscate. Drunk: coll. from ca. 1856; ob. The former is in 'Duangane Anglicus', 1857; the latter (Dec. 30, 1872) is a sol. Also obfuscation: H. Kingsley, 1861, 'In a general state of obfuscation'. Ex S.E. sense, to stupify. Contrast sub-fusco, q.v.  

obit. An obituary notice: journalistic: 1874. W. Black in *The Athenaeum*, Sept. 12, 'It was the custom of his journal to keep obits in readiness.' Prob. ex obituary, not a revival of mid-C. 15–17 S.E. obit, the same.  


object. A laughing-stock; 'gape-seed': coll. from ca. 1820. Cf. 'little object (of children) = a half-playful half-angry endaemor,' F. & H. Ex S.E. object of pity, mirth, derision, etc.  

obligate. To make indebted, to bind, a person by a kindness or a favour; late C. 17–20: S.E. till ca. 1800; then—except in U.S. (where coll.)—slightly sol., or at least catachrestic; ob.  

oblige. To favour a company (with, e.g., a song): coll.: 1735, Pope. O.E.D.  


obnoxious. Injurious; mid-C. 17–20: catachrestic. By confusion with noxious. O.E.D.  

oblize is erroneous for oblige: C. 19–20. O.E.D.  

obe. Obligations: (lower) middle classes’ (— 1923); almost + by 1933. Manchon. By abbr. *observationist.* One (gen. a pedlar, hawkers, etc.) who spies out likely booty for thieves: o. (— 1800); ob. Barrere & Leland.  

observation. To see: to reserve; retain: catachrestic: C. 16–16. O.E.D.  

obsequiate. An oe. form of obequitate, q.v.: H., 1859.  

obstacle. An obelisk: sol. (— 1823). 'Jon Bee.'  

obtain(s). Catachrestic forms of abstain; + by C. 18. O.E.D.  

obstreperous, -clous, -ulous; obstroplous, -clous, -ulous; also obstrepros, -ulous. Obstreperous: from ca. 1726; sol. when not deliberately jocular; Halliwell, however, in 1847, characterises it as 'genuine London dialect.' Resp. first recorded: ca. 1780, ca. 1780, 1727; 1778 (Goldsmith), ca. 1770, 1748 (Smollett); ob-
O.E.D.

octopi. Octopuses: C. 19–20; a cultured sol. ex the mistakenly assumed L. origin. (The scientific pl. is octopodes.)


odd, of age, years being omitted, as in Hood's 'His death . . . At forty-odd befell,' 1845, app. the earliest record. Here, odd denotes a small surplus (in years) over and above a 'round number'. O.E.D.

odd-come-short. In pl., odds and ends: rural coll.: 1836, T. Hook; slightly ob.—2. Some day: coll.: from ca. 1870; ob. Usually one of these odd-come-shorts (as in Harris's Uncle Remus); but except in U.S., much less gen. than:

odd-come-shortly. The same: coll.: C. 18–20; ob. Will you be married when . . . One of these odd-come-shortly's, Colonel; Grose, 2nd ed.; Scott.

odd fish. See fish.

odd job. One 'who professes to do anything and only does his employer's: trades' (—1909). Ware.

oddish. Tipsy: low coll.: from ca. 1850; ob. Cf. queer, adj., 2, q.v.

odds! See odds.

odds, above (Australian) or over (English) the. Outside the pale; exorbitant: C. 20: s., >, by 1930, coll. C. J. Dennis. Ex horse-racing.

odds, it is or makes no. It makes no difference (in good or ill): C. 17–20: S.E. till C. 19, then coll. T. A. Guthrie, 'But there, it's no odds' (O.E.D.).

odds, shout the. To talk too much, too loudly, or boastingly; 'lower classes': from ca. 1910. P. & Gibbon. Ex the race-cource.

odds?, what's the. What difference does it make?: coll.: mid-C. 19–20. (Dickens's 'What is the odds . . . ?' is S.E.;) Trollope, 1880; Besant. (O.E.D.)

odds?, where's the. A low coll. form (—1887) of the preceding. Baumann.

odds, within the. Possible or possibly; esp. just or barely possible; sporting coll. (—1887), >, by 1890, gen coll. Baumann.

odds and odds. "Details" attached to Battalion Headquarters for miscellaneous offices: batmen, sanitary men, professional footballers and boxers on nominal duties, etc.: military: 1915; ob. B. & P.—2. Hence, hangers-on; miscellaneous persons: from 1919.

odds, be no. As in 'It's no odds a' mine' (Greenwood), no concern of mine; (low) coll.: mid-C. 19–20. Baumann.

odling (vb.), cheating: either S.E. or a rare catchphrase: late C. 16–mid-17.

odno. Lit., nod. Rare except in ride on the odno, to travel by rail without paying: back a: 1889, The Sporting Times; ob.

ods, Sh. Odds. (Also see ods.) God's, gen. in combination, in late C. 16–early 19 coll. oaths and assurances; extant as a jocular archism. The second member is frequently perverted, as in bed ex blood, nouns or oms ex wounds, books ex hooks. Cf.: ods bop. a C. 18 reduction of and corruption of: ods bodkins, a jocular exclamation, is a late C. 19–20 perversion of ods bodkins, lit. God's little body, a C. 17–19 oath. See odds., of, v. Have: sol. & C. 19–20. (Never for the infinitive.) Frequent among the illiterate and not unknown in the Dominions and in U.S., among the literate though not, of course, the cultured. E.g. 'I would of done it.' Even more so, when unnecessary, as in 'If I had of done it': here, however, (ha)we is more gen. see have. Ex the slurred pronunciation of 'we = have, as in 'I would've done it.' of, preposition. Intrusive or tautological, as in the next entry and as is frequent, in low coll. (i.e. in sol.), esp. after a present participle: C. 19–20. Greenwood, ca. 1880, 'They're takin' of her to the pit-hole' (Baumann); D. Sayers, 1923, 'Bill Jones says he rekolleet of me standing in the Dispatch.'—2. Its omission is C. 19–20 coll. in, e.g., 'What colour was her dress?'—3. On: late C. 14–20: S.E. until mid-C. 18, then coll.; in C. 20, increasingly low coll.; prob. soon to be a sol. Sheridan, 1777, 'Oh, plague of his nerves!' (O.E.D.)—4. (Always of or of any.) At some time during, in the course of: S.E. until C. 19, then coll., as in of an evening.—5. For sins against grammar, see Fowler.—6. Like: sol. mid-C. 19–20. D. Sayers, Murder Must Advertise, 1933, 'A charm or a trinket or something of that.' i.e. of that sort.

of, what are you doing. What are you doing? (diial. and) low coll.: C. 19–20. Abrbr. or slovenly corruption of what are you doing of (W.) Cf. of, preposition, i. q.v.


off, adj. Out of date; no longer fashionable: coll.: 1892, Illustrated Bks, Oct. 22, 'Theosophy is off—decidedly off.' Perhaps ex restaurant j. ('Chops are off').—2. Hence, stale; in bad condition, e.g. of a cricket pitch: low coll.: from ca. 1895. 'Smells a little bit off, don't it ?,' F. & H. Abrbr. off colour.—3. Hence, out of form: coll.: from ca. 1896—4. Hence, in ill health: coll.: from late 1890's.

off, preposition. Having lost interest in; averse to: coll.: C. 20. Desmond Coke in The House Prefect, 1908, 'You can see Bob's off you' ; Manchin, 1923, 'He's dead off jam'; Collinson, 1927, 'I'm rather off dogs at present.' Ex off, cannot be, q.v.

off ! Abrbr. switch off, q.v.

off, a bit. (Slightly) crazy: C. 20. Collinson. Abrbr. a bit off his head.

off, be. To depart; run away: coll. (—1887). Baumann; 1892, Ally Sloper, Feb. 27.

off, cannot (or could not) be. At Greenwood, ca. 1880, 'I couldn't be off likin' it.' I couldn't help —or refrain from—liking it: (low) coll.: mid-C. 19–20. Baumann.

off, have the bags. To have independent means —and live on them: c. (—1887). Baumann.
OFF AND ON

[off and on, as adj. = vacillating, is, despite H., S.E.]


off chump. Having no appetite: stables' (-1900). Ware. Perhaps off champing. Cf. oats, one's.


Bonnmann.

off. A start, a beginning: Scots coll.: 1880, R. L. Stevenson. O.E.D.

off it. See off, v.—2. A variant of off one's chump or nut or rocker, etc. See those on.

off of. Off; from sol.; mid-C. 19–20. 'That takes the beauty off of it'; 'He took it off of me.' Baumann.

off one's chest; off one's chump, coconut, nut, onion, pannikin, rocker, top traverse. See the nn.—off one's feed or oats. See feed and oats, off one's.

off the hinge. Out of work; low: from ca. 1850: ob. Ex:

off the hinges. Out of order; upset: diseheartened: coll. till C. 18, then dial, where it gen. = in bad health, spirits, or temper. Cotgrave.

(Appearance.) Ex a door unhinged.


off the horn. (Of steak) very hard: low: from ca. 1870: ob. H., 5th ed.

off the rails. See rails.—off with. See off, v. 3.

offer up. To lift; to help to raise: London labourers, esp. in the building trade: late C. 19–20: (By ellipsis) Holway Bailey in The Observer, March 31, 1935.


office. One's office is one's ordinary Haunt, or Piving-[1 playing]-place, be it Tavern, Ale-house, Gaming-house or Bowloring-green, B.E.: late C. 17–18.—2. A signal, a (private) hint; a word of advice; (as a sparring, or valuable information: C. 19–20: † orig. c. Esp. in give the office (1803) and take the office (1812, likewise in Vaux), the latter slightly obv. (O.E.D.)—3. An aeroplane cockpit: Air Force: from 1916. F. & Gibbons. Ex its speaking-tube and writing-pad.—4. An orderly-room: military jocular coll.: C. 20. B. & P.

office, v. To give information (about something); warn, intimate to: low († orig. c.): 1812, Vaux: Modern, 1910. To off someone. To the Bulls of the Alley the fate of the Bear.'

office, cast of (e.g. your). 'A Touch of your Employment': coll.: late C. 17–18. B.E. prob. means a helping hand from one in a (good) position.

office, cook's. The galley: nautical: from ca. 1850; ob.

office, give one the. See office, n., 2.

office-sneak. A stealer of umbrellas, overcoats, etc., from one's coll.: from ca. 1860.


officers' mess. 'Any female working in officers' quarters, or any female companion of officers': military: from ca. 1910. B. & P.


officers of the 52nd. Young men rigidly going to church on the 52 Sundays in a year: city of Cork (-1900). Ware. As if of the 52nd regiment.

offish. Distant; reserved: coll. from ca. 1830. L. Oliphant, 1883. Cf. stand-offish.—2. (Pronounced off's or not, and as sense 1, offish.) Official; authoritative; military: 1916–18.

offishness. Aloofness; reserve: coll.: from ca. 1880. Ex offish and, like it, of persons only.

offitorie, offitories. Corrupt C. 16 forms of onitory. O.E.D.


offter. A frequenter or habitué; sporting: ca. 1884–1910. Ware. Ex of, often.

og. See ogg.

gog-rattin. Au gratin: London restaurants' (-1900). Ware.


ogle. See ogles.—2. 'An ocular invitation or consent, side glance, or amorous look', F. & H.: coll.: C. 18–20. Giber, 1704, 'Nay, nay, none of your parting ogles.' Ex:

*ogle, v.i. and t. (See the first o entry.—) To look invitingly or amorously (at): from ca. 1680: c. until ca. 1710, coll. till ca. 1790, then S.E. Implied in B.E.'s ogling, 'casting a sheep's eye at Handsum Women'; and in the Shadwell quotation at ogling: D'Urley. Ex Low Ger. ogeln, same meaning.—2. To look: to look at: c. and S.E.: from ca. 1820: ob. Haggart, 1821, 'Seeing a cove ogling the yelpers'. Ex S.E. sense, to examine.

*ogled, with determining word, e.g. queer-ogled, squinting: late C. 18–20: ob. c. », ca. 1840, low s.


*oglers. Eyes: c. from ca. 1820; ob. Haggart. A variation on:

*ogles. (Extremely rare in singular.) Eyes: mid-C. 17–20: c. until ca. 1805, then boxing s. until ca. 1860, finally low gen. s.: ob. Coles, 1670; B.E.; Dyche; Grose; 'Cuthbert Bede'—Thackeray. Ex the v. Hence, queer ogles (see also ogled), cross eyes; rum ogles, bright or arresting eyes.

ogling. (The ppl. adj. is S.E.—) Vol. n., the throwing of amorous or inimitating glances: from ca. 1680: c. until ca. 1710, then coll., then, by 1790, S.E. Shadwell, 1832, 'They say their Wives learn ogling in the Pit,' a marginal gloss reading: 'A foolish Word among the Canters for glancing' (O.E.D.)

oh. See o be... also after you, dammy, Jupiter, Moses, my, swallow.

oh, go to nose. The popular shape of Opta-epocus, on a flag in a mounting at Hyde Park in favour of the Cretans; London: 1897. Ware.

oh, la-la! A military c.p. indicative of joviality: 1915: very ob. B. & F., 'Borrowed from the French and in use chiefly among officers.'
oh, my leg! A low c.p. addressed, ca. 1810–50, to one recently liberated from gaol. *'Jon Bee.* A gibe at the gait caused by fettlers.

**oil**

To be shot at dawn! A jesting c.p. for anyone (including oneself) in trouble: military: 1917–18.

B. & F. Ex death for desertion.

Well! It's a way they have in the Army. See it's a way.

Oh yeah! Oh, no! You think you know all about it, but, in my opinion, you don't: adopted ca. 1930, via the 'talkies', from U.S.; where yes often > yeah. *The Daily Mirror*, June 28, 1934. 'item' headed 'Oh Yeah!'<n>

**pickman**

A labourer, shopkeeper, etc.; hence, an objectionable fellow: Bootham School (−1925).

**oil**

An oil-painting: coll.: from ca. 1890. By 1920, almost S.E. (Gen. in pl.)—2. See oils, 2.—3. The oil, esp. the dinkum (occ. good) oil: the truth.

Orig. and mainly Australian. C. 20. Ex prospecting for oil-springs.—4. Hence, in New Zealand c. (−1932), it = information.—5. In addition to its popularity in proverbs and proverbial sayings (there are 89 in Apperson, oil is of frequent occurrence in various humorous and/or ironic phrases that began as col., and may have > S.E.; indeed, since it is arguable that all except oil of glibets were always S.E., it is better to list them all together: —oil of angels, a gift, a bribe, late C. 16–17, as in Greens (and see below); oil of barzley or malt, beer, mid-C. 17–early 19, as in B.E.; oil of Baston (a topographical pun; basting), a beating, C. 17, Withals,—with which cf. oil of gladness (Grose, 2nd ed.), —hickory (gen. as h. oil), holly (C. 17), rope (C. 18, Mrs. Centlivre), stirrup (late C. 18–mid-19, Grose, 2nd ed.: also as stirrup-oil), strappin (C. 19, and whip (mid-C. 17–mid-18, Fuller), and also the C. 19–20 dial. (ob.) birch, hazel (also in form h. oil, coll. and dial.), oak, strap, the form strap-oil occurring as C. 19–20 jocular coll.; —oil of glibets or horn, the female spendings (this, certainly, is low s.!), C. 19–20; —oil of palms (Egan’s Grose), or palm-oil, a bribe, C. 19–20, ob.—cf. oil of angels; —oil of tongue, flattery, with which cf. the late C. 14–mid-15 S.E. hold up oil, to consent flatteringly (Apperson), and the rare oil of fool, flattery, as in Wolcot (O.E.D.).—6. Pretentiousness; presumption; —sidie: Public Schools: C. 20. (D. Coko, *The School across the Road*, 1910.) Ex greasing, q.v.


Hence oiler, 3.—2. See Addenda.

Oil, good or dinkum. See oil, n. 3.

**oil**

Strike. To have good luck, be successful: orig. U.S.; anglicised ca. 1875; by 1920, coll. Ex the S.E. sense, to discover oil-springs.


Bowen. Ex the abundance of oil which its carcase yields.


**oil**


Oil of... See oil, n. 5.


**oil-rag**


**oil**

The knocker. To fete: the porter: from ca. 1850; ob.

**oil**

The wig. To become tipsy, while oil one’s wig is to make a person tipsy: provincial s. or coll.: late C. 18–19. Cf. oiled.


**oiled**

Slightly tipsy: 1916, E. V. Lucas (S.O.D.). Gen. well-oiled. Cf. *oil* of barley (beer) and:

**oiler**


**oilies**

The same as oiler, 2, than which, in English use, it is slightly earlier: coll.: late C. 19–20.

Bower. Also in dial. **oiliometer**. Incorrect for *oiliometer*: 1876. O.E.D.

**oilous**


**oils**


**oily**

An oilskin coat: 1926, Richard Keverne. Cf. oiler, 2; oilies, 2.

**oil-wad**

A seaman not specialising in anything: naval: from ca. 1914. Bowen. Ex the time such men ‘have to spend cleaning brass-work with oily wads’.—2. Any one of nos. 1–30 of ‘the first British oil-burning torpedo-boats’: naval: from ca. 1916. Ibid.

**oiner**


**ointment**


**Omak**; properly *Ooac*. The Officer Commanding Administrative Centre: Army officers'; 1916–18. F. & Gibbons.

**Oakbery; Oackery**. The Records Depot: id.: id. Ibid. Ex preceding.

*oke*! ‘O.K.’, adj., q.v.; yes! C. 20 U.S. >, ca. 1930, anglicised, thanks (?) mainly to ‘the talkies’ (q.v.). Richard Church, in *The Spectator*, Feb. 15, 1935. ‘A child replied ‘oke’ to something I said. After a shudder of dismay, I reflected that this telescoped version of ‘O.K.’ now used to mean “Right you are”, or “I agree”, or any other form of assent, will ultimately appear in the textbooks as a legitimate word, with an example quoted from a poet who is at present mute and inglorious.’ *Prob. ex o.k., q.v.* But cf. the Choctaw (h)oke, it is so (Thornton): which may well—in Britain at least—have > operative because of the interesting label on bottles of Mason’s ‘O.K.’ Sauce.


**old**

of the old to, Jack.' | abbr. old stuff.—2. Much: | coll.: early C. 19, but rare. See the Scott quotation in old, adj., 2. old, adj. Crafty, clever, knowing: from ca. 1720; ob. Defoe, 'The Germans were too old for us there' (O.E.D.). E.g. in such phrases as old bird, dog, file, hand, soldier, stager, q.v.—2. A gen. intensive = great, abundant, excessive, 'splendid': | coll.: mid-C. 15–20. Anon., ca. 1440, 'Gode olde fighting on the waere' (O.E.D.); Tarlton, 1590, 'There was old ringling of bell'; Cotton, 1634, 'Old drinking and old singing'; Grose; Scott, 1814, 'So there was old to do about ransoming the bridegroom' (O.E.D.). From ca. 1860, only with gay, good, grand, high, and similar adj., as in The Referee, March 11, 1883, 'All the children ... had a high old time,' and with any as in 'any old time' or 'any old how' (Manchon).—3. Ugly: o.: late C. 18—early 19. Grose, 3rd ed. Perhaps ex old Harry, Nick, One, Roger, etc., the devil.—4. (Mostly in terms of address) Indicative of affection, cordiality, or good humour: | coll.: 1588, Shakespeare, 'Old Lad, I am thine owne' (O.E.D.); B.E.; Grose; Hume Nisbet, 1892, 'Now for business, old boy.' Also old bean, chap, fellow, man, thing, top, etc.—5. Hence, of places familiar to one: | coll.: late C. 19–20. Often good old, q.v.—6. A gen. pejorative: C. 16–20: S.E. or coll. or a. as the second member in S.E. or coll. or a.; the practice itself is wholly (orig., almost) unconventionally. E.g. old block, figwig, fogy, stick in the mud. See the second member of such phrases when they are not listed below.—7. In combination with (e.g.) Harry, Nick, One, Scratch, q.v., the devil: | coll.: from Restoration days, the earliest record in the O.E.D. being Old Nick in L’Estrange, 1668; old, however, was, in S.E., applied to Satan as early as C. 11. Ex the S.E. sense in this connexion: primeval. See also old Bendy. old, any. See old, adj., 2. old, good. An approving phrase that gives a coll. and familiar variation to good. C. 19–20. Perhaps ex old, adj., 2, and 4, q.v.—2. In the G.W. Army, a c.p. gag ran: 'Some say good old X; we say f**k old X or him!'; extant; prob. pre-War. old Adam. The penis: low coll.: C. 19–20. Ex S.E. sense, natural sin.—(as) old as Adam, very old indeed, is S.E. near coll. old Agamemnon. ‘The 69th Foot, now [1902] the 2nd Batt. of the Welsh Regiment’, F. & H.: military: | coll.: late C. 18–20; ob. Ex the days when they were marines on the Agamemnon. See also Upp and Downs. old and bitter. A mother-in-law: proletarian (—1935). Old and Bold, the. The 14th Foot Regiment, which, in 1651, charged into the Prince of Wales’s Own (West Yorkshire Regiment): military: C. 19–20: ob. Also known as Culvert’s Entire, the Pacock, the Fighting Brigade. old as Charing Cross or as Paul’s (i.e. St. Paul’s) or as Paul’s steeple. Ancient; very old indeed: | coll.: ca. 1650–1820. Howell, 1659 (Paul’s steeple); Ray, 1678 (Charing Cross); Other topographical similarities are | old as Abigale and, in dial., | vale Hill, § Egerton, § Glastonbury tor, § Pandon Gate; cf. S.E. old as the devil. old as my tongue and a little older than my teeth, as. A c.p. reply to an inquiry as to one’s age: | coll. (slightly ob.) and dial.: C. 18–20. Swift, Polite Conversation, Dial. I. (Apperson.) old as the itch, as. Extremely old: (low) coll.: C. 18. Fuller. old bach. A confirmed bachelor: | coll.: from early 1870’s. (O.E.D. Sup.) old bag. An ‘old sweat’; pejoratively, an old soldier: lower classes’ coll. (—1923); ob. Manchon. Old Bags. John Scott (1751–1838), 1st Earl of Eldon; at one time Lord Chancellor. Dawson. Old Bailey underwriter. A forger on a small scale: ca. 1825–50. Moncrieff, Van Diemen’s Land, 1830. | orig. c.; certainly low. old bean. A term of address: from ca. 1917; slightly ob. by 1933. Collinson. See old, adj., 4. old beeswing. A vocative (ob. by 1910, † by 1920). See beeswing, and old coo.k old (or, as with all names for the devil, Old Bendy or bendy. The devil: C. 19–20 dial. rather than coll. Dial. also are: old all thing, old booger, botheration, boy (q.v.), naze, chap (q.v.), child, clouts or Clouts, dad, fellow (q.v.), gentleman (q.v.), hangie, Harry (q.v.), hooky, hornie, lad (q.v.), Mahoun, man (q.v.), Nick (q.v.), or Nicker or Nickie or Nickie Ben, one (q.v.), Sam, Sammers or Sanny or Saunders, Scratch (q.v.): also coll.), Scratchem, Smith, smoke, sooty, soss or Soss, and thief. For the coll. and a. terms, see under; cf. also old, adj., last sense. My essay ‘The Devil and his Nicknames’ in Words! old Bill. A veteran; any old soldier, esp. if with heavy, drooping whiskers: military coll., mostly officers: 1915; very ob. F. & Gibbons. Ex Captain Bainarfsold’s Old Bill. old Billy. The devil, but rarely except in like old Billy, like the devil, i.e. hard, furiously, etc. Astley, 1894 (O.E.D.). Cf. the like similes. old Billy-o. An occ. variant (—1923) of the preceding. Manchon. old bird. An experienced thief: c.: 1877.—2. An experienced, knowing person: | coll.: from ca. 1887. Cf. old dog, old hand, old soldier, old stager. q.v. old blazes. The devil: low: 1849; ob. See old, adj., last sense. old block. See chip of the old block.—old bloke. See bloke. Old Bold, the. The 29th Foot Regiment (in late C. 19–20, the 1st Battalion of the Worcestershire Regiment): mid-C. 19–20; ob. Also the Ever-Sworded 29th. Cf.: Old Bold Fifth, the. The 6th Foot (in late C. 19–20, the Northumberland Fusiliers): military: mid-C. 19–20. Also the Fighting Fifth (†), Lord Wellington’s Bodyguard, the Shiner.s. old boots. The devil. Only in ... as old boots and esp. like old boots, a gen. intensive adv. Smedley, 1850, 'was out of sight like old boots'; Milliken, 'I jest blew away like old boots.' See old, adj., last sense.—2. See old shoes. old boy. A coll. vocative: C. 17–20. Shakespeare. Cf. old chap. See old, adj., 4.—2. See entry at old Bendy: | coll. and dial.: C. 19 (? earlier)–20.—3. Any old or oldish man, or one in authority, esp. one’s father, a headmaster, the managing director, etc.: | coll.: C. 19–20. Cf. old man, q.v. This (like the preceding sense) always, except in the vocative, goes with the—2. A strong ale: brewers’ | coll.: ca. 1740–80. O.E.D. Old Bragg, the. The 28th Foot (in late C. 19–20, the 1st Battalion of the Gloucestershire Regiment): military: from ca. 1750. Ex the name of the
colonel (1734–59) with a good-humoured pun on brag. Also the Slasher (C. 19–20; ob.). F. & Gibbons.

Old Brickdusts, the. The 53rd Foot, from ca. 1881 the King's Shropshire Light Infantry; military: C. 19–20. Ex the brickdusty hue of their facings. (F. & Gibbons.)


old Bucks. The 16th Foot (in late C. 19–20, the Bedfordshire Regiment); military: from ca. 1800. F. & Gibbons. Also known as the Feather-Beds and the Peace-Makers.


Old Cars. Old Carthusians; from ca. 1880; 'justly considered a vulgarius', A. H. Tod, Charterhouse, 1900.


old Charley. See charley, 6.


old China. A variant, mostly as a vocative, of China (or c), a mate or companion, q.v.

old chum. See chum. (Ca. 1840–1900; increasingly rare. C. P. Hodgson, Reminiscences, 1846.)

old cock. See cock (= man, fellow) in relation to old, adj., 4. Used both in address (Mark Lemon, 1867, 'Mr. Clendon did not call Mr. Barnard old cock, old fellow, or old beecwing') and in reference = an (old) man (Marriott-Watson, 1895, 'He was a comfortable old cock . . . and pretty well to do'), old cockalorum (or -elorum). A very familiar variation (—1877) of the preceding, slightly ob. Banham.

old codger. See codger (Colman, 1760), and old, adj., 6.

old crawler, esp. preceded by regular. A pejorative, whether in reference or in the vocative: late C. 19–20; (mainly Australian) coll. or s. 'Rolf Boldrewood,' 1888. Prob. ex pub-crawler or crawler, a contemptible person, a toady.

old cuff. See cuff, 1, and cuffin in relation to old, adj., 4. (B.E.)


old dog at common prayer. (Of a clergyman) 'A Poor Hackney that could Read, but not Preach well,' B.E.: late C. 17–mid-18. Cf. old dog at it, be. To be expert at something: coll.: ca. 1630–1880. Nash, 'Old dogge at that drunken, staggering kind of verse'; Butler, B.E.; Grose, 1st ed. Cf. the S.E. proverbial old dog for a hard road.

*old donah. A mother: tramps' c. (—1893)‡, by 1914, also Cockney a. P. H. Emerson. See donah; cf. old gel or woman.


Old Dozen, the. The 12th Foot (in late C. 19–20, the Suffolk Regiment); military: C. 19–20.


old dutch or Dutch, gen. preceded by my, occ. by your or his. One's wife: from the middle 1880's. When Albert Chevalier introduced the term into one of his songs (cf. the later, more famous poem, My Old Dutch), he explained that it referred to an old Dutch clock, the wife's face being likened to the clock-face. Prob. influenced by duchess (cf. my etymological error, at old dutch, in the 1st ed. of Slang).

Old Ebony. Blackwood's Magazine: journalistic and literary: from ca. 1860; ob. Ex the sober black lettering, etc., on the front cover. Cf. Maps. old egg. A very familiar term of address (rarely to women); coll.: late 1918; ob. (O.E.D. Sup.)


Old Fighting Tenth, the. The Lincolnshire Regiment: military coll.: late C. 19–20. F. & Gibbons. Orig. the 10th Foot Regiment.


Old Five and Threepence, the. The 53rd Foot: military: C. 19–20; ob. Ex the number '53' and the C. 19 daily pay of an ensign. Also the Brickdusts.


Old Fogs, the. The 87th Foot (in late C. 19–20, the Royal Irish Fusiliers); military; ex the battle-cry, fog an bealach (clear the way) influenced by: old foggy. See foggig.—old fork, the. See fork, the.

old four-by-two. The quartermaster: military: from ca. 1912. B. & P. Ex four-by-two, a rifle pull-through.

old fruit. A jocular term of address: ca. 1912–25. Cf. pipkin, q.v., and old bean.

old gal. See old, adj.

Old Gang, the. Uncompromising Tories: political coll. nickname: from ca. 1870. Ware.

old geezer. See geezer.

Old shoes! Up again! 'No rest for the wicked!' semi-proverbial coll. (— 1887); ob. Baumann.

old shoemaker. See shoemaker.

old shovel-penny. 'The paymaster, who is generally an ancient' (Ware): military (—1899); ob.

Old Slop. *The Times*: London: ca. 1840–50, when that newspaper, having no will of its own, was trying to attract attention. Ex Fr. *sloape*, a slut.


old soldier, v. To 'come the old soldier over' (a person): coll.: 1802. O.E.D. Cf.: 


old sport. A coll. term of address: 1905 (O.E.D. Sup.) Ex sport, a good fellow.

old square-toes. A coll. nickname for a pedantic, old-fashioned man: from ca. 1890; ob. *The Sun*, Dec. 23, 1894.—2. But square-toes appears as early as 1755 (Grose, 1st ed.) for 'one's father' or 'father'; † by 1800.

old stager. A very experienced person: coll.: 1711. Shaftesbury, whence we see that the term was orig. applied to travellers by stage-coach (O.E.D.); the gen. sense was well established by 1788: witness Grose, 2nd ed. Cf. old hand.

old stamper. A naval seaman transferring from ship to ship as his captain is transferred: naval coll.: C. 18–mid-19, Bowen virtually implies. Cf. old stager.

Old Steadfast. Woodfull, the Australian test cricketer of 1928–34 and captain in 1930–4: cricketers' nickname: from 1930. Also, as in *The Daily Telegraph*, April 23, 1934, the Rock or the Unbounable.


old stick in the mud. (In vocative and reference) a very stupid person: coll.: from ca. 1820. Moncrieff, 1823, *Tom and Jerry*.

Old Strawbots or Strawsw. See Old Sancy Seventh and Strawbots. Ex having, at Warburg (1780), substituted straw-bands for outworn boots. Very ob. if †; a.


old stripes. See stripes.


Old Stubtyle. William Fiennes (1582–1602), the 1st Viscount Saye and Sele (Dawson).


old thirds. Three men working on the one job or together: tailors' (—1938). Cf. partners.

Old Tick. The same as Old Q. (Dawson.)

old-timer. One given to praising old times: coll.: 1860, *Music and Drama*: ob. Mostly U.S.—2. One long established in place or position: from ca. 1810: coll. until ca. 1905, then S.E. except when used as term of address.

old toast. The devil: low: C. 19–20; ob. Occ. old toaster, likewise ob. (Cf. the U.S. old smoker.) Prob. ex —: 2. 'A brisk old fellow', Grose, 1st ed.: o. or low a.: ca. 1800–1830. B.E.

old Tom. Gin; esp. very good strong gin; low: from ca. 1820; ob. *'Jon Bess*, 1823; II., 5th ed. (q.v. for etymology); A. S. M. Hutchinson, making great play with it in *Once Aboard the Lugger*, 1908. Brewer's etymology ex one Thomas Chamberlain, a brewer of gin, may be correct.

Old Tony. Anthony Cooper (1821–83), the 1st Earl of Shaftesbury. (Dawson.)

old top. A s. vocative: from ca. 1920; slightly ob. by 1930. P. G. Wodehouse, 1923 (O.E.D. Sup.). Cf. old bean.

old tots. See tots, old.

Old Toughs, the. The 103rd Foot (in late C. 19–20, the Royal Dublin Fusiliers): military: from ca. 1750. F. & Gibbons. Ex long and arduous Indian service. Also the Bombay Toughs.

old trout. A C. 19–20 survival, now slightly ob., of trout, q.v., *That awful old trout*, applied in 1834 by a 'bright young thing' to a dowdy authoress.

old truepenny. See truepenny.—old turnip. See turnip, 2.—old run. See old one.—old Vun O'Clock. See General One O'Clock.


old whip. See whip, old.

old whiskers. A 'cheeky boys' salute to a working-man whose whiskers are a little wild and iron-grey': mid-C. 19–20. Ware.

Old White Hat. John Willis, clipper-ship owner: nautical: mid-C. 19–very early 20. Bowen. Ex the white top-hat he was so fond of wearing.


old wives' Paternoster, the. 'The devil's paternoster', i.e. a grumbling and complaining: coll.: ca. 1575–1620. H. G. Wright, 1580. 'He plucking his hatte about his ears, mumbling the old wives' Paternoster, departed.' Apperson.


olds. Old persons: old members of a set, class, etc.: coll. : 1883, Besant, "Young clever people . . . are more difficult to catch than the olds," O.E.D.

oldster. The nautical sense (a midshipman of four years' service): is. — 2. An elderly or an experienced person: coll.: 1848, Dickens in Dombey and Son (O.E.D.).

old woman. See ol'.

olivander. An error for † S.E. olivaster (cf. Fr. olivêtre): from ca. 1850. O.E.D.

olive-branch. A contemporaneous synonym of rainbow, q.v. (F. & Gibbons.)


*Oliver; occult. Oliver. The moon: c.: ca. 1780-1900; nearly b. by 1860 (H., 2nd ed.). G. Parker. Esp. in Oliver is up or O. widdles, the moon shines, and O. is in tow, the nights are moonlight. Amsworth, in Rookwood (1834), has "Oliver puts his black night-cap on," hides behind clouds. Perhaps Oliver was 'coined' in derision of Oliver Cromwell: cf. Oliver's skull. — 2. Among tramps conversant with Romany, Olivers (rare in singular) are stockings: from before 1887. Baumann. — 3. A flat: abbr. (— 1909) of rhyming s. Oliver Twist. Ware.

Oliver, do you. Do you understand?: C. 20: abbr. rhyming s., Oliver Cromwell on tumble (pronounced tumblid), to understand. W.

Oliver Twist. See Oliver, 3. (Mid-C. 19-20; ob.)

Oliver's skull. A chamber-pot: low: ca. 1600-1870; ob. by 1820. B.E.

oll. All: (diai. and) low coll.: C. 19-20. (The Observer, June 2, 1935, in a cricket report.)


*oller, boys, 'oller! A collar: rhyming s.: late C. 19-20. B. & P.

*ollis compoli. 'The by-name of one of the principal Rogues of the Catering Crew', B.E.: c.: late C. 17-19nd-mid. 19. What was his role, unless he were, perchance, the Jack-of-all-trades? And what the etymology of this rhymed fabrication unless to o? — Ology. Often, from ca. 1810, in jocularities verging on the coll. John Bull, April 28, 1917, 'Don't pin your faith too much to ologies and isms' (W.). Here, as in -ometer (q.v.), the -o- has been adopted from the preceding element, the radicals being Gr. λόγος, a word, and Gr. μέτρον, a measure.

omacle. An incorrect form of onycle, onyx: C. 14-16. O.E.D.

omalo. Onomatopoeia for homalo- in scientific combinations: from ca. 1865. O.E.D.

*omee; omer; omeey; homee, homey. A man; esp. a master, e.g. a landlord: c. and Parlyarea (> in late C. 19, also gen. theatrical): from ca. 1840. "No. 747", p. 409, is valid for 1845; H., 1st ed. Ex It. uomo via Linguas Francas. See quotation atarker.

-o-meter. Jocular formations were popularised by Sydney Smith's foolometer: e.g. girlometer, q.v.

omma and chevoo. A French van or truck on troop-trains in France: military; G.W. (F. & Gibbons.) Ex the marking, 'Hommes 37-40. Chevaux en long &'

ommes. A mixture of 'odds and ends of various wines': 'wine-merchants' (— 1900). Ware. Ex alle, L. omnes meaning all.

omni-. All. Often, from ca. 1800, so fantastic as to border on coll.

omni gatherum; or as one word. A variant of omnium gatherum, q.v.


omnia. Combined non-Government stocks of which the constituents may be handled separately: Stock Exchange coll.: from ca. 1894. L. omnium, of all things. O.E.D.


om-o- is incorrect (C. 17-20) for homo; omioio- (C. 19-20) for homoio-, homoae-. O.E.D.


on, adv. or adv.-adj. Having money at stake, a wager on (something): from ca. 1810: racing coll. until ca. 1885, then S.E. The Sporting Magazine, 1812 (O.E.D.). — The Standard, Oct. 23, 1873, 'Everyone . . . had something on.' Since ca. 1870, gen. kain a bit on, as in George Moore's Esther Waters: this phrase is coll. II. Hence, standing or bound to win: racing (— 1874) > gen. coll. 'You're on a quid if Kaiser wins,' H., 5th ed.

on, preposition. Of: C. 13-20: S.E. until ca. 1750, then coll. till ca. 1790, then low coll. (in C. 20, indeed, virtually sol.) and dial. Esp. in on 's = of it. Partly ex of being = both of and on— 2. Superfluous in this sense: sol.: mid-C. 19-20. Who's that you're meaning on ?' where meaning on should correctly be simply meaning, though the on arises actually from the implied sense, 'whom are you getting at?' (Baumann).— 3. See on, adv., 2.— 4. With: coll.: C. 19-20. See onto, 2, and in that quotation substitute on for onto. — 5. To be paid for by: coll.: C. 20. Esp. in 'The lunch is on me.'
(O.E.D. Sup.—) 6. To the detriment, or the ruin, or the circumventing of; of C. 20, 'I hope he won't go bankrupt on us.' Sometimes, to one's loss, as in 'Our old cat died on us.'

on phrases.—See the key words.

on, hot. See hot on.

once. Energy, vigour; impudence: low: 1886, The Referee, Oct. 24, 'I like Shille—I cannot help admiring the mere amount he possesses of what is vulgarly called 'once' '; virtually t. Ware, 'the substantiavising of 'on'—most emphatic.'

once, in. First time; at the first attempt; low coll.: late C. 19-20. G. R. Sims, 1900, 'You've guessed it once, father,' Cf. S. E. in one.

once a week. 'Cheek' (n. and v.): rhyming s. (— 1914). F. & Gibbons.

once-a-week man; or Sunday promenerader. A man in debt: London: ca. 1820-60. Egan, Real Life in London. Sunday was the one day on which he could not be arrested for debt. (Ware.)

once before we fill and once before we light. A drinking c.p. recorded by Ned Ward in 1709.

once-over. A quick, penetrating glance: coll. adopted, in 1919, ex U.S. (British soldiers had heard it in France often enough in 1918.)


onces. Wages: artisans' (— 1909); ob. Ware. Ex once a week.

once. See onct.


once t., onct: once, onest. Pronounced wust.


one. One self; one's own interest: coll.: 1897. R. Edwards, 'I can help one is not that a good point of philosophy' (O.E.D.); t. by 1830. In C. 19-20, number one, q.v.—2. A grudge; a score; a blow, kiss, etc.: 1830. Galt, 'I owed him one' (O.E.D.): s. >, ca. 1890, coll.—3. A lie: late C. 19-20: s. >, ca. 1920, coll. Esp. 'That's a big one!'—4. Erroneous form of own, adj.: C. 17. O.E.D.—5. Erroneous for none, abundance, resources: C. 15. O.E.D.—6. 'One' in Stock Exchange parlance, when applied to stock, means one thousand nominal; a half or 'half, a-one' is, therefore, five hundred pounds. 'Five' = five thousand pounds nominal,' A. J. Wilson, Stock Exchange Glossary, 1895. These terms are coll. verging on j. 7. See:

one, a. A very odd or amusing person: from ca. 1905. 'He's a one.' Cf. one for, q.v.

one, on. Under open arrest: military (other ranks) ': from ca. 1825. The one is the charge-sheer on which his name appears.

one a-piece, see. To see double: coll.: 1842, Punch (ii. 21): ob.

one-acter. A (short) play in one act: theatrical coll.: from ca. 1910. Ex one-act play 'by the Oxford -er'.

one and a peppermint-drop. A one-eyed person: low London (— 1909); slightly ob. Ware.

One and All, the. The Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry: military: late C. 19-20. F. & Gibbons. Ex the onty motto.


one another for each other. See each other, 2.

one-armed landlord. A pump: Somersethshire s. (— 1903) rather than dial. E.I.D. Ex the cheapness of water compared with beer.

one better, go. To do better, to 'score': from ca. 1890: s. >, ca. 1910, coll. The Spectator, May 7, 1892 (O.E.D.). Ex play at cards.

one-bit. (Gen. pl.) A small, sour apple—thrown away after being tested with one bite: costers': from ca. 1870. Ware.


one-drink house. A public-house where only one drink is served within (say) an hour: coll. of London lower classes: ca. 1860-1905. Ware.

one-er, tromener, oner, wunner. A person, a thing, of great parts, remarkable (e.g. a notable lie), most attractive, dashing; an expert: 1840. Dickens, 'Miss Sally's such a one-er for that, she is'; 1857, Hughes, wunner; 1861, Dutton Cook, ononer (pron. won-ner); 1882, Thackeray, oner. In C. 20, rarely other than oner. Perhaps oner is ex one, something unique, influenced—as W. suggests—by dial. wunner, a wonder. (Cf. one, a, q.v.)—2. Esp. a knock-out blow: 1861, Dutton Cook, as above.—3. Something consisting of, indicated by, characteristic to or by, "I": coll.: 1889 (of cricket). Esp. of one church-going a day. (For all three) O.E.D.—4. Esp. a shilling: low: late C. 19-20; ob. Cf. (and prob. ex) one of them, 2.

One-Eyed City, the. Birkenhead: C. 20. (John Brophy, Waterfront, 1934.) Mostly among 'Liverpuddians'.

one for, a. 'A devotee, admirer, or champion of (anything)': coll.: from ca. 1930. O.E.D. (Sup.) Prob. ex a one (q.v.) at one, a.

one for his nob. See nob, one for his.

one-gun salute, get a. To be court-martialled: naval coll.: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. The ship on which the Court is to be held fires one gun at 8 a.m.

one hand for yourself and one for the ship! Be careful: a nautical c.p. (C. 19-20) addressed to a youngster going aloft. Bowen.

one-horse. Insignificant; very small: coll.: orig. (1854), U.S.; anglicised—mostly in the Colonies—ca. 1885. Goldwin Smith, 1886, 'Canada has been saddled with one-horse universities.' (Thornton.)

one hundred and twenty (gen. written '120') in the water-bag. An Australian rural c.p. (C. 20) applied to a very hot day. Sc. degrees.

one in, adj. 'Hearing another's good fortune and wishing the same to oneself', F. & H.: tailors': from ca. 1870. Contrast one out, q.v.


one in the eye. A misfortune, a set-back, a snub, an insult: late C. 19-20. G. R. Sims, 1900, 'It was . . . one in the eye' for her aunt' (O.E.D.).

one-legged donkey. 'The single-legged stool which the old coastguard was allowed for purposes of rest, designed to capsize the moment he drowsed off': nautical: C. 18. Bowen.

one lordship is worth all his manners. A C. 17 c.p. running manor.

one nick or nitch. A male child, too nick (nitch) being a baby girl: printers': from ca. 1860. Ex an anatomical characteristic.
of one 'o'clock, like. See like one 'o'clock.

one of + pl. n. + who (which, or that) is (was, etc.) Incorrect for one of ... are (were, etc.). 'He is one of those men who is always right,' properly 'are always right.' An error arising in faulty thinking: cf. these kind of ... q.v.


one of the best. See best, one of the.

one of the boys. A variant of one of the lads, q.v. at lads. See also b'hoy.

one of them or us. A harlot: coll.: resp. C. 19—20 (extant only with stressed them); mid-C. 18—mid-19, as in Grose, 1st ed. Cf. one of my cousins.

(Only one of them.) A shilling: urban lower classes (—1809). Ware.

one of those. A catamite; any homosexual: euphemistic: C. 20. See the quotation at Nancy, 1. one of those, I (really must) have. A non-aristocratic c.p. of ca. 1880—3. Ware. Ex a comic song.

one on (him, you, etc.) I, that's. That is a point against you 1: coll.: late C. 19—20.

one out, adj. I'm lucky!: tailors': from ca. 1870. Contrast one in, q.v. Cf.

one out of it! I'm keeping out of this!: tailors': from ca. 1870.

one over the eight. See eight, one over the.


one squint, etc. See squint is better ... one star, one stunt. An Army c.p. (1914 +) now ob., meaning that second lieutenants in the infantry frequently got killed in their first battle. They wore one star. See stunt.

one two, proceeded by a, his, the, etc. Two blowis in rapid succession: boxing coll.: from ca. 1820. Egan, 'Belcher ... distinguished for his one two'.

one under the arm. An additional job: tailors': from ca. 1870; ob. Ex things carried comfortably under the arm.

one up, be or have gone. To have obtained the next step in promotion: military coll.: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Cf.

one up on, be. To have scored an advantage over (a person): coll.: C. 20.

one or a marble (upon another's) taw, I'll be! I'll get even with him some time!: low: ca. 1810—50. Vaux.

one with t'other, the. Sexual intercourse: low: C. 17—18. Anon. song, Maid'm Delight, 1601, in Farmer's Merry Songs and Ballads, 1897.

one word from you and (sh)he does as (sh) she likes, with other pronominal variations. He ignores your commands: c.p. 18. Sarcastically ex one word from me (etc.) is enough or he (etc.) obeys.

one. One: low theatrical: from ca. 1850; ob. Influenced by Parlyaree.

oneirocracy. A catarchistic form of †oneirocracy: C. 17. O.E.D.

onener, oner. See one-er.

one's eye. A hiding-place for 'cabbage' (q.v.): tailors: from ca. 1850; ob.

one's name on it. See name on it.—onest. See onet.

onious or -cess; onkiss; mostly oncus or, esp., a. onkus. (Of food) good; (of a place) passable: New Zealanders': from ca. 1914, chiefly among the soldiers.—2. (Ex the second nuance.) Inferior or bad; unjust: Australians': from ca. 1914. It is, however, possible that sense 2 is the earlier and that the origin is the U.S. orner.

*onicker. A harlot: c. from ca. 1880; ob. Walford's Antiquarian, 1887. Cf. one nick, q.v.


onion, feel much of an. To feel very bored: lower classes (—1923). Manchon.

onion, it may serve with an. An ironical C. 17 c.p. Howell. (Apperson.)
onion, off one's. See onion, 2.
onion-hunter. A thief of seals worn on ribbons, etc.: c. : 1811. See onion, 1.
onish. ( Pron. onish.) Rather late: e.g. 'It's getting onish.' C. 20: coll.
onkiss or onkus. See ongus.
on only is frequently misplaced, as in 'We only heard it yesterday' for 'We heard it only yesterday' : this catarchesis is coeval with the language. (Baumann.)—2. Except: sol. (—1887). Baumann, 'They never came, only on Tuesdays.'
on't. On it: C. 15—20: S.E. until C. 19, then coll.
onto, corresponding to into, is S.E.; where on, it is catarchestic: mid-C. 19—20. See esp. the O.E.D. and Thornton's acrid comment.—2. On, in sense of 'with': sol., or low coll.: from ca. 1870 or perhaps a decade or two earlier. Baumann cites 'He had a strange habit of somewhating on him' (cf. S.E., 'He had a strange way with him').
on'y. Only: sol.: C. 19—20. Like 'on't, it is very illiterate. Baumann.
oodles. A large quantity, esp. of money: orig. U.S.; anglicised ca. 1890. The Overland Monthly, 1890 (iii, 131), 'A Texan never has a great quantity of anything, but he has "seads" of it or oodles or dead oodles or scadoodles or "swades". Prob. ex (the whole) boodle (O. W. Holmes), with which cf. caboodle, q.v.

ooft, ooffish. Money: low: resp. from ca. 1885; from ca. 1870 (and ob.) The Sporting Times, Dec. 26, 1891, 'Ooffish was, some twenty years ago, the East End [Yiddish] synonym for money, and was derived from [Ger.] auf tische [properly auf dem tische], "on the table", because one refused to play cards for money unless the cash were on the table'. Cf. plank down, q.v.—2. (Gen. pl.) An egg: military or Western Front in G.W. (F. & Gibbons.) Ex Fr. ouf. Only oof in this sense.


ooft-bird walk, make the. To circulate money: low: from ca. 1888; ob.

ooja. See erfs.—ooftish. See oof.

ooft. Rich; (always) with plenty of cash; low: from ca. 1889. See oof.
ooja-(ka-piv or ka-(or-cum)-piyvi, the latter being the original corruption), is prob. a corruption of the nautical hook-me-dinghy or else ex Hindustani (as Manchon says); military, C. 20, it means a 'gadget'—anything with a name that one cannot at the moment recall. Further corruptions were ooja-cum-suff and, later still, oojikoo, with which cf. the Canadian hooyo-ma-klo. B. & P.—2. Hence the old ooja, the Colonel: military: from ca. 1905. Manchon.


ooms; occ. oun(s). A coll. variation, late C. 18-20 (very ob.), of rounds. O.E.D.

oopisoticas, the. 'An undiagnosed complaint', C. J. Dennis: Australian (—1916). Jocularly artificial word.

ooze. To depart: from ca. 1920. D. Mackail, 1930, 'I've got some work this afternoon. Shall we oooz e t' Cf. filter and trickle.
oozle. See ouzle.

'op it. See hop it.
opaque. Dull; stupid: London: ca. 1820-40. Bee. (Adumbrates dim, q.v.)

open. An open golf-championship, as the British open: sports coll.: from ca. 1920.

open-air. An open-air meeting: Salvation Army's coll.: 1884. Ware.

open areas. A medlar: C. 11-20; S.E. till ca. 1860, then low coll. till ca. 1820, then dial.; Grose, 1st ed. (at medlar), cites a C. 18-early 19 e.p.: 'It is never ripe till it is rotten as a t—d, and then (it is) not worth a f—d. Hence, a medlar: C. 17-18. Davies, The Scourge of Folly, ca. 1618, puns thus on meddler, medlar: 'Kate still exclaimes against great medlers . . . I muse her stomacke now so much shouldes faile | To losth a medlar, being an open-tail' (O.E.D.). See also open up.

open door. The female pudend: low: C. 19-20; ob. ('t orig. printers').

open house. Keep. See keep open house.

open lower-deckers. To use bad language: naval: late C. 18-mid-19. Bowen, 'The heaviest guns were mounted on the lower decks.'

open one's mouth too wide. To bid for more than one can pay for: from ca. 1880: Stock Exchange s.: ca. 1860, gen. coll.

open the hall. See ball, open the.

open to. To; or admit, to (a person): London lower classes': 1865, The People, Jan. 6, 'I knew then that Selby had got a bit more [money] than he opened to me'; slightly ob. Ware.

open up, v.i. (Of a woman, sexually) to spread: low coll. bordering on S.E.: mid-C. 19-20. Ex S.E. sense, to become open to view. Cf. the rare C. 17 open-tail, a harlot, a light woman, and open arse, q.v.

opener. Any case, bag, package, etc., opened by customs officials: customs's (ca. 1908) >, by 1930, coll. O.E.D. Sup. Either by 'the Oxford -er' or ex the frequent order, open her!

oper, no. No chance, esp. of surviving a battle: military: 1918; ob. F. & Gibbons; B. & P. I.e. no hope.


operator. A pickpocket; coll. bordering on S.E.: C. 18. Ex the † S.E. sense, one who lives by fraudulent operations.

ophido- is, in combination, erroneous for ophio-.

C. 17-19. O.E.D.


opinionatre, opiniona(s)try. Incorrect forms of opinatre, opinia(s)try (ca. 1600-1700), as opinative is (late C. 16-17) of opinative. Other erroneous or words are opilic, opilhous, for hop; opportunity for importunity (late C. 16-17); optupen
tune for appurtenance, *t* prep*; orption for ob*; or* or* sp*; or* sp*; or* st* sp*; or* t* for* at*.

o.E.D.

-opolis. See -polis.

ops, night. Night-operations (in manouvres): military coll.: from 1915. Also in medical s.

opah. Something optional; esp. a ball where fancy dress is optional: 1903. F. Morton Howard in The Humorist of Dec. 16, 'There was a fancy-dress dance . . . of the sort known locally as an "opah"'.


optic. (Gen. in pl.) An eye: C. 17-20; S.E. till ca. 1880, then jocular coll. Licensed Victuallers' Gazette, April 10, 1891, 'A deep cut under the dexter optic.' (or and nor. See Fowler.)


oracle, work the. To raise money: from ca. 1820. 'Jon Bee', 1823; J. Newman, Scampering Tricks, 1891, Hence, to contrive a robbery; c. (—1887). Baumann. Ex S.E. sense, to obtain one's end by (gen. underhand) means.—3. work the double, dumb, or hairy oracle, (gen. of the man) to copulate: low: C. 19 (?) earlier)—20; ob.

orange. The female pudend: Restoration period.


orange dry, squeeze or suck the. To exhaust, drain, deplete: late C. 17-20 (squeeze > † ca. 1860): S.E. until ca. 1880, then off.

Orange Lilies, the. The 35th Foot (from ca. 1881, the 1st Battalion Royal Sussex): military: from ca. 1760; ob. Ex 'the facings till 1832 and the plumes awarded for gallantry at Quebec in 1759', F. & H.
Orange Peel. Sir Robert Peel (1788–1850) when Chief Secretary for Ireland. Dawson, ‘Because of his strong anti-Catholic opinions’ and punning orange-peel.

orate. To hold forth, ‘speechify’: C. 17–20; S.E. till ca. 1830, then lapsed until ca. 1865, when, under the influence of U.S. (where still serious), it was revived as a jocular term that, ca. 1910, > coll. Cf. :

oration, vi. To make a speech: coll.: from ca. 1830; slightly ob. J. Done, 1863, ‘They ... had marvalous promptitude ... for orationing’; Meredith. Ex the n. O.E.D.

Orator Henley. John Henley (1692–1756), pamphleteer and lecturer.

[orator to a mountebank, a quack doctor’s decoy, is perhaps late C. 17–mid-18 coll. but prob. S.E.—a mere special application of the S.E. sense. B.E.]


orch. Oro (a fierce ceteasean; hence, a devouring monster): C. 17 erroneous form. O.E.D.

orchard. The female pudend: low: C. 19–20; ob. See Jack in ....


orchid. A titled member of the: Stock Exchange; from ca. 1880. Because decorative.


order, a large. An excessive demand or requirement: 1884, The Pall Mall Gazette, July 24, 1884, ‘... An agreeable piece of slang, a very large order’ (O.E.D.). Also, from ca. 1910, a big order. Obviously ex the placing of an unusually large order for goods.

order, a strong. A very good horse: the turf (1923). Manchon.

order of the , the. E.g. ... of the bath, a bath; ... of the boot, a kick, a violent dismissal; ... of the push, a dismissal. All are coll. and essentially middle-class; from ca. 1880. (See e.g. push, order of the.) Perhaps suggested by such knight mock-titles as knight of the pigskin, a jockey.

order of the day, the. The most usual thing to do, think, etc., at a given period: coll.: from ca. 1790. Arthur Young, 1792 (O.E.D.).

*order-racket. The obtaining of goods from a shopkeeper by false money or false pretense: ca. 1810–70. Vaux. See racket.


orderly dog. An Orderly Corporal: id.: id. Ibid.


ordinary, adj. Ordinary-looking, plain: from ca. 1740: S.E. till ca. 1880, then coll. and (esp. in Cambridgeshire) dial. Knowledge, Aug. 10, 1883. O.E.D.

ordinary, out of the. Unusual: coll.: late C. 19–20. (Cf. the etymologically equivalent extra-ordinary.)

-orange, as in pork for poor, is a distinctive mark of illiterate speech.—2. So is -ore for -om, as in tore for torn, worn for worn.

corf. Off: sol.: C. 19–20. Independently, or as in orfis, q.v. Also for equivalent ough as in corf. This incorrect sound is typical of Cockney. See also -tf.


organ, carry the. To shoulder the pack at defaulters’ or at marching-order drill: military: ca. 1870–1910.

organ, want the. See organ, 3.

organ-pipe. The wind-pipe, the throat; hence the voice: low s. > coll.: from ca. 1850; slightly ob. Ex the shape and purpose of both.


orinoko, pron. orinoker. A pokor: rhyming s.: (1857); ob. ‘Ducange Anglicus’.

orl. A ‘phonetic’ spelling that is unnecessary.

orlop, demons of the. Midshipmen and junior officers: naval jocular coll. (1887); virtually † Baumann.


Oronoko. Tobacco: 1703, Ned Ward. Rare. (W. Matthews.)


orphan collar. A collar unsuitable to the shirt with which it is worn: jocular (1902). Orig. U.S.

orrigh. All right: sol.: C. 19–20. Also aw right. See ‘I omitted’.

orrors. See horrors, 5.

Orosmades. ‘A nickname given to the poet Thos. Gray (1716–71) when at Cambridge’ (Dawson).


orthopnoic is a C. 17 error for orthoepnic. O.E.D.

O’s, the. The Clapton Orient Football Club: sporting: C. 20. Cf. the Bees.

os ace. An illiterate pl. of o ace for o-yes, i.e. oyes: C. 17. O.E.D.

oscar. Money, esp. coin: Australian rhyming s. (C. 20) on cash. Ex Oscar Asche, the Australian actor (1871–1936).

*archive. See orchive.

Bowen (? cf. the Ger. place-names, Osche and Oscheleben.)

osocomo. An error for *nonocoma*, a hospital.

O.E.D.

ossiter. See ocular.

ossy. Horsey (adj.): 1881, Earl Grenville (O.E.D. Sup. at bench).

ostatius. A prefect doing, in rotation, special duty, under keeping order: Winchester College coll. or j.: C. 19-20. Revived by Dr. Moberly ca. 1896. L. ostiator, a door-keeper.—The official title for the Second Master,' Mansfield, 1866; ob.


ostrary. An error for ostracism, as in North, 1879: ca. 1850-1870. O.E.D.

otake. A C. 16 error for out-take, preposition. Ibid.

otamy. An † corruption of atomy.

cote. C. 16 corrupt form of hole (ex hight, to bid, sell, name), Spenser. O.E.D.—2. Also of wet ex sol to. Ibid.


"other half, the. The return drink in the ward-room, all naval drinks being traditionally a half-measure: naval coll. : C. 20. Bowen.

"other side, the. Mail travelling in the opposite direction: railwaymen's, esp. on mail trains: from ca. 1920. The Daily Herald, Aug. 5, 1936.

"other thing, if he doesn't like it he may do the. I.e. 'jump it', or go to hell: col. (— 1887). Baumann.

"other thing, the. The contrary, reverse, opposite: coll. : from ca. 1923. Ex the preceding.

otherwise. Different: from ca. 1650 S.E. until ca. 1820, then coll and dial. Cf. † S.E. others.

otherwise for other is cacophonic: rare before C. 20. Fowler.


Otter. A sailor: C. 18-20; very ob. Street Robberies Consider'd.—2. N. and adj. : also oto. Eight: occ. eightpence; Parleyes and costers' a. from ca. 1850. Ex It. oto, via Lingua Franca.

P. H. Emerson, 1893, 'I'll take otto soli.' See soldi.

otter-down. An erroneous form of eider-down: ca. 1760-1800. E.g. in Johnson. O.E.D.

otto. See otter, 2.


otomy. See atomy.

Outfit. The Oxford University Dramatic Society: Oxford University s. (from ca. 1890) >, by 1930, coll.


ought. See nought. Esp. in ought to (present infinitive), didn't; ought to (perfect infin.), hadn't. Should—not ought not to—do: should not—ought not to—have done: C. 19-20: low coll. >, ca. 1880, sol. Particularly illiterate is this example from Baumann: 'Didn't e ought to stay ?', i.e.

'Ought he not to have stayed ?' Also in affirmative (see examples at O.E.D., ought, 236, IV, 7, o). A survival of ought, past plp. of owe.


ounds. A coll. form of wounds (e.g. God's wounds): C. 18. Cf. sound.

our. A familiar way of referring to that thing or, more gen., person: C. 19-20. Dorothy Sayers, Murder Must Advertise, 1933, 'I've an idea our Mr. Willis was a bit smitten in that direction at one time.

our 'Arbour. See 'Arbour.—Our Billy. See Billy, Our.

our noble selves ! A C. 20 upper-middle class toast.


ourn. Ours: mid-C. 17-20: dial. and low coll. Partly ex † S.E. our(e)n; our; partly ex our on mine. Cf. hern, hien, yourn.


curious for orous is cacophonic, as in humourous for humorous. Cf. Galsworthy, The Silver Spoon, 1926, 'The humourous town still hummed.'

Ouse whale. Fish served at school meals: Bootham School (— 1925). Anon., Dict. of Bootham Slang.

ouster-le-mer. A law-dictionaries error for ouiller-le-mer. O.E.D.

out. a. (Mostly in pl.) One out of employment or (esp. political) office: 1764: coll. till ca. 1790, then S.E. Goldsmith, Chatterton. Ex the adj. —2. A dram-glass: public-house and low: ca. 1835-70. Dickens, in Sketches by Boz. These glasses are made two-out (half-quartern), three-out (a third), four-out (a quarter).—3. An outing or excursion; a holiday: from ca. 1760: dial. and, from ca. 1840, coll.; very ob. as the latter, (O.E.D.).—4. An outsider passenger on a coach, etc.: 1844: ob.: a. >, ca. 1850, J. J. Hewleth, 1844, 'Room for two outs and an in' (O.E.D.).—5. (Also in pl.) A loss: lower classes' col. (— 1909). Ware.


out, adj. (See the first o entry.).—2. Unfashionable: coll. or, as the O.E.D. classes it, S.E.: 1660, Pepys in Diary, Oct. 7, 'Long cloakes being now quite out'; ob. ? ex go out of fashion.—3. (Of a girl, a young woman) at work, in domestic service; coll. >, ca. 1890, S.E.: 1814, Jane Austen.—4. Tispy: C. 18-mid-19. ? ex out, astray. F. & H.—6. Having been (esp. recently) presented at Court: Society coll. >, ca. 1890, S.E.: 1886, Mrs. Gaskell (O.E.D.): 1877, Belgravia, Aug., p. 189. Ex to come out at Court.—6. Wrong, inaccurate: coll. or, as the O.E.D. holds, S.E.: mid-C. 17-20. Ex out in one's count, guess, estimate.—7. Having a tendency to lose: a. verging on
OUT

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OUTS

a proverbial lie.


out, adv. The orig. form of all the adj. senses: see preceding entry.—2. See all out.—3. In existence; one could find: coll. >, ca. 1905, S.E.: from ca. 1860. G. A. Lawrence, 1859, *Fanny was the worst casuist out" (O.E.D.). *ex out before the world or out on view.

out,? does your mother know you’re. See mother... The c.p. reply is, *Yes, she gave me a farthing to buy a monkey with! are you for sale! (Manchon.)

out, play at in and. See in and in and out. out after, be. A mainly lower classes’ coll. variant (—1923) of familiar S.E. *be out for, to be exceedingly keen to obtain. (Manchon.)

[put and out, adv. and adj.: S.E., despite F. & H. and others.]


out at elbows or heels. See elbows and heels.

out at leg. (Of cattle) feeding in hired pastures: rural coll.: C. 19–20; ob.

out for an airing. (Of a horse) not meant to win: the turf; 1888, *The Sporting Times, June 29. Opp. on the job (see job).

out. It. To go out, esp. on an outing: coll.: 1878, Stevenson, *Pleasure-boats outing it for the afternoon.* Ex ob. S.E. out, v.i. O.E.D.

out of (occ. Christ’s, but gen.) God’s blessing (occ. heaven’s benediction, Shakespeare in Lear) into the warm sun. From better to worse: proverbial coll.: mid-C. 1870, Smith-J., Palgrave, 1840, ‘To leap out of the heel into the kytokytc, or out of Christ’s blessing in a warm sunne;’ Howell; 1712, Mottetous, who misunderstands it to mean ‘out of the frying-pan into the fire.’ Skeat derives it ex the congregation hastening, immediately after the benediction, from the church into the sun. Occ. out of a or the warm sun into God’s blessing, from worse to better (Livy.) Apperson.


out of commission. Requiring work: clerks’ coll. (—1900). Ware.

*out of flash. See flash, out of.—out of mess. See mess, out of.

out of it, the hunt, the running. Debarked; having no share, no chance; wholly ignorant: from ca. 1890: coll. till C. 20, then S.E. *Ex sport.


out of the cupboard, come. To go out to work on one’s first job: lower classes’ (—1909). Ware.

*out of the way (for and so). In hiding because wanted by the police (for such and such a crime): c.: from ca. 1810; ob. Vaux.

*out of town. ‘Out of cash; locked up for debt’; Bee: c. of ca. 1810–50. Opp. in town, q.v.

*out of twig. Reduced by poverty to the wearing of very shabby clothes: c. of ca. 1810–80. Vaux. who notes put out of twig, to alter a stolen article beyond recognition, and put oneself out of twig, to disguise oneself effectually.

(out) on one’s own. Fearless; a very good sort of fellow: coll.: C. 20.

out or down there. Turn out or be out (or knocked) down: boatmen’s o.p. to lazy seamen: C. 19. Bowen.

out the back door, go. To go down to the beach at Gallipoli, esp. on fatigues: New Zealand soldiers’; in 1915.

out there. On the Western Front: military coll.: late 1914–18. F. & Gibbons. Also over there.

out with. To bring out, to show: coll.: 1892, R. & M. Edgeworth (O.E.D.); e.g. *out with a knife. —2. Hence, to utter, esp. unexpectedly, courageously, etc.: coll.: 1870, Spurgeon, ‘He out with his lie’ (O.E.D.).—3. Gen. be out with, to be no longer friendly towards: (mostly nursery) coll.: from before 1885. Ware.

outcry. An auction: C. 17–19; *S.E. in England by ca. 1800, but surviving in India as a coll. until late C. 19. H., 3rd ed.: Yule & Burnell. (Also mid-C. 18–19 dial.: E.D.D.)


outer edge, the. See outside edge.

outside it with a card of ten. See card of ten.

outfit. A travelling party; a party in charge of herds, etc.: coll.: orig. (1870) and mainly U.S.—2. Whence, Canadian and Australian military coll.: a battalion, a battery, an aeroplane squadron, etc.: G.W. +. (Also U.S.)

outfit, the whole. The whole thing or collection of things: coll.: from ca. 1910.


[outparer. A spurious or ghost word. See O.E.D. at outparer and outputter.]

outrun the constable. See constable.


*outs, be (a). To quarrel; to be no longer friends: coll.: C. 19–20; ob.

outs, drink the three. To drink copiously: a coll. c.p.: C. 17. Two specific meanings: S. Ward, 1622, ‘Wit out of the head, Money out of the purse, Ale out of the pot’; T. Scott, 1624, ‘To drink by the dozen, by the yard, and by the bushell’. O.E.D.

outs, gentleman of (the) three. See gentleman of... (Baumann, 1887, has four outs: without wit, money, credit, or good friends.)

outs of, make no. To fail to understand; misunderstand: (somewhat low) coll.: C. 19–20; ob. Possibly influenced by, or a corruption of, make ore of, to undervalue; cf. S.E. make (a person) out, to understand him.
outside. An outside passenger: 1804 (O.E.D.): coll. till ca. 1890, then S.E.—2. The utmost: coll. from ca. 1890. B.E. Esp. in at the outside.

outside, preposition. More than, beyond: (low) coll.: from before 1887. Baumann cites novelist Greenwood, 'Tuppence outside their value'.

outside, at the. At the (ut)most: from ca. 1850. Rep. of number or price: e.g. 'In a few weeks, at the outside, you may expect to see ...'; The Literary Gazette, Jan., 1852. (O.E.D.) Ex outside, n., 2.


outside, get. See outside of, get.

outside edge, the. 'The limit': C. 20. Lyell, App. first recorded by Ian Hay in 'Pip', 1907. Orig. a skating variant of the limit. Also the outer edge (Collinson).

outside, Eliza or Liza! Get out of this!; a low c.p.: from ca. 1850; ob. Were defines it as 'drunk again, Eliza' and says that it is 'applied to intoxicated, reeling women'.

outside of. Except; beyond (the number of, the body of): coll.: orig. (—1889), U.S.; anglicised ca. 1906. E.g. 'Outside of the habitués, nobody was there.'

outside of, get. To eat or drink (something): from ca. 1890. Also be outside of: same period: ob. Cf. the U.S. sense, to understand.—2. (Of a woman) to cot with: low: from ca. 1870.

outside of a horse. On horseback: coll., mostly Australian: 1889, 'Rolf Boldrewood'.

outside the ropes. Ignorant (of a particular matter); being merely a spectator: 1861, Lever; 'Until I came to understand ... I was always "outside the ropes", O.E.D.


outsider. (See the first entry.)—2. One who fails to gain admission to the ring: the turf: coll.: from ca. 1860. Ex outsider, a non-favourite horse, a sense that, despite the O.E.D., may have been coll. at its inception (1887).—3. A person unfit to mix with good society: coll.: from ca. 1870.—4. A housekeeper: person: Glasgow (—1924). Freq. or in the lit. sense.

*outsiders. Nippers with semi-tubular jaws used in housebreaking: o. and j.: 1875 (O.E.D.).

outside. A person (gen. female): rather larger than the majority: from ca. 1890. Ex drapery j. The O.E.D. records it for 1894 as rather an out size and as S.E.; yet I believe that spelt as one word (C. 20) it is to be considered coll. Certainly such a phrase as an outside its thunderforms, punchers, hats, efforts, etc., is jocular coll. of C. 20.

outward-bounder. A ship outward-bound: nautical coll.: 1884, Clark Russell. O.E.D.

ouzel, pronounced and gen. spelt ooze. To obtain illicitly or schemingly: New Zealand soldiers': 1915; ob. Perhaps ex ooja + wangle.

Oval, the. The Kennington Oval Cricket Ground: coll. (—1887) >, by 1900, S.E. Baumann.

ovate. To greet with popular applause, with an ovation: journalistic coll.: 1864, Sala; The Saturday Review, May 3, 1890, 'Mr. Stanley ... was "ovated" at Dover.' O.E.D.

ovator. One who participates in a popular welcome (to another); journalistic coll.: 1870, The Evening Standard, Oct. 22. O.E.D. Like preceding, ex S.E. ovation.

oven. The female pudend: low: C. 18–20, ob. D'Urfey. Perhaps with reference to the C. 18–19 (extant in dial.) proverb, he (or she) that has been in the oven [as a hiding-place] know where to look for son, daughter, etc.—2. A large mouth: ca. 1780–1910. Grose, 1st ed. Ex S.E. oven-mouth, a wide mouth.

oven, in the same. In the same plait: low coll.: C. 19–20; ob.


over, be all. To make a great fuss of, esp. with carelessness: C. 20. (Of a monkey) 'He'll be all over you as soon as he gets to know you,' which indicates the semantics: The Humorist, July 28, 1893. (Lyell).—2. Hence, to be infatuated with: from ca. 1925.

over, do. To possess a woman: low coll.: C. 18–20; ob.

over, get. To get the better of: coll.: 1870, Hazlewood & Williams.

over, put it. See put it over.

over-and-over. An acrobatic revolution of oneself in the air, a complete turn (or more): acrobats' coll. (—1887). Baumann.

over at the knees. Weak in the knees: C. 19–20: stable coll.; in C. 20, S.E.


over-day tarts. The darkened and damaged appearance about the gills and fins of a herring more than 24 hours caught: fish trade (—1889). Ex the blood there extravasated and its resemblance to an overflowing jam tart.

over-eye. To watch (carefully): non-aristocratic coll.: C. 19–20; ob. Ware. Ex over eyes.

over shoes, over boots. Completely: coll.; late C. 16–early 19. Shakespeare, Breton, Welsted (1726), Scott. Cf. the S.E. over head and ears. (Apperson.)

over the air. By wireless: (mostly nautical) coll. o. from ca. 1926. Bowen.


over the bags. See bags, mount the—over the bender. See bender—over the boman(stick).—over the chest. See chest—over the coals, call over the. See coals.

over the door, put. To turn (someone) out into the street: coll.: C. 18–mid-19. Cf. give the key of the street, q.v.


over the gun. See gun, over the.


over the left (shoulder). See left.

over the letter. (Of a partridge or a pheasant) shot before the season begins: poachers' o. (—1909) Ware.

over the lid; over the plonk. Variants (1917–18) of top, over the, q.v.


over the stile. (Sent) for trial: rhyming a. (—1859). H., 1st ed.

over the top. See top, over the.
over the top, go. To be married, to marry: jocular: from 1919. Ex military sense.

"over the water. In King's Bench Prison: London c.: ca. 1820-50. 'Jon Bee.' The reference is to the 'other' side of the Thames.

over there. See out there.

overbroke. Over much, too heavily; esp. bet overbroke, applied to a bookmaker: the turf: C. 20. overdraw the badge. See badge. (v.t. + S.E. overdraw one's bank.)

overflow and plunder. A method of fleecing the audience by sending them from dearer to yet dearer seats: theatrical: ca. 1880-1900. Barrère & Leland.

overheat one's flues. To get drunk: low, mostly Cockney (ca. 1887). Baumann.


overrun the constable. See constable, outrun or overrun.

overseen. Somewhat drunk: late C. 16-20: S.E. till C. 17, then coll. till ca. 1820, then dial. L'Estrange. Cf. overshot, overtaken, q.v.


overshot. (Very) drunk: C. 17-20; ob. Marriott, 1866 (O.E.D.); Lyell. Cf.: oversparked. Top-heavy; unsteady; drunk; nautical: 1890, Clark Russell; ob.

overtaken. Drunk: late C. 16-20: S.E. till C. 18, then coll. till ca. 1850, then dial. Hacket, 1839, 'I never spake with the man that saw him overtaken'; Congreve; Halliwell; Mrs. S. C. Hall.

Ex overtaken in or with drink.

overtosy box. A cupboard-like box for books: Winchester College: from ca. 1880.

overw. For Anglo-Indian vv. in -ow, see puckerow (which note can be supplemented by reference to Yule & Burnell at bunow and luggow). C. 19-20.


owl, v.i. To smuggle: coll.: ca. 1735-1820. Ex ovel, owling, q.v.—2. To sit up at night: from the 1800's: ob.

[owl, catch the. This country trick, mentioned by Grose, 1st ed., belongs to folklore.]

owl (or by owls, live too close to the, or near a, wood to be frightened by an. To be not easily frightened: C. 18-early 19 as proverbial coll., then dial. Swift, however, has 'Do you think I was born in a wood to be afraid of an owl?'

owl, take the. To become angry: coll.: late C. 18-mid-19. F. & H.

owl(s) on an ivy-bush, like an. See ivy-bush.

owl's night walk. To fear arrest: coll.: ca. 1650-1700. Howell. (Apperson.)

owler. A person, a vessel, engaged in smuggling sheep or wool from England to France: late C. 17-early 19: orig. c. or s., though the O.E.D. considers it to have always been S.E. (B.E., Grose). Ex ob. S.E. owl, owl: Cf.:


own, on its or one's. On its or one's own account, responsibility, resources, merits: from ca. 1895:

—2. Hence, by oneself; alone; independently: C. 20 coll.—3. on (or out on) one's own. See out on one's own.

own back, get one's. See get one's own back.— own man, feel one's. See feel one's own man.

own up. To confess; admit (v.t. with to): coll.: 1880, Trollope, 'If you own up in a genial sort of way, the House will forgive anything.'

owned, be. To make many converts: clerical: ca. 1853-75. Conybeare. Cf. owld.


owner's man. A captain or officer protecting the owner's interest by cheese-paring; an officer related to the owners: nautical coll.: late C. 19-20. Bowen.


owny-o, on one's. "On one's own" (q.v.); lonely: C. 20. Jocular -o and endeear -y.

owl. (Dial. form of ough, n., q.v.—) Two: back s. (ca. 1890). H., 1st ed.

owtherquishery. A mistaken form of outwretchedness: C. 18-20: O.E.D.

ox has (hath) trod on his foot, the black. He knows what poverty, misfortune, ill-health, old age, etc., is: proverbial: from ca. 1630: coll. till ca. 1760, then S.E.; ob. Tussor, Ray, Leigh Hunt.

ox-hide, oxhide. Since 1858 has been catastrophically explained as a measure of land: by confusion with hide (skin and measure). O.E.D.

ox-house to bed, go through the. To be cuckolded: late C. 17-early 19: semi-proverbal coll. B.E., Grose. Obviously because he has horns.


Oxford,—send verdingales (farthingales) to Broadgates at or in. A c.p. of ca. 1650-1670 (later in dial.) in reference to farthingales so big that their wearers could not enter an ordinary door except sideways. Heywood (1652), Fuller, Grose's Provincial Glossary. Apperson.

Oxford bleach. From ca. 1925 (coll.), as in Denis Brown in The Spectator, Jan. 5, 1934, where he speaks of an exaggerated form of the Oxford or Public School accent. 'Surely it is permissible to suggest what [outsiders] rudely call the Oxford Bleat by writing down the directions given me the other day as "past a white horse, between the water-tah and the pa station".'

Oxford bags. See bags.

Oxford Blues, the. The Oxbridge Royal Horse Guards: late C. 17-20: military. Ex the colour of their facings, introduced in 1990.

Oxford 'er'. At Oxford, it began late in 1875 and came from Rugby School (O.E.D. Sup.). By this process, the original word was changed and gener-bridged; then -er is added. Thus, memorial > memmugger, the Radcliffe Camera > the Radder (for the is prefixed where the original has the). Occ. the word is pluralised, where the original ends in -s: as in Adders, Addison's Walk, Juggers, Jesus College. This -er has got itself into gen. upper-middle class s. See esp. Stang, revised ed. (1935), pp. 206–9.

[Oxford glove. App. a very loose-fitting glove: C. 17; coll. Nares, quoting Dekker. Oxford Glove may, however, have been j. of now obscure meaning.]

Oxford scholar. Five shillings (piece or sum): New Zealanders' rhyming s. on dollar: C. 20. Also from ca. 1870, in the S.W. of England; now ob. Cf. shirt collar (Everyman, March 29, 1931.)

*oxy. Nothing: c.: from ca. 1830. James Curtis, The Gift Kid, 1936. Suggested by the popularity of Oxz, the beef-extract; prob. by rhyming s. on the letter o regarded as the cypher 0.

oyl. See oil (of barley, hazel, etc., etc.).

oyez. Confused by Skene (late C. 16–early 17) with oylas (L. huesmus). O.E.D.


Profit, advantage: jocular: ca. 1895–1915. Ex a prophet's (profit) and an oyster's beard.—4. (Gen. in pl.) One of the holes in a cooked duck's back: domestic: late C. 19–20.

oyster, a choking or stopping. A reply that silences: coll.: ca. 1525–1600. Skelton (stopping): Udal (the same); J. Heywood, 1546 (choaking).

oyster, as like as an apple to an. Very different: coll.: ca. 1530–1680. More, 1532, 'Hys similitude ... is no more lyke then an apple to an oyster'; L'Estrange, 1667. In 1732, Thomas Fuller has the form, as like as an apple to a lobster. Apperson.

oyster. old. See old oyster.


oyster part. A part in which one speaks but a sentence: theatrical coll. (& 1923). Manchon.

oysteries. 'Panie in reference to oysters creating typhoid fever': middle classes: ca. 1900–8. Ware. Ex oysters + hysteria.

oysters, drink to one's. To fare accordingly (esp., badly): coll.: mid-C. 15–early 16. J. Paston, 1472, 'If I had not delt rght corteyly ... I had drank to myn oysters.' O.E.D.

ozimus, ozymus. A mid-C. 16–mid-18 error for osmand, iron imported from Sweden. E.g. in Edward VI's Journal and Hume's History. O.E.D.

p- (or P-) maker. The male, the female pudend: low: mid-C. 19–20. See poo.
p.o.q. or P.O.Q. Push (or piss) off quickly military coll.: 1910; ob. F. & Gibbons After p.d.q.

"p.p. or P.P. A pickpocket: c. (—1887). Baumann.—2. Play or pay, i.e. go on with the arrangement or forfeit the money; esp., the money must be paid whether the horse runs or not: mostly the turf: from ca. 1860; slightly ob. H., 3rd ed.


P.R., the. See P.G.
p's and q's (or P's and Q's), learn one's. To learn one's letters: coll.; 1820, Combe. Ob. Prob. ex children's difficulty in distinguishing p and q, both having tails. O.E.D. Cf.:
p's and q's (or P's and Q's), mind one's. To be careful, exact, prudent in behaviour: coll.: 1779, Mrs. H. Cowley, 'You must mind your P's and Q's with him, I can tell you' (O.E.D.). Also p's and q's: occ. (and ob.) be on (or in) one's p's and q's. Perhaps influenced by p and q; perhaps cognate with preceding entry; perhaps, as F. & H. suggest, ex 'the old custom of alehouse tally, marking
"p" for pint and "q" for quart, care being necessary to avoid over- or under-charge."—2. Grose, 2nd ed., shows that ca. 1786—1830, there was the more refined sense, "to be attentive to the main chance."


P.V. A variant of Parr, q.v.; extremely ob.

P.W. Abney. A high, feminine hat appearing in 1800, lower classes, late 1800-7. Ex 'Pax Abney of Wales Abney Cemetery,' the hat being worn with 'three black, upright ostrich feathers, set up at the side ... in the fashion of the Prince of Wales's crest feathers' (Ware).

P.Y.C. or P.Y.C. A pale yellow candle: the Baltic Coffee-House, London (—1909); † by 1930. Ex 'this establishment persistently rejecting gas' (Ware).

P.Z.Z. Tactical exercises: naval: from ca. 1920. Bowen, 'From the two code flags hoisted as an order.'


pace, alderman. A slow, dignified gait: coll.: from ca. 1860: ob. Melbancko, 1863; Cotgrave; 1865, S. Wesley the Elder, 'And struts ... as goodly as any alderman'; Grose. Apperson.

pace, go the, is E.'s, as are the following in F. & H.:—pack, a harlot; pack off and send packing; pad-clinking (see separate entry); paddle, to caress; padd-y-wack; Paddy's watch; padlock; pagaan, a harlot; pair, a flight of steps; pale, leap the; palliard (except as = a straw-sleeping vagabond); palm, n. and v., in birdberry and cardsharping terms; palm, bear the; palsy; pan (or frying-pan), savour of the; Pancake Tuesday; panel, parcel, pernel; panjandrum and the Grande or Great P.; pansy-man; Panthaguer; pant; pate, a cap; pant, paph, nipple, breast, and broad sauce; pap-head and pap-mouth; paper, money in paper not coin; paper-building; paper-stainer, a clerk; Papian; papoose; pair, at par; parader; paradise (euphemistic S.E.); paradise, fool's; parcel-bawd; parrot, n. and v., parrot-lawyer, and parrot(e); parts below, more dear, of shame, and carnal or other parts; partlet; partner, sleeping; passage at arms; part bellering, hoping, etc.; past complaining (due to a mis-apprehension of Grove's entry at content); past master; pasterns; past, adj. and adv.; pathetic, n. Paul Fry; Paul's walkers; paunchy, v., and paunch-guts; pay home; pay old scores—one in his own coin—the last debt to nature;eacher; peacock, to display, and peacocky; peck(ing); peck, a young girl, etc. peck; creamy, cry (cf. the classical pronunciation: Peckon = I have Spindles); peck, to pitch, throw; peculiar, a wife; peculiar river; ped, a basket; pedescript; Sir Peeler; peep, speak weakly or shrilly; Peep O' Day Boy; peg, a leg or foot; peg, a step or degree, hence hoist a peg high and take down a peg; peg, a text, an excuse; peg (at cooks): Pegasus's neck, break; peg(-)-lips; pell-mell; pelt, hurry, rage, a miser; pelt, to hurry; peller, a miser, a pistol; pelting angry, peltingly; pell, garments; pen, kenight of the; Penniless Bench and Pierce Penniless; penny (money); a pretty penny; penny, at first; penny, turn a and an honest; penny in the forehead; penny plain and twopenny coloured; penny wise (and) pound foolish; penny-father, -post, -wedding; pennyworth, a good p., cast pennyworths; pensioner (Cambridge University); pepper, v., peppered, pepperer, peppering, peppery; pepper-hose, cups; perform, periodicity-rag; perished; periwinkle, a wig; perk up, to adorn; perkin; perking, adj.; perticlicky; perspire, v., to melt away; pert; pestle, a log, and pestle-head; pet; a truant, a darling; petard, hoist with a or one's own; Peter-see-me; Petronel Flash; Sir; all petticast terms, except four; petitgeois, etc.; petty, n., pew, as in C. 17 literature: plots; phallic phat, faro, phaeus, pharse, phuse, etc.; phlander, etc.; Phlistia;Philistine; phoenix; nest; pi or pie in printing; picaroon; piccadilly;—pick up; to shoot, eat mincingly, pilfer; pick a bone; pick and choose; pick a quarrel; pick at; pick fault, holes; pick off; pick-purse; pickthaink; think the brains of; pick back; pick a petty thief; pickle, rod in; pickled; herring, a buffet; pickstone; picktoose; leisurely; Pickwick; picture-hat; pill, etc., to trifl, etc.; piddler, a triller, and piddling, trilling, paltry; pie, magpie, a gosip; pie, have a finger in the; pies, in spite of the; piece of flesh or goods, a woman; pieces, money; pig, a person; pig-eyed, -faced, -headed; pig together; piggery; piggish; pig long for; pig for a hog, mistake a; pig is proffered ... when a pig's tail provokes; child's pig, father's bacon; pigs (or hogs) to market, take one's; pigeon-breasted, -hearted, -livered, -toed; pigeon-pair; pigeon-wing; pigeon's milk; pigeond(e)y; pike, give the; pikes, pass the; Pilaetvoice; pile, a large sum of money; pilgarlic, an old person; pill, gild the; pill and poll; pill-monger; pillicoock, an endearment; pillory; piump, n. and v.,—but see at pimp, n.; pin, a trille; pin oneself on, pin faith to, be pinned to; pinch, a dingle; pinch at a, and come to the, pinch, pinch, to reduce; pinch at, to criticize; pinchbeck; pinched to the bone; pinch, a beauty, a model, etc., a hunting coat; pinch, to pireeke, make elaborately; pinnace (of women); pioneer of nature; pip (on dice or playing-cards); pipe another dance; pipes, the lungs, bagpipes; pipe-merry; pipe-(-)elay; routine; piping hot; pirate (literary, sexual), omnibus; pickery-pashery; the pia provers; pish-burn, stained with urine; piss-bowl; pot, -prophet; pissing-post and -dale; pissing-clout; pit, a hole, even as in B.E.; perhaps knight of the pit; pit-hole; pit of darkness; pit-a-cat; pit-choo; pitch on; pitcher proverbs; pitcher-man; pitchfork, a tunnifying fork, also to thrust (into a position); pitter-patter; pitable; platebo; placket as shift, petticoat or petticoat-slit; placket-racket; plane (political); plate; money; platter-face and -faced; plausible; all play terms (except the few at play, later); pleasure in all sexual terms except two; pledge, a baby; plough, sexual v.; plough proverbs; ploughshare (sexual); pluck, to reject at an examination, to deflower; pluck-penny; plum, a good thing; plum-possidge as term of contempt; plum-tree; plumb, adj.-adv.
PACKETS!

In Milton's 'Plumb down he falls'; plump, fat; plump, political v.; plump, adv.; plumper (beautifying and political); plump-pate; poach and poacher-court; pocket (resources); pocket, adj.; pocket, v.; be in—out of—put one's hand in one's—pocket; carry or have in one's pocket; pick pocket and to pick pockets; pocket-borough, -piece, -pistol; pocket an affront, one's horns, pride, etc.; carry one's passions in one's pocket; pocketed: poem, fig.; poacher, all point phrases except those noticed later; points, beauties; nine points of the law; poke, a bag or pocket; poke about—face—nose; pokierish; poke; polecat; poll-parrot; pollard; poit; poltroon; pommel; pony; pond, (etymology: S.E.)-pony; pond, adj.; poop, to cheat; all pop terms not given later; pope-holy, be or play; popinjay; poplet; pork, a pig-headed person; porker, a (young) pig; portable, portage; portal to the bower of bliss; porter and porter's knot; portionist; portmanteau-word; pose and poser; possess (a woman); post, employment; post, to reject, to publish, raise to the rank of post-captain; pillar to post; deaf as a— kiss the—run the head against a—talk—post; postman; postmaster; pot, a chamber-pot, the female pudend; such pot terms as are not defined later; pot-hocks and hangers; pothean; potion and potomacian; potter, potteer, pottering; pond, to pocket; pound, a prison; pound, to hammer, to move noisily, and the hunting sense; pow—powder, fig.; prancer, a dancer; prank; prat, a trick; prat-face, pratting, prattling, prattle-basket and -box, pratler, prattle-prattle; pray—pray fashion; preach, fig. v.; precision; presbyter, presbyterian, present, a baby; pretty, as ironic adj. and as = rather; priap, price, v.; prick, a skewer; prickled, sore; prickers, cavalry; prickledom; pride, proud (sexual senses), priest; be one's priest; priest's niece; prig, a superior person; prim, a wanton; prime, adj. and v.; prime-cock-boy; princoke or -cox; princod, a pin-cushion; print, in—out of—quite in—Pris- cian's head, break; private; private-stitch (tailors'); privy, n.; privy-hole; proboscis, of the human nose; procession; at the head of the procession; profession, the (see, however note at pro, 2); profusion, etc., except as c. or promoter; pro- mption, on or approval or trial; profuse, the best able at Magdalene College, Oxford: property of one, make; proflig,-l! an academical toast; protection; under; proud (sexually); (except for one sense) prowler, prowlsry, prowling; Pry and Paul Pry Pry, Pack, the devil; puck-flat or -foist; pudder, n. and v. (also dial.); puddling, good luck, profit; pudding-head(ed), -hearted, -sleeves; in puddling time; the puddling proving; puddling, puddle to muddy; pudding, n. and adj. (menal); puff up; puffed; puffer; puke; puling; pull, a drink, an advantage, an attempt at, rowing exercise; pull, v. (cricket, rowing, racing); pull, long (over-measure on drink); all such pull phrases as are not defined later; puller-on; pulpit as a euphemism; pulse, feel one's; pummel, -er, -ing; pump, n. and v. (artful questioning), make breathless; pumps, dancing-shoes; pun; punch, punchiness, punchy (of stocky build); punch-blows; puncheon; puncheon; pummelette; pumper (in Rugby football); punt, n. and adj. (of men) punt, puppy, puppy-headed, puppyish; purchase (plunder), live on p., get in p.; Puritan; punt, a kind of liquor; purse, a prize, the scrotum; all purse proverbs; all pure phrases not recorded later; pursive, purvey; push, enterprise; push, energy; push, put to the; at push of pike; puss, a hare, a woman; puss-gentleman, an effeminate; put, n., in Stock Exchange sense; all put phrases not recorded later; putage, formation; putter-on; puzzle, puzzle-headed, puzzledom, puzzlement.

Dial. are: pack, familiar, intimate; pack, eat the; pack, spend the; paler, palke, ped-belly; peller, a rage; pen, parchment or parchment paper; the; peatman; pitchpole and turn a pack-pig, to turn a somersault; pod; pooker (at Newcastle); poor mouth, make a; porridge, cook the; potato-boggle; poult, i.e. poult, a young girl; preze; prial; priag, to huddle, puzzle; (of a person) pejorative n. and adj.; pulling time.

pacer. Anything (esp. a horse) that goes at a great pace: coll. (— 1890). Century Dict.

paces, show one's. To display one's ability: coll. : from ca. 1870. Ex horses.


pack, go to the. To go to pieces (fig.); lose a leading position: s. > coll. : New Zealand: C. 20. Perhaps ex a trained or a domestic animal going wild, or ex a dog falling back into the pack. Perhaps cf.:

pack, send to the. 'To rellegate to obsequi:ery,' C. J. Dennis; Australian (—1916).

pack one's hand. See pack up.

pack the game in. To desist; esp. abandon a way of life: lower classes: C. 20. Philip Allingham, Cheapsack, 1834. Cf. pack up.

pack-thread, talk. To speak lawfully in seemly terms: coll. : late C. 18-20; very ob. Grose, 2nd ed. (In North Country dial., merely to talk non-

sense.) Ex packing-thread, used for securing parcels. Cf. wrapped-up, q.v.

pack up; occ. pack one's hand; coll., military (1916) , by 1920, gen. To retire; stop working or trying; to die. Prob. ex pack (up) one's kit-(bag).

F. & Gibbons. Opp. carry on, q.v.


2. (A large) sum of money lost or won in betting or speculating: from mid 1920's. (O.E.D. Sup.)—


Packet of Fars or Woodcines, the. 'The famous five-funnelled Russian cruiser Aeskold. (Also the Floating Skeleton) : naval: ca. 1914-20. Bowen: B. & P.


packets! An expression of incredulity: mid-

C. 19-20; very ob. H., 3rd ed. Ex packet, 1, q.v.
**PADDINGTON**

paddock. Erroneous for *paktong*, Chinese nickel-silver; from 1839. O.E.D.

packing. Food: low (-1909); hence, in G.W., rations. Ware: F. & Gibbons. Cf. S.E. stuff oneself with food and inside lining, q.v.


ware. Ex the preceding.


packstaff. See pikestaff.

Pad. A not very gen. abbr. (-1887) of Paddy, q.v. Baumann.


*pad*, v. To travel on foot as a vagrant: C.17-20: c. until C.19, then mainly dial. Rowlands, 1010, *'O Ben mort wilt thou pad with me?* Ex S.E. *pad*, to walk (1553, O.E.D.). Prob. cf. the n., sense 1. See also *pad the hoof*.—2. To rob on foot or on the highway: ca. 1635-1840: orig., prob. c.; never better than low s. Ford, 1638, *One can . . . cunt, and pick a pocket, Pad for a cloak or hat*. Cf. *pad, go out upon the*, q.v.—3. V.i., to put handkerchiefs, etc., in one's trouser-seat before being caned: Public Schools’ coll. C. 20.


*pad, go out upon the*. To (go out to) rob on the highway: c. late C.17-mid 19. B.E., who notes the variant *go-a-paddar*; Grose. See *pad*, n., 1.


*pad, on or upon the*. (Engaged in robbery) on the highway: c.: late C.17-early 19; prob. low s. after ca. 1790. L’Esprance.—2. Hence, on tramp: C.19-20, though not with certainty recorded before 1851, Mayhew. Both senses ex *pad*, n., 1; the former, gen. upon; the latter, on.


*pad, sit*. See —*pad, stand*. To beg by the wayside: c. 1858, H.: 1862, Mayhew; ob. Properly, while remaining stationary—and standing. Obviously *sit pad* is to beg from a sitting position; recorded in 1851, likewise in Mayhew.

In both, the beggar gen. has a piece of paper inscribed ‘I’m starving—blind—etc.’ Also *stand Paddy*.

*pad, upon the*. See *pad, on the*.


*pad-clinking*. *Hobnobbing with footpads*, says F. & H., defining it as: Kingsley’s note to the sole record, 1865, says ‘Alluding to the clinking of their spurs’ (O.E.D.).

*pad-horse*. An easy-paced horse: from ca. 1630; ob. Coll. quickly > S.E. Jonson.


*pad it*. To tramp along, esp. as a vagrant: late C.18–20: s. > ca. 1840, low coll. > ca. 1800, S.E.


*pad round*. To pay excessive attention to a customer; tailors’ coll. from ca. 1870. Ex the S.E. *pad*, (of animals) to walk, etc., *with steady dull-sounding steps* (O.E.D.).


*pad the wall*. To sit on a comfortable leather seat against a wall, esp. in a restaurant or a bar: coll. 1936, James Curtis, *The Gift Kid*.


*padar*, in Wotton, is an unsolved error admitted by Johnson and others. O.E.D."

*padda*. See *pad*, n.—*paddan crib* or *ken*. See *padding-crib*.


*paddars*. Feet; shoes or boots: low: from ca. 1825; ob. Egan, *Finish to Tom and Jerry*, 1828, *My paddars, my stampers, my bucketers, otherwise my boots*.


*paddy*. Robbery on the highway: c.: ca. 1670–1840. B.E. (see *pad, go . . .*).—2. Short, light articles in the magazines: journalistic coll. (–1887): ob. Baumann notes that the term is used ‘in opposition to the serial stories’. (The ordinary, the S.E. sense of padding is: fill-up matter within a story or article.—3. See ‘Miscellanea’ in Addenda.


*padding-crib*. See —*paddan crib*. And *k*. A lodging-house for the underworld, esp. for vagrants: c.: from ca. 1835; ob. Brandon (both); Mayhew, 1851 (*ken*); H., 1st ed. (both). Ex *pad*, v., 1, and n., 5. Brandon distinguishes
thus: g.-c., a boy’s lodging-house; g.-k., a tramp’s lodging-house; a distinction that seems to have been lost as early as the 1850’s.

*Paddington fair (day); or P. Fair-(day). A hanging (day): e. c. late C. 17–early 19. Tyburn was in the parish of Paddington. Ex ‘a rural Fair at the Village of that Name, near that Place’ (Tyburn), B.E. Cf.:”

“Paddington friar, dances the. To be hanged: e. c. ca. 1780–1830, Grose, 1785. Cf.:

“Paddington spectacles. The cap drawn over a criminal’s eyes at his hanging: either c. or low a. c. early C. 19. Cf. the preceding pair of entries.

paddist. A professional highwayman: ca. 1670–1800: Scots s.>, in C. 18, coll. O.E.D.
paddle one’s own canoe. See canoe, paddle . . . Perhaps one might mention the French-teachers’ ‘gag’: pas d’elles yeux Rhône que nous. (Such tricks should be collected: cf. γ β φ, to eat a bit of pie) paddle. A paddle-steamer: coll.: from ca. 1890. (O.E.D.)

Paddy. A nickname (cf. Pat, q.v.) for an Irishman: coll.: 1780, A. Young, ‘Paddies were swimming their horses in the sea to cure the mange,’ O.E.D. Ex the very common Irish name, Patrick, of which Paddy is the Irish diminutive. Also Paddylander, Paddywhacker, q.v. Cf.:

“Paddy stand. See pad, sit.
Paddy Land or Paddyland. Ireland. Hence, Paddylander, an Irishman. Coll.: from ca. 1820.
paddy over, come (gen. the). To bambooole, ‘kid’, humbug: from ca. 1820; slightly ob. Ex Paddy, q.v., and the Irishman’s reputation for blarney.
Paddy Quick. A stick.—2. Thick. Both rhyming s. (1859); the latter, ob. H., 1st ed.
paddy-row. ‘More jackets off than blows struck, where sticks supply the place of fists,’ Bee: coll.: from ca. 1820; ob.
paddy wax or wax. A variant (1923) of paddy-wax, q.v. Manchon.
Paddy Wester; occ. paddlywester. A bogus seaman carrying a dead man’s discharge-papers; a very incompetent or dissolute seaman: nautical: from ca. 1890. Bowen, ‘After a notorious board-

‘paid’ to, put. An occ. variant of purse, q.v. (B. & P.) paid. Tiptey: ca. 1635–70. Shirley, The Royal Master, 1638. (O.E.D.) ‘paid’ to, put. ‘To regard a matter as finished, as over and done with’: S.E. of an account, coll. in such fig. connexions as ‘Oh, don’t worry; you can put paid to any friendship that ever existed between him and me; I’ve found out the sort of fellow he really is!’ (Lyell); late C. 19–20.
pain l., you give me a. The o.p. form of: pain in the neck, give one a. To bore intensely; to irritate: C. 20.

paint. Money: esp. among house-painters (-1866); ob. Cf. brads, sugar, q.q.v.—2: Jam. military: from the 1890's. F. & Gibbons. Ex its inferior quality.


paint-brush baronet. An ennobled artist: Society coll.: 1885, The Reference, June 28; extremely ob. (Ware.) Cf. gallipot baronet, q.v.

paint one's eye for him (her, etc.). To give him a black eye: low (—1887). Baumann.

paint the town red. See red, paint the town.

painted edge. A coat-edge in, or of, coloured cloth: tailors': C. 20. E.g. in The Tailor and Cutter, Nov. 29, 1928.


painter. A workman that scorches his job: tailors': C. 20.

painter stainer. (Gen. pl.) An artist: Society; latter half of 1883. Ex the Lord Mayor's reference, at the Royal Academy banquet, to the Painter Stainers' Company. Ware.

painter, cut one's. To prevent a person's doing harm: late C. 17-mid-18 nautical s. B.E.—2. Hence, to send a person away: nautical s. (—1783). Grose.—3. (Of oneself) cut one's or the painter, to depart unceremoniously: nautical (—1867). Smyth.—4. Hence, to sever one's connexion: gen. coll. (—1888), ca. 1905. S.E. (The painter being the rope that holds the boat fast to the ship, Grose.) Occ. slip the painter, in senses 3, 4: from ca. 1805.

painter, let go the. To deliver a (heavy) punch: boxers' (—1887); ob. Baumann. Ex nautical j. Cf. pain one's eye, q.v.

painter, what pleases the. A late C. 17-mid-18 e.p. in the world of art and literature: "When any reproduction in the Productions of his or any Art is unaccountable, and so is to be resolvd purely into the good Pleasure of the Artist," B.E.

Painter Pug. Wm. Hogarth (1697-1764), the artist. Dawson. (An iminal sobriquet was the Pensioned Dawber.)

painting, vbl.n. See paint a job.

pair of. Pair is coll. (and often humorous) when used of 'the two bodily members themselves, as "a pair of ears, lips, jaws, arms, hands, heels, legs, wings", etc', O.E.D.: late C. 14-20.

pair of (l) compasses. Human legs: London: ca. 1890-1910. Ware. The term arose when the male leg began to be narrowly encased.

pair of (l) drums. See drums, pair o'. *pair of (l) kicks. Boots; shoes; tramps' e. (—1835).

pair of hands. A man: coll.: from ca. 1630. O.E.D.

pair of heels. See clean pair of heels, show a.


pair of shears. See shears.

pair of shoes, a different or another. A different matter: coll.: 1859. Thackeray; 1865, Dickens. Both have another. O.E.D.

pair of spectacles. See spectacles.

pair of (l) subs. See subs, pair o'.

pair of wheels. A two-wheeled vehicle: coll.: from ca. 1830. Cockeram. O.E.D.


pair off with. To marry: coll.: 1885, Miss Braddon in Sir Jasper. Ex S.E. sense, to go apart, or off, in pairs. O.E.D.


pajamas. See pyjamas.


pakeha. A white man: a Maori word colloquially adopted in New Zealand ca. 1850. Perhaps ex a Maori word meaning a fairy; perhaps a Maori attempt at bæver, 'said to have been described by Dr. Johnson (though not in his dictionary), as a term of endearment amongst sailors'*, a theory app. supported by Morris. ( Pronounced as a misspelling, the a's being, as always in Maori, given the Continental value.)

pakka. See pukka.

*pak. An accomplice: o (-1788). Grose, 2nd ed. (chosen pella, pell being an occ. C. 18-19 form); Vaux, 1812, pail. In late C. 19, this sense > low s. —2. Earlier and from ca. 1800 the prevailing sense, a chum, a friend: 1861-82, the Hereford Diocesan Register, 'Whoare have you been all this day, pail?' (O.E.D.): s. >, ca. 1890, low coll. Ex Romany pal, brother, mate (cf. o. and Romany blo(u)wen), ex Turkish Gypsy, pral, plal, brother; ultimately related to Sanskrit bhratā, a brother (cf. L. frater). W., O.E.D., Borrow, and Smart & Crofton. (Cf. pally, q.v.) Hence:

c. pal, v.i. To associate (with); become another's 'pal' (q.v.): perhaps orig. c. certainly, at best, low s. (—1879) >, ca. 1905, (decreasingly low) coll. Often, esp. in C. 20, pal in with, pal up (to or with) in C. 19, occ. pal on. 'The Autobiography of a Thief', in Macmillan's Magazine, 1879, 'I palled in with some old hands at the game.'—2. (Gen. pall) to detect: o. 1851, Mayhew; ob. Perhaps ex pal, n., 1, or, more prob., ex the Romany preposition palal, palala, after, as in av palala, lit. to come after, i.e to follow, and dik palal, to look after, i.e. to watch (Smart & Crofton): cf. be after a person, to pursue him, desire strongly to find or catch.


*palmarie, v.i. and t. To talk, speak: vagrants' c. (—1893); ob. P. H. Emerson, 'She used to
palerie thick [cast] to the slaves." A variant of Partioure, q.v., influenced by palaver, v.

palatic. Drunk: 1885, The Stage, 'Sandy told me he last saw him dreadfully palatic' — theatrical; very ob. I.e., paralytic (q.v.) corrupted.

palaver. A fussy, ostentatious person: Scots coll.: C. 19–20; ob. Gen. old palaver. Presumably ex—. Conversation or discussion, gen. id.—. C. 19–20) flattering or wheedling; 'jaw', q.v.: nautical s. >, ca. 1790, gen. coll.: 1748, Smollett, 'None of your palaver.' Ex S.E. (orig. trade and nautical) sense, a parley, a conference, esp. one with much talk, itself ex Portuguese palavra (cf. Sp. palabra), used by the Portuguese in parleying with the natives on the African coast. (Partly O.E.D.; see also Grose, P.) Cf. the v.—. Hence, business, concern: from middle 1890's. C. Hyne, 1899, 'It's not your palaver . . . or mine.' O.E.D. (Sup.)

palaver, v. To talk much, unnecessarily, or (in C. 19–20) plausibly or cajolingly: from ca. 1730: a, or coll. > in C. 19–20 definitely coll., latterly almost S.E. Ex the preceding: but until ca. 1770 unrecorded except as palavering.—2. Hence, to flatten; wheedle: from ca. 1780; ob. Grose.

palaver or palaver(ry). To ask one for (a thing). To ask one for something; beg it: tramps' c. (— 1859). H., 1st ed. Ex palaver, v., 2.

palaverer, occ. palaverist. One who palavers; one given to palavering: from ca. 1785 (ob.); coll. In C. 20 almost S.E. Ex palaver, v., 1. Cf.: palavering, vbln. and pprl. adj. Cupious or idle talk, very talkative; resp. 1733, 1764 (O.E.D.); a, or coll. until C. 19, then definitely coll.; in C. 20, almost S.E. Foote, 'He is a damned palavering fellow.' Ex palaver, v.

palayl. Incorrect for palayl, poultry: C. 14–16. O.E.D.

pal. Pale brandy: London coll. mid-C. 19–20; ob. Mayhew, 1861, 'A "drown of pale", as she called it, invigorated her.' [pale... These similes, e.g. pale as ashes, clay death, are S.E. Apperson.]


pall. See pall, n. 1, and v., 2.—6. To detect: e. or low s.: 1809, H. ; by 1900.—3. To stop, e.g. 'pall that', stop (doing) that, and 'pall there', silence !: nautical (— 1864); ob. H., 3rd ed., 1870. Ex pall, properly paus, an instrument used to stop the windlass. See pawl, the earlier, more gen. form.—4. To appeal; daunt (as in C. 14–17 S.E.): nautical (— 1864). Ibid. (Cf. palled.) Abbr. appal. or ex the nautical order case and pall. pallid. An † incorrect form of palled, a mattress. O.E.D.


palliard. A vagrant that lies on straw; but esp. 'he that goeth in a patched cloak', Awdeley: c. of ca. 1850–1830; ob. by ca. 1750.—2. In C. 17–

early 18, the seventh 'rank' of the underworld: born beggars affecting hideous sores. B.E. (Other senses, S.E.) Ex Fr. pailleir, itself ex paille, straw. (O.E.D.) Cf.:

palliasse. A harlot: low: C. 19–20; ob. Ex palliassa, a straw, i.e. cheap mattresses.

palliness. Comradeship; the being 'pals' (q.v.): from ca. 1890. Cf. palish, v., q.v. pallish. Friendly, 'cheerful; mostly school': 1892 (O.E.D.); ob. Ex pal, n., 2. Cf.
pally. Friendly; 'thick'; from 1895 or slightly earlier. Ex pal, n., 2. q.v. Cf. preceding.

[palm. See entry at pace, go the.] palm-acid or —oil. A caining on the hand: schoolboys: from ca. 1890; ob. palm-oil; a tribe. *palmier. A beggar that, under the pretence of collecting 'harp' halfpence, by palming steals copper coins from shopkeepers: c. (— 1864); † by 1920. H., 3rd ed. Contrast palming, q.v.—2. A shy fellow: Durham School: from ca. 1870; ob.

Palmer is concerned, Mr. A c.p. applied, ca. 1810—60, to a brier or a brieress. Vaux, 1812. Ex the S.E. palm-oil, a tribe. Contrast palm-acid and palmistry.

palming. The robbing of shops by pairs, the one bargaining, the other palming desirable articles: c. (— 1839); slightly ob. Brandon; H., 2nd ed. Contrast palmer, 1.


palore. See polore.

Pals, the. The four Service 'battalions of the Liverpool and Manchester Regiments, raised in 1914': military: G.W. (F. & Gibbons.)

palship. Friendship; being pals: 1896 (O.E.D.); ob. Ex pal, n., 2. Cf. palliness, q.v.

Fallock's Inn or inn. A poverty-striken place: ca. 1578–1610: coll. almost imm. > S.E. Grosvenor: 'Comming to Chenas, a blind village, in comparison of Athens a Pallockes Inne'. Presumably ex some wretched inn, the host one Pallock.

pam or Pam. The knife of clubs: 1885, Crowne; ob. Coll. Pope, 'Ev'n mighty Pam, that Kings and Queens o'erthrew.' Abbr. Fr. pamphile, a card-game and esp. this card, which, in trumping, ranks highest. W.; O.E.D.—2. A card-game rather like nap: from ca. 1690; ob. Coll. >, ca. 1780, S.E. Addison, in The Guardian, 1713, 'She quickly grows more fond of Pam than of her husband.'—3. Lord Palmerston (d. 1865) a nickname by 'telescopmg': 1854, Smoledy, 'It's very jolly to be on those terms with a man like Pam'; slightly ob. Also nicknamed Cupid, by the ladies; Pumice-Stone, by his political opponents.

Pamp, (as) may as old. Very comfortable; lower classes: (— 1870): ob. Baumann. Who was Pam? The name is prob. fanciful ex a pampered person.—2. (pamp or P.) A Pampero, i.e. a River Plate galé: nautical: late C. 19–20 Bowen.

pamp. A bed: c. E. 18. Hall. 1708.—2. Money: c. mid-C. 18—mid-19. Halliwell.—3. the, the workhouse, trampers': (— 1893). P. H. Emerson. The etymologies are extremely obscure, as are the connexions—if any. Perhaps all three are cognate with Romany pan(d), to 'shut, fasten, close, tie, bind, etc.,' Smart & Crofton; sense 1 may,


panel, be or go on the. To ‘place oneself under the care of a panel doctor’: coll. —1927. Collinson.

panel-crich-, den-, house. A brothel where theft is (deliberately) rife: c. (1860); orig. U.S. Bartlett, 1860 (panel-house, low s.). Whence the next two entries.

panel-dodge or -game. Theft in a panel-house: low s. > low coll.: resp. 1885, Burton, Thousand Nights; Century Dict., 1890. Ex panel-crib, etc., q.v.


*panem. See panam.
PANISER, FILL A WOMAN'S 604

PAPER

a skirt forming a protuberance behind': catastrophic: 1869. O.E.D.
pannier, fill a woman's. To render her pregnant: C. 17–18; low coll. Cottgrave.
pannikin, of one's. Crazy: Australian: 1910, A. H. Davis, On Our Selection; 1916, C. J. Dennis (O.E.D. Sup.).
pannikin into another shed, roll one's. To seek work with another employer: Australian coll. (— 1902); ob. Cf. the preceding entry.
panorama. A paramour: sol. : 1880, The Referee, Nov. 17. (Ware.)
pansy. A very effeminate youth; a homosexual: from ca. 1930. Cf. Nancy (boy). Also pansy-boy: from ca. 1930; The New Statesman and Nation, Sept. 15, 1934, concerning the Fascist meeting in Hyde Park on the 9th Sept., notes that there were, from the crowd, "shouts about "pansy-boys"":
*pant. See panto.
pants. Incorrect for pant- in pantacorne, pantagamy, pantograph, pantometer, pantamorphic, pantascopic, pantatype, mid-C. 18–20. O.E.D.
pantables, stand upon one's. To stand on dignity: coll. : ca. 1570–1760. G. Harvey, Cotton, Horace Walpole. Moreover, pantable is corrupt for pantofle, a slipper, a shoe. Other corruptions are pantacle, pantile, pantop, pantable, pantop(ple), pantophel, pantopt(ple), pantible. O.E.D.
pantechinon. A coll. abbr. of pantechinon van (furniture-removing): 1891. O.E.D.
pantener. pantoner. Frequent misreadings of 
*pantener, rascal, n. and adj. : C. 14–15. O.E.D.
—2. The human heart: from ca. 1720 certainly; pantable from late C. 17: low a., prob. orig. a., slightly older than a hint of ca. 1725, quoted in Mrs Pedestria; Grose, 2nd ed., 'Frequently pants in time of danger'.—3. See:
pantible. See pantables.
pantile(-)house, (-)shop. Ca. 1780–1830: a rapidly > coll. : resp. 1785, Grose; 1796, Grose (hence, 1790 or 1791). 'A Presbyterian, or other dissenting meeting house, frequently covered with pantiles, called also a cock pit', Grose, 1st ed.
pantiler. A Dissenter: coll. : app. ca. 1720–1890, but not recorded before 1843, according to F. & H., 1889 according to the O.E.D.; it occurs in H., 1880. Ex pantile, 1. —2. Hence, a religious prisoner: prison-staff s. : early C. 19. Mayhew, 1856, 'The officers ... used to designate the extraordinary religious convicts as "pantilers"'.
panto. A C. 20 coll. abbr. of pantomime. Ware. Oco. (— 1823: Manchon, pant.)
pantofle, pantoffle, pantolest. See pantables.
pantomime. A sol, frequent among even the semi-literate, for pantomime: C. 19–20.
panty. A prize-ring variant (— 1920; ob.) of bread-basket, q.v.: cf. meat-safe, W. W.
pants, got the. See got the pants.
p*panum. See pannam.
p*mus. A burglary: c. : (—1577); 1719.
*Ducange Anglicus.' A perversion of panny, 3.
pap. Paper; esp. paper money: c. : 1877, Horeley, Jottings from Jail, 'A lucky touch for half-a-century'—£50—in pap'. Ex paper influenced by S.E. pap: or the other way about. (—F. & H.'s 'euphemisms is a special application of S.E.)
pap. (e.g. his) mouth is full of. A c. applied to one still childish: late C. 18–early 19. Grose, 2nd ed. Ex pap, babies' food. Cf. the C. 18 proverb, boil not the pap before the child be born.
pap with a hatchet, give. To punish as if one were doing a kindness or conferring a benefit: ca. 1589–1710; ob. by 1650. Coll. Lyly or Nashe, 1590; G. Harvey, 1880; D'Urfe, 1719. (O.E.D.) Halliwell's 'to do any kind action in an unkind manner' perhaps misses the irony.
papa; (C. 18) pappa. Father: from ca. 1680; S.E. until ca. 1780; then a childish coll.; since ca. 1880, ob. except when jocular. Ex Gr. παπας, v.q. See also dad, daddy.
paper, v.t. To fill (a theatre, etc.) by means of free passes: before 1879. Webster, Supplement, 1879. Ex paper, n., 2. Cf. paperary, q.v.
paper, reading the. The excuse given for taking a nap: o.c.: from ca. 1880.
paper-fake. A 'dodge' or 'lay' with paper, e.g. selling ballads: Cockney: ca. 1850–80. Mayhew.
—2. Ono who, pretending to be the agent of a paper-mill, collects rags free and then sells them: o. (—1839); ob. Brandon.
paper-man. An officer 'who, being employed on the staff', is 'not available for regimental duty'. The Standard, Oct. 24, 1892; prob. it was used some few years earlier: military coll.: ob.
paper medal. See medal, a putty.
paper-mill, the. The record office of the Court of Queen's Bench: legal: ca. 1840–1900.
paper-minister. A minister that reads his sermons: Scots coll.: 1854, H. Miller. O.E.D. The E.D.D. records, at 1828, paper-ministry, 'a ministry of preachers who read their sermons'.
paper-stainer. A clerk: coll.: mid-C. 19–20; ob. (As author, S.E.)
*papers, get one's or, more gen., the. See get the papers.
papery. Occupied by persons with free passes: 1885, The Referee, Nov. 8, 'The stalls were partly papery, and partly empty.' Ex paper, n., 2.
papessent. Incorrect for papassent: Arbuthnot, 1731; 'Johnson' and later dictionaries. O.E.D.
*naplur or paper. See poplur.
papphie. A C. 15 erroneous form of † pap, to paint (the face) with cosmetic. O.E.D.
par. Abbr. paragraph, esp. of news; journalistic coll.: 1879, W. Black (O.E.D.); Ware, however, dates par-leader (a short leading article in one paragraph) at 1875. 'Pink Pars for Pale People' has long been a feature of Books of To-Day. Cf. para, a more variant of pa.
par-banging. 'Tramping, seeking for work': urban lower classes' (—1909). Ware. Le. bänging the pawel.
par-leader. See par.
pas. Abbr. paragraph, esp. as part of a book, an article, etc.; book world: C. 20. While par, q.v., is used mainly by printers and journalists, para is used mainly by authors; some publishers prefer par, some para.
paradice. A C. 16 incorrect form of parricide. O.E.D.
parade, burn the. See burn the parade.
paradise. The gallery of a theatre: 1864; always felt to be French: ob. by 1910, † by 1930. H., 3rd ed. Fr. paradis. Cf. the cognate the gods and contrast the Fr. poulailler.—2. A grove of trees outside St. John's College at: Oxford: from ca. 1860; ob. (Its Winchester 'notional' sense, a small garden, is perhaps rather † than eligible.)
paradise, get or have a penn'orth of. To get, have, take a drink, esp. of gin: low: ca. 1860–1915.
paralytic fit or stroke. A badly fitting garment: tailors': from ca. 1870; slightly ob. By a pun on that affliction. Cf. give fits.
paramedica; paramedogistic. Incorrect for paromedogistica; paramedogotic: C. 17–18. O.E.D.—
paramonasia. Incorrect for paranomonasia: C. 17–18. O.E.D.
parapet Joe. Any of the numerous German machine-gunners whose pleasure it was to 'play a tune' along the parapet, pom-tiddley-am-pom pom-pom being the usual burst: Australian soldiers'; 1916–18.
paraphalanx, paraphonalia. For paraphernalia: C. 17–18. O.E.D.
parasol. A monoplane that, with wings 'raised above the fuselage and over the pilot's head', gave 'a clear view of the ground': Air Force coll.: 1915–18. F. & Gibbons.
parsel-finder. One who, for lost packets, goes to the pawnbrokers: pawnbrokers' coll. (—1887). Baumann.
parenthesis, have one's nose in. To have it pulled: ca. 1786–1850. Grose, 2nd ed. Hence, parenthesis, the having one's nose pulled: ca. 1820–40. Bee.
parentheses. Bandy legs: printers': from ca. 1710. Ex the shape: ( ).
parings. Used, chippings of money: c. late C. 17–19-19. B.E. Gros. A special application of the S.E. sense, (Grose's chippings is an error.)
paring of one's nails, not to give, lose part with: To be a miser: semi-proverbial coll.: from ca. 1540; in 19–20, mostly dial. 'Proverbs' Heywood, Deloney, Mabb, 'Phrasologia Generalis' Robertson, Northall. (Apperson.)
paripatetician, pyripatitation. Incorrect for peripateticus: C 16, 17. O.E.D.
parish-park-axe. A prominent nose: lower classes (1800) and/or ob. Ware.
parish-soldier. Ca. 1780–1850. 'A jeering name—prob. collar. rather than s.—for a militia man, from substitutes being frequently hired by the parish from which one of its inhabitants is drawn.'
parish-stallion. See parish-bull.
parishes, his stockings are of (later, belong to) two. A d.p. applied to one whose stockings or socks are odd: ca. 1790–1860. Grose, 3rd ed.
park. A prison: low a. and Northern dial.: ca. 1820–70. 'Jon Bee.' Perhaps ex the privileged circuit round the King's Bench and/or the Fleet Prison.—2. A back yard, a small strip of garden in a town: jocular coll.: from ca. 1890; ob.—3. See Bushy Park.
park, down the. (Of a horse that is) losing: Glasgow sporting (1934).
park, in the To Bushy Park, at.
parker, v.i. and t. To speak (about) a good, ask; beg; c.: from ca. 1890; ob. F. H. Emerson, 1895, 199. You are Parkered to the owner for your letting.' Ex Iv. A.; via Lingus France, or a corruption of Parnie, q.v.
parkey; incorrectly parley. Cold; chilly. (Only of weather; in Midland dial., however, it = witty, smart or sharp of tongue.) From 1898 or a little earlier. Prob. ex perky, perky, characteristic of a park; c. dial. parkin, ginger-bread.
parley, v.i. To speak French: s. when not jocular coll.: 1765, Foote, 'You know I can't parley vous,' O.E.D. Ex the n., 1, q.v. also for variant spellings.—2. Hence, to speak a foreign language: from ca. 1880; ob. Cf. sing the bat.—3. Hence, loosely, to speak: from ca. 1918.
parlament. ERRONEOUS FOR PARMAMENT OR PALLIAMENT: C 16. O.E.D.
parliament whiskey. Whiskey on which inland-revenue dyes have been paid: Anglo-Irish coll.: from the 1820's. Ware.
parliamentary press. An old custom of claiming any iron, which happens to be in use, for the purpose of opening the collar seam', Barrière & Leland, 1889. Tailors: ob.
parlour into the kitchen, out of the. From good to bad: coll.: late C. 16–17. Florio. Ex of God's blessing into the warm sun, q.v.
aparlour-jump, v. Ex parlour-jumping, q.v.: c. 1894, Arthur Morrison. O.E.D.
aparlour-jumper. One who specialises in 'parlour-jumping': c.: from ca. 1870, says Ware.
aparlour-jumping. Theft from rooms, esp. by entering at the window: c.: from not later than 1870.
parlous. Extremely clever, shrewd, mischievous; extraordinary: C. 15–20 (ob.): S.E. until ca. 1840, then dial. and coll. (= 'awful', terrible). O.E.D.

[Parlyaree. The 'Lingua Franca'—but actually as to 90% of its words, Italianate—vocabulary of C. 18–mid-19 actors and mid-C. 19–20 costermongers and showmen: (orig. low) coll. verging, after ca. 1930, on S.E. (How long the word itself has existed, I do not know; prob. not before ca. 1850, when the vocabulary was much enlarged and the principal users changed so radically, though itinerant and inferior actors supply the link.) Ex It. parigatiare, to speak. Cf. parler and see Slang, passim, and at 'Cirrus Slang,' and P. Allingham's Cheesepack, 1934. E.g. donah, letky, madza, mungary, nantee, omee, salice, say, tray, q.v.]
parleyoo, parleyous. See parleyoo, n. and v. parmees, parnell(e); in India, mostly pawnee. Water: orig. (1862) among strolling actors (Mayhew); by 1890, fairly gen. low a., though witness Yule & Burnett—popular in Anglo-Indian, e.g. in brandy-pawnee, q.v., by 1865; much used by soldiers—orig. the regulars with service in India—
parrot and monkey time. A period of quarrelling: ca. 1855-1915. Adopted ex U.S., Ware noting that it 'started from a droll and salacious tale of a monkey and a parrot'. Whence parrot time.

parrot must have an almon, the. A c.p. applied to or hinting of incentive, reward, or bribery, very common ca. 1650-1640. Skelton; Nashe, Almond for a Parrot, 1590; Shakespeare; Jonson; 'Water Poet' Taylor. (Apperson.) Ex parrot's delight in almonds.

parol time. The same as parrot and monkey time: 1886, The Daily News, Oct. 12; † by 1920. (Ware.)

parson. The public hair: low: C. 18-20; almost †. Whence:


parson. To marry; to church after child-delivery: coll.: from ca. 1880.

Parson Bate. Sir Henry Bate Dudley (d. 1824), who, a clerk in holy orders, became a sporting journalist and the editor of The Morning Post. Also The Fighting Parson. Dawson.

Parson Greenfields. See Greenfields.

Parson Mallum I, remember. 'Pray drink about, Sir!': late C. 18-19: c.p. Like the next, it must have had its origin in some topicality.

Parson Palmer. 'One who stops the circulation of the glass by preaching over his liquor'; Grove, 1785: coll.: C. 18-early 19. Swift, Polite Conversation, Dialogue II. An elaboration of no preaching—or dangerous to preach—over your liquor, as in Aphra Behn, 1682, and app. a semi-proverb, it is a c.p. See esp. Apperson. Cf. proceeding.


parsonet. A parson's child: coll., gen. jocular:

1812, G. Colman (O.E.D.); ob.—2. A newly fledged or a very unimportant parson: jocular coll.: 1834, Gen. P. Thompson, 'fashionable parsonets'; P. Brooks, 1874, 'parsonettes'. O.E.D.

parson's barn. See barn, parson's.

parson's journeyman. A curate: from ca. 1810; ob. Lex. Bal. An assistant curate does most of the itinerant work of his vicar or rector.

parson's nose. A chicken's or a goose's rump: coll.: — 1864. H., 3rd ed. Cf. pope's nose (q.v.) by which it was, to Protestants, prob. suggested.

parson's side, pinch on the. To withhold, cheat him of, his tithes: coll. > almost proverbial. Lyly, 1579; T. Adams, 1630; B.E.; Grose. (Apperson.)

parson's week. A holiday from Monday to the Saturday of the following week: Cowper's letter of June 28, 1790, to Lady Husketh (O.E.D.); also, mid-C. 19-20, Monday to Saturday of one week. Coll.: late C. 18-20.


part, for my. Instead of me; in my place: Cape Province coll. (— 1813). Pettman.

part brass-rags. To quarrel: naval (from ca. 1890) >, by 1900, military. Bowen, 'From the bluejack's habit of sharing brass cleaning rags with his particular friend'.

parttaker. A mistake for partaker: mid-C. 16-17. O.E.D., which notes also parted, error for parcel, and parcel-gilt for parcel-gild.

pater. A payer or giver of what is due or advisable; by itself, 'a free, liberal person' (H.); a bad payer is a bad pater. From ca. 1502; s. >, ca. 1915, coll. H., 3rd ed. Ex. preceding term, q.v.


partial to. Liking; fond of: coll.: 1866, Prior, 'Athens . . . where people . . . were partial to verse'; A. Lang, 1889, 'Cold sausage (to which Alphonso was partial)'. Ex O.E.D.


particular, n. Something very characteristic or especially liked, e.g., a glass of one's particular, i.e. of one's favourite drink: s. s.: C. 19-20. Earliest and mainly in particular, London, q.v.—2. A very close friend; a favourite mistress: dial. (— 1828) >, ca. 1850, coll.; slightly ob. Gen. F. Thompson, 1850 (O.E.D.).

particular, adv. Especially; low coll.: mid-C. 19-20. 'I want to speak to you awfully particular,' The Boy's Own Paper, cited by Baumann, 1887. (The O.E.D., giving an example of 1600, describes the usage as rare and †.)

particular, London. A Madeira wine imported especially for the London market: coll.: 1807, Washington Irving (O. D.); by 1900, † by 1930. Perhaps the origin of glass of one's particular (see particular, n., 1).—2. Hence, ex the colour, a London fog: 1862, Dickens: s. >, ca. 1890, coll. Also called London ivy (London fog in gen.; not a particular one): 1889; somewhat ob. Cf. pea-souper, q.v.
particular, one's. The favoured gallant of a
courtesan: brothel col. (1749, John Cleland; t. ob).
partner. A partner: jocular (— 1887); ob.
Baumann.
partners. Two men working together: tailors' 
coll. (late C. 18–20) verging on j. Cf. old third, q.v.
Anon. song of ca. 1700. Cf. plover, by which—plus 
parrish-boat—boat, case—case, it was prob. suggested.
parke, play (allusion) any, or of one's. 
To play a nasty trick on a person: low coll. (— 1887).
Baumann, 'Don't play me any of your parts.'
party. A person: mid-C. 17–20; S.E. until ca.
1760, then only (Foote, 1770); from ca. 1850, low 
coll. (Bagehot, 1855, 'A go-ahead party'); in C. 20,
when not jocular, s. and usually pejorative. 
(O.E.D. dates): Esp. old party, an old person.
Ex such legal phrases as guilty party, be a party to. 
See notably Alfred's The Queen's English, 1863.
party-roll. A list of boys going home together:
from ca. 1860: Winchester College coll. > j. 
(Such terms are a lexicographical problem.)
pars. 'By some C. 19 writers applied in error to
"a room over a church-porch". App. originating 
in a misunderstanding of "a passage in Blome-
field's Nottingham, 1745, says the O.E.D., q. certainly v.
pas de Lafarge I No talk about Madame Lafarge
(the reputed murderers): Society: 1840's. Ex 
Paris. (Ware.) Cf. Tick l. no.
pasen(s). Mistaken by Buffon, who has been followed 
by some English compilers and lexicogra-
phers, for the gembok, a South African ante-
lope: late C. 18–20. O.E.D.
pasgo; paseo. A walk: U.S. (—1840),
anglicised ca. 1800. Ex Sp. paseo, a walk; pasear,
to walk. O.E.D. (Sup.)—2. (Only pasear.) To 
walk: id., id. Ibid.—3. (Ex sense 1; only paseo). A street, a promenade: 1920. Ibid.
*pas/ni. A small coin; a 'copper' c.; (— 1839). 
† by 1900. Brandon.—2. An infatuation; among 
school-children, one for a teacher; at a few English 
public schools, a homosexual fondness for another 
boy. C. 20. (Dorothy Sayers, Unnatural Death,
Baumann.
pass. To fail to understand; have no concern in:
coll.: C. 20. Ex eurehe, though its post-1910 
usage is mainly owing to the bridge formula.—2.
See pass one.
pass, sell the. See sell the pass.
*pass along. To send (post articles, the stuff) to 
a 'fence'; to conceal them: c. (— 1923). Man-
ehon.
*pass-bank in B.E. and Grose, like their passage, 
is S.E.
pas in a crowd, it'll. See crowd, pass in a.
pas in one's checks. To die: orig. (—1872) and 
chirally U.S.; anglicised, esp. in Canada and Aus-
tralia, ca. 1890. Nisbet, 1892, 'Mortimer 
passed in his checks . . . unexpectedly.' Also 
hand in; also, with either v., chips, which, however, 
is rare outside U.S. Ex setting one's accounts at 
poker.
pass (a person) one. To deliver a blow: Aus-
tralian (— 1928). C. J. Dennis.
pasient. To die: coll.: O.ED. (Sup.). Prob. abbr. pass out of sight.—2. To lose conscious-
ness through liquor: military (1916) >, by 1919, 
gen.—3. Hence, or ex sense 1, to faint: from ca. 
1920.
past the book. To 'tell the tale': low (— 1894).
Cf. buck, conversation.
pass the compliment. To give a gratuity: low 
coll.: late C. 19–20; ob. Perhaps ex (the ? orig.
U.S.) pass the compliments of the day (cf. next).
pass the time of day. (In passing) to exchange 
greetings and or fleeting gossip: coll. and dial.: 
1834, A. Parker, 'Two Indians . . . halted . . .', 
'starved . . . and then casually passed the time of 
day.' O.E.D.
passable (traversable, viable; able to, fit to circu-
late; tolerable) and passible (sensitive, perceptible) 
are, from C. 17, often used in error the one for the 
other. (O.E.D.; Fowler.)
Passages. Shares in the Cork, Blackrock, 
& Passage Railway: Stock Exchange (—1806) >, 
by 1910. Coll. A. J. Wilson, Stock Exchange 
Glossary.
passed is incorrect for past, when the latter is a 
preposition. 'He went passed me.'
passenger. An ineffective member of a racing-
boat crew: 1885 (O.E.D.).—2. Hence, such a 
member of any team or (C. 20) on a business or other 
staff: 1892 (O.E.D.) s., >, ca. 1930. Ex 
travel by ship.—3. A passenger-train: railway-
passent. An incorrect form of pasant (esp. in 
heraldy): C. 17. O.E.D.
passing-out number. A second-year naval cadet: 
B Bowen.
passy. (Of a master) severe; bad-tempered; 
Christ's Hospital: ca. 1840–50. Superseded by 
viel, q.v. Ex passionate, says Blanc in his 
reminiscences.
past. Beyond (the power or ability of a person): 
are welcome . . .; but if you be not, 'tis past 
me; To make you so; for I am here a stranger.' 
O.E.D.
past dying of her first child, be. To have had 
a bastard: coll.: mid-C. 17–18. Rey, 1678.
past praying for. (Esp. of persons.) Hopeless; 
Ironically ex paste and scissors, q.v. 
paste, v. To thrash; implied in 1851, Mayhew, 
'H . . . gave me a regular pasting '; H., 5th ed. 
F. & H. suggests ex bill-sticking; perhaps on baste 
(W.).—2. As a cricket col., esp. paste the bowling, it 
is recorded for 1924. Lewis.
paste, play for. To play billiards for drinks: 
billiard-players' (— 1909). Ware, 'Probably from 
"vino di pasta"—a light sherry'.
paste and scissors. Extracts; unoriginal padding: 
journalistic coll.: late C. 19–20. Usually 
scissors and paste, gen. considered as S.E. Ex 
cutting out and pasting up.
paste-horn. The nose: shoemakers': 1856, 
Mayhew; ob. Ex an article of the trade. See also 
old paste-horn. Cf. cork, emollient.
Cf. pasteboard, drop one's.—2. A playing-card; 
playing-cards collectively: 1859, Thackeray.—3. 
A railway-ticket, esp. a 'season': C. 20. The 
Daily Chronicle, Nov. 11, 1891. O.E.D. (all three).
pasteboard, v.t. To leave one's visiting-card at 
the residence of: 1864, H., 3rd ed. ; ob. by 1900, 
† by 1920. Ex preceding and following entry, q.v.
pasteboard, drop, leave, lodge, shoot one's. 
To leave one's visiting-card at a person's residence;
PATRING-COVE

**patent-** [Frenchman]. An Irishman: 'tailors': from ca. 1870; ob.

**patent-** inside, -outside. 'A newspaper printed (first) on the inside (or outside) only, the unprinted space being intended for local news, advertisements, etc,' F. & H.: journalists' (mostly provincial): from ca. 1880; very ob.

**Patent Safeties, the.** The 1st Life Guards; military: from ca. 1850; ob. Also the Cheeses, Cheese-traders, Piccadilly Buses, and Royal Blues, and Tin-Bellies, which explains the P.S.

**pater.** A father; also in address: mostly among schoolboys: 1728, Ramsey; Miss Braddon, who italicises it. (O.E.D.) Direct ex the L. Cf. mater, q.v.

**pater-cove.** See patricio.


**paternoster, devil's.** A muttering, grumbling; a blasphemous exclamation: coll.: late C. 14–20, but ob. by C. 18. (Chaucer:) Terence in English; Congreve.

**paternoster-white, in a.** In a moment (the time needed for a paternoster); quickly: from ca. 1360 (ob. by 1890): coll. bordering on S.E. Paston Letters.


**pathetic.** Luidicrous; C. 20 coll. (1 orig. s.). Contrast funny, odd.

**patience.** See *patience.*

**patron.** One of the fifteen 'rank' of the underworld, a strolling (pseudo-)priest: c.: C. 16–20, but ob. by 1820. Harman, B.E., Gros, Ainsworth.—2. Hence, C. 17–20 (ob. by 1840), any parson or priest: c. B.E. The forms include *patrich- (-patricks-)* etc. C. 16 rare, as in Awdelay; *patter- or patring-cove, C. 16, Copland; patrer-cove, late C. 17–19 (e.g. in B.E., Gros, and Lytton), *patron* (A New Canting Dict., 1725), and *patte-rone, C. 19–20, as in Henley & Stevenson. (A C. 18 song spells it *patricio-cove.*) Prob. ex *pater + co(e). *patricio. See *patricio.*
patriot. Mistakenly (with possessive) as if = upholder; devotee; mid-C. 17. Weever, 1631, 'A careful Patriote of the State'; 1641, L'Estrange, 'A Patriote of Truth'. O.E.D.

Patriot King, the. Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke (d. 1761). Ex his Idea of a Patriot King. (Dawson.)

Patsy. Elias Hurdend (b. 1889): cricketers' nickname: from c. 1898. In Good Days, 1934, Neville Cardus has an essay entitled 'Patsy'.

*pattern-ken. A variant (C. 20) of padding-ken: see padding-crib. Manchon.

patterns run on. (Of the tongue) to elatter; go nineteen to the dozen: c. 1650–1620. Udall; (?) Shakespeare. Ex the noise made by clogs.


*patter, flash the. To talk; esp. to talk s. or o.: c. (from ca. 1820) >, ca. 1880, low s. Prob. ex patter flash, q.v. See patter, n. 1 and 2, and flash, v.

*patter, stand—occ. be in for—the. To stand for trial: c. from ca. 1810; ob. Vaux, Haggart. See patter, n. 1. (The legal talk.)

*patter-cove. See patrico.

*patter-crib. A lodging-house, or an inn, frequented by the underworld: c.: from ca. 1830.

H., 3rd ed. See patter, n. 1, and crib, n.

*patter flash. To talk; also to talk s. or o.: c. (—1812) >, ca. 1880, low s. Vaux. Cf. patter, v., 2, and cf. patter, flash the, q.v.


*patterer, bumbox. A person: c.: from ca. 1838; ob. Serialist Reynolds.

patterning, v.b.n. The pert or vague replies of servants: coll. from ca. 1690; ob. by 1880. † by 1930. B.E. Grose. Ex patter, to talk glibly.—2. Talk intended to interest a prospective victim: o. or low s.: 1785, Grose.

*patterning-cove. See patrico.

pattern. 'A common vulgar phrase for "patent"', H. 3rd ed.: sol. from ca. 1850.—2. Delightful; brilliant: Anglo-Irish: late C. 19–20. Ware derives it thus: pattern fair ex patron fair, i.e. patron saint's fair.

patty-cake. An error for pat-a-cake: late C. 19–

O.E.D.

paucia! Speak little! ; say nothing: (1) o.: late C. 18–19. Baumann. I.e., pauca verba; few words.

Paul. See paul.—Paul, rob Peter to pay. See Peter to pay.


Paulus. See milks.—Paul's, old as. See old as Charing Cross.


Paul's (or Westminster) for a wife, go to. To go whoring: coll. late C. 16–18. Shakespeare (implied: 2nd Henry IV, I, ii, 58); Ray. Old St. Paul's was a resort of loungers and worse (cf. S.E. Paul's men, walkers, loungers).


Paul's (steeple), old as. See old as Charing Cross.

Paul's work. A bungled job; a 'mess': coll.: C. 17. Dekker, 'And when he had done, made Poules work of it', O.E.D.

Pauly. (Gen. pl.) A follower of Paul Kruger; a Boer: mostly journalists': 1899–1900. Ware.


Pav, the. The London Pavilion theatre or music hall: from early 1860's. H., 3rd ed., where also the variant, the P. V.; The Observer, April 1, 1934. (In 1824 it went over to 'the pictures'). Cf. Met, the, q.v.—2. (pay.) A sports pavilion: schoolboys': late C. 19–20. Collinson.

paved, have one's mouth. To be hard-mouthed: coll.: C. 18. Swift, 'How can you drink your Tea so hot? Sure your mouth's pav'd.'

*pavement artist. A 'dealer in precious stones who stands about in Hatton Garden' (Charles E. Leach: c. (—1933). Ex S.E. sense.

*pavement twist. See hard-up (cigarette).

pavia(u)r's or pavia(u)r's workshop. The street: ca. 1786–1890. Grose, 2nd ed.; Baumann. Ex pavia(u)r, paver, a paving stone, extant in dial. (E.D.D.)

[pavon. A ghost word ex misread Old Fr. paron, a pennon. O.E.D.]

paw. A hand: coll.: from ca. 1590. Chapman, 1605, 'I ... laid these paws [Close on his shoulders]; Dryden; Scott. Jocularly ex paws, a foot. Also for paw, the hand; hind paw, the foot: both recorded in 1785 (Grose) and ob.—2. Handwriting, esp. a signature: coll.: C. 18–20; ob. Ex sense 1.

paw, v. To handle awkwardly, roughly, coarsely, indelicately: coll.: 1604. T. M., 'His palm shell
PAY WITH A HOOK

pay, v. To beat, punish: from ca. 1680: S.E. until ca. 1750, then coll.; from ca. 1830, s. and dial. Grose, 1st ed. Cf. pay over... pay Paul... and pay out, q.v.—2. To deliver (e.g. a letter): Anglo-Chinese coll. (—1864). H. 3rd ed.—3. See entry at pace, go the.

pay, be good (etc.). To be sure to discharge one's obligations, esp. one's debts: coll.: 1727, Gay, "No man is better pay than I am," O.E.D.; slightly ob.


pay and no pitch hot or ready 1, the devil to. A nice mess: nautical: late C. 18–19. Grose, 2nd ed. Punningly ex the paying, i.e. smearing, of a ship's bottom with pitch to stop a leak.

pay away. To proceed; continue (v.i.), the v.t. form be pay it away. Coll.: 1670, Backard (of talking); in C. 19–20, mainly nautical. Cf. pay it out/..., q.v.—2. To fight manfully; mainly nautical, s. (—1782)> ca. 1850, coll.; ob. Grose.—3. To eat voraciously; mainly nautical (—1785); almost †. Grose.

pay-bob. See pay, n.

pay down. 'To send all heavy weights below': nautical coll.: late C. 19–20. Bowen.

pay into. To 'pitch into', to strike or punch vigorously: (low) coll. (—1887). Baumann. Cf. pay, v.1.

pay it out! Keep on talking!: nautical (—1887). Besant, 'Pay it out. [I don't care]—not a rope's yard.' Ex paying out a rope.

*pay-off. Punishment; settlement for infringing the rules of the underworld: e.g. in John G. Brandon's novel, The One Minute Murder, 1934.


pay-off line. A printed form that a man receives on being paid-off; he signs it as a receipt: Public Works' (—1935). See line, n.6.


pay on. To pay cash (for a bet): turf s. verging on coll.: C. 20.

pay out. See pay it out.—2. To give (a person) his deserts: coll.: 1863, Cowden Clarke, 'They, in return, (as the vulgar phrase has it), "pay him out".' O.E.D.—3. See paying out.

pay out the slack of one's gammon. To relate (too) many stories: low (—1887). Baumann. Prob. nautical at first.

pay over face and eyes, as the cat did the monkey. To give a terrible beating about the head: a low e.g. (—1880); ob. H., 2nd ed. Ex pay you as Paul paid the Ephesians, q.v.

pay the bearer. (Gen. as vbl.n.) To cash a cheque against non-existent funds: bank-clerks': late C. 19–20. Cf. cash a dog.

pay the shot. To pay the bill: C. 16–20: S.E. till C. 19, then coll.; ob. Hackwood, Old English Sports, 1907, '[They] called for their ale... and... expected the losers "to pay the shot".' Apperson.

pay up and look pretty, ooc. big. Gracefully to accept the inevitable: 1894, Sale (pretty); big is very, pretty slightly ob. Cf. sii pretty.

*pay with a hook. To steal: Australian e. from ca. 1870. Brunton Stephens, in My Chinese Cook,
1873, 'You bought them? Ah, I fear me, John, I.
You paid them with a hook.' — ex hook, to steal.

pay with pen-powder. To write fair specimens but fail to pay: semi-proverbal coll.: ca. 1630–80. John Clarke, 1639. (Apperson.)

pay (or pay debts) with the fore-topsail. 'To slip away to sea in debt': nautical: mid-C. 19–20. Bowen. The military variant is with the drum.

pay you as Paul paid the Ephesians, I warn. Explained by part gen. added: over the face and eyes and all the damned jaws. A low c.p.: ca. 1750–1850. Grose. An elaboration of pay /, q.v.; cf. pay over face and eyes, the latter form of the phrase.

paying out. (Vb.ln.; as v., very rare.) The use, esp. by an officer, of very forcible language, gen. in fault-finding; a leg-pull exercised on a young soldier, e.g.'telling him to go and wash the last post': military: C. 20. B. & P. Cf. pay into and pay out.

pea. The favourite; one's choice: low 1888, Sporting Life, Dec. 11, 'Sweeney forced the fighting, and was still the pea when 'Time! ' was called': ob. Ex this is the pea I choose in thimble-rolling. — 2. The head: c.: from ca. 1840; ob. 'No. 747.' Prob. ex pea-nut: cf. the relevant sense of nut.

pea, pick (occ. do) a sweet. To urinate: low (mostly among—or of—women): from ca. 1860. Punning pea, q.v. Cf. gather violets, pluck a rose.

pea-baller. Gravel that will pass through holes of half an inch (or less): Public Works' coll.: C. 20. Prob. suggested by S.E. peas, coals of a small size.


pea-man or -rigger. See thimble-rigger.


pea-souper. A dense yellowish fog: coll.: 1890, J. Fayn (O.E.D. Sup.). Ex the next.


peabody. A block of houses built under the Peabody by Request to the poor of London': lower-class' coll. (—1900): ob. Ware.

peace. See piece.

peacemaker; matrimonial peacemaker. See matrimonial peacemaker. —As a pistol (Lever, 1841), it is, by the O.E.D., considered—quite rightly, as against F. & H.—to be jocular S.E.

Peace-makers, the. The Bedfordshire Regiment, formerly the 16th Foot: military: ob. From ca. 1890. From Surinam, 1804, to Chitral, 1895, they missed active service.


peachy. v.t. As v.t., it is S.E. = t to impeach; extant when it = to divulge, esp. in peach a word (1883, O.E.D.): ob.—2. V.i., to blab: coll.: 1852, Thackeray, 'The soubrette has been peached to the amours,' O.E.D. Ex: —3. V.i. to inform (against a person); turn informer: late C. 18–20: S.E. (as in Shakespeare) in C. 16–17; coll. in C. 18–mid-19 (as in Fielding, Hughes); s. in mid-C. 19–20. Either absolute or with against or (up)on. Aphetic form of a-peche, to approach (O.E.D.). Cf. blow the gaff, give the office, put away, snitch, squeal, squeak, tip the wink, whiddle, q.v.

peach-perch. A 'flapper-bracket' (q.v.): motorista' (—1935). Ex peach, n. 2


peaching. vbl.n. Giving of information against a person: turning or being an informer: mid-C. 16–20: S.E. until C. 18, then coll. till C. 20, when s.

peaching, ppl.adj. See preceding entry. C. 17–20: S.E. till C. 18, then coll. till C. 20, when s. and ob. Moore, 1818, 'The useful peaching rat'. O.E.D.


peacock, v. To pay (esp. on ladies and gen. brief) morning calls, at which beer was served: Anglo-Indian: from ca. 1850; ob. The Graphic, March 17, 1883. Prob. ex the spotless clothes worn by the visitors.—2. V.i. and 1., to buy up the choicest land so as to render adjoining territory useless to others: Australia: from ca. 1890; ob. 'Ex picking the 'eyes' of the land: running the ocelli on a peacock's feathers. Cf. peacocking, q.v.


peacocking. The practice mentioned in peacock, v., 2, q.v.,—than which it is much commoner. 1894, W. Eppe, Land Systems of Australasia. Morris.


peacock's tail, the. Euclid, Bk. III, proposition 8: C. 16 coll. Ex the figure. O.E.D.


Peak, send a wife to the (devil's) arse-a-. To send a woman about her business when she proves vexing: ca. 1663–5. Pepys, Diary, Jan. 19, 1663.

Ex a curtier's wife being sent home to the Peak in Derbyshire. (Apperson.) N.b., the devil's arse-a-, or in the, Peak, earlier Peak's are, is the Peak Cavern (O.E.D.).

peaked. Sickly-looking; pinched, thin, esp. from illness: from ca. 1830: mostly coll. till ca. 1920, then always S.E. Ex sharpness of features.


peakish. Rather thin, pinched, sickly: from ca. 1836; coll. and dial. Perhaps ex peaked.


peal, ring (a person) a.; occ. ring a peal in one’s ears. To scold him: late C. 18—19. Gross, 2nd ed. ; Baumann. Cf. the dial. be or get into a peal, i.e. a temper. E.D.D.

pealer. Incorrect form of peeler, q.v. In C. 20, very rare, very ob.

pear. To appear: C. 14—20: S.E. till C. 18, then coll. and dial. Gen. — 2. To obtain money from both sides, e.g. from police for information, from underworld for a warning: o.; from ca. 1850; † by 1915. Ex pear-making, q.v.

Pear, the. Louis Philippe: Anglo-Parisians: 1830—48. Ware. Ex the shape of his head.

*pear-making. To take bounties from more regiments than one: o.; ca. 1810—60. Lex. Bal. † the making of pairs, double-crossing.


pearl in a hail-storm, like a. Impossible to find: non-aristocratic coll. (— 1887); slightly ob. Baumann.

pearl on the nail, make a. To drink: coll.: C. 17—18. Ray. Ex the (late C. 16+) lit. sense, to drop the moisture remaining in a cup, glass, etc., on to one’s nail—a drinking custom recorded by Nash.

pearlies. (The singular hardly exists.) Pearl buttons, esp. on a corset’s clothes: from ca. 1885; low coll. Henley.— 2. Hence (fairly gen. in singular), coxcombers: low coll.: C. 20.

peas. Abr. peas in the pot, q.v.: from ca. 1895, says Ware.

peas, as like as two. Very similar indeed: late C. 19—20: coll. >, in C. 19, S.E. In C. 16—17, a. pease, A Horace Waipole; Browning, in James Lee’s Wife, O.E.D.

peas and cues. See p’s and q’s, mind one’s.

peas in the pot. Apt to be amorous: low London rhyming a. on hot: from ca. 1890. Ware. See also peas.— 2. Also, hot in the gen. sense. B. & P.


pease-kille, make a. (V.1. with of.) To squander lavish. Scots coll.: C. 18—20. Likewise, a pease-kille = a very profitable matter. Jamieson; E.D.D.


peb. Abbr. pebble. 1, in Dennis’s sense. First recorded by Dennis, 1916.


pebble on the beach, not the only. (Of persons) not the sole desirable or remarkable one available, accessible, potential; semi-proverbial coll.: C. 20. Lyell.


pebbles, my. See pebble, 2. Moncrieff, 1843.


*peck; in C. 16—mid-17, occ. peck. Food; ‘grub’; from ca. 1655: o. until C. 19, then low s. Harman, Jonson, Centlivre, Moncrieff. Cf. peckage, q.v. Ex:

*peck, v.I. and v.T. To eat: mid-C. 16—20: o. until C. 19, then s. till ca. 1880, then coll. Copleaud; Egan; Dickens, ‘I can peck as well as most men.’ Ex a bird’s pecking; † cf., however, Welsh Gypsy pek, to bake or roast.—2. To pitch forward; (esp. of a horse) to stumble: coll. (mid-C. 19—20) and dial.: from ca. 1770. Ex † S.E. v.I. peck, to incline.

*peck combinations, peck being the second member: — gero-peck, a turd, C. 17—19; grunting-peck, pork, C. 17—20, ob.; ruff-peck, bacon, C. 17—19; rum-peck, good eating, an excellent meal.

*peck off one’s. Off one’s appetite: o.; C. 18— 19. Cf. pecker, off one’s, q.v.


peck and boozie or tipple. Meat and drink: low (boozie orig. c.): C. 18—20, the former; C. 19—20, the latter. Mrs. Delany, 1732 (O.E.D.). Cf. bub and grub and:

peck and perch. Food and lodging: low (? orig. c.): 1828, O.E.D.; slightly ob.

*peck-kids. See peckidge.


peckidge. See package. B.E.'s spelling; Coles has peckidge.

peckish. Hungry: 1785, Grose; in C. 18, perhaps c.: C. 19, (orig. low a); C. 20, coll. George Moore, 1894, 'I feel a bit peckish, don't you?' Ex peck, n.

pecky. See peaky.


peel eggs. To stand on ceremony: s. or low coll.: from ca. 1860; ob.

Peel (occ. peele) Garlic. See Pilgraria.

peel off. 'To obtain money by a Stock Exchange transaction': financial: from ca. 1860. Ware.


peel, keep one's eyes. To watch carefully: coll.: orig. (—1833), U.S.A.; anglicised ca. 1865. Cf. keep one's eyes strained, also U.S.A.


*peep To sleep: c.: late C. 17–mid-18. B.E. On sleep.

peep-bo. Bo-peep: coll.: from the middle 1820's. 1837, Dickens, 'A perpetual game of peep-bo', O.E.D. This jocular or perhaps juvenile reversal of bo-peep is rare in C. 20.

peep o' day tree. 'Provisional stage machinery', e.g. a tree whereby escapes and/or rescues are effected: theatrical coll.: 1862; ob. Ware. Ex such a tree in Peep o' Day, an extremely successful piece produced at the Lyceum Theatre in 1862.

peep-by. See peepy-by.

peep-o(h)! (To and by children.) Look at me! here I am, esp. as one emerges from hiding: coll.: C. 19–20; perhaps centuries earlier.


peeping Tom. An inquisitive person: 1785, Grose; coll. >, ca. 1850, S.E. Ex the Coventry legend of Lady Godiva.

peepholes. The pan-pipes: street-performers' a., almost j.: late C. 19–20; ob.


peep-y, go to. To fall asleep: from ca. 1840.
Also go to peep-by: from ca. 1850; ob. Both, coll. and dial. Ex peeps. Cf. sleepy-by / peep.


*peery, n. (Gen. there's a peery.) A being observed, discovered: c.: late C. 18–mid. 19. Grose, 1785, 'There's a peery, 'tis snitch, We are observed, there's nothing to be done.' Ex: *peery; occ., in C. 17–mid. 18, speit peerie. Sly: c.: late C. 17–20; extremely ob. B.E. Ex to peer. Cf. Lear's, q.q.v.—Sly, timid, suspicious: from ca. 1670; slightly ob. in last, † by 1850 in first and second nuance. Coles and B.E. give it as c., O.E.D. as S.E.; almost certainly, until mid-C. 18, either o. or low s.—3. Hence, inquisitive: from ca. 1810 (ob.): low. Lex. Bal.; H., 2nd ed.

*peeter. See Peter. Coles's and B.E.'s spelling.


peetle. To disgraceful; to annoy: from ca. 1930; coll. By back-formation ex:


peg, v. (See peg it to, peg it in, peg it into, peg out, peg up.)—2. To drive: 1819, Moore, 'I first was hir'd to peg a Hack' (i.e. a hackney-coach); ob.—3. (Also with away, off, along) to move, or go, vigorously or hastily: dial. > ca. 1855. coll. Le Fanu, 1884, 'Down the street I pegged like a madman.'—4. To work persistently, 'hammer' away: coll.: C. 19–20. Esp. peg away, q.q.v., in eating, and peg along, q.q.v.—5. To tipple: 1874, H., 5th ed. Ex peg, n. 1—6. (Gen. pup or down.) To copulate, v.t., occ. v.i.: low coll.: from ca. 1850.—7. V. b., to fix the market price of: Stock Exchange: from ca. 1880: a. till ca. 1920, then coll. ; prob. soon to be S.E. Gen. as peg up, 1, q.v.

peg, old. See old peg.

peg, on the. (See also pegs, on the.) Under arrest.—2. Fined; having had one's pay stopped. Both military: late C. 19–20. Cf. peg, whip on the, q.q.v.

peg, put in the. To stop giving credit: coll. ex dial.: late C. 19–20. 'A peg of wood above the latch inside . . . effectually locked it,' Dr. Bridge (quoted by Apperson).

(oneself) on the. To be careful, esp. as to liquor, behaviour, etc.: late C. 19–20 military; ob. Perhaps suggested by the preceding entry as well as by peg, on the. Cf. pin, keep in the, q.q.v.—2. put (another) . . . To arrest: military: late C. 19–20. See peg, on the.


peg a hack. See peg, v., 2.—2. 'To mount the box of a hackney coach, drive yourself, and give the Jewry a holiday': c.: ca. 1820–50. Egan's Grose.


peg down. See peg, v., sixth sense.


peg into. To hit; let drive at: coll.: from ca. 1850. Ex peg it into, q.q.v.

peg (or nail) (in) to one's coffin, add or drive a. To drink hard: from ca. 1860; ob. Ex the old peg-tankards: cf. peg lower and peg too low, q.q.v.

peg it. A variant, from ca. 1860, of peg, v., 2.—2. Inseparable part of:

peg into. To hit: 1834, Dowling, 'You peg it into him, and pray don't spare him': coll. ; ob. Cf. peg into and peg it, q.q.v.


peg lower, go a. To drink to excess: coll.: C. 19–20; very ob.


peg-puff. An old woman dressing young: Scots coll.: from ca. 1810; ob. (Perhaps dial.)


Peg Cranton's, go to. Dead: from ca. 1890, B.E.; 1785, Grose; † by 1890. Occ. Peg Cranton's (Ned Ward). Note that in East Anglia, Peg Cranton is extant for a hodyen.

peg up. See peg, v., last two senses. (The Pall Mall Gazette, April 8, 1882, ' Arbitrarily raising prices . . . "pegging prices up", it is called.' (O.E.D.)


pegged out, be. To be notorious: low: 1886, Tit-Bits, July 31; ob.


guns. Guns from the gunboat Pegasus:

German East Africa campaigners: late 1916–17.
F. Brett Young, Jim Redlake, 1930.


pet. on the. (Of an N.C.O.) awaiting trial by court martial: military: from ca. 1908. F. & Gibbons. Because he was in suspense. Also, of any rank below that of an officer, on the pet: F. & Gibbons.

pet. than square holes, there are always more round. There are always more applicants than jobs: coll. late C. 19–20; ob. Ex S.E. round pet in a square hole (or square peg . . .).

pet. See peck.

pelke, Peke. A coll. abbr. of Pekin(g)ose, so. dog or spaniel: from ca. 1910. Rarely Pek: occ. Pekie (1920; O.E.D. Sup.).


pell. See pal.


pell. v. See under pace, go the.—2. To sew thickly; toasters': from ca. 1860. Prob. suggested by pelt, garments made of furry skins.

pell at, have a. To attempt vigorously, 'have a shot at': coll. (—1923). Manchon.


6. A whoremonger: tramps: c. from ca. 1850; ob.


Penny. Pembroke College, Oxford: from ca. 1890. (Very rarely, Penman: see —er, from Oxford'). Collinson.

penn. An imaginary object for which a new-comer is sent: Winchester College: C. 19–20; ob. Ex τόν μοῦ διδομον προτέρων, send the fool further; i.e. keep the idiot moving! Cf. strap-ouit, squad umbrella, qv.

pennfartch. Pentarchy: erroneous form: C. 17. O.E.D.


pen, have no more ink in the. To be temporarily impotent from exhaustion: low: late C. 16–17. E.g. in Weever's Lazy Juventus. Ex pen, 1.


pen-pusher. See pen-driver. (A. H. Dawson, Dict. of Slang, 1913.)

penal. A sentence or term of penal servitude: coll. from ca. 1890. O.E.D. (Sup.).—2. See penal, 2.—3. Also at Shrewsbury, thus in D. Coke, 1906, 'Pens and paper (which is known as "penal" and is sold by "gates") . . .


pencil and tassel. A (little) boy's penis and scrotum: lower classes' euphemism: C. 20.

pencil-fever. The laying of odds against a horse certain to lose, esp. after it has at first been at short odds: the turf: from ca. 1872; ob. H., 6th ed. Also marked-fever and milk-fever. Ex the pencilling of the horse's name in betting-books. Whence penciller.

pencil-in dates. To make engagements to perform: theatrical coll.: 1896; slightly ob. Ware.

pencil, open, lost, and found. Ten pound (sol. for ten pounds sterling): rhyming s.: from ca. 1870; ob. Ware.


pencilling faternity. Bookmakers, collectively: the turf: from ca. 1890; ob.

pendant used cathachristically for penmon (mid-C. 16–17), as pendentine for architectural pendant (from mid-C. 19). O.E.D.


penn(e)r. See pen(n)e(r)th and pennirth.

penguin. An aeroplane organically unable to leave the ground; a member of the W.R.A.F., which consisted of women (mostly 'flappers'), unable to fly: Air Force: 1917; ob. W.; B. & P.; O.E.D. (Sup.). Cf. the Wrens.—2. See pen-gum.

Peninellar. A veteran of the Peninsular War: coll. The Quarterly Review, 1888, but prob. in use from ca. 1840. Ob. by 1900, ♀ by 1910.—2. (Also called a roll toother, H., 1st ed.) A female pickpocket: c.: (—1859); very ob. H., 1st ed.

pennam. A rare variant of pennam.—*pennel. See pinnel.

pen(n)eth. C. 16–17 forms of pennorth, q.v.


penniless bench, sit on the. To be poverty-stricken: coll. late C. 16–19. Massinger, 'Bid him beare in, he shall not | Sit long on penniless bench.' Ex a certain London seat so named. Cf. S.E. Pierce Penniless.


penny. See the penny entries at pace, go the,


penny, turn and wind the. To make the most of one's money: coll.: late C. 17–18. R.E. An elaboration of S.E. get or turn a or the penny, to endeavour to live, hence to make money.

penny-a-lia. A jocular variation (—1857; ob.), recorded by Bauman, of:

penny-a-liner. A writer of paragraphs at a cheap rate, orig. a penny a line; hence, a literary hack: 1834, Ainsworth (O.E.D.): journalistic coll.: >, ca. 1805, S.E.


penny-buster. A small new loaf, or a large bun or roll, costing one penny: ca. 1870–1910. H., 1874. But a penny starrer is a stale one or an unusually small one († by ca. 1910); orig., however, a starrer meant a halfpenny loaf, or, occ. a bun: H., 1874.


penny(—)dreadful. A sensational story or († by 1910) print: coll.: H., 1874; The Pall Mall Gazette, Nov. 17, 1892, 'A Victim of the Penny Dreadful', title. Occ. penny(—)awful or (ob.) horrible; cf. blood and thunder, shilling shocker, (U.S.) dime novel.

penny-farthin'. An old-fashioned, very high bicycle with a large and a small wheel: coll.: from ca. 1885; ob.

penny for your thought(s). A c.p. addressed to one preoccupied: from ca. 1650. Heywood’s Proverbs, 1648; Greene; Swift. The -s form, which is not found before C. 17, > gen. in C. 18; a penny for 'em belongs to late C. 19–20. (Apperson; Collins.)

penny(-)gaff. A low-class theatre, music-hall: 1851, Mayhew; slightly ob. by 1902 (F. & H.), but still extant. Also penny-room. Ex gaff, last sense, q.v.

penny gash. 'Exaggerated mode of writing English frequently seen in a certain London daily paper': journalistic coll.: ca. 1880–5. Ware.

penny hop. A cheap (country) dance: C. 19. Thus, in C. 20, a shilling hop.


penny loaf. A man afraid to reveal: c. (—1909). Ware. Lit., one who would preter to live on a penny loaf.

penny locket. A pocket: rhyming s. (—1909). Ware.

penny or paternoster. Pay or prayers; only in no paternoster, no penny (no work, no pay): proverbial coll.: mid-C. 16–early 18. Heywood.

penny pick. A cigar: London: ca. 1838–45. Ware derives ex Dickens’s Pickwick: † pickwick.

penny poto. Pimples on a tippler’s face: low: from ca. 1850; ob.

penny puzzle. A sausage: low: ca. 1883–1914. Ware. 'Costing a penny, it is never found out'.

penny silver, think one's. To think well of oneself: coll.: late C. 16–early 18. Gabriel Harvey; Breton; Fuller, 1732. In early quotations, gen. good siler, (Apperson.)

penny(-)starver. See penny buster.—2. A penny cigar: low (—1909); ob. Ware.

penny to bless oneself with, not a. No, or extremely little, money; from ca. 1540: coll. >, by 1700, S.E. (Semi-proverbial: see Heywood’s Proverbs.)

penny-swag. 'A man who sells articles at a penny a lot in the streets': Cockneys’ (—1861); ob. Mayhew. I.e. a swag-barrowman specialising in sales at one penny. E.I.D.

pennyrof. 'The lowest description of toff—the cad imitator of the fellows of the Jeunees dorte’ (Ware): London: ca. 1870–1914.

penny-white. Ugly but rich: coll.: late C. 17–18. B.E. (Rarely of men.)

pennyworth, Robin Hood’s. Anything sold at a robber’s price, i.e. far too cheaply: coll.: C. 17, and prob. earlier. (O.E.D.). Cf. the C. 19 proverb, pirates may make cheap pennyworths of their pilage.

pennyworth out of, fetch one’s. To make a person earn his wages, its cost, etc.: coll.: late C. 17–18. B.E. A variation on a pennyworth for one’s penny.

pen'orth. See pennorth.

pension I, not for a. Not for all the money in the world: lower classes' coll. (—1887); ob. Bau mann.

Pension (or Pensionary or Pensioner) Parliament. The Long Parliament of Charles II: coll. nickname. O.E.D.


*pensive* is an error for *pensive*: ca. 1670–1650. O.E.D.


*pentagochar. pentograph. Erroneous for *pantograph*: C. 18–20. O.E.D.


*pentile,* erroneous for *pantile* (mid-C. 18–20), *pentionary* for *pentitentiary* (C. 17), *pentlike* for *pentile* (C. 16), *pentograph* for *pantograph* (C. 18–20). O.E.D.


*people-in-law.* One's husband's or wife's relatives, esp. parents, brothers, sisters: *coll.*: from ca. 1890. (O.E.D.)


*pep up.* To infuse (gen. a person) with new life, spirit, courage: *coll.*: orig. (early 1920's) U.S.; *anglicised* ca. 1927. O.E.D. (Sup.). *Ex preceding.—2. Hence, to become lively:* from ca. 1930. *The Passing Show, July 15, 1933.*

*pepin.* A C. 17 form of *pippin,* 1.

*pepper.* (See *pease, go the—*) 2. V.t., to put in the accents of a Greek exercise: *university:* from ca. 1880. Ex sprinkling with black pepper.—3. V.t., to humbug, to *kid:* from ca. 1870; ob. Ex *throw pepper in the eyes of.* The v.i. form is used the same.

*pepper.* Chili. Incorrect for *chilli:* from ca. 1870; now rare. (O.E.D.)

*pepper, snuff.* To take offence: *coll.*: C. 17. On take pepper in the nose, *q.v.*

*Pepper Alley* or *pepper alley.* Rough treatment, esp. hard punching, as in *The Sporting Magazine,* 1820; *His mug . . . had paid a visit to *‘pepper alley’*—(O.E.D.): pepuglistie; ob. Punningly on the name of a London alley. Cf. *gutter lane.*

*pepper-box.* A revolver: ca. 1840–1910. (Revolver invented in 1835.)—2. A ship's lighthouse at the break of the forecastle: C. 19 naval. Also, a shore lighthouse: late C. 19–20 naval (now ob.). Bowen. Ex: *the shape.—3. the Pepper-Boxes was a term applied as early as 1880 (H., 2nd ed.) to *the buildings of the Royal Academy and National Gallery, in Trafalgar-square.* Cf. *the Boilers,* *q.v.*

*pepper-box, use the.* See *pepper, v.* 2.

*pepper-caster (occ. -er).* A revolver: 1889; ob. (O.E.D.) Suggested by *pepper-box, q.v.*

*pepper in the nose.* Take to offence, grow angry: C. 16–mid-18: *coll.* till C. 17, then S.E. (Apperson). Cf. *snuff pepper, above*

*pepper on one's mitt, have.* To be punched on the head: *boxers*—(1887); ob. Baumann.

*pepper-proof.* (Not of, of course, immune to, but) free from venereal disease: low coll.: late C. 17–18. B.E. Contrast: peppered off. *Darnably Clapt or Poxt,* B.E.: low coll.: late C. 17–18. († S.E. *peppered.*)

*pepperminuter.* A seller of peppermint water: London lower-class coll.: —1851; very ob. Mayhew, cited by E.D.D.

*Pepper's Dragoons.* The Eighth Hussars: military: C. 19–20; extremely ob. peppery. Energetic; spirited, e.g. work: from ca. 1921. Ex pep, q.v. Evelyn Waugh, *Vile Bodies,* 1930; in *The Humorist,* July 28, 1934, a typical retired admiral is described as *addressing peppery letters to the editor of The Times* (Austin Barber).—2. See pipi.


*per is sol.* —(1887) for *pro in perception and per- fessor, for pro in pervert.* Baumann. Cf. perty, q.v. (per capita. It is advisable to read Fowler's note thereon.)

*per usual, (as).* See usual.

*peraffetted.* Incorrect for *paraphet; from: ca. 1690; ob. O.E.D.*

*peram.* A sol. variant —(1923) of *pram,* q.v. Manchon.


*perch.* A small and gen. high seat on a vehicle: *coll.*: from ca. 1840.—2. Death: C. 18. Ex such phrases as *knock off the perch, hop the perch.* O.E.D.


*perch, be off to.* To go to bed: from ca. 1860; ob. H., 2nd ed.

*perch, drop or fall off or hop the; perch, pitch or tip or turn over the.* To die: first three, late C. 18–20, all slightly ob.; the fourth; late C. 16–17, e.g. in Haklyut; the fifth; C. 18 (Ozell's *Tabulata,* Richardson) — the sixth, late C. 16–17 (Nash). Scott, *The Pirate,* "I always thought him a d—d fool . . . but never such a consummate idiot as to hop the perch so silly." Cf. *hop the twig.* (O.E.D.)—2. Also, though rarely *hop the perch,* to be defeated: same periods.

*perch, knock off the.* To perturb; defeat; kill: from ca. 1860. *Also throw over the perch,* C. 16–17, as in Fulwell, 1668; *turn over the perch,* C. 17–18, as in facetious Tom Brown; *occ. give a turn over the.* The second and third senses > coll.


*perfect.* (Mostly pejorative.) Sheer; unmitigated; utter: mostly coll.: 1611. Shakespeare, "His complexion is perfect gallows." The phrase
PERFECT DAY, A


PERFECT day, a. A day that one has very greatly enjoyed: coll. 1906 (O.E.D. Sup.). Whence: perfect day, the end of a. A coll. G.W. c.p. of indefinite meaning; see. Jocularly applied, by soldiers, to one who has very evidently been ‘celebrating’. See the editor’s *Bakara Bulletin*, 1919, at the end-sketches; Collins. Imm. ex Carris Jacobs-Bond’s song, *When You Come to the End of a Perfect Day*.

PERFECT lady. A harlot: from ca. 1880; slightly ob. Origin prob. anecdotal, as Ware says.

PERFECTLY good . . . a. An indubitably—or, merely, a quite—good, sound, satisfactory something or other: from ca. 1818: a. > coll. Cf. perfect, q.v.

PERFECTOR. See per.

PERFORATE. To take the virginity of: low: C. 19–20.


PERFORM ON, v.t. To cheat, deceive: low: from ca. 1870. H., 1874.

PERFORMER. A whoremonger: low: C. 19–20; ob.—2. One who is apt to make a great fuss or noise: C. 20: rare. Ex perform, 2.

PERGER. See purger.

PERICANON. As the skull or the brain, the word is by the O.E.D. considered S.E.: rather, I think, S.E. in late C. 18–18, but coll. in C. 19–20. Ex anatomical sense, ‘the membrane enveloping the skull’.


PERISH, do a. Nearly to die from lack of water: Western Australia (—1894). Morris. An interesting contrast is afforded by sense 4 of perisher.


PERISHING. A pejorative intensive adv.: coll. C. 20. Orig. and esp. (š)’s perishing cold.

PERIWINKLE. The female pudend: low: mid-C. 19–20; ob.

PERK; PERKS. Perquisites: (the singular, rare, ca. 1890–1910); 1887, *Fun*, March 30, ‘The perks, etc., attached to this useful office are not what they were in the “good old times”’. In *Soots*, *perk* is recorded as early as 1824 (E.D.D.).

PERK UP. To recover health or good spirits: coll. and dial.; from ca. 1650. B.E., Barham. Ex † S.E. perk, to carry oneself smartly, jauntily. (O.E.D.)


PERKER. A person constantly seeking ‘perks’ (see perk): lower classes (—1925). Manchon.


PERM. A supposedly permanent wave (of the hair): coll.: from ca. 1925.—2. Hence, from ca. 1927, v.t., to subject a person, or a person’s hair, to a permanent wave: coll., and gen. in passive.


PERPENDICULAR. A buffet meal; a party at which the majority of the guests have to stand: 1871, ‘M. Logrand’, ‘. . . an invitation to a Perpendicular, as such entertainments are styled’ (O.E.D.).—2. Cotillion between two persons standing upright: low: mid-C. 19–20. Also a knee-trembler, an upright. Contrast with a horizontal.

PERPENDICULAR, do a. See do a perpendicular.

PERPETRATE. To make (e.g. a pun); do (anything treated as shocking): coll. 1849, C. Bronté, ‘Philip induced . . . his sisters to perpetrate a duck.’ O.E.D.

PERPETRATION. The doing of something very bad, or atrociously performed: coll. from ca. 1850. (Gen. a humorous affectation by the narrator.)

PERPETUAL, GET THE. See got the perpetual.

PERPETUAL STAIRCASE. The treadmill: e.: late C. 19–20. Ware. Also everlasting staircase.

PERSELLING. Incorrect for parcelling: C. 15–18. O.E.D.

PERSECUTE and PROSECUTE are ooc. confused in C. 19–20. Cf. perspicuous, q.v.


PERSON. A personage: coll. C. 20. Esp. in quite a person (of a character) —.

PERSPICACITY, PERSPICACIOUS. Perspicacious, perspicuity: a cultured soul, i.e. a catchaschen: 1884. Rare. O.E.D.—‘The two words are sometimes confused in mod. use’, W. Cf. persecute and prosecute.

PERSPIRY. Full of, covered with, perspiration: coll. 1860. O.E.D.

PERSUADER. A spur. gen. in pl.: from ca. 1788; ob. Grose, 2nd ed., ‘The kidney clapped his persuader to his pad, but the traps boned him.’—2. A pistol: 1841, Leman Rede; slightly ob.—3. Hence, any other weapon: from ca. 1845, but anticipated by Marryat in 1833 (‘three rattans twisted into one’; to enforce submission).—4. A whip: coachman’s (—1887). Baumann.—5.
**PERSUADING PLATE**

"jenny" (q.v.) or other burglar's tool: o. : from ca. 1850; ob. Cf.

*persuading plate.* C, from ca. 1880; ob. 'An iron disk used in forcing safes: it revolves on a pivot, and is fitted with a cutting point,' F. & H. Persuasion. Nationality, sex; sort, kind; description: 1864 (S.O.D.). 'A little dark man . . . of French persuasion,' Ex persuasion, religious belief, opinion. (In C 20, jocular coll.)

pert as a parrmount, as. Very cheerful: from ca. 1812. **Pert [pert-long, pert-longs](C.):** adj., low coll.; adv. sol.: C 19-20. Baumann.

perly; often, illogically, spelt purty. Pretty; sol.: mostly Cockney (and dial.). Baumann.


Baumann.


Peruvian Jews; Peruvians. Russian and Polish Jews: a Transvaal coll. : from ca. 1898. 'Applied in the first instance to certain Jews from South America, who had failed, under Baron Hirsch's Colonisation Scheme, to make a living there, and who subsequently made their way to the goldfields of South Africa,' Pettman.

pervent. See per.

perverted. A Society euphemism for bu****red: from ca. 1918. Philip MacDonald, R.I.F., 1933, 'I'm perverted if I know!'

*pester; pester-up. (V.i. and v.t., resp.) To pay; pay up: o.: from ca. 1920. James Curtis, The Gift Kid, 1936. Ex Romanon peser, to pay.


pestle, v.i. To colt (of a man): low: C 19-20; ob. Ex pestle, n. 3.

pestle, knight of the. See the knight paragraph.

pestle of a lark. Anything very small; a trifle: late C 16-early 18: coll. >, by 1690. S.E. Fuller calls Rutlandshire 'Indeed . . . but the Pestle of a Lark. ' (O.E.D.)

pestle of a portuge. A portuge, a C 16-early 17 Portugese gold coin worth about 2¢: jocular coll. (C 17) verging on S.E. Fletcher, 1822. O.E.D.

pestle of pork. A leg: low coll.: C 19-20; very ob. Ex dial., where the phrase = the shank end of a ham, etc., or pork cooked fresh

petard. A trick or a cheating at dice, prob. by some kind of bluff or by the use of loaded dice: gambler's: (q. orig. coll.) C 18; in early period. J. Wilson, 1862 (O.E.D.). Probs. ex., or suggested by, host with his own petard.

Pete Jenkins. An auxiliary clown: circus: from ca. 1860; very ob. Ex Pete Jenkins, who (d. 1885) passed 'rustics' in the audience.

**PETER-HUNTING JEMMY**

**Peter.** A coll. abbr. of Peter-see-me (itself ex Peter Ximenes, a famous cardinal), a Spanish wine: C 17. Beaumont & Fletcher, Chances.

*Peter. A trunk, portmanteau, bag: (in C 19-20) a box or a safe: c. : 1658, Head ; Smollett; Grose; Lyttton; Horsley, 1879; James Spenser, Limey Breaks In, 1934. 'A "Peter" is a safe made from tool-proof steel and usually has safety lings made from a special sort of cement,—this being the predominant C 20 c. sense in Britain.' Prob. origin: perhaps because 'noted' by thieves: in allusion to Simon Peter's occupation. Cf. S.E. peterman, a fisherman. See also Peter to pay Paul. —2. Hence, any bundle, parcel or package; a tramp's sack: c. : from ca. 1810. Vaux; H., 1st ed.; Horsley, 1879.—3. A kind of loaded dice, hence the using of them: c. : ca. 1650-1760. Wilson, The Cheats, Prob. the correct form is petards, as above: it is F. & H. that lists under peter. Wilson's spelling is Peterly, as above: Ex the blue Peter, which indicates that a ship is about to start. Notes and Queries, 7th Series, iv, 356.—3. Hence, v.i. and t., to run up prices: auctioneers': from ca. 1890.—4. See peter out.

*petr-biter. A stealer of portmanteaux: c.: late C 17-20; ob. Also biter of peters, as in B.E. See peter, n. 1. Cf.:

*petr-claim. The same; esp. a carriage-thief: c.: late C 19-20. See peter, n. 1.

*petr-claiming. The stealing of parcels and/or bags, esp. at railway stations: 1894, A Morrison, 'From this, he ventured on peterclaiming,' (O.E.D.). Ex peter, n. 1.

Peter Collins. An imaginary person on whom the green are asked to call for a green-handed (or handled) rake: theatrical and circuses: (—1889); ob. J. C. Coleman in Barrère & Leland.


*petr-drag. See peter-hunting. C: C 19-20; ob. See peter, n. 1, and drag.

Peter Funk. A member of a gang operating 'shadily' at public auctions: late C 19-20. (Manchon.)

Peter Grieveus. A fretful child: coll.: mid-C 19-20; ob.—2. 'A miserable, melancholy fellow; a croaker': from ca. 1860; coll. H., 1874.—7. a euphemism of creepy Jesus.


Peter Gunner, will kill all the birds that died last summer. A C 18-19 (?: also late C 17) c.p.: 'A piece of wit commonly thrown out at a person walking through a street or village near London, with a gun in his hand,' Grose, 2nd ed. Ex preceding entry.

*petr-hunting. The stealing of portmanteaux, boxes, etc., esp. from carriages: c.: Vaux, 1812; ob. Also peter-drag and peter-lay. See peter, n. 1. Whence:

*petr-hunting jemmy. 'A small crowbar used in
smashing the chains securing luggage to a vehicle', F. H. c. : from ca. 1810; ob. Vaux.


*petter-man, petter-man. One who uses 'unlawful engines in catching fish in the river Thames', Bailey: late c. 17–early 18; c. Ex petterman, a fisherman.—2. One who specialises in stealing bags, etc., from carriages: from ca. 1810; ob. 1812, The Sporting Magazine (O.E.D.); Anon., The Story of a Lancashire Thief, 1863. Ex petter, n., 1.

petter out. To cease gradually; come to an end: U.S. (1854) anglicised as a coll. almost imm.; by 1930, S.E. H.; 1899 ('To run short, or give out'), makes no mention of America; The Saturday Review, Jan. 9, 1892, 'Human effort of all kinds tends to "petter out"' (O.E.D.). 'Orig. U.S., of stream or lode of ore. ? from Fr. pêtré ... ? cf. to fissle out', W.


*petter that! See petter, v., 1.

Petter to pay Paul, rob; in C. 17–19, occ. borrow from, as in Urquhart. To take from one person to give to another: C. 15–20; proverbial coll., >, ca. 1820, S.E. Barclay, 1548, has clothe (surviving till C. 18). Lyttoun, Paul Clifford, 'If so be as your name's Paul, may you always rob Peter [a portmaneau] in order to pay Paul.' Prob. not ex the relations of the two Apostles but 'merely a collocation of familiar names, Pierre et Paul being used in Fr. like Tom, Dick and Harry in Eng.': W.

*petterer. (Also petterman; see petter-man.) The same as petter-man, 2; c. of ca. 1840–70. H., 1st ed.


*petter-man. See petter-man.

*petter, biter. Cf. petter-biter.

Petter's needle, go or pass through St. (Of children) to be severely disciplined: C. 19–20 semi-proverbial coll. and dial. ? ex the Biblical eye of a needle.

petit(e) degree. Incorrect for pedigree: C. 16. O.E.D.

peto. A Society evasion, ca. 1905–14, for p.t.o. (please turn over). Ware.

petre. Salopet. late C. 18–20; S.E. until ca. 1880 (though long ob.); then technical coll.

Petro Hussars, the. 'The Armoured-Car force sent to Egypt in 1916': naval, then military: latter 1816–18. 'Most of the officers had served in Hussar Regiments,' F. & Gibbons.

[petticoat. See at pace, go the.]

*petticoat, up one's. Unduly, or very, familiar with a woman: low: C. 18–20; ob.


petifogger. See petty foggier.


petting-party. A party at which much caressing is done; esp. a party held for that purpose: orig. U.S.; anglicised ca. 1925. Cf. necking.


pettycoat. See petticoat.

pew. A seat, esp. in take a pew, park oneself in a pew, etc.: C. 20. P. G. Wodehouse, A Prefect's Uncle, 1903, 'The genial "take a pew" of one's equal inspires confidence'; Manchon.

pew, stump the. To pay: low: ca. 1820–30. Moncrieff, Tom and Jerry, 1823, 'It's everything now o' days to be able to flash the screens—sport the rhino—show the needful—post the pony—nap the rent—stump the pew.' Prob. pew is an abbr. of peeter, 1.

pew-opener's muscle. A muscle in the hand: medical (—1902). Sir James Brodie, 'because it helps to contract and hollow the palm of the hand for the reception of a grapple':


pewy. (Of country) so enclosed by fences as to form a succession of small fields: sporting (esp. hunting): 1829 (O.E.D.). Ex the shape of the old-fashioned big, enclosed pew.

pferty. Incorrect for furphy, q.v.—paffing. See pilting, 2.

[ph- is notable for the number of incorrect forms: most of which, thanks to the O.E.D., are noted hereinunder.]

phagn, is a spelling error for phænigm: mid.-C. 17–mid-19. O.E.D.

[phagous, -eating, appears in jocular S.E. verging on coll.]

phaleral. Erroneous for phalarical: C. 17. O.E.D.

phallicus. A C. 17 error for felucca, phan a C. 16 one for fan, phane (C. 16–17) for fans, phang(ed) (C. 17) for fang(ed), phangle for fangie in C. 17, while phantomisation is a ghostword. O.E.D.

phan. See fan, n. 3.

phan; or fan; in the North of England, often peeble, by evasion. A phantom-glass, i.e. that sheet of plate-glass, which, set obliquely on the stage, reflects from below, or from the side, the illusion known as Pepper's ghost: showmen's (—1909). Ware.

phos, phoss, even foss. Phosphorus: s., >, ca. 1890, coll. abbr.: from ca. 1810.—2. Esp. in the e. of early C. 19. a bottle of phosphorus, used by crackmen to get a light. Ex Bal.; Vaux. Whence phosse, q.v.

phogene. An anti-gas instructor, phogene being a German poison-gas; hence, foolish or profane talk (cf. gas, q.v.): military: 1916–18. F. & Gibbons.


phorry, ooc. foxy, jaw. Phosphorus necrosis of the jaw: coll.: 1889. O.E.D.


photographic. (Of a face) easily or strikingly photographable: coll.: from ca. 1910.

phrase; incorrectly, phrasey. Abounding in or notable for phrases: coll.: 1849. O.E.D.


phuese, phuyey. Errors for the fusee of a watch. O.E.D.

phut, go. (See also fut.) To come to grief; fizzle out; be a failure: coll.: 1892, Kipling (O.E.D. Sup.): A. S. M. Hutchinson, 1908. Partly echoic (cf. phil), partly ex Hindustani phatna, to explode. O.E.D.

phuz. Incorrect for fuzz, ‘loose volatile matter’: C. 17.—phyl Wrong for fie; —phyliarea (-area), phyllet, phyllira. ± errors for phylliga and fist. O.E.D.


phynosis. Incorrect for phimosis: C. 17. O.E.D.

phys. See phia.


physic, v. To treat, dose, with medicine, esp. with a purgative: C. 14–20; S. E. till ca. 1830, then coll. Cf. physic, n. 2. (O.E.D.)—2. ‘To punish in pure or pocket’; 1821, Egans; ob. Cf. physic, n. 3.


physical. See jerks.

physical torture. A rare variant (1915) of the preceding. F. & Gibbons. Ex physical culture.

physicula.

physicul literature. Physical powers: coll.: 1824. Rare in C. 19, 20; o. E.D.

physicking, n. and adj. Corresponding to physic, n. 2., and physic, v. 1 and 2: mid-C. 17–20: S.E. until ca. 1810, then coll. Bee, 1823, both n. and adj.


physiognomy. The face or countenance: (low) coll.: C. 17–20; ob. Fletcher & Shirley, ‘I have seen that physiognomy: were you never in prison?’ O.E.D. Cf. physiognomy.

physiognomist. See conjuror.


phys. See phiz; cf. physiog, physog; note phymotherapy.

physog. See physog.

pi; gen. pie. A miscellaneous collection of books out of the alphabet, q.v.: booksellers’ coll.: from ca. 1880; ob. Ex printer’s pie(s).—2. (Only pl.) A pious exhortation: Public Schools’ and universities’: 1870, O.E.D.—3. Cf. the adj., whence pi, a pious person: late C. 19–20; ob. Ex pious.

pi, adj. Pious; virtuous; sanctimonious: schools’ and universities’: 1870, O.E.D., whose first record of the adj., however, is for 1891. Cf. pi, n., 2.

pi-gas, -jaw. A serious admonition or talk: schools’ and universities’?: (jaw) from ca. 1875; -gas, ca. 1880–1915. Ex:

pi-jaw. To give moral advice to; admonish: schools’ and universities’: from middle 1880’s. Ex pi, adj. F. & H., 1902, quoting a glosary of 1891, ‘Ho pi-jawed me for thoking.’ Cf. pi-gas, pi-squash, and .

pi-squash. A prayer-meeting; any similar assemblage: schools’ and universities’: from ca. 1910; slightly ob. W. Ex pi, adj., q.v. Cf. pi-gas, q.v.

piache. Mad; on stone-mad, often stone-piache: Regular Army’s: late C. 19–20. B. & P. (p. 222); Ex Hindustani.


piano. To sing small, take a back seat: Society: ca. 1870–80. Ex musical piano, softly. (Ware.)

pianoforte legs. The legs of a bishop in ecclesiastical costume: jocular (—1923). Manchon. Ex the former draping of the mahogany, therefore black, legs of a piano: cf. ampute one’s mahogany.

pizzazz, walk the. (Of prostitutes) to look for men: ca. 1820–70. ‘Jon Bee.’ Ex the pizzazz—wrongly so called—of Covent Garden.—2. Hence, ca. 1870–1910, to walk the streets: likewise of prostitutes.

pibroch is occ. used erroneously as is = bagpipes from ca. 1720. O.E.D.


pican dummy. See picaniny.

pica, on the. ‘On the make’, prowling for easy money: coll.: C. 18. Smollett, trans. of Gil Blas, ‘I see you have been . . . a little on the
PICCADILLY BUTCHERS, THE

pickaro.’ Ex Sp. pickaro, a rogue, via the English pickaro (Sp. picarón).

PICCADILLY BUTCHERS, the. The First Life Guards, says F. & H.; First Horse Guards, says H.; the Life Guards, F. & Gibbons: C. 19–20 military; ob. They were called out to quell the Burdett or Piccadilly Riots of 1810. (Actually, only one rioter was killed.) Cf. Patent Sausages.


PICCADILLY window. A monochrome: London (non-artistic) style of the 1890’s; ob. Ware. Because frequently seen in Piccadilly.

piccaninny; occ. piccaninny or pickaninny(n). A child: coll. bordering on S.E.: 1785, Grose; 1817, ‘The little piccaninny has my kindest wishes’ (O.E.D.). Orig. applied, in the West Indies and America, to Negro and other coloured children. Ex C. 17 ‘Negro diminutive of Sp. pequeño or Portug. pequeno, small ...’ cf. Port. pequeno, tiny: ‘it is uncertain whether the word arose in Sp. or Port. colonies, or in the E. or W. Indies, but it has spread remarkably,’ W.

piccaninny, adj. Little: Australian coll.: from 1840’s; slightly ob. Morris. Ex preceding.


pick, v.t. To eat: 1786, Capt. T. Morris, ‘If it wasn’t for shame, I could pick till to-morrow at dinner’: s. till C. 20, then coll. Ex S.E. sense, to eat daintily.


pick, take a. To be spiteful: Glasgow (—1934). Cf. pick at and pick on.

pick a hole in (a person’s) coat. To be censorious: coll. verging on S.E.: late C. 16–19. Anon., Mar-Prelate’s Epitome, 1688; Ray; Manning in a letter to Lamb. Apperson. Whence S.E. pick holes in.


pick and cut. To pick pockets: low coll. († orig. a.): C. 17. Shakespeare, Winter’s Tale, ‘I picked and cut most of their festival purses.’


pick at. ‘To chaff; to annoy,’ C. J. Dennis: Australian coll. (—1916). Ex dial. Cf. pick on.

pick-axe. ‘A fiery mixture of Cape smoke, pontao—a dark, dry wine mediocritiy valuable—

and ginger-beer, in much request in the diamond fields,’ Pettman: South African; c. 1870–90. Boyle, To the Cape for Diamonds, 1873. Ex its ‘brutality’.

pick flies off. To find fault with: tailors: from ca. 1860; ob.


pick-me-up. A stimulating liquid, orig. and mainly liquor: coll.: 1867, Latham, ‘To drink home-brewed ale ... instead of pick-me-ups’—2. Hence, any person or thing (e.g. seaside air) with a bracing effect: 1876, ‘Guida’ (of a person). O.E.D.

pick on. To gird at; annoy actively: coll.: C. 20. Ex dial. pick upon. The O.E.D.’s ‘Now U.S. dial.’ ignores the coll. Eng. usage, which undoubtedly exists, esp. as = pick a quarrel with. Cf. the v. pick up, q.v.

pick on, get a. See get a pick on.

pick out robins’ eyes. To side-stitch black cloth or any delicate material: tailors: from ca. 1860; ob. by 1920.


pick the bird. To dissect a corpse: medical students’ (—1923). Manchon.

pick the daisies (at — Station). To rob passengers arriving in London by the Continental boat-trains: c.: from ca. 1920.—2. Hence, pick-up (man), a luggage-chief: c. (—1932). ‘Stuart Wood.’

pick-up. A chance (esp. if carnal) acquaintance (gen. female): low coll. (—1895). Funk & Wagnalls. Ex the S.E. pick up with, to make acquaintance with someone casually met.—2. See pick the daisies, 2.—3. A recovery of form: lawn-tennis coll.: from ca. 1927. E.g. ‘A wonderful pick-up! From 1–5 to 5 games all’.—4. A pick-up match: coll.: late C. 19–20. One in which the opposing sides are chosen by the two captains selecting one player alternately.—5. Hence, a team in such a match: coll.: C. 20. Both 4 and 5 occur in Alec Waugh, The Loom of Youth, 1917.

pick up, v. To cheat, grossly deceive (a person): low (—1860); † by 1900. H., 2nd ed. Ex:—2. To ‘establish contact’ with an unwary person: c. (—1812); ob. Vaux.—3. To meet casually, esp. of a man on the look-out for a girl: late C. 19–20. Cf. preceding entry. Orig. of harlot ‘picking up a man’ c. or low: from ca. 1810 (Vaux, 1812. Cf. sense 2.) Cf. the dial. nuances recorded by the E.D.D.—4. To take (a person) up sharply: coll.: C. 20.—5. (Cf. senses 2, 3.) To rob a man thus: he is allured into speaking with a harlot, whose bully then comes up to extort money or who herself decoys after taking his money ‘in advance’ and perhaps his watch as well: c. (—1861). Mayhew.

pick-up man. See pick the daisies.

pick up one’s crumbs. To be convalescent: coll.: 1680, Lyly; 1754, Berthelson; in mid-C. 19—
20. dial. I.e. to put on weight as well as to eat healthily.

pi|kanin|ny. See pic|an|ny.

"pick'er-up. A thief or a swindler 'pick'ing up' an unwary person: c. (-1812); ob. Vaux. See pick up, v.—2. Hence, a harlot: c. mid-C. 19-20. ob.—3. 'A dealer buying on quotations trickly obtained from a member trapped into giving a wrong price'; F. & H.: Stock Exchange: from ca. 1896. coll. and stealers. Hands: coll.: C. 17-20; slightly ob. Shakespeare, 'So I do still by these pickers and stealers.' Ex the Catechism 'To keep my hands from picking and stealing', which dates from 1648-9 (O.E.D.). Baumann considered Shakespeare's use to be s.; the O.E.D. considers the phrase, at no matter what period, to be S.E.


pick|le. A predicament, sorry plight, unpleasant difficulty: mid-C. 16-20: S.E. till C. 19, then coll. Byron, 'The Turkish batteries thrash'd them ... into a sad pickle' (O.E.D.). A fig. use of the lit. secondary S.E. sense, pickled vegetables.—2. Hence, perhaps via rod in pickle, a mischievous or—ob.—a troublesome child; any person constantly causing trouble; coll.: the former, late C. 18-20; the latter, late C. 18-19. Anon., History of a Schoolboy, 1788, 'He told Master Blotch he was a pickle, and dismissed him to his cricket.' O.E.D.—3. Hence, a wild youth or young man: s. or coll.: ca. 1810-40. Lex. Bal.—4. A wretchedly produced, cheap book: booksellers' (-1887); ob. Baumann. Isp. one that won't sell.

pick|le, v. To humbug; to 'gammon': C. 19. Perhaps ex nautical S.E. sense, to rub salt or vinegar on the back of a person just flogged.


pick|le, rod in. See rod in pickle.


pick|le, case of. A quarrel; a serious breakdown: C. 19-20; ob.


Picky, a. A picky person. Picky, and properly Pickier-Hatch, go to the Manor of, late C. 10-mid-17; go to Picket-Hatch Grange, ca. 1820-40. To go whooping; to whose: c., says Gross; more prob. s. or low coll. In Shakespeare's time, specifically a brothely tavern in Turnmill Street, Clerkenwell; hence, from ca. 1630, any brothel or low locality. A picket hatch, i.e. a hatch with piloes, was a common brothel-sign. Shakespeare, in Merry Wives; Jonson; Randolph, 'Why the whores of Pict-Hatch, Turnbull, or the unmoral bawds of Bloombury.'


pic|nicky. As at or as of a picnic: coll.: 1870. O.E.D.

coll. (or pics.), the. The illustrations: journalists and authors: C. 20. Neil Bell, Winding Road, 1934.—2. Occ. in the singular, of an artist's picture: artista': C. 20. Ibid. See also pic, 1.

Pict-Hatch. See Pickt-Hatch.

picture. A portrait, a likeness, of a person: C. 16-20: S.E. until ca. 1890, then coll. when not affected. O.E.D.—2. A fine example; a beau-ideal: coll. (-1870). E.D.D.; Baumann. E.g., 'a picture of health'; often ironical as in a pretty picture; a strange figure (F. & H., 1902).—3. Hence, a very picturesque or beautiful object: coll.: from ca. 1890. E.g. 'She's a picture.' In Berkshire dial. as early as 1859 (E.D.D.). See also oil-painting and pretty as paint.

picture, fake a. See fake a picture.

picture, not in the. Inappropriate, incongruous; (in racing) unplaced; coll.: late C. 19-20. Cf. not in it.

picture or portrait, King's or Queen's. See Queen's picture.


picture-frame. See sheriff's picture-frame.


pictures. A jocular name for the fritches of bacon, &c., when hanging to a ceiling or against a wall: South Lancashire a. (-1905) rather than dial. E.D.D. (Sup.).

pictures, lawful. See lawful pictures.

pictures, the. The cinema: coll.: C. 1915, Thomas Burke, 'Mother and Father ... go to the pictures at the Palladium near Balham Station' (O.E.D. Sup.).—2. Hence, an operatic theatre: military: 1916; ob. F. & Gibbons. Under other (e.g.) one sees fantastic things in dream.

piddle. Urine; occ. the act of making water: coll., mostly nursery: C. 19-20. Ex:


piddin, rarely piddun, often pigeon; occ. pidgin, Pidgin- or pigeon-English, 'the jargon, consisting chiefly of English words, often corrupted in pronunciation, and arranged according to Chinese idiom, used for intercommunication between Chinese and Europeans at seaports etc.,' S.O.D.:

pie, like. Zealously, vigorously: s. verging on coll. from ca. 1885; ob. Henley, 1887, 'I go for Olman Unt like pie.' † ex zestful eating of pie. 


pie, put in. See put in pie. 


pie-can. A fool; a half-wit: lower classes ( — 1902). Manchon. cf. jugging and muffing. 

pie-jaw or piejaw. Incorrect forms of pia-jaw. A. H. Tod, Charterhouse, 1900. 

pie in the sky. Paradise; heaven: from ca. 1818. Ex the U.S. song, 'There'll be pie in the sky when you die.' 


piebald. V.t, formed ( — 1909) ex, and corresponding to piebald eye, q.v. 


piece. A woman or girl: C. 14–20: S.E. until late C. 18, then (low) coll. and gen. pejorative. Esp. sexually, as in Grose, 3rd ed.: 'A damned good or bad piece; a girl who is more or less active and skillful in the amorous congress'. (Also C. 19–20 dial.) Cf. the Cambridge toast, ca. 1810–30, 'May we never have a piece (pussie) that will injure the Constitution.' — 2. A half-crown: gen. two pieces, 5s., or three pieces, 7s. 6d.; racing o.: C. 20. Abbr. half-crown piece. — 3. A slice of bread: Scottish, esp. Glaswegian, coll.: late C. 19–20. — 4. See piece the. 


piece, on. Very much; very quickly: military (other ranks): from ca. 1890. A man buying many drinks within a very short space of time is said to get them in on piece. 

piece, (right) through the. For the duration of the war: military coll., mostly New Zealand: 1915; ob. B. & P. Ex sitting through a play. 

piece, the. The thing, matter, affair; it: lower classes: late C. 19–20. E.g.: 'He'll fight the piece out with you.' 


Piece of work. A commotion, fuss, disorderly bustle: coll.: 1810, 'He kept jaming us, and making a piece of work all the time,' O.E.D.— 2. A person: from ca. 1920. Always pejorative; nearly always preceded by nasty ( 'X is a nasty piece of work'); the reference is either to moral character or to physical appearance, esp. looks, the latter often with an ethical implication. 

piece-out. Employment, a job (esp. if temporary); a loan: tailors: from ca. 1860. F. & H.; The Tutor and Cutter, Nov. 29, 1928. Ex the S.E. v. sense, to enlarge by the addition of a piece: cf. also S.E. piece-work. 

pieces, all to. Gen. with be or go. Exhausted; collapsed; ruined: from ca. 1665: coll. till C. 19, then S.E. Pepys, Aug. 29, 1667, 'The Court is at this day all to pieces'; Ray, of a bankrupt. 

pieces, fall or go to. To be brought to childbirth: mid-C. 19–20: s. > coll. 

piejaw. See pie-jaw. 

pieman. The player who criers at pitch-and-toss: from ca. 1850; ob. Ex the real pieman's cry, 'Hot pies, toss or buy, toss or buy'. H. — 2. See pi-man. 

pier-head jump, do a. 'To join a ship at the last moment': nautical: C. 20. Bowen. 

piercer. A piercing eye: 1762, Foote, 'She had but one eye, . . . but that was a piercer', O.E.D.: s. until C. 19, then coll.; slightly ob. — 2. A squint-eye says F. & H., 1902; I suspect this to be an error. 

piffer. A member of the Punjab Irregular Frontier Force; military: from ca. 1890. O.E.D. (Sup.). Ex piff, a thinned form of Pfuff, to blow. 

piffing. An † variant of spiffing, q.v.: never very gen.— 2. N., sub-calibre firing: artillerymen's coll.: from ca. 1825. Also naval gunners', gen. as piffing: Bowen. 


piffie, v. To talk, to act, in an ineffective, esp. in a feeble, manner: dial. ( — 1847) > ca. 1880, s. >, ca. 1926, S.E. Halliwell. For origin, see the n. — 2. See the n. — 2. 

piffer. An ineffective trifier; a twaddler; 'an earnest futility, i.e. a person with a moral end in view, and nothing to back it but a habit of talking, or writing sentimental rubbish', F. & H.; 1892 (O.E.D.): s. >, ca. 1926, S.E. Ex pifflie, v. 

piffling, adj. Trivial; feebly foolish; twaddling: C. 20: s. >, ca. 1926, S.E. Ex piffle, v. 

pie, a sixpence: o.: from ca. 1620; ob. Fletcher, 1622; Grose. Cf. hog, q.v.— 2. A policeman, a detective; esp. (also grunter) a policeman-runner; o. of ca. 1810–90. Vaux, H., who, in 1873, writes, 'Now almost exclusively applied by London thieves to a plain-clothes man, or a “nose”:'. — 3. A pressman: printers': 1841, Savage's Dict. Cf. donkey, q.v.— 4. See hog, n., Cambridge University sense.— 5. A garment completely spoiled; tailors; from ca. 1890; ob. Also pork. — 6. Hence, goods returned by a retailer to a wholesaler, or by a wholesaler to manufacturer: drapers': from ca. 1870. — 7. See Figs.— 8. A small piece, esp. a bit, i.e. a section, of orange
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PIG-YOKE

pig, v.t. To damage or spoil completely; tailors' C. 20. To treat as a pig would.
pig, bleed like a. To bleed much; coll.: C. 17-20. Dekker & Webster, 1607. 'He bleeds like a pig, for his crown's crack'd.' In C. 17-18, occ. stuck pig.
pig, China Street. A Bow Street officer: ca. 1810-80; c., or low a. Lex. Bal. See pig, 2.
pig, follow like an Anthony. See Anthony pig.—pig, Goodyer's. See Goodyer's.
pig, keep a. To occupy the same rooms as another student: 'Oxford undergraduates' (—1887); ob. Baumann.
pig, long. See long pig.
pig, stare like a stuck. To look fixedly or in terror: coll.: 1749, Smollett, 'He stared like a stuck pig at my equipment.'
pig-a-back. A corruption, eep. children's, of pick-a-back. See piggy-back.
pig and goose, brandy is Latin for. A c.p. excuse for drinking a dram of brandy after eating pig or goose: ca. 1780-1880. Grose, 2nd ed.
Pig and Tinder-Box, the. The Elephant and Castle tavern, London: ca. 1820-90. Egan, 1821, 'Toddle to the Pig and Tinder-Box ... a drap of comfort there.'
Pig and Whistle Line, the. See Chiddley Dyke.
pig at home, have boiled. To be master in one's own house, 'an allusion to a well-known poem and story', Grose, 1785: coll.: ca. 1780-1830.
Pig Bridge. 'The beautiful Venetian-like bridge over the Cam, where it passes St. John's College, and connecting its quads. Thus called because the Johnians are styled pigs' (Ware): Trinity College, Cambridge: mid-C. 19-20. It may pull the wrong. To make a mistake: ca. 1540-1870; from ca. 1750, also get the wrong pig or sow by the ear. Coll. Heywood, 1546.
pig-eater. An endearment; C. 19.
pig in a poke. A blind bargain: mid-C. 16-20; coll. till C. 19, then S.E. A poke here was a bag: indeed, bag is occ. substituted.
pig (or sow) in the arse or tail, grease or stuff a fat. To give unnecessarily, e.g. to a rich man: the grease ... arse form, ca. 1670-1830; the stuff ... tail, late C. 18-19: low coll.
pig in the sun, more like a. To snore vigorously or storiton, or slide, mid-C. 19-20. (Manchon.)
Pig Islander. A New Zealander: Australian coll.: late C. 19-20. Ex the (formerly) numerous wild pigs in rural N.Z.
pig it. Late C. 19-20 coll. form of ob. S.E. pig, live filthily together.
pig-jump, -jumper, -jumping. 'To jump ... from all four legs, without bringing them together': a horse that does this; the doing thereof: Australian: resp. 1893, 1892, 1893. O.E.D.
pig-meter. A bullock that will not fatten: Australian: 1884, 'Olive Boldrewood'. Because fit only for pigs' food.
pig-months. Those months in which there is an r (September—April): non-aristocratic: C. 19-20; ob. Ware, 'The months in which you may more safely eat fresh pork than in the ... summer months.'
pig of his or one's own sow, (gen. give one a). To pay one back in his own coin: semi-proverbial coll.: ca. 1530-1890. 'Proverbs' Heywood; Fielding; Reade. (Apperson.)
pig-on-bacon. A bill drawn on a branch firm not gen. known to such: commercial: from not later than 1920. O.E.D. (Sup.). Its two signatures are therefore worth, or equivalent to, only one.
pig-scorce. A dullard; a lout: coll.: ca. 1650-1900. Massinger; Meredith.
Pig-Tail. A Chinese: 1886, The Cornhill, July (O.E.D.): coll. till ca. 1905, then S.E.—2 (pig-tail, or as one word.) An old name for low urban coll.: ca. 1810-45. Ware, 'From the ancients clinging to the 18th century mode of wearing the hair'.
pig-tail, adj. Chinese, as in pig-tail brigade, party, land: coll.: late C. 19-20. O.E.D.
pig-tub. The receptacle for kitchen-refuse: lower classes' (—1887); slightly ob. Baumann.
pig will make a good brawn to breed on, a brinded. 'A red-headed man will make a good stallion,' Ray: a c.p. of ca. 1670-1750. (Apperson.)
A quadrant; a sextant: nautical: yet, 'This was the "no plus ultra" of
navigation; ... old Smallsloe could not do better with his pig-yoke and compasses.' Somewhat ob. Ex the roughly similar shape.


E.g. 'This is his pigeon.' (O.E.D. Sup.) Prob. ex pidgin, 1.

pigeon, v. See pigeon the news.—2. To deceive grossly; dupe; swindle: 1675. Cotton; 1807. E. S. Barrett, 'Having one night been pigeoned of a vast property', O.E.D., which classifies as S.E.; but surely s. (cf. pigeon, n., .)


pigeon, milk the. See milk.—pigeon, Paul's. See Paul's pigeon.—pigeon, pluck a. See pigeon, n., 6.

pigeon and kill a crow, shoot at a. To blunder deliberately: coll.: from the 1630's; ob. Apperson.

*pigeon-cracking. Same as next, q.v.: 1859, H.; ob.


pigeon-holes. See pigeon-hole, last sense.

pigeon the news. To send news by carrier-pigeon: a. verging on coll.: from ca. 1820. 'Jon Bee.' Cf. pigeon, n., 4.

pigeonier. A swindler or a sharper: 1849: coll. >, ca. 1900. S.E. Ex pigeon, v., 2. (O.E.D.)

*pigeons, fly the. To steal coal as one carte it: c. (— 1823). Manchon. Cf. fly a blue pigeon.

pigeons with one bean, catch (or take) two. To 'kill two birds with one stone'; semi-proverbial coll.: ca. 1650—1700. North's Dial of Two Princes, 1657; Ray. Apperson.

piggery. A room in which one does just as one wishes and which is rarely cleaned: coll.: C. 20. Prob. suggested by S.E. swaggery.

piggot. Piggot; Pigott. To forge: political coll.: 1880—ca. 1886. 'A reminiscence of the Parnell Commission: the expression was born in the House of Commons, 28th Feb., 1889,' F. & H.—2. Ware shows that it was used also as 'to tell an unblushing lie to', gen. in the passive; that there was a n. corresponding to this sense of the v.; that the term derived from the forger Pigott—which is the correct spelling.
1823; 1837, Dickens, "You'll find yourself in bed in something less than a pig's whisper.


Dickens. Hence:

pigskin, knight of the. A jockey: sporting: 1898, The Sporting Times, Nov. 26, "Riding rings round their crack knights of the pigskin'.

pigmen(e)y, occ. in pl. (-eys). An endurance: C. 14–early 19; S.E. till C. 18, when (Grosen, 1756) low till if used to a woman. (But it is extant in several dial.: E.D.D.) Lit., pig's eye, with intrusive a.

pigsty. See pig-sty.—pigtail. See pig-tail, n. 2.

pijaw. An occ. form of *pi-jaw (see *pig and *pi-jaw).


pike, prior. See *pike I.

*pike, tip a. To walk; to depart; esp. escape, give the slip to: c.: C. 18–mid-19. Song, 1712, "Tho' he tips them a pike, they oft nap him again." Cf. *pike off and *pike on the beam.

pike I an interjection, implying the form *prior claim or privilege: schools': C. 19–20; ob. ? I go first. (Cf. bags and bags I: and pledge.) Also the form in prior *pike!


*pike off. To depart; run away: c.: late C. 17–20; ob. In mid-C. 19–20, it is also common in dial.—2. To die: c.: late C. 17–20; ob. B.E., both senses: elaborations of *pike, go, die.

*pike on the beam (or ben). To run away as fast as possible: c.: mid-C. 17–18. Coles, 1676; A New Canning Dict., 1726. Origin, meaning of beam? Prob. it = beam, hence: excellent; hence, run away on a good road, i.e. to good purpose.

*pikeed off, p.l.pl.adj. Clear away, safe; dead: c.: late C. 17–20; ob. B.E.


*piker. A tramp or a vagrant; occ. a Gypsy: c. (—1874) ex dial. (—1838). Borrow, Lavo-Lil, 1873. Ex *pike, v., 1, or *pike it.—2. The nose: North (Northumberland) low s.; in parts of S.E., low


pikestaff. The penis: low coll.: C. 18–20; ob.

pikestaff, plain a. See plain.
pills. 6. 8. A custom-house officer: nautical (—1890). Ware, 'Because both are so very searching.' Cf. sense 1. 9. A cigarette: Canadian: C. 20. B. & P.
pill, v. To reject by ballot: 1855. Thackeray, 'He was coming on for election, and was as nearly pilled as any man I ever knew in my life.'—2. v.i., to twaddle, talk platitudinously: university: ca. 1895-1910. —3. To fail (a candidate) in an examination: 1908. A. S. M. Hutchinson (O.E.D. Sup.). Ex sense 1.
pill and pill, frar: a shaveling: C. 16 coll. Bacon, 'These smeared pill-pates, I would say prelates, . . . accused him.' I.o. pill'd or shaven pale.
pill(ie)cock (etc.)-hill. The female pudend: low: C. 16–17. Shakespeare, in King Lear, puns thus on Lear's pocky daughters: 'Pillcock sat on pillcock-hill.'
pilling. The vbl.n. of pill, v. 1. Recorded in 1882; but prob. 27 years earlier.
Ex pillar + millionaire.
pillow-securities. Safe scrip: financial coll.: ca. 1860–1915. Ware quotes The Daily Telegraph, July 8, 1896, "'Pillow securities'—those which do not trouble an investor's dreams at night and which a man need not worry about.'

pillows under folk's, men's, or people's elbows, sew. To give them a false sense of safety or security: coll.: lat. C. 14–17. The Geneva Bible; Wycliffe. O.E.D.
a pin. Perhaps orig. (C. 14) coll., but very soon S.E. — 4. jg. gallons; the vessel holding it: 1570. O.E.D. : perhaps coll. in C. 16-17, but thereafter, if not from the first, S.E.


pin, be down. To be indisposed: coll. : C. 19-20; ob. Cf. peg too low, q.v.

pin, keep in the. To abstain from drinking : from ca. 1835 : dial., and s., >, ca. 1880; coll. Prob. suggested by pin, put in the, q.v. O.E.D. and E.D.D. Cf. peg, put on, the, q.v.

pin, let loose. To have an outburst, esp. go on a drinking-bout: from ca. 1850 : dial., and s., >, ca. 1880; coll. : ob. E.D.D.

pin, nick the. To drink fairly: coll. : mid-C. 17-18. Cf. peg phrases. In old-fashioned tankards, there were often pegs or pins set at equal perpendicular distances.

pin, put in the. To cease ; esp. to give up drinking: from ca. 1830: dial., and s., >, ca. 1880; coll. Mayhew. For semantics, cf. precessing entry; perhaps, however (as the O.E.D. suggests) if a pin or a pin peg for using something fast or for checking motion, the pin being a linch-pin. As a c.p., it = 'put a sock in it!', q.v., i.e. close your mouth!, shut up! : ca. 1860-90; H., 1874.

pin-basket. The youngest child in a completed family: coll. in C. 18-mid-19, then dial. Bailey (folio edition); Grose, 1st ed.; E.D.D.

pin-buttock. A thin or a bony buttock or behind: late C. 16-20 (ob.) : coll. >, ca. 1600, S.E. Shakespeare, All's Well, 'The pin-buttock, the quach-buttock, the brawn-buttock, or any buttock': Opp. barge-arse, q.v., and comparable with S.E. pin-tail.

pin-case or -cushion. The female pudend : low: C. 17-20; ob. See pin, n., 2.

pin-money. A woman's pocket-expenses: late C. 17-20; coll. till C. 19, then S.E. Orig. a settled allowance: e. — C. 17-18; ob. Money gained by women from adultery or occasional prostitution : late C. 19-20; slightly ob. Allusion to pin, n., 2.

pin out, coming over with the. A military c.p. of 1916-18 addressed to one or to whom something is tossed or thrown. Ex the withdrawal of pin from a Mills bomb before it is hurled at the enemy.

pin-pammerly fellow. A covetous miser: coll. : 1 C. 17. Kennett MS. (Hallwell). One who pins up his panniers or baskets : one who hates to lose a pin.

pin-splitter. A first-class golfer : sporting : from ca. 1925. Ex the pin bearing the flag.

pin up. To sell (songs) in the street : lower classes' (—1923). Manchon. Ex affixing music-sheets with drawing-pins.


pinch. v. To steal: from ca. 1670: o. until ca. 1850, then also low s. Head, 1783, 'To pinch all the lurry he thinks it no sin'; very gen. among soldiers, 1914-18. Ex the pinching movement of predatory fingers. Cf. make, nab, nick, win, q.v.—2. Hence (gen. pinch . . . for), to rob (a person): C. 19-20, ob.; o. until ca. 1860, then also low s. Vaux.—3. V.I., to pass bad money for good: o. of ca. 1810-20. Lex. Bal. Ex sense 1. Cf. pinch, n, 2.—4. To arrest: o. : 1860. H.; 2nd ed.; 1861. Mayhew. 'He got arrested for fork there note after he had me pinched.' In C. 20, low a. Similar semantics. Cf. grab, pull in, q.v.—5. To urge (a horse), esp. press it hard ; exhaust by urging: racing coll.: 1737, Bracken, 'It is the vulgar Opinion that a Horse has not been pinch'd . . . when he does not sweat out,' O.E.D.

pinch, on a. A somewhat illiterate variant (—1887) of at a pinch. Baumann.

pinch, on the. A specific either as at pinch, n., 2, or gen. (—1887). The latter, Baumann.


pinch-back, -belly, -commons, -crust, -fart, -fist, -gut, -penny, -plum. A miser; a niggard; all coll. > S.E. — back, C. 17-19; — belly, 1846, Hexham; — commons, Scott, 1822; — niggardly pinchescommonns, ob.; — crust, C. 17-18, as in Rowlands, 1802; — fart, late C. 16-17, as in Nashe; — fist, late C. 16-20, ob.; — gut, a niggardly purser: nautical (—1867), ex-pinch-gut, a miser, mid-C. 17-20, slightly ob.—in C. 19-20, a vulgarism. Cf. pinch-gut money, q.v.; — penny, C. 16-mid-18, as in Lyly, 'They accept one . . . a pinch penny if he be not prodigall'; — plum, from ca. 1860. O.E.D.; F. & H.


pinch-fart. See pinch-back.—pinch-fist See pinch-back.


Pinch-Gut Hall. 'A noted House'—? a tavern-brothel—'at Mitten';—i.e. Mile End Road, East London—'so Nicknam'd by the Tarra, who were half Starved in an East-India Vioage, by their then Commander, who Built (at his return) that famous Fabrick, and (as they say) with what he Pinch'd out of their Bellies', B.E. Late C. 17-mid-18.

pinch-gut money. 'Allow'd by the King to the Seamen, that Serve on Board the Navy Royal, when their Provision Falls short, when they are forced to Drink Water instead of Beer,' B.E. Coll. : from ca. 1860; ob. Smyth, who gives it as pinch-gut pay (1867).

pinch on the parson's side. See parson's side.—pinch-penny, -plum. See pinch-back.


*pinch the regulars. To make an undue share, or keep back part of the booty: o. : C. 19-20. See pinch, v., and regulars.


PINCHING LAY

3. Pincher is the inevitable nickname, mostly naval and military, of any man surnamed Martin: late C. 19-20. Bowen, 'After Admiral Sir William F. Martin, a strict disciplinarian, who was constantly having ratings "pinched" for minor offences.'

"pinching lay." The giving of short change or bad money: c. late C. 19-20; ob. Grose, 2nd ed. Also the pinch. See pinch, v., 3, and n., 2.

Pinclear. See pinch-clear.


Pine-apple, the. On parish relief: lower classes' (-1936). Sweet but prickly.

Pinney. An incorrect spelling of piny: C. 18-20. O.E.D.

Pine. 'To speak in a quick singing high voice': sportman's: first half of C. 19. Ware, 'From the sharp ping of the old musket'.


Pine. n. See entry at pace, go the. -2. See pine.

Pine. -s. See pine, adj. -2. -4. See sense 2 of:

pine. v. Hit with visible effect, or easily and repeatedly: boxing: 1810 (O.E.D.); slightly ob. Ex swordsmanship. -2. To detect; catch in the act: Bootham School (-1926). Hence, the corresponding n. (Anon., Dict. of Bootham Slang, 1925.)


Pine. Dutch. Blood: boxing: 1853, Bradley's Verdant Green, 'That'll take the bark from your nozzle, and distill the Dutch pine for you, won't it?' Ob. by 1910, virtually + by 1930. Ex the S.E. sense (1788).


Pine. I, perish me; strike me pine! A mild, lower classes' expletive: c. 1820. (Manchon.)


Pine. 'Un, The. The Sporting Times: from 1880, says Ware, 'from the tint of the paper, and to distinguish from Brown.' Sportman. By 'Sportman' he prob. means TheSportman's Guide to the Turf, which commenced in 1880.

Pine. wine. Champagne: military (-1909); ob. Ware. Prob. an evasion.

Piney, -eny; variants in -ok-; also pine, pineken eye, etc. (As an endearment) darling, pet: nursery coll. > S.E.: late C. 16-early 17. Nashe, Massinger. Lit. *pink (a narrow, hence little, hence dear) eye. Influenced by pipsney, q.v. O.E.D.


Pinko. Tipsy: military: 1910-19. F. & Gibbons. Cf. blotto: perhaps pinko was derived from pink blotting-paper and then the suffix -o attached.

Pink. See pinkie.

Pinnus, pinner, pinn. A pinafore: resp. C. 19-20, coll.; from ca. 1845, coll. (+ by 1910) and dial.; from ca. 1850 (G. Eliot, 1860), coll., mostly nursery. (F. & H. confuses this pinner with pinner, a double-dipped C. 17-18 coif.)

Pinnacles. Spectacles, eye-glasses: lower classes' (-1909). Ware, 'A corruption of "barnacles".'

Pinnel, occ. pennel. Penal servitude: c. from ca. 1860; ob. By abbr. and corruption of the two defining words. H., 1874, 'As "four-year pinnel."

Pinner. See pinner.

Pinner-up. A seller of broadside songs and ballads: c. 1851, Mayhew; ob. by 1900, virtually + by 1920. Even in 1875, H., could write, 'There are but one or two left now.' Songs were usually pinned-up on canvas against a wall.

Pinnock to pannock, bring. To cause ruin: coll.: C. 16-early 17. Hulot, 1553, 'Bryngye somethynge to nothyng, as the vulgare speache is, to bryngyn pynock to pannock.' Origin obscure.

Pinni. See pina. (Cf. thou forms nanny, nanna.)

Pins. (Rare in singular.) Legs: coll. and dial.: 1530, Anon., Hickosier, 'Than wolde I reme thyder on my pynnes As fast as I might goe'; 1781, General Burgoyne in one of his sprightly comedies, 'I never saw a fellow better set upon his pins.' Ex the primary sense of pin: a peg. Cf. peg-leg.

Pins, on one's. Alive; faring well (cf. S.E. on his legs); in good form: coll. and dial.: from ca. 1810. Lex. Bal.; Vaux.

Pinney and needles. The tinging that accompanies the restoration of circulation in a bennumed limb: coll.: 1844, J. T. Hewlett (O.E.D.); 1876, G. Eliot. 'Pins and needles after numbness.' Ex the feeling of being pricked with those articles.


Pinsrap. A paraspin: back s.: from ca. 1880.

Pint. Praise; recommendation: tailors': from ca. 1860; ob. A pint is sufficient recommendation?

Pint, the price of a. A sum sufficient to buy a pint of ale or beer: coll.: late C. 19-20.

Pint of mahogany. (A glass of) coffee: low (-1909). Ware. Ex its colour.

Pint-pot. (A nickname for) a seller of beer: coll.: ca. 1560-1020. Shakespeare. O.E.D.


Pints round! A c.p. request to one dropping his heels: tailors': from ca. 1850; very ob. by 1902, + by 1918. Cf. pint, q.v.

Pintle. The penis: pintel in A.S., it is S.E. until
ca. 1790, then (dia. and) a vulgarism (ob.): cf. the degradation of pizzle and prick.

pindle-bit or -maid. A mistress; a kept whore;
low coll.: C. 19–20; ob.


pindle-orcan. 'Scarcely Scared, grievously put to it', B.E. at pit-a-pat: coll.: mid C. 17–
early 19. Skinner, 1671 (E.D.D.); Coles, 1676; Grose.
pindle-maid. See pindle-bit.
(E.D.D.).
pindle-ranger. See pindle-fancier and of. pindle-
bit and pindle-merchant.
from ca. 1780. Grose, 1st, 3rd ed.
pinut pots. Turnip tops: back s. (–1860).

H. 1st ed.
pion-pion. A French soldier, esp. a private in the
infantry: coll.: C. 20. Direct ex. Fr.: cf. Plois,
of which it may be a corruption and than which,
from ca. 1912, it has been very much less gen.; more
prob. a perversion of pied, reduplicated (cf. foot-
slobber). See esp. Gaston Esnaut, Le Puits tel qu’il
se part, 1919. See Words !
pip, preceded by the. Syphilis: coll. verging on
The mark on a playing-card: coll.: (−1874); in
C. 20, perhaps rather S.E. H., 5th ed., 'The ace
is often called a "single pip",'.— 3. See pip, get (or
have the) and give the. — 4. A star on the tunic
or jacket of a uniform: military: C. 20. Cf. pipper,
q.v. Hence, 'He is putting up three pipes', he is
now a captain (F. & Gibbons).
pip, v. To blackball: clubs': 1880. Huth's
Buckie. Prob. suggested by pell, v. 1.— 2. To take
a trick from (an opponent): cards: from ca. 1885.
— 3. To hit with a missile, esp. a bullet; to wound;
to kill: military: 1900 (O.E.D.). Perhaps ex sense
1 or as with a fruit-pip, or ex — 4. To beat, 
defeat, e.g. in a race: 1891 (O.E.D.). Ex sense 1
and 2. — 5. To fail (a candidate): 1908, A. S. M.
Hutchinson.— 6. To annoy: from ca. 1915. Ex
pip, give the, 2, q.v.— 7. To die: Harrow School:
sense 3.
pip, get or have the. To be depressed; (ob.) to
be indisposed: coll.: from ca. 1885. Marshall, in
Pomes, 'It cost a bit to square up the attack; | For
the landlord had the pip.' Ex the poultry disease
via the Thackerayen 'The children ill with the pip,
or some confounded thing.' 1862. Cf. Devonshire
dial. take the pip, to take offence: occurring as early
as 1746 (E.D.D.).
pip, give the. To depress; from ca. 1890: coll.—
2. Hence, to annoy or disgust: from ca. 1910: coll.
Where—which perhaps influenced by pip, to wound—
pip, to annoy.
pip, old. See old pip.
pip emma. P.M.: military coll.: C. 20. Ex the
signalese for p.m. Cf. ack emma.
**Pipe down.** To be quiet: nautical coll.: mid-C. 19–20. Bowen. Ex S.E. sense, 'to dismiss by sounding the pipe'.

**Pipe in (or occ. with) an ivy-leaf.** To busy oneself, either to no purpose or, more gen., as a consolation for failure; to do any silly thing one likes, gen. as you may go pipe in an ivy-leaf: coll.: C. 14–20; very ob.—indeed, rare since C. 17. Semi-proverbial. O.E.D. An ivy-leaf being emblematic of very small value: cf. rush, straw.

**Pipe-layer, -laying.** Political intriguer, intriguer: orig. (ca. 1835), U.S.; partly anglicised ca. 1860; coll. Ex a water-supply camouflaging an electoral plot. Thornton.

**Pipe off.** See pipe, v., 4.—2. To sound or pump (a person): low (—1923). Manchon.

**Pipe on.** To inform against: c. from ca. 1875; ob. Baumann. See pipe, v., 4.

**Pipe one's eye.** A variant of pipe an eye.

**Pipe-opener.** (An) exercise taken as a 'breather': coll.: 1878. Ex pipes, the lungs. O.E.D. Ware classifies it as a university term and defines it as the 'first spurt in rowing practice—to open the pipe'.

**Pipe out, put one's.** To spoil one's chance, sport, or showing; to extinguish: 1720, Ramsey. 'Their pipe's put out': coll. till C. 19, then S.E. and dial.; ob. O.E.D.—2. Hence, to kill: low: from ca. 1860;

**Pipe up.** See pipe, v., 1.—2. Also, to call, shout: same sense.

**Pipeclay.** V.t., to put into meticulous order (esp. accounts): 1833, Marryl; 1853, Dickens: nautical coll. >, ca. 1890, gen. coll., >, ca. 1910, S.E. Ex pipe-clay, a white cleaning-material.—2. V.t. and t., to hide defects in material or mistakes in workmanship: from ca. 1850. Ex sense 1.


**Pipe ! by the.** A mild, proletarian asseveration (—1887); slightly ob. Baumann. Ex dial.

**Pipe, drunk as a.** Very drunk: 1770, Graves, *Spiritual Quixote*. Jarry. ... proceeded so long ... 0.0, losing off horns of ale, that he became as drunk as a pipe: coll. >, early in C. 19, S.E.; † by 1890. (Dial.: piper-fou.)

**Pipe (occ. fiddler), pay the.** To pay the bill, lit. and fig.: 1681, Flatman (O.E.D.): Congreve; Smollett; Brougham; Carlyle: coll. till C. 19, then S.E.

**Pipe's cheeks.** Puffed, swollen, or very big cheeks: coll. late C. 16–17. Withals, 1602.

**Pipe's news.** Stable news: Scots coll.: from ca. 1829; ob. Hogge.

**Pipe's wife.** A whore: coll.: late C. 18–19. (Mainly Scots.)


**Pipe, pack, or put, or shut up one's.** To cease from action, more gen. from speech: coll.: mid-C. 18–19; in C. 18, virtually S.E. Old, 1566, put water in a pike, pack up. While shut up is in C. 18 and perhaps early C. 19, Ramsey has poke up. Ex the 'musical tube'.

**Pipe, set up one's.** To cry aloud; yell: ca. 1670–1800; coll. >, by 1710, S.E. H.M.'s translation of Erasmus's *Colloquies*. Ex pipe, the voice. O.E.D.

**Pipe, take.** 'To tickle one vigorously, in the region of the stomach': Bootham School (—1925). Anon., *Dict. of Bootham Slang*.

**Pipe, tune one's.** (To begin) to weep or cry: Scots coll. and dial.: late C. 18–20. Jamieson; O.E.D.: E.D.D. Ex pipe, voice, and pipes, lungs. O.E.D. Incorrect spelling of *pippy*; from ca. 1720.


**Pipe, n.** Weeping, crying: s. >, ca. 1860, coll.: 1779, Seward, 'No more piping, pray': Marryat, 1837. O.E.D. Ex pipe, v., 2, though piping is recorded the earlier.


**Pipped.** Annoyed; wounded: the latter, military: C. 20. See pip, v., 4, 3.

**Pipper.** As in one-pipper, a second, two-pipper, a first or full lieutenant: military: 1914 or 1915. Ex pip, n., 4; cf. pip, n., 2.

**Pippin.** A pejorative term of address: ca. 1660–1820. Cotton, 1664, 'Thou'rt a precious pippin, 'To think to steal so sily from me.' O.E.D. Whence: —2. (Gen. my p.) An endearment, mostly costermongers': C. 18–20; ob. Cf. ribstone and the C. 20 old fruit. N.B. Byron called his wife 'Pippin'.

**Pippin, sound as a.** Rosy-cheeked; very healthy; lower classes' coll.: (—1857). Baumann. Ex the apple's 'high-colour'.

**Pippin-squire.** An 'apple-squire', q.v.: a. or coll.: C. 17. Rowlands.


**Pipe.** Apt to 'pipe an eye', q.v.: from ca. 1890: a. >, by 1890, coll.

**Pique.** Errorneous for peak (e.g. of a cap): from ca. 1820. O.E.D.


**Pirier.** An occ. form of purier.

**Pissaphal.** Incorrect for *pissaphall*: C. 17–20. O.E.D.

**Piscatory.** Catachresio for piscine, adj.: from ca. 1780. O.E.D.

**Pish.** Whiskey; any spirituous liquor: military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Origin obscure; possibly the word derives ex *pis* (the effect) on...


**Peasant, 'a stern, hard-hearted miseric' (E.D.D.).

**Piss.** n. Urine: late M.E. + : S.E., but in C. 19–20 a vulgarism. Ex:

**Piss, v.** To urinate: M.E. + : S.E., but considered a vulgarism from ca. 1760. (Because of its "shocking", associated with woman, wrongly regarded as low coll. Of rare, **'st', **'st'.) Ex Old Fr. *pisser*, prob. echol. Ah, si je pouvais *pisser comme il parle*, Clemenceau of Lloyd George.

**Piss l.** A vulgar Restoration expletive. Etheredge, *The Man of Mode*. 

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(Excerpts from *Oxford English Dictionary* and *Dictionary of British & American Slang*)
piss, so drunk that he opened his shirt collar to. Blind drunk: low col.: C. 19–20; ob. piss-a-bed. The dandeline: coll. verging on S.E.; also dial. — mid-C. 18–20; † by 1900, except in dial. Ex (not its colour but) its diuretic virtues.
piss bones or children or hard. To be brought to childbed: low col.: C. 19–20; ob. Cf. the preceding entry.
piss-fire. A blusterer: C. 18–19; (low) coll. and dial. † ex the old proletarian habit of extinguishing a fire by pissing it out. Cf. the † proverb, money will make the pot boil though the devil piss in the fire.
piss in a quill. To agree on a plan: coll.: ca. 1730–1820. North’s Examen. (O.E.D.)
piss money against the wall. To squander, waste money, esp. in liquor: late C. 15–19: S.E. until C. 18, then (low) coll. Grose; Baumann.
piss more than one drinks. Gen. pisses ... he ... A semi-proverbial c.p. preceded by vain-glorious man and applied to a boaster: late C. 17–early 19. B.E.; Grose.
piss on a nettle. See nettle, piss on, and cf. the proverb as early as if he had pissed on a nettle.
piss on one’s props. To leave the stage for ever: pejorative theatrical (— 1935). See props.
piss one’s tallow. To sweat: C. 17–20; very ob. Urquhart. ‘He’s nothing but Skin and Bones; he has piss’ tallow.” Ex S.E. sense of a dear thinning in the matting-season. O.E.D.
piss pins and needles. To have gonorreae: low col.: from ca. 1780. Grose, 3rd ed.
Piss-Pot Hall. A tavern at Clpton, near Hackney, built by a potter chiefly out of the profits of chamber-pots, in the bottom of which the portrait of Mr. Sacheverell—who (d. 1724), after a notorious trial in 1710, was suspended, for three years, from preaching—was depicted’, Grose, 2nd ed. Ca. 1710–1830.
piss-proud. Having a urinal erection: low col.: late C. 18–20. Grose, 2nd ed., where occurs the c.p. that old fellow thought he had an erection, but his — was only piss-proud, ‘said of any old fellow who marries a young wife’ Cf. morning-pride, q.v.
piss-quick. Hot gin-and-water: low: ca. 1820–60. ‘Jon Bee’, 1823.—2. The German trench-gun (smaller than the ‘77’); also the noise (shish) of the travelling shell, the shell itself, and even—though rarely—its explosion. Cf. pisp-squeak, perhaps a euphemism for piss-quick.
piss the less,—let her cry, she’ll. A semi-proverbal c.p.: late C. 18–20; ob. Supposed to have orig. been addressed by consolatory sailors to their harlots. In Grose, 3rd ed., it occurs in the form the more you cry, the less you’ll ps—
piss (upon), as good ... as you would desire. Excellent; extremely, as in Tom Brown’s ‘There are some Quacks as Honest fellows as you would desire to Piss upon’, 1700: (low) coll.: late C. 17–early 19. (O.E.D.) Cf. pissed, as good ... and pot, as good ... pissed when one can’t whistle. To be hanged: low: from ca. 1780; ob. Grose, 1786.
piissed or pissed-up. (Very) drunk: low, and military: C. 20.
pissed, as good—occ. as very—a knave as ever. As good a man, etc.—as big a knave—as may be: (low) coll.: C. 18–20; C. 18–19. See pot, as good ...; and of piss upon.
pissed in the sea,—every little helps, ’as the old woman (or lady) said when she. A c.p. applied to urinating in sea or stream, hence to any very small contribution: mid-C. 16–20.
pissed-up. See pissed.
pisser, vinegar. A niggard; miser: coll.: C. 18.—2. (in C. 17) a sour fellow: cf. Anon.’s 2nd Return from Parnassus, 1602, ‘They are pestilent fellows, they speak nothing but bodkins, and pisses vinegar.’ (O.E.D.)
pisses my goose, such a reason. A very poor reason: C. 18–19: low coll. Cf. pissed ... goose.
piseth, by fits and starts as the hog. Jerkily; intermittently: coll.: C. 18–19.
piseth, when the goosen. Never. Often preceded by you’ll be good. Coll.: C. 18–20; ob. Cf. pisses my goose, such a reason.
pissing, vbl.n. As in the tin-whiffen is when you can’t sh*t for pissing, a low rhyming c.p.: ca. 1870–1910.
pissing candle. A small make-weight, or any very interior candle: coll. almost S.E.: C. 18–16. F. & H.
pistology. Incorrect for pistiology: C. 20. O.E.D.

pitch. A breast-pocket; a fig: c. from ca. 1810; ob. Lex. Br. — 2. The female pudend. It is described as being whether pit and its variants, pitch-hole and -mouth, pit of darkness, and bottomless pit, are low coll. or euphemistic S.E. C. 17-19.

pit, fly or shoot the. To turn tail: coll. verging on S.E. and indeed, in C. 19, achieving it: ca. 1740-1890. North, Examen, 1740 (shout); Richardson, Pamela, 'We were all to blame to make madam here fly the pit as she did.' As does a cowardly cock in cock-fighting.

pitch, knight of the. See the knight paragraph.

pit, shoot the. See pit, fly the.

pit and boxes (or, in C. 19-20, back and front shops) into one, lay. To remove or destroy the division between anus and vagina: from ca. 1780; ob. 'A simile borrowed from the playhouse, when, for the benefit of some favourite player, the pit and boxes are laid together,' Grose, 1785.


*pit-man; pitman (Baumann). A pocket-book carried in the breast-pocket: c. (— 1812); † by 1900. Vaux. Ex pit, n., 1 + -man(s), the c. suffix.


pitch, v.l. To sit down; take a seat (and a rest): late C. 18-20; coll.; ob., except in dial. (where pitch oneself). Ex S.E. sense, to place oneself. O.E.D.— 2. To do business: showmen's and tramps': from ca. 1880. Henley, 1887, 'You swatchel-coves that pitch and slam.' Like pitch, n., 1, this may orig. have been c. Also do a pitch.— 3. See pitch a or the fork, a tale.— 4. To utter base coin: c. (— 1874). H., 5th ed.— 5. To go to bed for less than the ordinary time; have a short sleep: esp. among bakers, busmen, etc.: from ca. 1860. H., 5th ed. Perhaps because they pitch themselves down on the bed.

pitch, do a. See pitch, n., 2. From ca. 1860. H.; Hindley; Henley, 1887, 'A conjuror Doing his pitch in the street.'

pitch, make a. (Of a cheapjack) to attempt to do business: low coll. (— 1874). II., 5th ed.

pitch, queer the. To spoil a sale, a performance: showmen's and cheapjacks'; 1875, Frost, Circus Life. See pitch, n., 1, 2.— 2. Hence, to mar one's plans: coll.: C. 20. St. James's Gazette, April 10, 1901, 'Queruing the pitch of the Italians.'

pitch a or the fork, a tale. To tell a story, esp. if romantic or pitiful: resp. a., ca. 1859-1920; from ca. 1885—a. until C. 20, then coll. H., 1st ed. (pitch the fork); Anon., A Lancashire Thief, 'Brumagem Joe... could patter and pitch the fork with any one.' The London Herald, March 23, 1874, 'If you then got to... pitch the fork with a tale, he might have got off.' Cf. pitch it strong.


pitch and pay, v.l. To pay on the nail: coll.:

C. 15-mid-19. Tusser; Shakespeare, Henry the Third, 'Let sense rule; the word is "pitch and pay"'; Trust none; Evans, Yorkshire Song, 1810. Ex a Blackwell Hall enactment that a penny be paid by the owner of every bale of cloth for pitching.


pitch in, v.l. To set vigorously to work: coll., chiefly U.S. and Colonial: 1847 (O.E.D.).— 2. Hence, to take a hand; to begin eating: coll.: from ca. 1860. Perhaps ex: pitch into. To attack energetically, with blows or words (hence, to reprimand): 1843, De Quincey, 'Both pitched into us in 1843' (= attacked): Dickens, 1852 (with words); Grant Allen, 1885 (of eating heartily). Coll. O.E.D.

pitch it. To desist; leave one's job; to cease doing something; tailors': late C. 19-20. The Tailor and Cutter, Nov. 29, 1928.

pitch it (too) strong. To exaggerate: from ca. 1870: s. till C. 20, then coll.

pitch-kettle. Puzzled; 'stumped' : ca. 1750-1830. Cowper, 'I...find myself pitch-kettle; and cannot see... | How I shall hammer out a letter'; Grose, 2nd ed. Lit., stuck fast, as in a kettle of pitch.

pitch-pole, pitchpole. To sell at double the cost-price: coll.: ca. 1850-90.

pitch the fork. See pitch a fork.— pitch the hunters. See hunters.

*pitch the nob. See prink the garter.

pitch-up. One's family or chums; a group or crowd: Winchester; from ca. 1850. Hence: pitch up with. To associate with: Winchester: from ca. 1860.

pitched. 'Cut', g.v.; tailors': from ca. 1860.


pitcher, bang a. To drain a pot: coll.: C. 19-20; ob. Cf. † S.E. pitcher-man, a toper.


pitcher that holds water mouth downwards, the miraculous. The female pudend: a conundrum c.p. of mid-C. 18-mid-19. Grose, 2nd ed. (1788).

pitcher-bawd. 'The poor Hack'—'worn-out whore—that runs of Errands to fetch Wenches or liquor,' B.E.: low coll.: late C. 17-mid-18.

pitching, go (a). To turn somersaults: circus (— 1897). Baumann.

pitchpole. See pitch-pole.—pitchy-man. See dolly-pith. To sever (the spinal cord): medical (— 1909). Ware. Because this lets out the 'pitch' or marrow.


pitcher. One in, a frequenter of, the pit: theatrical coll. (— 1887). Baumann. Perhaps on tisper.

Pity the poor sailor on a night like this! A semi-
jocular c.p. à propos of a stormy night: late C. 19-
20.

Pivot, City, the. A nickname—among outsiders,
jocular coll. verging on S.E., but in its proud
coiners,' i.e. in Geelong, eyes actually S.E.—for
Geelong in Victoria, Australia; ca. 1860-1910.
Morris.

pivot, a golfer that, in swinging his club,
turns his body as on a pivot: golfers' coll.: from
middle 1920's. (O.E.D. Sup.)

piz or pizz. A young man-about-town: Society:
ca. 1760-80. O.E.D. Cf. pizz(z).

pize on, upon, of; pize take it; etc. Coll. im-
precations: C. 17-20. Since ca. 1840, only dial.
Cognate, prob., with past, poz, and possibly poison.
Middleton, Shadwell, Smollett, Scott. O.E.D.

pizzle. The penis of an animal, esp. of a bull:
from ca. 1520. Hence, C. 17-20, of a man. S.E.
until ca. 1840, then dial. and a vulg. Ex Flemish
pezel or Low Ger. pessel, orig. a little sinew.

pizzle. (Of the male) to colt with: C. 18-20:
low coll. Ex the n.

placeable. Catastrophic for: quiet, peaceable;
C. 17-20; rare after C. 18. O.E.D.

place, an abode; a place of business: coll.: mid-
C. 19-20—2. A privy, a w.c.: coll. C. 19-20;
ob.—3. the place, the privies: low coll. or perhaps
 euphemistic S.E.: C. 18-20. Sterne, 'You shall see
the very place, said my uncle Toby. Mrs. Wadham
blushed.'—4. Errorneous for plea s, pl. of plea, esp. in
common pleas: 1. O.E.D.

place, v. To identify (thoroughly); remember
in detail: orig. (ca. 1855) U.S.; anglicised as a coll.
ca. 1860; by 1930, virtually S.E. (Thornton).

place, hot. See hot place.

place of sixpenny sinfulness. The suburbs; esp.
a brothel there: coll.: C. 17. Dekker.

place-on. A definite or well-established position,
e.g. in a queue: Bootham School (—1925). Anon.,
Dict. of Bootham Slang.

placebo, be at or go to the school of—hunt (a)—
make—play (with)—sing (a). To play the syco-
phant, to be a time-server or servile: coll.: resp.
approx. mid-C. 15-early 17 (Knox); 1360-1600
(Langland); 1480-1600 (Caxton); 1580-1650;
1340-1700 (Chaucer, Bacon). Ex the Office for
the Dead. Lit., placebo = I shall be acceptable.

placient. Catachrestic, as in Charles Reade, for
'propitious'. O.E.D. (Prob. on complacent).

O.E.D. E.g. in Bacon and Scott.

placfont. Incorrect for pak tong: from ca. 1890.
O.E.D.

placket. A woman, as sex: the female pudend:
low coll.: resp. C. 17; C. 17-18. With second
sense, cf. placket-rack, the penis (Urquhart), and
placketing and racketing in James Ray's The Scene is
Changed, 1932. Ex placket, a petticoat-slit or
(dress or petticoat) pocket-hole, occ. a chemise.

placket-stung. Venerably infected: coll.: mid-

plague. v. To trouble, bother; tease, annoy:
late C. 18—20; S.E. until C. 18, then coll. Gay,
1727, 'Husbandis and wives . . . plaguing one
another; 1833, Harriet Martineau. O.E.D.

plague! In 'a plague (upon), or 'take': from
ca. 1660; ob. Coll. verging on S.E. and, after ca.
1720, better considered as S.E. Also how the,
or what a, plague! : late C. 16-18; coll. > S.E.
(O.E.D.)

plagued. 'Plaguly': coll. (—1887). Baum-
mann, 'I'm plagued hard up.'

plaguresome. Troublesome, teasing, annoying:
C. 19—20; S.E. > coll. ca. 1860; ob.

Landon, 1828, 'Ronsard is so plaguly stiff and
stately,' O.E.D. Ob. by 1850; virtually f by 1920.
Cf. next two entries.

plaguy. Pestilent'; 'confounded'; excessive,
very great: coll.: late C. 17-20; ob. Mot-
tex, 1694, 'Women that have a plaguy deal of
religion'; Punch, May 17, 1879, 'A plaguy rise in
the price.' O.E.D. Cf.: plaguy,
adv. Exceedingly, very: coll.: from ca.
1740, earlier examples connoting 'a degree of
some quality that troubles one by its excess'.
Richardson, in Pamela, 'I'm a plaguy good-
humoured old fellow.' Ob. Ex preceding entry.
O.E.D.

plank. Unwatered, undiluted, neat: coll.: from
ca. 1850. Only of drinks.

plank as a pack-saddle. Obvious; very open:
coll.: mid-C. 16—mid-18. T. Wilson, 1653; With-
er; Ray; Bailey. (Apperson.)

plank as a packstaff. The more gen. C. 16-17
form (Becon, J. Hall) of:
plank as a pikstaff. Very clear or simple; be-
yond argument: late C. 16-20; coll. > ca.
1750, S.E. Shacklock, 1665; Greene, 1591; Smollett;
D'Urfeu; Trollope. (O.E.D.) Cf. preceding and:
plain as a pipe-stem. Exceedingly plain, clear:
coll.: late C. 17-18. Ware.

plain as Salisbury. The same: coll.: 1837,
Dickens; curiously adumbrated, as the O.E.D.
indicates, in Udall, 1642. Running Salisbury Plain.
(By the way, plain as the sun at noonday is S.E.) Cf.
Shakespeare's plain as way to parish-church.
plain as the nose on one's or your face. The
same: coll.: late C. 17-20. Congrove, 'As wit-
ness my hand' . . . in great letters. Why, 'tis
plain as the nose on one's face.'

Plain Dealer, nickname, whereas the Plain Dealer
is merely a sobriquet. Wycherley the dramatist
(d. 1715), ex his play so named (1747). Dawson.

plain statement. An easy piece of work; a meal
plain to indifference: tailors': from ca. 1890;
slightly ob. Ex a statement contrasted with an
invoice.

Plains of Betteris. 'The diversion of billiards',
Egan's Grose: Oxford University: ca. 1820-40.

plaster. See plaster.

plan, according to. Jocularly and often ironic-
amally among soldiers, to mean willy-nilly: 1917-18.
Ex Ger. planagensis, a euphemistic misrepresenta-
tion in communiques reporting loss of ground.
W.; B. & P.

plan, plane. A coll. abbr. of aeroplane: 1914:
by 1933, S.E.—2. Errorneously for planain: from
ca. 1660. (Perhaps a mere slip of the pen.) Q.E.D.

by 1890, † by 1920. (As source of light.)

plank, v. To put or set down; deposit: 's. and
PLANKED


Ex plank, l.


*plant, in. In hiding; hidden: o.: 1812, Vaux.

Ex plant, n., 1.

*plant, rise the. ‘To take up and remove anything that has been hid, whether by yourself or another’; Vaux, 1812; o. Cf.;

plant. spring s. To unearth another’s hidden plunder: o.: 1812, Vaux. Cf. preceding.

plant a man. To copulate: coll.: C 18–19. (Rarely of a woman.)

plant home. To deliver (a, or as a, blow); hence, in argument, to make a point, and, in gen., to succeed (plant it, or one, home). From ca. 1885: s. till ca. 1910, then coll. A special use of plant, v., last sense but one.

plant (the) whids and stow them. To be very wary of speech; purposely say nothing: o.: C 17–mid-19. Rowlands, Grose. Cf. stow it! ; whids = words.

plant (a person) upon (another). ‘To set somebody to watch his motions’; o. (—1812); ob. Vaux. Merely a special application of plant, v., 3, q.v.

Plantage. A nickname given, by their intimates, to the various Plantagegenty, Marquises of Hastings, and esp. to the 4th Marquis, fl.—on the turf—ca. 1850–68. Reginald Herbert, When Diamonds Were Trumps, 1903.


plantis. See plant, n., last sense.

plantis, water one’s. To shed tears: C 10. Cf. water-works, turn on the.

plasmaosome. Incorrect for plasmosome; late C 19–20. O.E.D.


plaster of warm guts. ‘One warm Belly clapt to another’, B.E.: ‘a receipt frequently prescribed for different disorders’, Grose, 1785. A late C 17–mid-19 low coll, almost a (men’s) c.p. Cf. the frequent, and often well-mean’d c.p. advice, what you need is a woman: mid-C 19–20;

plastered. Drunk: from ca. 1916; orig. military. Cf. plastered and shot, adj.

plasterer. A clumsy shot with a gun (cf. Peter Gunner, q.v.): sporting: 1883, O.E.D. Bromley-Davenport, Sport, 1885. ‘The plasterer is one who thinks nothing of the lives and eyes of the men who surround him, and blows his pheasant to a pulp before the bird is seven feet in the air.’ Cf. plaster, q.v.

plasterer’s trowel and Sergingapatam. Fowl and ham: rhyming s. (—1909); ob. Ware.

plate. The amount collected in the plate at church: coll.: C 20.

plate, be in for the. To be venereally infected.
PLATE, FOUL A

ca. 1780-1850. 'He has won the heat... a simile drawn from horse racing,' Grose, 1785.

plate, foul a. See foul a plate.

plate-fleet comes in, when the. When I make or get a fortune: coll.: ca. 1690-1830. B.E., Grose. The plate fleet was that which carried to Spain the annual yield of the American silver mines. Cf. the C. 19-20 when my ship comes in.

plate it. To walk: from ca. 1890: rather low, slightly ob. Ex plates, q.v.

plate of meat. A street: rhyming a. (— 1857)

'Ducaanglie.' Contrast plates of meat.

plated butter. A piece of butter genuine super-

ficially, internally lard: low London (— 1823);† by 1900. 'Jon Bee.'

plates. Short for plates of meat, q.v.: from ca. 1885. Marshall, 'Pomes.' 'A cove we call Feet, sir, on account of the size of his plates.'

Plates, New and Old. Stock Exchange a., from ca. 1890 for shares in, resp., the English Bank of the River Plate and the London & River Plate Bank. The latter, † by 1915.


H., 6th ed.

[platter-faced. Broad-faced. Despite B.E. and others, it is prob. S.E.]

platters of meat. A variant (— 1923) of plates of meat.

Manon.

platinum blond(e). A female with gold-grey hair: coll.: U.S., anglicised by 1933. O.D. (1934 Sup.).

play, v. See play it off and play off. — 2. To make fun of: coll.: 1891, Kinglake, in The Australian at Home, 'They do love to play a new chum,' O.E.D. Slightly ob.

play a big game. To try for a big success: low (— 1909). Ware.

play a cross. See play across.

play a dark game. To conceal one's motive: coll. verging on S.E.: from ca. 1885. Milliken, 1888, 'Bin playing some dark little game'?


*play across; occ. play a-cross or a cross. Same as play booty, q.v.: c. of ca. 1810-70. Vaux.

play artful. To feign simplicity; keep something in reserve; low coll.: from ca. 1840.

play at push-pin or two-handed put. See push-

pin and put, play at....

play camels. To drink too much; to get drunk: Anglo-Indian (— 1909). Ware. Ex a camel's drinking habits.

play diddle-diddle. (V.I.) to play tricks; to wheedle: coll.: C. 16. Skelton.

play for paste. See paste. play for.

play it off. To make an end: the imperative = it's time you finished: a, or coll.: late C. 16-mid-17. See esp. Shakespeare, 1st Henry the Fourth, II, iv, 'They call drinking deep, dyeing scarlet; and when you breath in your watering, then they cry hem, and bid you play it off.' Lit., orig., and gen., however, this is merely a form of play off, v., q.v.

play it (too) low; occ. play low. To take (a mean) advantage: s. > coll.: resp. 1892, Zangwill; The Referee, Aug. 25, 1886. — 2. V.A., play or play it (low) down: U.S. (1882) anglicised ca. 1890: s. >

coll. Marie Corelli, 1904. O.E.D.

play least in sight, v.i. To hide; keep out of the way: coll.: C. 17-mid-19. R. West, 1607; Grose, 1785. (Apperson.)

play low. See play it low.—play low down (on).

play it too low.—play marbles. See play trains.

play off; play with oneself. To masturbate: low: C. 18-19; C. 19-20.—2. To toss off or finish (liquor): late C. 16-mid- or early 17. See quotation at play it off; Dekker, 1607, 'He requested them to play off the sake and began.' O.E.D.

play off one's dust. To drink: ca. 1870-1910. (Remove it from one's throat.)

play ours. To 'live on credit' : sporting (— 1900): a. verging on coll. Ware.

play possum. See possum.—play square. See square.—play straight. See straight.

play tapasleeerie. To leap backwards; fall head over heels: Scots coll.: 1826, John Wilson. O.E.D. The Scots adv. tapsleeerie († ext top + Fr. sauter) == toapy-turvy.

play the see against the jack. (Of a woman) to grant the favour: low: C. 19-20; ob. A figure that, taken from cards, is suggested by jack = John Thomas.

play the duck. To show oneself a coward: coll.: C. 17. Urquhart.

play the game. To act honourably: coll.: 1889, The Daily Chronicle, May 2, 1904, 'Men do not talk about their honour nowadays—they call it ' playing the game '; O.E.D. (Lit., playing to the rules; cf. it's not cricket and play up, 1.)

play the game of docks. To avoid giving a decision, or expressing a definite opinion, by passing on the matter to some other department: civil servants': C. 20.

play the (giddy) goat. See goat, play the.—2. But play the goat, in s. or low coll., also = (of the male) to fornicate hard: C. 19-20; ob.

play the Jack. To play the knave: coll.: ca. 1500-1700. Golding; Ray. (Apperson.)

play the whole game. To cheat: ca. 1780-1840. Grose, 1785. Perhaps lit., play every trick one can: as well as one knows.

play to the gallery. To court applause, esp. if cheaply and coarsely: theatrical coll.: from ca. 1890.—2. Hence, chiefly in sport, to adopt spectacular means to gain applause: C. 20: coll. >, ca. 1930, S.E.

play to the gas, says The Daily Mail of March 16, 1890, 'is used in the general sense in reference to small audiences, but strictly it means that an audience was only large enough to render receipts sufficient to pay the bill for the evening's lighting'. Theatrical s.: ca. 1890-1906.

play trains !, run away and. Don't bother me!; go away, you (anything suitable)!: a C. 20 e.p. See—at play with yourself,—the cruder run away and play with yourself !, with which cf. the schoolboy run away and play marbles !, itself an exact equivalent of... play trains !

play up. To do one's best: coll.: from ca. 1895. Newbolt, 1898, 'Play up, play up, and play the game!' See also play the game : prob. both phrases are taken from the playing-fields, but play up may have been suggested by play up to, q.v.—2. To be troublesome: coll.: late C. 18-20. Of animals, esp. horses, and persons.—3. To make fun of, to annoy or tease: from early 1920's: coll. >, by 1933, S.E. (O.E.D. Sup. 1, ca. 1850).

play up to. To take one's cue from another; to humour another, back him up, or to meet him on his own ground; to flatter: coll.: from ca. 1825. (Implied in) Diaselli, 1826. Cf. play up, 1. Ex:—

2. So to set in a play as to assist another actor;
theatrical \( x \) : 1809, Malkin, 'You want two good actors to play up to you.' O.E.D.

play with oneself. See play off.

play with (the case of) a tooth-pick. VW, to play (one's opponent's) bowling with ease: cricket coll. 1899, J. C. Smith: slightly ob. Lewis.

play with yourself, run away and: an insulting variant, or perhaps the original, of play trains, q.v. playground. 'Gingerbread slab, or sandwich, served as pudding': Bootham School (1925).

Ex hardness.

playing the harp. Drunk, and going home by the railings: Anglo-Irish: C. 20. Ex the tapping on the railings, here likened to harp-strings.

plea; please. Erroneous forms of please: C. 15-16.

O.E.D.


please, I want the cook-girl! A London c.p. directed at, or said of, 'a youth haunting the head of area steps': ca. 1898-1915. Ware.

please, mother, open the door! A Cockney c.p. spoken admiringly at a passing girl: C. 1900-14. Ware.

please oneself, To do just as one likes: coll., esp. in please yourself! late C. 19-20. Ex the S.E. sense, to satisfy, esp. to gratify, oneself.

please the pigs! See pigs, please the.

pleased, (!) the will be. An ironic c.p. from ca. 1920.

pleased as Punch, (as). Extremely pleased: 1854, Dickens: coll., > by 1910, S.E. Perhaps ex the early pictures of Punch on the cover of the weekly so named and founded in 1841.

pleasure. 'To go out for pleasure, take a holiday': O.E.D.: coll. Not before C. 20, except in dial., where it occurs in 1845 (E.D.D.). Esp. as pleasing, n. Ex the S.E. v.i., to have or take pleasure.

pleasure-boat. The female pudend; low: C. 19-20; ob.


plebe or plebe. At Westminster School, a tradesman's son: pejorative: mid-C.19-20; slightly ob. Ex L. plebs, the proletariat. Cf. Velezi, q.v.—2. (Only as pleb.) Any plebeian: 1823, 'Jon Bee'. Cf. U.S. plebe, a newcomer at West Point, and:

plebian; plebianess. Plebeian (character or condition; caddish (nees); 1860, O.E.D. See preceding.

plebs. See pleb, 1.

pleb or pleb man; or pl. A policeman; low coll. (1887). Baumann.


plenipo, v.i. To be or act as a plenipotentiary: coll.: 1890. Rare. O.E.D.

Plenipo Baummer. Post Prior (1664-1721), 'who helped to arrange the preliminaries of the Peace of Utrecht (1713)'. See plenipoto, v., pl. Dawson.

plentitude. Incorrect for plentitude: C. 17-20; ob. On plenty. O.E.D.

plenty, adj. Plentiful, abundant, numerous: C. 14-20: S.E. until ca. 1840, then coll. Le Fann, 1847, 'Wherever kicks and cuffs are plentiful', O.E.D. Ex the n.—Whence plenty, adv. = abundantly: coll.: 1842. H. Collingwood, 1884, 'They're plenty large enough'. O.E.D. and E.D.D.

Plenty and Waste. 'Mrs Gore (1790-1861), novelist and dramatist, and her daughter' (Dawson).

pleo. Incorrect for plialo: C. 17-18. O.E.D.

plicman. See pleceraman.


ploll-cat. A whore: C. 17. A corruption of f. S.E. pole-cat, the same. F. & H.


plonk. (Gen. v.) To shell: military: 1915; slightly ob. F. & Gibbons, 'Suggested by the sound of the impact and burst'.

plot. A C. 17 erroneous form of plod. O.E.D.

plough, n. Ploughed land: hunting a. >, ca. 1900, hunting coll.: 1861, Whyte-Melvillo, 'It makes no odds to him, posture or plough.' O.E.D. Ex E. Anglian dial., where it occurs in 1787: E.D.D. —2. Rejecting a candidate in an examination, whether action or accomplished fact: 1863, Charles Reade. O.E.D. (Cf. ploughing.) Ex:


plough into. To address oneself vigorously to (food): coll. (1923), mostly lower classes'. Manchon. Cf. pitch into.

plough the deep, to (go to) sleep: rhyming a. (1859). H., 1st ed.

plough with dogs, I might as well. This is useless, or very ineffective: C. 17-20: a c. >, by 1700, semi-proverbial; from ca. 1860, only in dial. (Apperson.)


plouter. See plowter.

plowed. See ploughed.

plowed; occ. plouter. To copulate: low: C. 19–20; ob. | plough corrupted or ex plout, plouter, to splash about in mire or water (see O.E.D. and E.D.D.).

'ploy, play. To employ: dial. (late C. 17–20) and, hence, coll., late C. 19–20. As a n., it is used in the high Schools for a last bell.

pluck. Courage: 1785, Grose: boxing s. >, ca. 1830, gen. coll. Scotts, in 1827, called it a 'blackguardly' word, and ladies using it during the Crimean War were regarded with the same shocked admiration as one felt towards those who in the War of 1814–18 used the exactly analogous guts; it is now almost S.E. Ex pluck, the heart, lungs, liver (and other visera) of an animal, hence, ca. 1710, of a person.—2. In photographs, boldness, distinctness of effect: photographio: 1889.

O.E.D. Cf. plucky, 2.


pluck a pigeon. See pigeon, n., 5.

pluck a rose. To visit the privy: coll.: C. 18–19.

Grose, 1783. Chiefly among women and because the rural w. was often in the garden.

pluck Sir Onion or the riband. To ring the bell at a tavern: resp. late C. 17–mid-18: B.E.; late C. 17–early 19, B.E., Grose, 1st ed. Prob. riband refers to a ball-push; perhaps onion, the round 'handle'.

pluck-up fair. 'A general scramble for booty or spoil,' O.E.D.: ca. 1750–1850: coll.

plucked. Courageous; gen. preceded by cool-good, rare-, or well-; or by bad-. Coll.: 1848, Thackeray (good plucked); Hughes, 1867 (bad plucked); 1860, plucked, un. O.E.D.; H., 2nd ed.


pluckily. Bravely: coll. >, ca. 1920, S.E.: 1858, Trollope. (But pluckiness is S.E.) O.E.D.


pluck. Courageous, esp. over a period or by will-power: coll. >, by 1920, S.E.: 1842, Barham 'If you’re plucky,' and not over-subject to fright; Disraeli, 1829, had 'with as much a heart.'

O.E.D. Ex pluck, 1, q.v.; cf. plucked, q.v.—2. (Of negative or print) old, distinct: photographs coll.: 1885, O.E.D. Cf. pluck, 2.


plug, v. (Of the male) to cot with: low: C. 18–20. Cf. plug-tail, q.v. Ex S.E. sense, drive a plug into.—2. To punch, esp. plug in the eye: 1875, P. Fonder, 'Cries of ... *Plug him!' ...' E.D.D. Cf. cf. sense 1.—3. To shoot (v.t.): 1875, J. G. Holland; 1888, 'Roif Boldrewood', 'If that old horse ... had been fired forward ... you'd have got plugged instead.' O.E.D.—4. To continue, persist, doggedly: 1865, at Oxford (O.E.D.); soon gen.; in C. 20, coll., esp. plug along, mainly of walking.—5. 'To labour with piston-like strokes against resistance': 1898, G. W. Steevens (that brilliant unfortunate). O.E.D. By 1930, coll.—6. V.t., to try to popularise (a song) by dinting it into the public ear; coll.: 1927. O.E.D. (Sup.)—7. See plugged.

plug along or on. See plug, v., 4.

Plug Street. 'The Flemish village of Ploegsteert near Armentières': military coll.: from ca. 1914. F. & Gibbons.


Grose, 1785.


plum; in C. 17–18, gen. plumb. A fortune of £100,000: 1860, the Earl of Ailesbury. Steele, 'An honest gentleman who ... was worth half a plumb, stared at him'; Thackeray. Slightly ob. (O.E.D.)—2. Hence, loosely, a fortune: coll.: 1709, Price, 'The Misr must make up his Plumb, though here, as in most other instances, the specific sum may be intended. Slightly ob.—3. (7 hence) a rich man; orig. and properly, the possessor of £100,000; C. 18–early 19. Addison, 1709, 'Several who were Plumbs ... became men of moderate fortunes.' (O.E.D.)

plum, give a taste of. To shoot (a person) with a bullet: low: 1834, Ainsworth; > by 1900. I.e. plumb, lead.

plum and apple. Any jam: military coll.: 1918–19. F. & Gibbons. The ranks seldom got anything but
plum and apple: a fact satirised by Bainsfather in his famous cartoon, "The Eternal Question."

"When the oil is it going to be strawberry?"

plum-cash. Prime cost: pedig English (—1864)

E., 3rd ed.

plum-duff. Plum-pudding or dumpling: 1840? coll. orig. nautical, >; ca. 1890. S.E. O.E.D.


plum-tree, have at. The c.p., either semi-proverbal or in allusion to a song: C. 18–19. Funning S.E. plum-tree, the female pudend (Shakespeare). Cf.

plum-tree shaker. 'A man's yard,' Cotgrave, 1611, at hocche-prunter. C. 17–18.

plumb. n. See plum.—2. V.t. to decorate: ca. 1850–1910; low. † ex plumb, to fastom.—3. V.t. (1889) and v.t. (C. 20), to work (properly, in lead) as a plumber; coll. W. S. Gilbert, 'I have plumbed in the very best families.' Ex plumber. O.E.D.

plumb, adv. As an intensive: quite; completely: 1837, Anon., 'Plum ripe': coll. >, by 1750, also dial. In mid-C. 19–20, mainly U.S., but wherever used, in this period rather than s. coll. (O.E.D.)


plumdaness. Incorrect for plumdaness, i.e.; late C. 17–20. O.E.D.


plump, v. To utterly suddenly, abruptly; blurt out: coll. verging on S.E.: ca. 1579, Fulko, 'A very peremptory sentence, plummed downe . . . O.E.D. —2. To come (very suddenly, i.e.) to plump; plunge is plump (plumpness); col. bordering on S.E.: ca. 1829, Lamb (O.E.D.). —3. To shoot; hit hard. Punch: 1785, Gros. 'He plumped out his pop and plumped him'; † by 1880.

plump, adj. Big; great; well-supplied: coll. verging on S.E.: 1835, Quarles, 'Plump Fee': B.E., 'Plump-in-the-pocket, flush of Money': Pollok, 1827. O.E.D. Slightly ob.—2. (Of speech) blunt; flat; † ex coll. verging on S.E.: ca. 1769, Mme D'Arblay, 'She is the most plump inquiries,' O.E.D. Slightly ob. Cf. plump, adv., 2. plumpness, 1. and plumpiness, q.v.


plump, n. A plump person: in good health; gen. in negative: ca. 1757–1830, Gros. 2nd ed.

plump (a person) up to. To inform him opportunely or secretly about (something); lower classes' (—1923). Manchin. Ex plump, to fatten.


plumping. Unusually or arresting large; coll.: C. 20. Cf. plumper, 3.

plumpily. Unhesitatingly; plainly, flatly: coll. bordering on S.E.: 1786, Mme D'Arblay, 'The offer was plumply accepted,' O.E.D. Slightly ob. Cf. plump, v., and adj., 2; also plumpness.—2. With a direct impact: same status: 1846, O.E.D. Cf. plump, n., 1, and plump, v., 2.—3. Immediately: sol. (—1923). Manchin points out that this is a corruption of promptly by plump, adv.

plumpness. (Of speech) directness, bluntness; coll. verging on S.E.: 1780, Mme D'Arblay. O.E.D.

plunder. Gain; profit: from ca. 1850. Mayhew, 1851, 'Plunder . . . a common word in the horse trade.' Ex the S.E. sense of property acquired illegally or 'shadily.'—2. A grafter's stock or goods; grazers': from ca. 1890. (Philip Allingham, Cheapsjack, 1834.) Perhaps ex sense 1.

plunges. A reckless bet; from ca. 1877; racing s. >, ca. 1890, gen. coll. Ex:

plunge, v. To bet recklessly; speculate deeply: 1876, Besant & Rice, 'They plunged . . . paying whatever was asked,' O.E.D.: (orig. and mostly) racing s. >, ca. 1890, gen. coll. Lit., 'go in deep'.


plunging. Reckless betting, deep speculation: 1876; racing s. > ca. 1890, gen. coll.

plunk. A fortune; any large sum: 1767, Josiah Wedgwood (O.E.D.); † by 1850. Cf. the U.S. plunk, a dollar. As it precedes plunk, the v., by some thirty years, the word may be ex plum, 1, on chunk or plunk.—2. An exclamation expressing the impact of a blow', C. J. Dennis: orig. (—1816) and mainly Australian. Echoi: cf. plunk.

pluropartial is incorrect for pluropartial: C. 20. O.E.D.

plus. adv.—proposition. And a further, undefined quantity: coll.: C. 20. Ex:—Having in addition, having acquired or gained: coll.: 1866, Kane, 'Bonsall was minus a big toe-nail, and plus a soar upon the nose,' O.E.D.

plus a little something some (loosely, the others) haven't got. A c.p., jocular and self-explanatory: 1934 +. Ex an early-1934 motor-oil advertisement.

plus fours. Wide knickerbockers, orig. and cesp. as worn by golfers: 1920: coll. till ca. 1925, then S.E. Ex a plus (e.g.) 2 golfer, or, more prob., ex the fact that, to get the overhang, the length is increased, on the average, by four inches. (O.E.D. Sup.; C.O.D., 1934 Sup.)

POORAH

Flush, John. A footman: coll.: from ca. 1845; ob. Ex pluses, such pluss breeches as are worn by footmen. From Thackeray's *The Yellowplush Papers*, by Charles Yellowplush, Esq., the former recorded in 1844 (O.E.D.), the latter pub. in 1837.

plush, take. To accept an inferior position or appointment: coll.: C. 20. Manchon. Perhaps ex the plush worn by footmen.


*plyer.* See plier.

*Plymouth cloak.* A cudgel: 1608: c. >, ca. 1660, low s. >, ca. 1700, s., † by 1830, except jocularly. Dekker, 'Shall I walk in a Plymouth cloak (that's to say) like a rogue, in my hose and doublet, and a crab-tree cudgel in my hand?' The staff, cut from the woods near Plymouth by sailors recently returned from a long voyage, was jocularly supposed to serve as a cloak to those walking in cuirass, i.e. in hose and doublet: Ray's *Proverbs*. Bowen notes that in the old Navy it = 'an officer's or warrant officer's cane'.

pneumatic cavalry. Cyclist battalions: military: 1917; ob. B. & P.

po. A chamber-pot: C. 19-20; coll.: >, ca. 1880, low coll. (When, as rarely, written or pro-nounced po, it is S.E.) Ex the pronunciation of pot in Fr. pot de chambre.


poach. To blacken (the eyes): boxing s. > gen. ca. 1890: ca. 1815-1820. Moore, Tom Crüd, 'With grinders dislodg'd, and with peppers both poach'd'. Ex Fr. yeux pochés.—V.t., to gain unfairly or illicitly (an advantage, esp. a start in a race): the turf: from ca. 1891. Ex S.E. sense, to trespass (on).

pochaize: po-chay or po'chay; pochay. A brb. *pochaze*: coll.: resp. 1871, Meredith; 1871 (ld., pochay); 1827, Scotti, in *Chronicles of the Canongate*. O.E.D.


poaching country. 'Resort of all who go shooting', Egan's *Grose*; Oxford University: ca. 1820-50.

pock. Small-pox; syphilis: from M.E.: S.E. until C. 19, then dial. and low coll. Gen. the pock. Cf. pacs and pokey, q.v.

pock-nook, come on in one's own. 'As we say in Scotland when a man lives on his own moans'; Sir A. Wylie, *Works*, 1821. Late C. 18-20; ob. Coll. A *pock-nook* is a soak-corner or -bottom.


pocket. he plays as fair as if he'd picked your. A c.p. applied, m. C. 19, to a dishonest gambler.


*Pocket-book dropper.* A sharper specializing in, or adept at, making money by dropping pocket-books (gen. containing counterfeit) and pulling the gullible: c.: C. 19-20; ob. Cf. *drop-game* and *fawney rig*.


pocket the red. To effect intromission: billiard-players' erotic s.: late C. 19-20.


pocky. A coarse pejorative or intensive: a vulg.: ca. 1698-1700. Jonson, 'These French villains have pocky wits.' Ex S.E. sense, syphilite. (O.E.D.)


podge. A short, fat person; such an animal: dial. and coll. from ca. 1830.—2. Occ. a nickname: from ca. 1840. Cognate with *pudge*, q.v.—3. A special application is: an epaulette, as in *Marryat*, 1833: nautical; † by 1890.


pody cody! A low coll. perversion of *body of God*, an oath; late C. 17-early 18. Perhaps, however, of Urquhart's invention (1693 in his *Rabelais*). O.E.D.

Poet Bun. See Good Friday.

poet's walk; Poet's Walk. 'The tea served to Upper Club, on half holidays, in River Walk', F. & H. : Eton College coll.: late C. 19-20; ob.

poign, poigne, pogue. See poke, n.—pogny. See pogy.


pogged; puggled. Mad-drunk; mad: id.: id. Ibid. Ex preceding.

pogrom. A Dissenter; a (gen. Nonconformist) formalist; a religious humbug: 1860; † by 1902. H., 3rd ed.: 'from a well-known dissenting minister of the name': (H., 2nd ed.)
poogy. (Hard g.) Tipsy: e., in C. 19. low: ca. 1780–1890, but surviving in U.S. e. Grose, 1786; Halliwell, 1847; H., 1st ed. (where spelt poody); Baumann. Etymological problematic: but perhaps cognate with Romany pogado, crooked, ex pop(e), to break, or ex pogo (or puppet), q.v. Cf. pogo, perhaps, and certainly pogy aqua; cf., too, pogo-drunk.

*poogy (or poggy) aqua! Make the grog strong! (lit., little water!) c. or low: ca. 1820–1910. 'Jon Bee', 1823; Baumann. Ex Sp. poca aqua.

poignet. An error, fathered by Scott, for a dagger-handle or -hilt: 1820. O.E.D.

Poinc. A French soldier; gen., a private in the infantry: coll.: late Oct. or Nov., 1914. Direct ex Fr. ('haired one', i.e. 'he-man', hence 'brave fellow'). For this extremely interesting term, see esp. Words / (article on French soldiers' words and phrases). Cf. piou-piou, q.v.

point. A point to which a straight run is made; hence, the cross-country run itself: sporting (esp. hunting) coll.: 1875, Whyte-Melville, Riding Recollections (O.E.D.).—See points, get, and points to give,—3. 'The region of the jaw; much sought after by pugilists', C. J. Dennis; coll.: late C. 19–20.—4. A stopping-place, from which on (e.g.) a tram route, fares are reckoned: coll. (1907: O.E.D. Sup.) >, by 1935, S.E. point, v.i. 'To seize unfair advantage; to scheme', C. J. Dennis: Australian; C. 20. Cf. pointer, 2.

point, make his or their. (Gen. of a fox) 'to run straight to point aimed at': hunting coll.: 1875, Whyte-Melville, ib. Cf. point, 1.


point to, show a. To swindle; act dishonourably towards: New Zealand coll.: late C. 19–20. Cf. points to, give.


points, get. To gain an advantage: 1881 (O.E.D.): coll. variant of S.E. gain a point in the same sense. Cognate with:

poets to, give. To be superior to, have the advantage of; coll.: from ca. 1880. Ex S.E. sense, to give odds to (an opponent).


poison, like. Extremely: gen. in late each other (or one another) like poison: coll. Palgrave, 1930, has 'Hate me like poison', but hate like poison > gen. only in C. 19. Barham, 'And both hating brandy, like what some call pison'.

poison-gas. Treachery: meanness: from ca. 1916, but very ob.: coll. verging on S.E. (W., at gas.) Ex the use of poison-gas in G.W.


poisonous. A coll. intensive adj. (cf. putrid, q.v.): from ca. 1905, according to E. Raymond. A Family That Was (1929). Edwin Pugh, Harry the Cockey, 1912; F. E. Brett Young, Woodsmoke, 1924. 'With those Perfectly Poisonous People —very satirical; Richard Keverno, The Man in the Red Hat, 1930, 'He's a poisonous beast. As shifty as they make 'em'; "Poisonous child", Graham Shepard, in his country-house novel, Tea Tray in the Sky, 1934. Ex S.E. fig. sense, morally corrupting or destructive, of evil influence, or that of deadly as poison.

poisonously. Very: extremely: from ca. 1924. (Oswal Barr, It's Hard to Sin, 1935.)

poity. In late C. 19–20 considered a sol. pronunciation of poetry. Orig. due to the Gr. polus, poetry, and ροιτής, a poet.

pojam. A poem set as an exercise: Harrow School: late C. 19–20; ob. A blend: poem + jam (or perhaps pesum, an imposition, with intensive f.).


poke, get the. A Scottish (esp. Glaswegian) variant of get the nack, to be dismissed: late C. 19–20. Also in Yorkshire dial., which has the corresponding give the poke, to dismiss: E.D.D.

poke a snipe. To smoke a pipe: Medical Greek or narrowwasting: ca. 1840–90. See Slang at 'Sponnerisms'.


POKE BORAK

people's eyes out; more prob. ex poke, to thrust forward.—2. Occ. applied to the wearer of one: coll.: late C. 19-20.

poke borak or borax. See borax.


poke full of plums l, a. An impertinent c.p. reply to which (is the) way to (e.g.) London l: ca. 1850-1860. Melbaneck, 1833: Torriano, 1666. (Apperson.)


poke in the eye. See thump on the back.

poke-pudding. See poke-pudding.—poke up one's pipes. See pipes, pack...


poker; burn one's. To get a venereal infection: low: C. 19-20; ob. See poker, 2. Baumann.

poker l, by the holy. (Occ., ca. 1840-90, the wholly Irish by the h.p. and tumbling Tom l) Occ., ca. 1870-1910, by the holy iron l) A mainly jocular expiilunt, of uncertain meaning (cf., however, old poker, q.v.) and Irish origin: 1804, Maria Edgeworth (O.E.D.).

poker, chant the. To exaggerate; to swagger: s. or low coll.: C. 19. 1 ex preceding.

poker, Jew's. See Jew's poker.—poker, old. See old poker.


Poker-Face: origin. little P-F. Miss Helen Wills, now Mrs. Wills-Moody: lawn tennis devotees' nickname: from 1925. (The Daily Express, April 28, 1934.) Ex her imperturbability.


poker-talk. Fireside chin-chat: coll.: 1885, Mrs. Edwarncs. Ex the fireside poker.

poker. A Yorkshire s. (not dial.) term for goods paid for on the 'truck' system: from ca. 1870. E.D.D.

poking-hole. See poke-hole.

poky drill. Musketry practice without live cartridges: military (other ranks?): from ca. 1915. Ex poke, insignificant.

pol! By Pollix l: a coll. asseveration: late C. 10-early 17. Nashe, Dekker. O.E.D.—2. the pol or Pol; see poll, n. 2.


polar, polarical, polararch, polarchy. C. 17-18 incorrections for polyarch, etc. O.E.D.

pole. The usually wage account: 'printers': from ca. 1850. I became affixed to a pole or because it resembles a pole by its length; or, more prob., a corruption of poll, head, i.e. a 'per capita' account.—2. The male member, esp. when erect: low: C. 19-20; slightly ob.

pole, get on the. To verge on drunkenness: low (—1900). Ware. Prob. ex pole, up the, 4.

pole, go up the. To behave circumspectly: C. 20. Ex pole, up the, 1.

pole, up the. In good repute; hence, strait- laced: military: ca. 1890-1910. Perhaps up the pole = high up.—2. (Gen. up a pole: Manchon.) In difficulties; e.g. over-matched, in the wrong: low: from ca. 1890. 'Pomes' Marshall, 'But, one cruel day, behind two slopes he chanced to take a stroll; And ... he heard himself alluded to as being up the pole.' Perhaps ex pole, the part of the mast above the rigging.—3. Hence, half-witted; mad: low: C. 20.—4. (Rather drunk:) 1896, says Ware.—5. Annoyed, irritated: nautical: late C. 19-20. Bowen.—6. In Australia, 'distraught through anger, fear, etc.; also, disappeared, vanished', C. J. Dennis: late C. 19-20.

pole, (with) lead at both ends— he is like a rope- dancer's. A coll. applied to a dull, sluggish fellow: ca. 1878-1830. Grose, 2nd ed.


pole-axing. The reducing of wages to the point of starvation: printers' (—1887); ob. Baumann. Cf. the axe, q.v.

pole-footed is incorrect for poll-footed. Via careless pronunciation.


poley; polley. (Of cattle) hornless; lit., polled. English dial. and, from ca. 1860, Australian coll.—2. In Australian coll., from ca. 1880, also a hornless beast.


policeman always a policeman, once a. A late C. 19-20 ed., 'imputing 'habit is second nature'. Cf. the proverbial once a captain always a captain (Peacock, 1831); once a knave and ever a knave (C. 17); and once a whore and ever a whore (C. 17-18)—all three cited by Apperson. Cf. the C. 20 once a teacher always a teacher, a c.p. on a par with once a policeman ...

policeman's truncheon. A hand-grenade attached to a handle and having streamers to steady its flight: military coll.: 1915; ob. F. & Gibbons.

polling. See pole-work, 2.

-polis; -opolis. The o is euphonic; -polis represents the Gr. for a city. Relevant in nicknames, from ca. 1860, of cities or towns, e.g. Cottonopolis, Manchester; Leatheropolis, North- ampton; Porkopolis. Chicago and, before 1881, Cincinnati.
polish, v. To trash, to 'punish'; ca. 1840–1910. Ex polish off, q.v.
polish (or pick or eat) a bone. (Gen. of eating with another.) To make a meal: ca. 1787–1915. Grose, 2nd ed. (polish). Contrast:
polish off. Summarily to defeat an adversary: boxing s., 1829 (O.E.D.), ca. 1835, gen. coll. == to finish out of hand, get rid of (esp. a meal) quickly. Dickens, 1837, 'Mayn't I polish that ere Job off?' Ex polish, to give the finishing touches to by polishing.—2. Hence, to kill secretly: o. (—1923). Manchon.
polish the King's iron with one's or the eyebrows.
'To be in gaol, and look through the iron grated windows,' Grose, 1st ed.: ca. 1780–1840: (prob. o. >) low s.
police, do the. See do the police.
politician's porridge, carmen's comfort, porter's puzzle, are found in Ned Ward's The London Spy Compleat, 1703, as == beer. At the best, they are very rare; at the worst, they merely represent Ward's alliterative ingenuity.
polka, matrimonial. (Gen. the m.p.) Sexual intercourse: low coll.: 1842; † by 1920.
poll. A C. 15 incorrect form of pole.—2. (Occ. pol.) A pass in the examination for the ordinary, not the Honourable, B.A. degree. Gen. as the Poll, the passmen, and as go out in the Poll, to be on the list of passmen. Hence, poll, a passman; occ. poll-man. Cambridge University s. first recorded ca. 1830, poll is prob. ex. Gr. οἱ πολλοί, the many, 'the general run.' Brasted, 1865, 'Several declared that they would go out in the Poll'; J. Payn, 1884, 'I took . . . a first-class poll; which my good folks at home believed to be an honourable distinction.'—3. A wig: C. 16–early 19. Hall, 1708; Grose, 1783. Ex poll, the head.—4. A woman: esp. a harlot: nautical: from ca. 1860. H., 2nd ed.; P. H. Emerson, 'A poll gave him a bob.'—5. A decoy bitch used in stealing dogs: o.: from ca. 1870.—6. Poll. Mary, as a gen. name for a parrot: C. 17–20: coll. soon > familiar S.E. As Peg = Meg, Margaret, so Poll = Moll, Mary.
*poll, v. See poll and poll. From ca. 1835: c., as in Brandon, 1839; P. H. Emerson, 1893, 'He accused us of polling.'—2. To defeat; outdistance: printers' and sporting: from ca. 1870. H., 6th ed.—3. To smb.: low: from ca. 1875; ob.
Poll, Captain of the. The highest of the passmen: Cambridge University (see poll, n. 2): ca. 1830–90.
poll-man. See poll, n. 2.
poll off. To become drunk: low: from ca. 1860; ob. † ex poll, head.
poll on. See polling on.
*poll-thief. A thief; an informer: o.: from ca. 1890. Cf. poller, 2.
poll up. To court; live in concubinage with: low: from ca. 1870. H., 5th ed. Cf. polled up, living in unmarried cohabitation; in company with a woman: H., 1859. Cf. mولةd up.
pollaky! or o(h) Pollaky (or p.)! An 'exclamation of protest against too urgent enquiries': a non-aristocratic c. O.: ca. 1870–90. Ex the advertisements of a foreign detective resident at Paddington Green—one Pollaky (accented on second syllable). Ware. See also Addenda.
polley. See polley.
pollrumpions. Unruly or restless; foolishly confident; coll. or s.: from ca. 1860. † ex poll, head + rumpus. (Much earlier in dial.)
polly. † a boot, a shoe: from ca. 1890. P. H. Emerson, 1893, 'All I get is my kid and a clean mill tog, a pair of pollies and a stocking, and what few medazas (1 mezadas) I can make out of the lodgers and needies.'—2. Apollinaris water: 1893. G. Egerton.—3. As a name for a parrot: C. 17–20: coll. soon > familiar S.E.
Polly Hopkins. One Mr. Potts, the principal crammer of pass-men: Cambridge University: ca. 1840–55. H., 2nd ed. Punning Mr. Hopkins, a private tutor for the would-be honour men, and poll, n., 2 + ol pollol. Polly, put the kettle on, and we'll all have tea.
A c.p.: from ca. 1870; ob. Collinson. Ex the song of Grip, the Raven (Dickens).
polone, palore. Excessively drunk: London lower classes' (—1909). Ware derives ex Fr. soiut comme un Polonais (drunk as a Pole).
polone, palore. Erroneous for polone.
pollrumpions. A variant of pollrumpions.
polly; dolly. Easy: crackers': ca. 1890–1910. † cognate with Kentsh poll, saucy.
Polly, the. The Polytechnic Institute: Londoners' coll.: C. 20.
polyglotter. A person that speaks several languages: coll.: 1912. O.E.D. (Sup.).
Polyphemus. The penis: C. 19–20 (ob.) cultured. Via Monops, the one-eyed one.
pom. A Pomeranian dog: coll.: C. 19–20. Cf. peks, q.v. Aldous Huxley has somewhere remarked that 'there is no inward, psychological contradiction between a maudlin regard for poms and peks and a bloodthirsty hatred of human beings.'
pom Fritz. A variant, actually the imm. origin of, Bombardier Fritz, q.v. (B. & P.)
pomatum-pol. A small pot of throat-mixture kept by Gladstone at his side while he spoke in public: society: ca. 1885–90. Ware.
pommy, Pommy. A newcomer from Britain, esp. from England: Australian: from ca. 1910, or a few years earlier. The O.E.D. (Sup.) records it at 1910, but it was current before the Great War. Origin obscure: possibly pommy is a corruption of Tommy; perhaps an importation by Australian soldiers returning from the Boer War (1899–1902) and amused by pom-pom († pom-pommy > pommy), —cf. Woodbine, the Diggers' name for the Tom-
mies; perhaps a jocularly ‘perverted’ blend of 
Jimmy, n., 2 (q.v.) + Tommy; Jice Doone thinks it 
a combination of immigrant and pomegranate, 
ex ruddy fruit and cheeks; Dr. Randolph 
Hughes much more pertinently suggests that it 
derives from ‘Pomeranian, a very superior sort of 
dew or’, or from Ger. Pommer, the same—there 
being many German settlers in Australia.

Pompados, the (Saucy). The (2nd Battalion of 
the) Essex Regiment (before ca. 1881, the 54th 
Foot); military from ca. 1760; ex Ob. Ex the 
facings of purple, the favourite colour of Madame 
Pompadour. F. & Gibbons. (The standardized 
khaki has doomed—indeed already consigned—
many of the old regimental nicknames to oblivion.)
pompaque. See aga pompaque.

Bowen. Perhaps ex its naval prison: cf. York-
shire Pompy, a house of correction (E.D.D.).—2.
See Evans Off ‘H.’ Pompey Football Club: 
sporting: C. 20.—A. Temporary lid set on a cask 
that, in testing, is being fired: cooks’—(1935).
Cf. the Lancashire dial. pompy, a tea-kettle.

Pompey (or the black dog Pompey) is on your 
back! A c.p. (—1869) addressed to a fractious 
child: provincial coll., and dial. Cf. the old South 
Devonshire your tail’s on your shoulder. W. Carew 
Harlitt.

Pompy’s pillar to a stick of sealing-wax. Long 
odds: coll.: ca. 1815–60. Tom Moore, 1819; 
Egan’s Grose, 1823. Cf. all Lombard Street to a 
China orange, Chelsea College to a sentry-box.
pompilion. Incorrect for pomplion, an out-
ment: C. 17. O.E.D.
pompin, Pomphalshrie. See pumpkin, 1, and 
Pomphalshrie.

Bowen, ‘A little pompons’. [’pon for upon is perhaps, orig. at least, rather 
coll. than S.E.—For ’pon my styvy, see styvy.] 
*pon me my life. A wife: rhyming s.: late C. 19– 
early 20. Ware. More gen. trouble and strife.
ponec; ponec-sperc; ponecay. A harlot’s 
bully or keep: (prob. c. >) low s.: resp. 1872, 
ca. 1890, 1861 (Mayhew). H., 5th ed., 1874; 
‘Low-class East-end thieves even will “draw 
the line” at poneces and object to their presence in 
the bull’s eye’; Henley, 1887, ‘You pones 
good at talking tall’. Prob. ex ponec on ponec, 
though possibly influenced by Fr. Alphonse, a harlot’s bully 
(W.). Cf. bouner, fancy-cove, mack, proser, 
Sunday man or bloke.
oponec on. To live on the earnings of (a prostitu-
Kid, 1938.

poncho. A loose overcoat 1856, H.; ♀ by 
1800. Ex Castilian pescos, a military cloak.
ponec the. The North Atlantic Ocean: from 
ca. 1830: (mainly nautical) s. >, ca. 1880, gen. 
coll.?, ca. 1905, S.E. Ex the C. 17–19 S.E. sense, 
the ocean. Oce. the Big Pond, as in Halifax 
and Sale; also the Herring Pond, and even the 
Puget.

poney. See ponec.
ponec. A slink: low from ca. 1860; ♀ origin; 
ct. ponec, v., 1, its prob. origin.—2. Beer: low: 
from ponec, s. ponec, 2nd ed., where spell ponce. 
Varies pongo(lo)(w) (H., 1884), pongellorum (F. & 
H., 1903), these being fanciful endings. Origin 
obscure: ♀ suggested by pommes (pommes), q.v. 
Ware, who defines it as ‘pale ale—but relatively 
any beer’, classifies the term as ‘Anglo-Indian 
Army’.
ponec, pongelo(w), pongellorum. See ponec, 
♀, and v. 2. But whereas pongelow is recorded 
(H., 1864) as a v., pongellorum is not so recorded.
ponging, n. Somersaulting: circus s.: mid-C. 
19–20. See ponec, ♀. 4.
in S.E., properly a ‘large anthropoid African ape’; 
loosely, indeed erroneously, the orang-outang, 
1834. Native name. S.O.D.—2. Hence, a nick-
name for a marine: naval: C. 20. Coppleston, 
1916. (W.)—3. Hence, a soldier: naval: G.W. 
(F. & Gibbons).—4. An Australian infantryman 
Australians’: from 1915. This Australian usage 
have been influenced by the Aboriginal name for a 
lying squirmed.

ponk. A rather rare variant of ponec, ♀ and v. 
ponky land, in. Weak-minded; silly: mili-
tary: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Possibly ex a blend, 
or even an ignorant confusion, of pogo + wonky, 
qq.v.

ponite. A pound (sterling): showmen’s, from ca. 
ponitic. Credit: London s. (—1823) > Lincoln-
shire s. (—1903). Abbr. upon tick (see tick). 
‘Jon Bee’ and E.D.D. Cf.:
(onite, adv. On credit: low: from ca. 1890; 
slightly ob. Prob. F. & H.’s slip for ponite.)

Grose, 1785. Why?—2. The druggist-covering 
to the thwrat to prevent chafing: Oxford rowing 
men’s (—1884); ob. Why?—3. A provost ser-
Pontius Pilate’s Body-Guard.

Poucitt Pilate. Dead as. Quite dead; long dead: 
Poucitt Pilate’s Body-Guard or—Guards. The 1st 
Regiment of Foot, after ca. 1881 the Royal Scots, 
the oldest regiment in the British Army: military 
(slightly ob.): Grose, 1785, but prob. in spoken 
use from ca. 1670. Either simply ex their acknow-
ledged antiquity or ex their alleged claim that, had 
they been on guard at the Crucifixion, they would 
not have slept.

Pontius Pilate’s counsellor. A briefless barrister 
legal: from ca. 1780; ob. One who, like Pilate, 
can say, ‘I have found no cause of death in him.’ 
Grose, 1785. Cf. Fr. avocat de Pilate.

ponto. A pellet kneaded from new bread: 
15, 1900 (Matthew Arnold ponto-pelted at school). 
♀ origin: possibly connected with the punto 
of ombre and quadrille (the card-game): cf. sense 2— 
2. Punto, at cards: a corruption: 1861. O.E.D.

ponzon. The card-game: 1900; military coll. >, 
by 1910, gen. S.E. A corruption of, more prob. an approximation to, vingt-us. S.O.D.

Pony. An ‘inevitable’ nickname of men sur-
pony. A bailiff; esp. an officer accompanying a debtor on a day's liberty; coll.: C. 18–mid.19.—2. Money: low: ca. 1810–40. *Lex. Bal., Moncrieff (see quotation at poet, stamp the), Ainsworth. Prob. ex sense 2.—3. £25: 1797, Mrs. M. Robinson, 'There is no touching her even for a pony.' O.E.D. Perhaps because only a small sum, as a pony is a small horse. (Cf. pony up, q.v.) N.B., among brokers, a pony is £25,000 of stock, i.e. 25 £1000-shares. Cf. monkey, n. 2.—4. A small glass of liquor: 1884, in U.S.; anglicized ca. 1890, chiefly as a small measure of beer. O.E.D.—5. In gambling, a double-headed or double-tailed coin: c. > low a.: late C. 19–20.—6. A crib; schoolboy—(1912). A. H. Dawson.—7. Inferior goods: market-traders' (e.g. Petticoat Lane). C. 20. pony, post the. To pay: a C. 19 variant of post the cole: see post, v., and pony, 2. (Baumann's pot the pony is an error.)

pony (occ. lady), sell the. To toss for drinks; low: late C. 19–20. Ex pony, third and fifth senses. Hence, he who has to pay, buys the pony. pony and trap. See tom-tit. pony in white. A sum or value of twenty-five shillings: racing o.: C. 20. Ex pony, 3; in white, in silver.


pooh. See pouch.

pooche. Any dog: (sarcastic) coll.: from ca. 1860; slightly ob.—2. (Pooche) The same as Paul Pry, q.v. (Dawson).—3. (Rare in singular) A sausage: low: C. 20. A. Neil Lyons, *Arthur's,* 1914, 'We fair busted ourselves on puddles and mashed ' (Manchon); slightly ob.

poocher. A man, esp. a naval or military officer, that, for the time being rather than habitually, cultivates the society of women: Anglo-Indian, hence military, hence naval: from middle 1920's (! earlier). Hence, pooche-faking, vb.ln. O.E.D. (Sup.). In reference to lap-dogs.

poocher. 'Womaniser' or confirmed flirt among cyclists: cyclists': from ca. 1930. Ex preceding. The opp. is a blinder.

'poof. A male pervert: o.: (—1932) and low. 'Stuart Wood.' Ex poof / or pooh. Also spelt poufe. See also puff, n. 2.


poole. An excellent suit; perfect clothing: male society coll.: from ca. 1840. Ex Poole, a leading tailor, at 37–9 Savile Row, London. Messrs Henry Poole & Co. were established in 1823 by James Poole at 171 Regent Street; their fame has forced them to open a branch in Paris (10 rue Trousnet). Ware; *The Red Book of Commerce,* 1900 (ed. 1935).

poorness. To a poorness (a piece of furniture) with a wedge: Winchester College (—1891). Wrench, *Notions.* Prob. ex L. ponerea, to place. Imm. ex:—

2. V.i., to be unsteady: ibid.: ca. 1830–70. Wrench, 'Hence you wedged the leg that poon.'

poona. £1; a sovereign: costermongers': from ca. 1855. H., 1st. ed. ? pound corrupted or ex Lingua Franca. (cf. ponte, q.v.) or, less likely, pound influenced by poonah, a painting, etc., on the analogy of Queen's picture (q.v.).

poona Guards, the. The East Yorkshire's, formerly the 15th Regiment of Foot: military from ca. 1860. Ex residence in India. Also the Snappers.


poop-downshani. An imaginary rope: nautical coll.: (1883). Cf. the operation, equally imaginary, of 'clapping the kocl athwart-ships'. Clark Russell's glossary.


poop off. See poop, v., 4.

poop-ornament. An apprentice: nautical: ca. 1850–90. The *Athenaum,* Feb. 8, 1902, 'Miscalled 'a blasted poop ornament '; the drudge even of ordinary seamen'.


poor. Uneven condition or circumstances: C. 13–20: S.E. until ca. 1855, then coll. Mrs Carlyle, 1867, 'He looked dreadfully weak still, poor fellow !—2. When said, as from ca. 1785, of the dead person whom one has known, poor verges on coll. O.E.D.

poor as a Commanth man. Extremely poor: Anglo-Irish coll.: ca. 1802, Maria Edgeworth.

poor as a rat. As. Extremely poor: a C. 19–20 (ob.) coll. variation of as poor as a churchmouse. E. Ward, 1703. 'Whilst men of parts, as poor as rats • • • , with which cf. Hugh Kimber's 'The country is full of hungry men with brains' (March 1933); Marryat, 1834; W. De Morgan, 1907. Apperson.

poor knight of Windsor. See next: coll. and dial. C. 19. Scott, The Bride of Lammermoor, 1818, has this footnote, 'In contrast... to the baronial "Sir Loin",' concerning:


poor man's goose. Bullock's liver, baked with sage, onions, and a little fat bacon: (low) coll. (—1909). Ware. Cf. poor man's treacle. (In Warwickshire dial., it is 'a cow's spleen stuffed and roasted', E.D.D., 1903.)


poor man's side, or with capitals. The poor man's side of the Thames, i.e. South London: a coll. (—1887; very ob.) verging on S.E. Baumann. Opp. rich man's side, the North side of the Thames: same period.


poorly. (Always in the predicate, except in poorly time, q.v.) In poor health; unwell: from ca. 1750: S.E. until ca. 1870, then near-coll.; in C. 20, coll. O.E.D.

poorly time. The monthly period: lower-class women's coll. (—1887). Baumann.

pooser. 'A huge, uncouth thing': low Northumberland s. (—1903). Ex dial. poose (or pouse), to strike. E.D.D. Cf. whopper.

poot. A shilling: East London (—1909). Ware. Ex Hindustani. Oriental beggars were, before that, date, common there.

poove; pooving. Food; feeding, i.e. grazing for animals: either circus s. or Parlyarse (—1833). E. Seago, Circus Company. Origin?: perhaps ultimately ex the root pa, as in Sanscrit pō-pās, a herdsman.


Pop. See pop, n., 1, 9.—2. the Pop; the Poplolly. Lady Darlington, notorious and prominent in English society of the 1820's. John Gore, Creweey's Life and Times, 1934.

pop, v. To fire a gun: coll.: 1725, A New Casting Dict.; ob.—2. V.t., to shoot: a. or coll. >, in C. 20, S.E. Gen. with down (1762) or off (1813). O.E.D.—3. To pawn: 1731, Fielding; Barrie, 1902, 'It was plain for what she had popped her watch,' O.E.D. Cf. pop-shop and pop up the spout.—4. See pop off and pop the question—5. To lose one's temper: tailors': late C. 19–20.

pop, give (a person) a. To engage in a fight (from ca. 1910); to fire at with machine-gun (G.W.): New Zealanders'.


pop-eyed. Having bulging eyes, or eyes opened wide in surprise: U.S. (ca. 1920), anglicized by ca. 1910. (O.E.D. Sup.)

goes the wassel (of, now gen. regarded as a nursery rhyme tag, was in the 1870's and 80's a proletarian (mostly Cockney) c.p. Ware, 'Activity is suggested by "pop", and the little wassel is very active. Probably erotic origin. Chiefly associated with these lines—Up and down the City Road | In and out the Eagle | That's the way the money goes, | Pop goes the wassel!'

pop it in, v.i. To effect intromission: low coll. C. 19–20. Contrast:

pop it on, v.i. To ask for more, esp. a higher price: coll. 1876, Hindley.

pop-lolly. A sweetmeat: raspapajack's' a. or coll. 1878, Hindley, 'Lollipop and pop-lolly'.

pop off. See pop, v., 2.—2. To die: 1764, Foote, 'If Lady Pepperpot should happen to pop off', O.E.D. Also, but ob. by 1930, pop off the hooks, from ca. 1840, as in Barham.


the question. To propose marriage: 1826, Miss Mitford, 'The formidable interrogatory... emphatically called "popping the question",' O.E.D.: s. >, in C. 20, coll. Rarely, to pop († by 1920). Ex S.E. pop the question, to ask abruptly.

pop up the spout. Same as pop, v., 3: low: 1869, H., 1st ed. See spout.


pope. As a pejorative (a pope of a thing), as an imprecation ('A pope on all women, 1820'), in as drunk as a pope, and in (e.g. know, read) no more than the pope, i.e. nothing, the term is on the borderland between S.E. and coll.; all these phrases are † except in dial.—2. See Pope of Rome.

pope-holy is catastrophic when = popishly devout or holy: C. 17–20; also cf. Pope o' Rome. See trot the udyu.


poperine pear. The penis: low coll.: late C. 16–mid-17. Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet, in
POPE'S EYE

the quarto edition; passage afterwards suppressed. Ex shape.
pope's eye. The thread of fat, properly 'the lymphatic gland surrounded with fat', in (the middle of) a leg of mutton: from ca. 1670; S.E. till C. 19, then coll. Shirley Brooks, 1852, 'The pope's eye on a Protestant leg of mutton'. Presumably eye ex its rounded form. (O.E.D.)
pope's (occ. Turk's) head. A round brompt, with a long handle; from ca. 1820; coll. >, ca. 1890, S.E.; ob. Maria Edgeworth, in Love and Law, 'Run . . . for the pope's head.'
pope's size. Short and fat: trade a. > j.; from ca. 1865; ob. Mostly tailors'.

*poplars, popler(s), poppelars; rarely, poplar. Porridge; esp. milk-porridge; e. c. 17-early 19. Dekker (poplars); Middleton (popler); Grose, 1st ed. (poplers). Prob. a corruption of pop (for infants, invalid).
popletic, pop lethal. Incorrect for popletic(al): mid-C.18-17. O.K.

Popolly, the. See Pop, 2.—poppa. See pop, n., seventh sense.
popped. Annoyed; esp. in popped as a hatter, very angry: tailors: from ca. 1860. = popped off, apt to pop off. Cf. mad as a hatter.

*poppeters. See poplers.
popper. A pistol: 1790, Coventry; ob. a. > coll. in late C. 19-20, also a rifle or a shot-gun (E. Seago, 1933).—2. See pop, n. 7.
popping-crease. A junction station: railway officials' (—1900). Ware. Running the cricket term.
popple. A performer at (1895), a frequenter of (1901), the popular concerto: coll. Ex pop, n., 2. O.E.D.
poppy, adj. Popping, exploding: coll.: 1894, Kipling, 'Little poppy shells'. O.E.D.—2. (Of the ground) causing the bulb to pop (itself, j.): cricket: from ca. 1874. Lewis.
poppy-show. A display, esp. if accidental, of underclothes; orig. and properly, of red or brown flannel underclothes: low coll.: late C. 19-20. Ex dial. poppy-show, a peep-show, a puppet-show (see E.D.D.).

pops or Pop. Father: C. 20, but rare before 1919. (E. M. Delafield, Gay Life, 1933, 'Pops says that . . .', and 'My Pops says . . .')

*pops and a galloper, his means are two. He is a highwayman: late C. 18-early 19; c. or low s. Gross, 2nd ed.
popy. An endearment for a girl: nursery coll.: 1862. Ex S.E. pop, similarly used; see the next entry. O.E.D.
popy-woppy. A foolish endearment: (mostly nursery) coll. (—1887). Baumann; 1892, Alty Sloper's Half-Holiday, March 19, 'Bless me if the little poppy-woppy hasn't been collecting all the old circus hoops and covering them with her old muslin skirts'. Reduplicating poppy (archaic pop, darling, short for poppet 'W.').

popularity Jack. An officer given to curry ing favour either with the men or with the public: naval, gen. as nickname: C. 20. Bowen.
por, porr. Sol. pronunciation of poor: C. 19-20 (f earlier). Often so printed: e. g. in Frank Swinerton's quiet masterpiece, The Georgian House, 1933, 'Pore old lady'.
Porcher, the. See Academy, the.
pory. See Georgy-pory, pudding pie.
pork, ory. To act as an undertaker's tout: low: late C. 18-mid-19. Grose, 2nd ed. The raven, 'whose note sounds like . . . pork', is 'said to smell carrion at a distance'.
porky, adj. Of, concerning, resembling pork; obese: coll.: 1852, Surtees. O.E.D.
porpoise. A very stout man: late C. 19-20: coll. >, ca. 1905, S.E.
porpoise, do a. (Of a submarine) to dive nose first at a sharp angle: naval: from 1916. Bowen.
porpoising, vb.n. 'The movement of an aero- plane when an imperfect "get-off", or landing, is made': Air Force: from 1915. F. & Gibbons. Contrast the preceding.
porps! porps! 'The old time whalers' cry when porpoises were sighted', Bowen: C. 19.

Porridge Island. The nickname for 'an alley leading from St. Martin's church-yard, to Round
court, chiefly inhabited by cooks, who cut off ready dressed meat of all sorts, and also sell soup; Grosé, 1786: London coll.: ca. 1780–1830.

**porridge-pot.** A (heavy) shell; military (not very gen.): in G.W. (G. H. McKnight, *English Words, 1923*).

**Portridge-Pots.** ‘Linesmen’s satirical mode of naming the Scotch guard [sic]: military (— 1809); ob. Ware. Ex porridge as staple food of Scotland (cf. **porridge-hole**).

**Port Egmont fowl.** The large Antarctic gull; nautical coll.: C. 20. Bowen. (Port Egmont is in the north-west of the Falkland Islands.)

**port for stuffs.** ‘Assumption of a commoner’s gown’, Egan’s Grosé: Oxford University: ca. 1820–40. The double pun is obvious.

**port-hole.** The fundament; the female pudendum: low coll.: from ca. 1800; ob.

**port-holes in your coffin! you want.** A naval o.p. (C. 20) addressed to a man very hard to please. F. & Gibbons.


**portable property.** ‘Easily stolen or pawned values—especially a plate’: coll.: 1855, The Refuge, vol. vii.

**port.** A C. 17 incorrect form of *portus*, a portable brevity. O.E.D.—*portatur*(s). Incorrect for *portaiture*: C. 15. O.E.D.


**port-hole.** See **port-hole.**—*portigue*. See pestle of a portuge.

**portmanteau.** A ‘*I*3g* highly explosive shell, a name introduced during the Russo-Japanese War’; naval: ob. Bowen.

**portmanteau, portmancy.** A portmanteau: C. 17–20: S.E. till C. 19, then resp. dial. and low coll.

**portrait.** See Queen’s picture.

**portrait, sit for one’s.** To be inspected ‘by the different keys’: that they might know prisoners from visitors’, Dickens in *Pickwick*: prison: ca. 1835–80.

**portreeve.** Erroneous when made to = the reeve of a seaport town: C. 17–20. O.E.D.

**Portuguese.** A Portuguese (soldier): jocular military, mostly officers’: 1916, John Buchan, *Greenmantle*.


**Portuguese (a)see parliament.** ‘A forecaste discussion which degenerates into all talkers and no listeners’: nautical: late C. 19–20. Bowen.


**Portuguese pumping.** A nautical phrase (— 1662) of which Ware was unable to discover the meaning. Nor have I; but I agree with Ware that ‘it is probably nasty’: it refers almost certainly to either defecation (suggested by *pump ship*, q.v.) or masturbation.

**pos, posse, poss, possesses.** Positive: coll. abbr.: resp. 1711, 1719, 1710 (Swift), 1710 (Swift): all "above 1800. The most frequent, pos, may date from as early as 1700 or 7, occurring as it does in *Poltie Conservation*; posses (e.g. D’Urfe, ‘Drunk I was last night, that’s posses’) is rather rare.—2. As adv., positively: coll.: late C. 18–early 19, but adumbrated in *Swift*.—3. Only **pos** and **poss** (gen. the latter) possible; usually in *if posses*. Low coll.: from ca. 1885; slightly ob. ‘Pomes’ Marshall.—4. (Gen. **pos**.) A certainty: rare coll. verging on *s.: 1822, Manchon. Ex sense 1.


**posy.** See **posy**.

**posh.** Money; specifically, a halfpenny or other coin of low value: c. (— 1839); ob. Brandon; H., 1st ed. Ex Romany *posh*, a half, as in *posh-horri*, a halfpenny, and *posh-hovora*, a half-crown.—2. A dandy: Society s. (— 1897); † by 1920. Barrère & Leland, 2nd ed. † ex sense 1; i.e. a moneyed person (cf. *plum*, 1, 3). Or perhaps a corruption of (big) *pot*.—3. When, in *The White Monkey*, 1924 (Part ii, ch. xii), Galsworthy wrote ‘Pity was posh!’ he was confusedly blending *punk and tosh*; all he meant was ‘Pity was bosh’.

**posh**, adj. Stylish, smart; (of clothes) best; splendid: military >, by 1910, gen.: 1918, says O.E.D.; but it appears as Cambridge University *s., though as *posh* or *poosh*, in 1903, when P. G. Wodehouse, in *Tales of St. Austin’s*, says of a brightly coloured waistcoat that it is ‘quite the most push thing at Cambridge’. Avoided by polite society since ca. 1930. B. & P. Ex *posh*, n., 2; or possibly a corruption of Scottish *toosh*, clean, neat, trim.

**posh**; gen. *posh up.* (Gen. in passive—esp. all *posh-ed-up.*) To make smart in appearance; to clean and polish: military > gen.: from 1917 or 1918. F. & Gibbons; B. & P. Ex *posh*, adj.; and, like it, slightly ob.

**poshness, poshness.** Incorrect for *poor or poise* in: C. 19–20 India. Yule & Burnell


**positive.** Certainly no less than; downright; indubitable, ‘out-and-out’: coll.: 1802, Sydney Smith, ‘Nothing short of a positive miracle can make him . . .’, O.E.D.

**pos.** See **pos**.

**posse mobilisitatis.** The mob: coll.: ca. 1890–1890. B.E.; Grosé, 1st ed. On *posse comitatus*.


**possibly.** Catchastic or, at the least, incorrect for possible in such phrases as if possibly, by all means possibly, soon as possibly: mid-C. 19–20; ob.; indeed, rare after C. 17. O.E.D.

**possee.** See **poise**.

**posse; more correctly *pose*. An earnest advocate: lower classes’ satirical (— 1909). Ware. I.e. *aposele*.

**possum.** Opossum: C. 17–20: S.E. till mid-C. 19, then coll. **possum, play.** To pretend; feign illness or death: orig. U.S. (— 1824); partly anglicised ca. 1850. Ex the opossum’s feigned death. The
variants to possum, to act possum, and to come possum over have remained wholly U.S. (O.E.D. and Thornton.)

possum-guts. A pejorative, gen. in address:

Australian: 1850, H. Kingley; ob.

posy; occ. posie, pozy. A position; esp. a dug-out, or other shelter: military, mainly Australian and New Zealand: from 1915. B. & P.; F. & Gibbons. Hence, from 1910, mostly in the Colonial, a house, a lodging, etc.; a job. Joe Doone.—3. See poszy, 3.

post. Such mail as is cleared from one receiving-box or as is delivered at one house: coll. from ca. 1890.

post, v. Often post up and gen. in the passive, esp. in the post passive ppl.: to supply with information or news: U.S. coll. (1847) anglicised ca. 1860; > S.E. ca. 1880. Prob. ex posting up a ledger. (O.E.D.)—2. To summon (a candidate) for examination on the first day of a series: Oxford University: C. 18. Amberlct, 1721. ‘To avoid being posted or dogged’, O.E.D. (See dog, v.) Ex S.E. post, to hurl a person.—3. To pay: from ca. 1780; ob. Esp. post the cole, orig. c., 1781, C. Johnston; post the nettles, c., 1780, G. Parker; post the pooy, 1823, Moncrieff.—see posty; post the fin, 1854, Martin & Aytoun. After ca. 1870, the term is influenced by post, to send by post.

post, bet on the wrong side of the. I.e. on a losing horse: turf coll. (—1823); ↑ by 1900. ‘Jon Bee.’

post, between you and me and the (bed; in late C. 19–20, often gate). In confidence: coll. >, ca. 1910, S.E.: 1832, Lytton; Dickens. O.E.D.

post, kiss the. See kiss the post.—post, knight of the. See knight.

post, make a buck in the. To use, consume, a considerable part of a thing: from ca. 1840: coll. >, by 1870, S.E.; ob. O.E.D.

post, on the. Dealing with postage; applied esp. to the clerk dealing with this: commercial and insurance coll.: late C. 19–20. (M. Harrison, Spring in Tarantus, 1935.)


post-chaise. To travel by post-chaise: coll. : 1864, Thackeray, Ob. O.E.D.


post-nointer. A house-painter: 1785, Grose; ↑ by 1850.


post-shay, See post-chaly.

post ta, e.g. chum or hat. A Charterhouse c.p., from ca. 1870, to indicate disapproval (of, e.g., hat or companion). A. H. Tod, Charterhouse, 1900, implies derivation ex a post ta of (anything), the right to use a thing after the ‘owner’ has done with it (mid-C. 19–20); itself ex post ta (in L., ‘after thee’) as in post to math, ex. ‘May I glance over your mathematical exercise?’

post the blue. To win the Derby: racing-men's (—1909). Cf. post, v., 3; the blue is the blue riband of racing, the Derby. Ware.

Postage Stamp, the. Any hotel, etc., known as the Queen’s Head: taverns: 1837-ca. 85. Ex the design on stamps. (O.E.D.)


postie. See posie.

postilimentary, postliminiate, postliminious, postliminous. Erroneous for postliminary (C. 18–20), postliminate (C. 17), postliminious (late C. 17–20), postliminious (C. 17). O.E.D.

postman's sister, the. An unnamed or secret informant: middle-class coll.: ca. 1883–1914. Ware. Cf. Jinks the barber.

postmaster-general. The prime minister: a late C. 17–early 19 nickname. Grose, 1785, ‘... Who has the patronage of all posts and places’.


posty. See posie—posy. See Holborn Hill.


pot. To shoot or kill for the pot, i.e. for food; to kill by a pot-shot: coll.: 1860 (O.E.D.)—2. v.i. To have a pot-shot, v.t. with at: 1860 (O.E.D.)—2. to coll. till C. 20, then S.E. Cf. pot away, q.v.—3. To win, ‘bag’: 1900, H. Nisbet, ‘He has potted the girl,’ O.E.D. Cf. pot, v., 1, and pot n., 4.—4. See pot, put on the.—5. To deceive; outwit: mid-C. 18–20: S.E. until C. 19, then s., as in Tom
Taylor's Still Waters, 1855, 'A greater flat was never potted'; ob.—6. See pot on.

pot, as good a piece as ever strode a. As good as a girl as you could find: low coll.; mid-C. 19–20. Cf. pissed, as good as ever, and piss upon . . . , q.v.
pot, go to. To be ruined or destroyed; to get into a very bad condition: mid-C. 16–20; S.E. till C. 19, then coll.; in C. 20, low coll. (Whence go to pot /, go to the devil: coll.; late C. 17–20.) Orig., go to the pot, lit. 'to be cut in pieces like meat for the pot', S.O.D.
pot, gone to. Dead: C. 19. See preceding entry.
pot, old. See pot, the.
pot, on the. At stool; low: ca. 1810–60. Lex. Bal.

pot, put in the. Involved in loss: turf (—1823); † by 1900. Bee.
pot, put on. To exaggerate, e.g. to overcharge: from ca. 1850; ob.—2. (Also to pot.) To wager large sums: sporting: 1823, 'Jon Bee'; ob. See pot, n., 1.
pot, put on the big. To sbn.; to be patronising: from ca. 1891: coll. (Occ., big omitted).
pot, the old. One's father: mostly Australian (—1916). C. J. Dennis. Abbr. the old pot and pan, 'the old man'.
upset the. To beat the favourite: sporting: from ca. 1860. 'Ouida.'
pan and pot. A rather rare form of old pot and pan, q.v.
pot-boiler. Any literary or artistic work done for money: coll.; 1803 (S.O.D.). I.e. something that will keep the pot boiling.—2. Hence, a producer of 'pot-boilers': coll.; 1892, G. S. Layard (O.E.D.).
pot-cad. See pot, n., 8.
pot calls the kettle black arse, the. See black arse.
pot-hat. In Notes & Queries, 1891 (7th Series, xii, 48), we read: 'Until lately . . . always . . . short for "chimney-pot hat", less reverently known as a "tile"; but at the present time . . . often applied to a felt hat,' the latter—to be precise, a 'bowler'—being, by 1930, slightly ob., the former more historical. Coll.: 1798, Jane Austen (O.E.D.).
pot-head. A stupid person: coll.; 1855, Kingsley. O.E.D. App. ex:
pot-herb is cathartic when, as by Stevenson in 1882, used as = pot-plant. O.E.D.
pot-house. An easy-going club; clubmen's coll. (—1909). Ware. Jowlar on S.E. sense.—2. (Pot-

POTATO, THE

House, the.) Peterhouse, Cambridge: Cambridge (mid-C. 19–20; ob.
pot-houser. See pot, n., 8.
pot-hunter. One who follows sport for profit, lit. for pots: coll. till C. 20, then S.E.: 1874, H., 5th ed. See pot, n., 4. Ex S.E. sense, one who hunts less for the sport than for the prey. Cf. the next entry.—2. In very local c. of late C. 16, the same as a 'barnacle'. Greene, 1592.
pot-hunting. The practising of sport for the sake of the prizes: coll. till C. 20, then S.E.: 1862, The Saturday Review, July 7; Good Words, 1881, 'Some men are too fond of starring or pot-hunting at "sports",' O.E.D. Cf. pot-hunter, q.v.
pot in the plate, have a. To be the worse for drink: coll. verging on S.E.: ca. 1650–1780. Bracken, in his interesting Farriery Improved, 1737, 'An Ox . . . would serve them to ride well enough, if they had only a Pot in the Plate,' O.E.D.
pot joint. In grafters' of late C. 19–20, thus in P. Allingham, Cheapside, 1834, 'An enormous number of crockery sellers are Lancashire men, and their great stalls, where they sell all kinds of china by mock auction, are usually called "pot joints",' pot o'honey. See honey, 2.
pot of all. A leader-hero, a 'dei-god' Cockneys: ca. 1883–1914. Ware.
pot o(f) bliss. 'A fine tall woman': taverns: from ca. 1876; ob. Ware.
pot of O is the abbr. of pot of O, my dear: rhyming s. for 'beer': 1868, says Ware; ob.
pot on. To be enthusiastic for: non-aristocratic s. (—1887) >, by 1900, coll.; ob. Baumann quotes Punch: 'When their fancy has potted on pink' (Wenn sie sich in rosa verliebt haben).
pot walks, the. A c.p. applied to a drinking bout: ca. 1560–1750. (O.E.D.)
pot with two ears, make a or the. To set one's arms akimbo: coll.: ca. 1670–1700. Cotton, 1675, ... 'A goodly port she bears, [Making the pot with the two Ears.], O.E.D.
potquaune is (mid-C. 10–20) erroneous for potouquaune; potaro (C. 17) for pedrero. O.E.D.
potato, hot. See hot potato.
potato, the or the clean. The best; the correcior most appropriate thing: resp. 1822, 1880. Esp. in quite or not quite the (clean) potato. (O.E.D.)
potato-box. The mouth (cf. p.-jaw, q.v.): from ca. 1870.

potato-finger. A long thick finger; a penis; a dildó; (low) coll.: C. 17–18. Esp. in Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida. Ex supposed aphrodisiac virtues of the sweet potato. (O.E.D.)

potato-jaw or -strap. The mouth: resp. 1791, Mme D'Arblay; 1853, Grose. Orig. Irish. (O.E.D.)


potching. The taking of tips from a person that one has not served:waiters' (— 1883). The Graphic, March 17, 1883. Prob. = poaching. (Ware.)


potomains. Ptomaine: from ca. 1880; sol. Cf. potomais, q.v.

pots or Pota. North Staffordshire Railway ordinary stock: Stock Exchange: from ca. 1885. The railway serves the potteries.

pots; gen. be pots, to be mad, or extremely eccentrio: from ca. 1925. (Anthony Weymouth, Hard Liver, 1936.) Ex potty on bals, q.v.

pots and pans, make. 'To spend freely, then beg', Bee, 1823: ca. 1820–1900. (Baumann.)


potted fug. Potted meat: either dial. or local s.: Rugby (town): from ca. 1860.


day of potterie: ca. 1750–1820. Foote, 1764, 'Master Lint, the potted-carrier'. O.E.D.

potteries, the. Stoke City Football Club ('soccer'): sporting: C. 20.


potta. See pots.


pouch, v. To supply the pouch, i.e. the purse or pocket, of: to tip: >, in C. 20, (low) coll.: 1810, Shelley (O.E.D.); 1844, Disraeli, 'Pouched in a manner worthy of a Marquess and of a grandfather'. Slightly ob.—2. To eat: low coll.: 1892, Milliken, 'Fancy pouching your prog on a terrace.' Ex S.E. sense, to swallow.—3. To steal: low (— 1923). Manchon. Ex dial., where it dates from C. 18.


pouchet. A pocket: either coll. or a corruption of pocket by Fr. pochette. Radcliffe, 1682, 'Did out of his Pouchet three nutmegs produce.' — by 1800.

Pondering-tub. See Pondering-tub.


pouffe. See poof.

poulan. A chancery: low coll.: 1785, Grose; ob. Ex Fr. poulan.


poulte over the peeper. A punch or blow on the eye: low (— 1900). Ware.

poulte-wallah. A physician's, esp. a surgeon's, assistant: military: from ca. 1870. See wallah and cf. poultise-mixer and:

poulte-wallahs; also with capitals. Occ. P. Wallahs. The Royal Army Medical Corps: military: from ca. 1870; ob. Also the Pills (see pills, 2), Linseed Lancers.—2. Occ. in the singular, esp. in the Navy: a sick-bay attendant: late C. 19–20. Bowen.


*poultry-rig. The 'dodge' noted at poulterer, q.v.: c.: C. 19. Lex. Bal.

poultry-show. A 'short arm' inspection: military; 1915; ob. B. & P., 'It had no reference to hens.'

pounce. A variant of pounce.


pound, v. See pound it and powered.

pound. Pounds, whether weight or Sterling;
POUND, GO ONE'S

S.E. until mid-C. 19, then coll. and dial.  'He's worth a thousand pound if he's worth a penny';  'That bullock weighs eight hundred pound.' In combination, however, the uninflected pl. is S.E.: e.g. 'a four pound trout.'

bound, go one's. To eat something up: military: ca. 1870-1914. Ex the fact that a soldier's ration of bread used to weigh 1 lb., his ration of meat nearly 1 lb. (actually 2 lb.), as mentioned in The Pall Mall Gazette, 7 July 1886 (cited by O.E.D.).


bound, shut (up) in the parson's. Married: 1785, Gros; † by 1860.

bound and pint. 'The bare Board of Trade ration scale': nautical: late C. 19-20. Bowen.


bound it. To bet, wager, as on a virtual certainty, in I'll 'pound it': 1812, Vaux; ob. by 1900, virtually † by 1930. Ex offering £10 to 2s. 6d. at a cock-fight. Dickens, 'I'd pound it that you haven't.' Cf. poundable, q.v.

bound (of lead). Head. See bake, n.

bound-not(e)ish. Stylistic; aristocratic; affected of speech or manner: lower classes: from ca. 1930. James Curtis, The Gift Kid, 1936, 'Her pound-noteish voice both annoyed and amused the Gift Kid.'


bound to an olive (it's a). It's a certain bet: Jewish coll. (— 1909). Ware. Perhaps ex Jewish fondness for olives.

boundable. (Esp. of the result of a game, the issue of a bet) certain, inevitable; or considered to be such: low (? c.): 1812, Vaux; ob. by 1890, † by 1920.


bounders. (Rare in singular.) Testicles: coll.: late C. 17—18. Dryden's Juvenal, VI, 117.

boundrel. The head: coll.: 1664, Cotton, 'Glad they had escap'd, and sav'd their boundrels'; † by 1830. Origin obscure, though prob. connected with weight.

bore. See poop, n. 2, and v. 2.

pour. A 'continuous' rain: esp. a steady pour (all the morning): coll.: late C. 19—20.


poutry-corner, more gen. p-junction; or with capitals. The corner formed by York and Waterloo Roads, London: music-hall and variety artists' (— 1890); ob. Tit-Bits, March 29, 1890. There they used to wait to be engaged. Since ca. 1910, it has gen. referred to a corner in the Leicester Square districts and is a gen. theatrical coll. Cf. the Slave Market, New York—2. The corner of Fenchurch Street and the approach to the Station: nautical: late C. 19—20. Bowen. (The haunt of out-of-work seamen.)

Poverty Row; Poverty Row picture. See 'Moving-Picture Slang'; § 8.

POX

POX. Erroneous for pavilion: late C. 17—18. O.E.D.

powder. (Of a horse) vigour, spirits; surf (— 1923). Manchon. Perhaps ex gumpower + sense 2 of:

powder, n. To rush: coll. and dial.: lit. in Quarles, 1632, 'Zeuxus climb'd the Tree: But O how fast . . . he powder'd down agen!'; fig., from ca. 1730. O.E.D. Ex the rapid explosiveness of powder—2. Hence, to spurn (a horse) to greater speed: sporting (— 1887). Baumann—3. V.t., to 'camouflage' the fact that a horse is gladdened; horse-copers': from ca. 1860. 'No. 747:', p. 20.


powder away, v. To perform fine but useless deeds: coll. (— 1823). Ibid. Ex S.E. powder, to scatter or sprinkle like powder.

powder-monkey. A boy employed to carry powder from magazine to gun: 1862, Radcliffe, 'Powder-monkey by name': naval coll. till C. 19, then S.E.

powder or shot, not worth. Not worth cost or, esp., trouble or effort: 1776, Foote: coll. till ca. 1850, then S.E.

powdering (one's) hair, be. To be getting drunk: taverns': C. 18—50; extremely obs. Ware, 1909, remarks: 'Still heard in remote places. Euphemism invented by a polite landlord.'

powdering-tub. A salivating cradle or pit, used against syphilis: late C. 16—early 19; humorous S.E. until C. 18, then coll. Shakespeare; Gros; 1st ed.—2. With capitals, 'The Pocky Hospital at Kingsland near London', B.E.: low coll.: late C. 17—mid-18.

power. A large number of persons, number or quantity of things; much: from ca. 1690; S.E. until ca. 1820, then dial. and (low) coll. Dickens, 'It has done a power of work.' O.E.D. Cf. nation and:

poweration. A large number or quantity; much: coll.: ca. 1830—1910. Also dial.

powerful. Great in number; in quantity: dial. and low coll.: 1882, in U.S.; anglicised in 1865, by Dickens, 'A powerful sight of notice', O.E.D.—2. Adv., powerfully: exceedingly, very: dial. and, esp. in U.S. (1833, Thornton) and Canada, low coll.: 1835, Washington Irving; Besant & Rice, 1876, 'Rayner seems powerful anxious to get you on the paper', O.E.D.; Tit-Bits, Sept. 17, 1892, 'He's powerful bad, miss.' Ob. as coll. in Great Britain. (The adj. ex the adv., the adv. ex power, q.v.)

Powers, the. The Prince of Wales's Own Regiment: late C. 19—20; military; ob. Also known as the Old and Bold, q.v., and Cabinet's Entire.

powwow. A conference of, discussion of plans by, senior officers before a battle, or during manoeuvres: military: from ca. 1912. F. & Gibbons. A natural extension of the S.E. sense.

POX. Syphilis: C. 16—20; S.E. until mid-C. 18; then a vulg. That the word was early avoided appears in Massinger's 'Or, if you will hear it in a plainer phrase, the pox'; 1691. Often French pox (Florio, 'The Great or French pox'); see also powdertub. Cf. poz /, q.v., and:

Pox, v. To infect with syphilis: late C. 17—20:
praise. (The name of) God: a Scots euphemism
coll.: C. 17–early 19. Callander, 1782, "Praise be
blessed, God be praised. This is a common
form still in Scotland with such as, from reverence,
decline to use the sacred name,' E.D.D. Ex t S.E. praise, an
object or subject of praise".

pram. A perambulator (for infant): (until ca.
1920, considered rather low) coll. abbr.: 1884, The
Graphic, Oct. 25, "Nurses... chattering and
laughing as they push their "prams"."—2. Hence,
a milkman's hand cart: coll.: 1897 (O.E.D.).

prance. To dance, caper, gambol: mid-C. 15–
20: S.E. until ca. 1850, then coll. (O.E.D.).

*prancer. A horse: c.: ca. 1655–1860. Har-
man, B.E., Grose, Ainsworth. Cf. the S.E. usage:
a prancing or mettlesome horse. See also pran-
Day, Head. O.E.D.—3. Hence, a horse-thief: c.: C.
18–mid-19. Anon., The Twenty Craftsmen, 1712.
'The fifteenth, a prancer... If they catch him
horse-courting, he's nooz'd once for all.'—4. A
cavalry officer: military: from ca. 1870; ob.
H., 5th ed.

*praner, the Sign of the. The Nag's Head (inn):
from ca. 1650 (very ob.): c. >, in C. 18, low s.
Harman. Also the Sign of the Prancer's Poll, B.E.,
Grose.

*prancer's nab or nob. A horse's head as a sham
seal to a counterfeit pass: c.: late C. 17–mid-19.
B.E.—2. See Prancer, the Sign of the.

Prob. a corruption of prancer, 1.

p'ra. Perhaps: coll. abbr. (in C. 19, rather
low): 1835, Hood; prob. much earlier. (O.E.D.)

*prat, prat. A tinder-box: c.: late C. 17–early
19. B.E., Grosse. ? origin.—2. (Gen. in pl.) A
buttock; a thigh: mid-C. 16–20: c. >, ca. 1820,
low: Harman, Brome.—3. A behind: late C. 16–
20: c. >, in C. 19, low. Rowlands, 1610, 'And
tip lower with thy prat'; Marriott-Watson, 1895, 'We
ain't to do nothing... but to set down upon our
prats.' Cf. U.S. c. sense, a hip-pocket.—4. The

*prat, v. To go: c.: 1670, Horsley. Connected
perhaps with prat, n., but prob. with Romany
pratunor, to run.—2. Hence, prat oneself—or,
more gen., one's frame—in, to but in, come uninvited,
interfere: low: late C. 19–20.—3. To beat, to
swish: late C. 16–20 (ob.): low. App. ex prat,
n. 3. Shakespeare, Merry Wives, IV, ii.

prat one's frame in. An Australian and N.Z.
variant of prat, v., 2: c. 20.

prate-roast. A talkative boy: ca. 1870–1840:
low: Glenvill; B.E.; Grosse (1st ed.), who, by the
way, certainly err when he describes it as c.

pratie, praty. A potato: dial. and Anglo-Irish:
1832, a Scots song (O.E.D.); Marryat; Reade,
1857, has the very rare spelling pratiee. A slurred
abbr. Also see later (-ur), latie.

Harman; B.E.; Grosse, 1st ed. See cheat, a
thing.

*prat. See prat, n.

*prating-ken. A low lodging-house: c.: from
1680. 'No. 747.' Ex prat, n. 2. Cf. krading-
ken, q.v.

pratlive-broth. Tea: late C. 18–mid-19. Grosse,
1788. Cf. chatter-, scandal-, broth.

prattle-cheat. See prattle-cheat.
*prattling-heap. An occasional variant of prattling heap, q.v.
*prats. See prat, n.
prawn, silly. A pejorative applied to persons; gen. you silly prawn or the s.p.: coll. from ca. 1905; slightly ob. It may date from ca. 1890, for in 1895 W. Pett Ridge, Minor Dialogues, has: 'Ah, I expect you're a saucy young prawn, Emma.'
pray with knees upwards. (Of women) to colt: low: 1785, Grose.
prayer-bones. The knees: low colt: from ca. 1850; ob.
prayer-book. A small holy-stone (cf. bible, q.v.); nautical s.: >, ca. 1870, nautical coll. (ob.): 1840. Dana, 'Smaller hand-stones... prayer-books... are used to scrub in among the crevices and narrow places, where the large holystone [see bible] will not go.'—See Post Office Prayer-Book.—3. (Also the sportsman's prayer-book.) Ruff's Guide to the Turf: sporting: mid-C. 19–20. Ware. (The Guide dates from 1842.)
prayers, say. (Of horses) to stumble: sporting: C. 19–20; ob. Cf. devotional habits.
preach. An act of preaching; a sermon; a discourse; tediously moral talk (cf. pi-fau, q.v.): C. 19–20. Mrs Whitney, 1870, 'I preached a little preach,' O.E.D. Slightly ob. 'Preach at Tyburn Cross. To be hanged: c. or low s.: ca. 1810–60.
preachy. To deliver a (tedious) sermon; moralise wearisomely: coll.: 1775, S. J. Pratt (O.E.D.).
preaching. The being preachy: q.v.: coll.: 1861, O.E.D. Cf. preceding entry.
preaching-shop. A church; more gen., a chapel: coll.: from ca. 1840. Thackeray. Prejorative on preaching-house (1760), Wesley's name for a Methodist Chapel. (O.E.D.)
preachy. Given to preaching; as if, as in, a sermon: coll.: 1819, Miss Mitford. 'He was a very good man... though preachy and proxy,' O.E.D. Whence... preachy-preachy. Tediously moral or moralising: coll.: 1894, George Moore. 'I don't 'old with all them preachy-preachy brethren says about the theatre.'
precede and proceed have been confused since
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prep. school. A preparatory school: school s.: 1899 (O.E.D. Sup.), but prob. earlier.


prestate. Erroneous for presele (shavegrass): C. 18. O.E.D.


present. A white spot on a finger-nail: coll.: C. 19–20; slightly ob. Suggested by S.E. gift in the same sense. Supposed to betoken good fortune. [Present tense for prettires: a common sol.: prob. contemporaneous with the language. Esp. give for gave (see, e.g. quotation at renner), run for rus. Cf.: 2. Present infinitive for dot(s), or did, + that infinitive: coll.: mid-C. 19–20. E.g., R. Kererne, Menace, 1935, ‘Mr Patty get away all right?’ ‘Yes. Went off early, as you arranged.’]


preservator. Incorrect spelling of preservator: C. 16. (Gen.-our.) O.E.D.


press, hot. See hot press.

press the button. To be the person to make a definite and/or important beginning: coll. (— 1931). Lyell.


prestirite, n. and adj. (A very old (person): Society: ca. 1870–1900. Ware, ‘Especially applied to women’. Cf. B.C. and has been.

[Presterite misused for present-perfect tense results, most, next, recent past presence of ‘gangsters’, orig. and chiefly U.S.; esp. in ‘You said it’ for ‘You’ve said it’: illegitimate coll.: ca. 1930.]

pretermit is catachrestic when to cease completely: from ca. 1830. (O.E.D.)

 pretended. Rendering finically or cheaply pretty: coll.: from ca. 1805. pretended, adj. (Made) pretty in a too-dainty or in a cheap way: coll.: from ca. 1851. Ex: pretty.

to make pretty, esp. if cheaply or prettily. To represent prettily: coll.: 1860, Mrs Trollope, ‘Your money to prettify your house’, O.E.D.


prettily. (Always the p.) The fairway: golfers’ coll.: 1907. O.E.D. (Sup.)—2. As the ornamented part of a glass or tumbler, it is S.E.

prettily. This S.E. adj. has, since ca. 1850, had a slightly, distant, ring.—2. The adv. (C. 16–20) has been almost coll. since ca. 1850: i.e. in sense of ‘rather’, ‘considerably’. Contrast:]


prettily, do the or speak or talk. To affect amiable or courtesy in action or speech: low coll.: from ca. 1890. J. Newman, Stamping Tricks, 1891, ‘We can talk pretty to each other.’

prettily, sit. To (be very comfortable and) look pretty: coll.: C. 20. Orig. U.S. Ex fowls, esp. chickens, sitting prettily on the nest.

prettily as paint. As. Very pretty: coll.: 1822, E. V. Lucas, ‘She’s as prettily as paint’ (Apperson). Because like a painting. Cf. oil-painting and picture, q.q.v.


prettily-boy clip. ‘Hair brought flat down over the forehead, and cut in a straight line from ear to ear’: Society: ca. 1880–1900. Ware.


prettily-face. A small kangaroo: Australian coll.: from ca. 1885; very ob. Morris.

prettily Fanny’s way, only. Characteristic: coll.: in C. 19, a proverb on only her (his) way: ca. 1720–1900. Ex Parnell, ca. 1718, ‘And all that’s madly wild, or oddly gay, We call it only pretty Fanny’s way’ (O.E.D.).


prettily-pretties, pretty things, knock-knocks, 1875, and prettily-pretty, rather too, or prettily pretty, 1897, are given by O.E.D. as S.E.: but orig. they were almost certainly coll.


prettyish. Rather pretty: coll.: 1741, Horace Walpole, ‘There was Churchill’s daughter, who is prettyish and dances well’, O.E.D.

preventive, despite the opinion of many, is S.E.; in C. 20, however, preventive is preferred. Prob. there has been some confusion with:

preventive, n. and adj. Incorrect, C. 17–20, for preventative, i.e. preventive. Doubtless due to influence of preventative (1839) on preventative (1664). O.E.D.

preventive. A preventive officer: nautical: 1870, E.D.D.

previous; gen. too previous. Premature; hasty: s. >, ca. 1895. coll.: 1885, The Daily Telegraph, Dec. 14, ‘He is a little before his time, a trifle previous, as the Americans say, but so are all geniuses.’ Whence:

previousness. The coming too soon or being premature, hasty: coll.: 1854 in U.S.; anglicised ca. 1890. Ex preceding term q.v.


price — P, what. (Occ. admiring, but gen. sarcastic; in reference to a declared or well-understood value.) What do you now think of — — ? Just consider, look at — — !: orig. racing (‘What odds — — ? ’), then gen.: from ca. 1890. P. H. Emerson, 1893, ‘What price you, when you fell off the scaffold.’

priceless. (By itself, it is) ludicrous; extremely amusing. With n., egregious; e.g. ‘priceless ass’ (of a person): s. >, ca. 1935, coll.: from ca. 1906. ‘Now a favourite schoolboy word’, W., 1920. Ex S.E. sense, ‘invaluable’. 

**prick-eared** or -eared; or with capitals. A Roundhead, a coll. nickname: 1642; † by 1690. Though influenced by *prick-eared* (or -bugged), q.v., *prick-eared* derives mainly ex the fact that the Puritan head-gear was a black skull-cap, drawn down tight, leaving ears exposed, F. & H., or, as B.E. defines *prick-eared fellow*, 'a Crop, whose Ears are longer than his Hair'.


**prick** (for a (soft) plank). 'To find the most comfortable place for a sleep': nautical: late C 19–20. Bowen.

**prick has no conscience.** See standing prick.

**prick-in-the-garter**; also prick-in-the-loop. A fraudulent game, in which pricking with a bodkin into the loop of a belt figures largely: C 19. In C 17–18 called *prick-in-the-belt*: in C 18 s., *the old sob*. Orig. coll., but almost imm. S.E.


**prick-the-garter, play at.** To coll.: C 18–19: low. Ex *prick-in-the-garter*, q.v.

**prick-the-louse.** See prick-louse.


**prickly Moses.** See Moses, prickly.


**pride of the morning.** A morning erection due to retention of urine: late C 19–20 (low) coll. Also morning-pride. Perhaps suggested by the S.E. and dial. p. of the m., an early morning shower of rain.

**prig.** See prigman.

**prigman.** See prigman.


**prig.** See prig, n. and v.


**prigging, vbl.n. to prig, v., q.v.: e.g. B.E. Riding; also Lying with a Woman*; Greene, 1691. 'This base villany of Prigging, or horse-
stealing'. From ca. 1820, mostly of petty theft; and, as such, low s.


"prigging, law, lay. Theft; esp. pilfering: c.: resp. late C. 16-17 and C. 19-20; ob. Greene, Maginn, 1829, 'Doing a bit on the prigging lay'. (Prob. expresses lack of examples, the law term endured till ca. 1750, when—again prob.—the other arose: see law and lay.) Ex *prig, v., 1.


priggism. Thievish; (c. or) low s.: C. 18. Fielding, 1743, 'The Great antiquity of priggism'.

"prigman. occ. privigger. A thief: c. of ca. 1660—1600. Awdelay (prigman); Drant, 1867 (prigman). Ex *prig, n., 1, or, more prob., v., 1. (O.E.D.)


—3. See priv-star, 2; B.E. and Grove both spell without hyphen: privgstar.


Ex both the adj. and the v. privilegial. An incorrect form of privilegium: C. 17. O.E.D.

Prime, the. The Prime Minister: from ca. 1919. John Galsworthy, The White Monkey, 1924, 'Didn't he think that the cubic called "Still Life"—of the Government', too frighteningly—especially the "old bean" representing the Prime?'

prize as a universal approbative adj. ca. 1810—40 is a coll. almost s. Vaux; Bee; Egan's Grove.

prime, adv. Excellently; in prime order: coll.: 1646, Gage, 'Prime good'; C. Scott, Sheep-Farming, 'The hoggens will be prime fat by Christmas.'

O.E.D.


primitive. Unmixed; undiluted: society s. of ca. 1800—1910.

"prorose. 'A beverage composed of old and bitter ale mixed’: 170. West Yorkshire a. (~ 1905), not dial; slightly ob. E.D.D. (Sup.).

primo. The chairman, or master, of a Buffalo lodge: friendly societies: from ca. 1880: coll. > in C. 20, j. Ex L. primus, the first.


"prinado. A sharper, prob. female: c. of ca. 1820—60. Dekker; Brathwait, Citas’s Whimaste, 1631, H. Nipps, Inta, Bungs, and Prinado’s. .

ofttimes prevent the Lawyer by diving too deep into his Client’s pocket.' Origin obscure: the O.E.D. hazards Sp. preysada, pregnant: unmarried pregnant women of the lower classes used to tend to become criminals.

Prince Alberts. 'Burlap wound round the feet when a man’s socks are worn out’: salling-ships: from ca. 1860; ob. Bowen.—2. Hence, rags worn by swagmen and busheen in the same way: Australian: C. 20.

"prince prig, See prig, prince.

Prince Robert’s metal. Incorrect for Prince Rupert’s metal: late C. 17—20. O.E.D.

Prince’s points. 'Shilling points at whist';

Society and clubmen’s coll.: 1877—1901. H.H.H. (afterwards King Edward VII) argued that 'the best whist-players were not necessarily the richest of men,' Ware.

Princess Pat’s, the. Princess Patricia’s Regiment: Canadian military: G.W., and after. F. & Gibbons (at colour).

principe. Incorrect for principiata: ca. 1660—1700. O.E.D.

[principiata. See 'Westminster School slang', near end.]


princock. 'A round, plump’ person, Grose, 1st ed.: Scots coll.: ca. 1780—1860. Ex S.E. sense, a punctusion. (Possibly, however, it never emerged from dial.)


princum—prancum. See prinkum—prankum.

Princum Prancum, Mistress (B.E.) or Mrs (Grose, 1st ed.). A fastidious, precise, formal woman: coll.: late C. 17—early 19. See prinkum—prankum, stressing prink rather than prank.

prink, n. An act of making (gen. oneself) spruce: coll.: 1895 (O.E.D.): Ex: prink, v.t. To make spruce; in reflexive, to dress oneself up: coll.: 1576, Gascogne, 'Now I stand prinking me in the glasse,' O.E.D. The v.i., in the reflexive sense, is also coll.: C. 18—20 (D’Urfey); in C. 19—20, much the more gen. Cognate with equivalent prank.

prinked. The ppl.adj. of prink, v.t., and = ‘all dressed up’. Coll.: 1576, North. (O.E.D.)

prinker. A very fastidious dresser of self: coll.: from ca. 1860. Webster, 1864. Cf.:

prinking. A fastidious adorning, mostly of oneself: coll.: 1699, Farquhar (O.E.D.). See prink, v. prinkle, esp. prinked. To sprinkle; sprinkled: children’s sol.: since when? Manchon. (But I believe Manchon’s ‘prinked in all her finery, on grande toilette ’ is simply an error or, more prob., a misprint for prinked . . .)

prinkum—prankum. A prank: coll.: late C. 16—17. Nash. A reduplicative on prank with um (see pricum) added to each element. (O.E.D.)—2. (Mostly in pl.) Fine clothes; fastidious adornment: C. 18—early 19: coll. Here the stress is laid on prink (see the v.). See also Princum Prancum, Mistress.

print, out of. See out of print.

printed character. A pawn-ticket: low s. (f > coll.): from ca. 1890; ob.

Printing House Square, adj. ‘Powerful—crushing, ex cathedra, from The Times being published in that locality’: London clubmen’s coll.: ca. 1810—80. Ware.

priorily. An incorrect variant of priory, adj.: late C. 18—20; ob. O.E.D.

priscillas. See pecullas.

prison-bug. A man that spends most of his time in prison: c. : from ca. 1920. prithe. I pray thee; i.e. please!: coll.: 1677 G. Harvey; f. except as an archism, by 1880. Addison. 'Prythee don’t send us up any more Stories of a Cock and a Bull.' An abbr. corruption. O.E.D.

PRIVATE LEAK


prize, adj. Egregious; esp. 'prize idiot': coll.: C. 20. Ex S.E. sense, first-class.

prize-fagots. 'Well-developed breasts in women': low London (—1909). Ware. A faggot is a kind of rissole.


pro. A pro-proctor: university (esp. Oxford coll.: 1823, Anon., Hints for Oxford, 'Freshmen cap the Pro's too in the street'; Bradwood, O.V.H., 1869.—3. An actor: theatrical (—1899). H., 1st ed. (Introduction). I.e. one who belongs to the profession, i.e. acting. (N.B., the profession is rather j. than coll., though orig. It may possibly have been theatrical coll.)—3. Hence, any professional as opp. to an amateur: e.g. cricket, 1867; journalist, 1886; golfer, 1887. Coll. O.E.D.—4. In post-War days, esp. of a prostitute whose profession is body-vending: as opp. to a notoriously or very compliant 'amateur', esp. an 'amateur' that makes a little extra by sexual 'adventures'.—5. A probationer (nurse): medical: late C. 19–20.

pro-donna. An actress: music-halls: from ca. 1890; ob. Ware. Lit., professional lady.

proceh. A procession: late C. 19–20. (Never as v.; contrast:)

process. To be part of, go along with a procession: coll.: 1814 (O.E.D.). 


prog, adj. Being a professional (esp. actor, showman, singer): coll.: (—1887); slightly ob. Am. (—1899); being a professional (esp. actor, showman, singer): coll.: (—1887); slightly ob. Baumann.


prodigious. Prodigiously: very greatly; very: from ca. 1670: S.E. until ca. 1750, then coll.; in late C. 19–20, low coll.; ob. E. de Acton, 1804, 'A prodigious high hill'. O.E.D. Cf. prodigiously. Exceedingly; very: coll.: C. 18–20; ob. Swift, 1711, 'It snowed... prodigiously.' (O.E.D.)

produce, gen. in imperative. To pay over the money won: two-up players': C. 20. Abbr. produce the money.

prof. (1838) anglicised ca. 1860. Thornton.

profession, the. See note at pro. 2.

professional. A 'professional examination' (medicine): Scottish universities, mostly medical students': C. 20. (O.E.D.)

profit, l. all. A bankers' e.p., indicating that a customer having his hair cut requires no 'dressing' on his hair; gen. said to the customer. C. 20.


programme. A programme: from ca. 1898. See prog, n., 3. and cf. proffer, n., 2. (O.E.D.)

programmatic. An artistic cemetery: literary, ca. 1900–10. I.e. prog, n., 1 + proctic, one who knows; obviously with pun on S.E. programmatic.

prolong, v.i. and v.t. Being a professional (esp. actor, showman, singer): coll.: (—1887); slightly ob. Baumann.

[Projector, the. John Law, financier (d. 1729). Also Beau Law and the Paper King. Rather sobriquets than true nicknames.]

PROMENADE

PROPOSE

of the...most cultured music lover.' Cf. pop and:


promise. Declare; assert with assurance: coll.: mid-c. 18-20. Esp. in If promise you, I assure you; I tell you confidently or plainly. O.E.D.

promp. A promotion: Charterhouse, from coll.: 1880. A. H. Tod, Charterhouse, 1900. An unexpected, perhaps an undeserved promotion was, ca. 1890-1905, a Stedman.

promissory. To talk rubbish; play the fool: Australia: ca. 1895-1910. (J. origin.

promoted. Dead: Oct.—Nov., 1890. Ex the public funeral of Mrs Booth, General Booth’s wife, and Salvation Army j. (Ware.)


promotion, be on one’s. To behave with marriage in view and mind: coll.: 1836 (O.E.D.); 1848, Thackeray, ‘Those filthy cigars,’ replied Mrs Rawdon. ‘I remember when you liked ‘em, though’, replied her husband...’ That was when I was on my promotion, Goosey’, she said. Ex on promotion, on approval or trial.


prompter. A member of the 2nd Form: Merchant Taylor’s School: C. 19-20 coll. > j.


pronunciation. Pronunciation: sol., written as well as spoken: C. 18-20: not incorrect until C. 19. Owing to pronunciation, pronounceable, etc. (Yet I have no word—see pronunciation.)


Prooshan blue, my. See Prussian blue.


prop. v. To hit; knock down: pugilistic and lower: 1851, Mayhew, ‘If we met an “old bloke”...we „proped him.”’ Perhaps by anti-

phrase of prop, to support, influenced by drop; but cf. prop., n., 5—2. Only in prop and cop, a four-handed game in which one says I prop (I propose), and another I cop (accept); 1923, Manchon; ob.

prop, kick away the. To be hanged: low coll.: early C. 19.

prop-nailer. A stealer of pins or brooches: o.: 1806, Mayhew. Ex prop, n. 3.

prop on, put the. To seize an opponent’s arm and thus prevent him from hitting: pugilistic: from ca. 1860; ob. Cf. props, 3.

propaganda. Exaggerated talk; senseless rumours or information: military coll.: 1918—19. F. & Gibbons. (Comment unnecessary.)


propensities, have musical. (Of a horse) to be a roarer: sporting, esp. journalists’ (—1887); ob. Baumann.


proper, adv. Excellently; thoroughly; without subterfuge; handsomely; an intensive adv. = hard (‘Hit him proper!’), very much; mid-c. 15—20: S.E. until ca. 1820, then coll.; since ca. 1880, low coll.; since ca. 1920, almost a sol. Conan Doyle, 1898, ‘Had ‘em that time—had ‘em proper!’ said he,’ O.E.D.


propr. adj. Rejected, refused: lower classes’ (—1909). Ware implies an erotic connotation.


prophecy, the n., and prophecy, the v., Often confused in writing; occ. in speech.


propos, v.i. To offer marriage: coll.: 1764. Gray in his poem The Candidate. O.E.D.
proposition. A matter: C. 20 coll. (orig. U.S.); prob. soon to be S.E. 'That's quite a different proposition.' Ex the very closely alllicd S.E. (orig. U.S.) sense, 'a problem, task, or undertaking ... a person to be dealt with', S.O.D. See, e.g., The Fowlers' King's English.—2. A tough proposition retains its U.S. flavour.

proppy. Like a prop or pole: coll., but rare: 1870. O.D.D.

prophet. To own: journalistic: 1887. The Referee, July 31; or Ware (At Pink 'un). Ex proprietor.


props, pins on one's. See pins on one's props.—propterer. See props, 4.

pros; occ. proses. A water-closet: Oxford and Cambridge University (—1800). H., 2nd ed. Abbr. πος των or πος των. Cf. the old under-graduate 'Whose?': 'When is posd used [or, put] for pros? | When the nights are dark and dreary, | When our legs are weak and weary, | When the quid we have to cross, | Then is posd put for pros?': doubtless a double pun, for posd = (chamber-)pot, pros = a w.c., and pote = Gr. ποτής, when f, pros = Gr. πός, to. Cf. topos, q.v.


prosecutes. See persecutes.

prospect. A person more or less likely to take out an insurance policy; an insurance coll. now verging on: J. 20. 'Ex S.E. mining sense, a spot giving prospects of, e.g., gold.

Prosperity Robinson. Fred. Robinson (d. 1859), Viscount Goderich. Ex untimely eulogy of British prosperity. (Also known as Goosy Goderich.) Contrast Adversity Humour and of Starvation Dundas. (Dawson.)


pros, v. To caddge (a meal, a drink): occ. v.i.: theatrical, from ca. 1860. H., 3rd ed. Either ex pros, n., 2, or pros, v., 2. Anon., ca. 1876. 'I've prosed my meals from off my pals.'—2. 'To break in or instruct a stage-infatuated youth', H., 1st ed.: theatrical: from ca. 1858; ob. This sense may have been influenced by Roman pros, to ridicule.

pross, on the, adj. and adv. Looking for free drinks, etc.; on the caddge: theatrical, ca. 1890, low gen. s.: from ca. 1800. P. H. Emerson, 1883. —2. Breaking in (and sponging from) a stage-struck youth: theatrical: from ca. 1860.


Prosser's, occ. Prossers' Avenue. The Gaiety Bar: theatrical: from ca. 1832. Ex prosor, s. q.v. prostitute. To prostrate: a C. 17 catarrhesis. O.E.D.

prostituted. (Of a patent) so long on the market that it has become known to all: commercial coll. (—1899). Ware. [prostitute. See Fowler.]


protervious. An incorrect form of 'protervous': mid-C. 16–17. O.E.D.—protest. See detest.—prothesis, prophetic, are incorrect for the prosthesis, prophetic, of surgery: from ca. 1840. O.E.D. [proph] Feeling very gratified, delighted: S.E. verging on coll. and dial.: C. 19–20. Whence i. —proph, do one. To flatter (ob.): to honour: to treat very generously: coll.: 1819 (O.E.D.): 1836, Clark, Ollapodiana Papers, 1836. 'I really thought, for the moment, that' 'she did me proud', ' Cf. 'the Cull tipp us Rom Prop, the Gentleman Treated us very High', B.E. and: —proph, do oneself. To be delighted (ob.): to treat oneself well, live comfortably: coll.: from ca. 1840. Ex preceding entry.


proverbial, the. A fall, smash; disaster; military: 1916: ob. P. & Gibbons. Abbr. the proverbial guter that comes after pride: see guter. providence. One who appears, or acts, in the


provost. A garrison or other cell for short-sentence prisoners: military coll. (-1890), ca. 1905, S.E.; ob. Abbr. provost-cell.


Prowler, Hugh. A generalised († low) coll. nickname for a thief, a highwayman: mid-C. 16–17. Tusser, ‘For fear of Hugh Prowler get home with the rest.’

proxime. Proximate accessit: coll. abbr. (schools’, universities’): 1806. O.E.D.


pruff. Sturdy: Winchester College: from ca. 1870. Ex proof against pain. Pascoe, 1881, ‘Deprive a Wykehamist of words… such as quill… pruff… cad… and his vocabulary becomes limited.’

prunella, leather and. This misquotation of Pope’s leather or prunella has been misspelled to mean something to which one is completely indifferent. (Fowler.)

prunella, Mr.; or prunella. A clergyman: late C. 18–mid-19. Grose, 1st ed. Clergymen’s, like barristers’, gowns were formerly made from this strong (silk, later) worsted stuff.

Prussian blue, my. An earment: ca. 1815–70, though app. not recorded before 1837, Dickens, ‘“Vell, Sammy,” said the father. “Vell, my Prooshan Blaan,” responded the son.’ Punning the colour: ex the tremendous popularity of the Prussians after Waterloo: cf. the old toast, Prussian blue: Brewer.

Prussian blue, my. See prussic acid and v. —prysman, See psalm-emitter. —prythe. See prythe. —pr’s and q’s. See imm. after ‘p’s or P’s.—2. Shoes: rhyming s. late C. 19–20. B. & P.


psalm, psalter. Incorrect for psycho-, psycho-. C. 19–20. O.E.D.

psy. See Sike.

psyche (pronounced sike). To subject to psycho-analysis: coll. (-1927). Collinson. Cf. :

psycho. Psycho-analysis (1921); to psycho-analysis (1925); coll. O.E.D. (Sup.).

psychological moment. (Cf. the misuse of inferiority complex.) The critical moment; at the p. m., in the very nick of time: catachresis: from ca. 1871. The error arose from the French moment psychology, a confusion of the psychologische Moment with der p. M., i.e. the ‘momentum’ or factor for the moment of time. Esp. common in journalism. See esp. W., O.E.D., and Fowler.

plomaine. The pronunciation dot-mane was in 1909 condemned by the O.E.D. as illiterate; but by 1920 (so I infer from W.) it was no worse than coll.; by 1930, it was S.E., for the orig. correct toe-may-in had disappeared.—the author (horrible dictum) has never even heard it. Cf. polomaine, q.v.

pu-pu. A variant of pooh-pooh.

pub. A public-house (see public, n.): 1859, H., in his first ed.: s. >, ca. 1890, coll. Anon., The Bikad, ca. 1871, ‘All the great houses and the minor pub. ’—2. See P.B.

pub (always pub it). To frequent ‘pubs’: coll.: 1889, Jerome K. Jerome. Ex preceding. O.E.D.


pubes. An incorrect pl. of pubis, a part of the innominable bone: from ca. 1840.—2. Also incorrect for pubös, the pubic bone: 1872. O.E.D.

pubis. A mistake for pubes, the hypogastric region: from ca. 1680. O.E.D.

public. A public-house: coll.: 1709, a churchwarden’s account (O.E.D.); ob. Scott, ‘This woman keeps an inn, then? interrupted Morton. A public, in a prim way, replied Blane.’ Cf. pub, q.v.


public buildings, inspector of. An idler; a loafer: from ca. 1800; ob. Hence, one in search of work: from ca. 1860; † by 1930.

public ledger. A harlot: low: late C. 18–20; very ob. ‘Because like that paper, she is open to all parties,’ Grose, 2nd ed. Punning not The Public Ledger (of Philadelphia, 1838) but perhaps the Public Register.

public line, something in the. A licensed victualler: coll. Dickens, who, in 1840, originated— or, at the least, gave currency to—the phrase; prob. on the public business.


public-room men. ‘In modern liners, the deck, smoke-room, library and lounge stewards and the like’: nautical coll.: C. 20. Bowen.

puellas; priscellas. Incorrect for procello: C. 19–20. O.E.D.

Publican. A nickname for General Booth after buying the Grecian Theatre and Tavern in the City Road: 1883—ca. 90. Ware.


pucka. See pukka.—pucker, adj. See the same.

pucker. Excitement; (a state of) agitation: coll.: 1741, Richardson (O.E.D.); Smollett, 1751, ‘The whole parish was in a pucker; some thought the French had landed.’ Rare except as in a pucker, which Grose, 2nd ed., defines as ‘in a dishabille’, a sense † by 1880: also in a fright, which is a little too strong. Common, moreover, in dial.; cf. the Lancashire puckerush, vexation or agitation. Ex the pukckering of facial skin. See pucker up.

pucker, v. To talk privately: showmen’s s. (perhaps orig. c.): 1881, Mayhew, ‘The trio… began pukckering… to each other in murdered
pudder

French, dashed with a little Irish.' A corruption of Romany rok(k)er or rook(k)er, to talk: cf. rocker, q.v.


pudder-water. An astringent employed by the old experienced traders, i.e. prostitutes—to counteract virginitv: low coll.: Grose, 1785; † by 1890. Gen., water impregnated with alum. (Cf. post-parturition astringents.) Ex pudding, to contract.


pukkerow; o.c. puckaroo. To seize: Anglo-Indian and military (—1864). H., 3rd ed. Ex Hindustani, where this, as in all the Anglo-Indian v. v., is the form of the imperative, of the present infinitive. Perhaps cf. pakara, q.v.

pud. A (child's) hand; an animal's fore-foot: a nursery coll.: 1654, O.E.D. Lamb, 1823, 'Those little short...puda.' Origin unknown: but cf. Dutch poot, a paw (W.) and the later pudsey, plum, chubby.


puddin., v. C. 17–20. To supply with pudding; treat with a pudding-like substance: low coll.—2. Esp., in c., to silence a dog by throwing a narcotic ball to it: 1858, Youatt (O.E.D.).

puddin-basin. An illiterate variant of pudding-basin, q.v. (B. & P.)


*pudding. Liver drugged for the silencing of noise-dogs: c.: 1877, but prob. much earlier—see pudding, v., in c. sense. Horatius, Jottings from Jail. Cf. the old saying 'Pudding is poison when it is too much boiled' (Swift).—2. Cotton, the penis; the seminal fluid: low coll.: from Restoration days. Wit and Mirth, 1682; D'Urfey, —3. See puddings.—4. An English 60-pound bomb; military: 1916–18.

pudding, give or make or yield the crow(s) a. To die; also and orig., to hang on a gibbet: late C. 16–19. Grose, 3rd ed. (pote); Shakespeare, 'He' ll yield the one pudding one of these days.'

*pudding, not a word of the. Say nothing about it: coll. c. of late C. 17–early 18 B.E., at mum-for-that.

pudding, ride post for a. To exert oneself for a small cause: coll.: C. 18–19 coll.


pudding about the heels. Thick-ankled: low coll.: C. 19–20; very ob.

pudding for supper, have a hot. See hot pudding.


pudding-basin. A British shrapnel-helmet; military: 1815; ob. Ex its shape. (P. & Gibbons.)


pulled on and needs no fastening or tying. Cf. step-ins.

pull out. To hurry work in hand: tailors' a. verging on ; from ca. 1850—2. To achieve, as in 'He spent a special effort' ; C. 20.


pull the checks. To depart: aircraft engineers': from ca. 1930. The Daily Herald, Aug. 1, 1936. Thus is an aeroplane released for flight.

pull-through. A very thin, militeary Soots J. tailors' low military-drubber late coll. 1924, coster-C. coll. from cf. 40.

The cabinet-makers* feminine young 1820-70. Bee
dickens in Box. Ex by the act of pulling up, a check-
ing, a fugitive. Cf. pull, v., 1.

pull up a Jack. To stop a post-chaise on the highway with a view to robbery: o. of ca. 1810-50. Vaux.

pull up one's boot. To make money: costermongers' (1900). Ware, 'When a man prepares for his day's work, he pulls on and strings up his boots.' Cf.

pull up one's socks. See socks .

pull your ear! Try to remember! : lower classes' o.p. of ca. 1890-1910. Ware.

*pulled. See pull, v., 1.—pulled up. See pull up. Secured work: tailors' coll. : from ca. 1850.

Pullen is concerned. Mr. See pull in.


pullet, virgin. 'A young woman . . . who though often tried has never failed,' Bee, 1823 : low : ca. 1820-70. Ex pullet; and of :

pullet-squeezer. A womaniser that 'likes 'em young a. a 'chicken-fancier': from ca. 1830 ; somewhat ob. Ex pullet; cf. pullet, virgin.

*pulley. A confederate thief, gen. a woman: o. (—1860) ; very ob. H., 1st ed. Ex Fr. poulet.

pulleys. Women's drawers that are pulled on: feminine coll. : from ca. 1932. See quotation at nethe-seet. Imm. ex pull-one, q.v.

pulling the right string?, are you. Are you correct ? are you going the right way about it ? : cabinet-makers' o.p. : from 1863, says Ware. Ex small measurements being made with string. Cf. who pulled your chain?, q.v.

Pullman Pup, the. The night train running from Leeds to Scotland precedes that much more luxurious one from London to Scotland; hence this nickname of the former. Railway s. (—1890) ; ob.

pully-handy (in Grose, -hawly). A rough-and-tumble; a romp; coll. : late C. 18-19, but in C. 20 surviving in dial. and, as coll., in :

pully-handy, play at. To romp with women ; esp. to copulate; coll. : late C. 18-20 ; slightly ob. The idea, however, is extant in dial. pulling and hauling time and dragging time: cf. the † dial. pulling time. See Grose, F.


pulpit. An artillery observation-ladder: military, esp. artillerymen's: from 1915. F. & Gibbons. pulpit-banger, -cuffer, -drubber, -drummer, -smith,

-thumper; pulpit-cuffing, -drubbing, etc. A rant-
ing parson; a violent sermon or moral exhortation: coll. bordering on S.E.: late C. 17-20; -drubber (drubbing), † by 1850; -cuffer and -drummer; very ob.


pulse, a heart-beat, is sometimes construed mistakenly as a pl. (Fowler.)

Pumice-Stones. See Pam (Palmerston).


ment applied to bailiffs, constables, and pick-
pockets. B.E.—. 5. To weep: low: 1837, Marryat, 'And she did pump | While I did jump | In the boat to say, Good by.' Ob. Partly ex S.E. sense, partly ex pumps, n., q.v.


pump, purser's. See purser's.

Pump-and-Tortoise, the; or the Pump and Tortoise. The 38th Regiment of Foot, in late C. 19-20 the South Staffordshire Regt.: military: from ca. 1770; ob. Ex their enforced abstemious-
ness and physical debility when kept in the West Indies for an appalling number of years in the earlier C. 18. F. & Gibbons.

pump at Aldgate, draught on the. See Aldgate.

pump-handle, n. See pump, n., 2,—2. V. In greeting, to shake (a hand or person by the hand) as if working a pump: coll. : 1868, R. S. Surtess (O.E.D.). Also v.i.


pump is good but your or the suckers' dry, your. A c.p. addressed to one trying to pump, i.e. extract information: from ca. 1780; ob. Grose.

pump (oneself) off. To masturbate: low: C. 19-20; ob. Cf. frig.

Pump Parliament, the. The Long or Pension Parliament of Charles II of England: nick-
name: 1677, J. Verney, 'A little water put into a pump fetches up a good deal,' O.E.D. : now only historical.


pump-sucker. A teetotaller: low: from ca. 1870; ob.


pump-water, christened in or with. Red-faced: coll. or, in form he (she) was christened . . . c.p. : late C. 17-mid-19. Ray; Grose, 2nd ed.
pumped, be. 'To stand drinks all round': nautical: C. 20 Bowen.


Pumpkinshire: also Pump. 'Boston, and its dependencies': Grove. See pumpkin, 1.

pumps. Eyes: low: 1825, Buckstone. 'Your pumps have been at work—you've been crying, girl': ob. by 1910, † by 1935. Cf. pump, v., last sense.


pun (v.i.) or pun of (v.t.), at Hertford; pun out (v.t., and t.), London. To inform (against): Christ's Hospital, orig. at the country section: mid-C. 19-20. Ex dial. pund, to pound.


pounce. An occ. variant of pounce.


punch, cobbl'r.s. Urine with a cinder in it: low: ca. 1810-60. Lex. Bal.—2. See cobbl'r's punch.

punch a cow. 'To conduct a team of oxen': C. J. Dennis; Australian: C. 20. Cf. the now S.E. cow-puncher.

Punch and Judy. Lemonade: English Illustrated Magazine, June, 1885; † by 1920.

punch-clod. A farm-labourer; cloghopper: rural coll.: C. 19-20; ob.

punch-house. A brothel: coll.: late C. 17-mid-19. B.E. Ex the S.E. sense, a tavern where punch may be had, and ex punch, v., 1.

*punch it.* See punch, v., 2. Cf. also beat it and punch outside.

punch one's ticket. To hit (a man) with a bullet: from 1899 (ob.), mostly military. J. Milne, The Epistles of Atkinson, 1902.

*punch outside.* To go out of doors: c.: C. 19-20; ob. See punch, v., 2.


Punctoon Plata. A lower classes' c.p. (—1909) 'jocosely addressed to a person in protest [against] some small asserted authority'. Ware. Punning Punch and Pontius Plata.

puncture. To deflower: cyclists' low a.; late C. 19-20. Ex punctured tyres. Cf. punctured.—2. V.i. and in passive, (of cycle or rider) to get a puncture: coll.: from ca. 1893. Ex the tyre's being punctured. (O.E.D.)

punctured. Damaged, fig., as in 'a punctured reputation': coll.: C. 20.


pungo, go. (Of a rubber tyro) to burst from: ca. 1920. Manchester. Ex punctured.

punish. To handle severely, as in boxing (1812); food and drink (1826); the bowling at cricket (1845); a horse (1856); a plant (1889); a. >, in C. 20, coll. (O.E.D.).—2. To hurt, pain: coll. and dial.: from mid-C. 19. E.D.D.

punisher. A hard hitter: in boxing, 1814, The Sporting Magazine (O.E.D.); at cricket, 1846 (Lewis).—2. A heavy task: coll.: 1827, ibid., 'Fifty miles' road-work this day ... a punisher', O.E.D.—3. A farrier that visits forges and cadges from his fellows without doing any work or rendering any service for the loan: London farriers': late C. 19-20.

punishing, adj. Exhausting; handling severely; esp. hard-hitting: a. >, ca. 1850, coll.: 1810, Moore, 'An eye that plann'd punishing deeds'; in boxing, 1820, J. H. Reynolds (O.E.D.); in cricket, 1846, The Field, Jan. 28, 1882, 'Each course to-day was of the most punishing kind.'

punishment. Severe handling, orig. that dealt out by a cricketer or a boxer: a. >, ca. 1890, coll.: 1846, W. Denison (Lewis); 1856, H. H. Dixon.—2. Pain; misery: coll. and dial.: from mid-C. 19. E.D.D.

punk. A punctured tyre: cyclists': late C. 19-20; ob. Cf. next entry.—2. See punk and plaster.—3. Nonsense, 'bilge', twaddle: 1927, Dorothy Seyers, Unnatural Death, 'We had to sit through a lot of moral punk ... about the prevalence of jazz and the immoral behaviour of modern girls.' Like the adj., it comes from the U.S.A. Semantically, it is comparable to rot, n.


punk, adj. Worthless; decidedly inferior; displeasing, 'rotten': from ca. 1917, via American soldiers: low, as in U.S., where, via punky (1870), ex punk (touchwood), it originated in late C. 19. Thornton & Irwin.

punk and plaster. Bread and margarine: tramps c. (—1932). F. Jennings, Tramping with Tramps. Ex U.S.—2. In the Army, however, and as early as 1916, the term meant, food (F. & Gibbons); often simply punk (B. & P.). And in Canada, punk, bread, dates from ca. 1900.

punkah one's face. To fan oneself: Anglo-Indian (—1909). Ware. Ex the punkah.


punt. An occ. variant (recorded in 1862): F. &
puppy’s mamma. See dog’s lady.
pur- for pre- (as in purtend) and pro- is a sol.; for per-, a spelling sol. Both are mainly Cookney and of C. 19–20. Baumann.

puradventure. Incorrect for peradventure: †. O.E.D.

Purby, the. The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood: Society: ca. 1850–90. Ware. Ex the initials P.R.B.

*purchase. Stolen goods; booty: c.: late C. 16–mid-17. Greene; Shakespeare. (Baumann.)

*pure. A mistress, esp. a kept mistress; a wanton: ca. 1685–1830: c. >, ca. 1750, low s.: 1688, Shadwell, ‘Where’s . . . the blowing that is to be my natural, my convenient, my pure †. Cf. purést pure, q.v. By antiphrasis—pure = pure, ’physician, a ’pure’ surgeon. (i.e. the one, not the other; not a general practitioner.) Medical coll.: 1827, The Lancet (O.E.D.).—3. ‘Dog’s-dung is called pure, from its cleansing and purifying properties,’ Mayhew: coll. >, ca. 1805, j.: 1851.

pure, adj. Excellent; splendid; very pleasant. (Indeed, a gen. intensive.) Ca. 1875–1900, though ob. by 1850; it is, however, extant in several diall. Wycherley, 1675 (O.E.D.); Cibber, 1704, ‘She looks as if my master had quarrelled with her . . . This is pure ’; Henley & Stevenson, 1884, ‘O, such manners are pure, pure, pure’! Cf. purely, q.v.—2. See pure and ...


pure and ... (another adj.). Nice, or fine, and ...; also quasi-adverbially, excellently, very well, thoroughly. 1742, Fielding, ‘The hogs were all pure and fat’; coll. >, ca. 1840, dial. (O.E.D.)


pure Merinoes. See Merinoes, pure merinoes.
purely. Excellently; very well: 1665, Congreve: s. >, ca. 1700, coll. Hood. O.E.D.

Ex puratory (between hell and heaven).
purge. Beer: military and low gen.: from ca. 1870. Cf. the barrack-room c.p. rhyme, recorded by F. & H. in 1902, Comrades, listen while I urge; | Drink, yourselves, and pass to purge, ob. by 1925, and :

purger or perger. A testotaller; hence, a pejorative: ca. 1860–1920: low. Vance, ca. 1884, in The Chickaleary Cove, ‘My tailor serves you well, from a purger to a swell.’ † one who, to keep himself fit, takes laxatives or purges instead of beer: cf. purge, n.

purpose, a- or o't. On purpose: S.E. (gen. a purpose) >, ca. 1790, dial. and low coll. (O.E.D.)

purpose as the goose slurs upon the ice (or as to give a goose hay), to as much. Uselessly: semiproverbial coll.: late C. 17-19, C. 18-20. Cf. to no more purpose than to beat your heels against the ground or wind.

purposes, for (e.g. dancing). For (e.g.) dancing: coll., tautological: late C. 19-20. Cf. side on the purse. The female pudend: low coll.: C. 17-20.

(Baumont & Fletcher)

purse, v.i. To take purses; to steal: late C. 16-17: low coll. (I orig. s.). Lyly, 1592 (O.E.D.).

Baumont & Fletcher, in The Scornful Lady, * Why I'll purse: if that raise me not, I'll bet at bowling alleys.


Ex purse, n.

purse a purgation, give a person's. To take money from one: coll. ca. 1540-80. Ileywood; Bullein. Apperson.


*purse-nets. C. of ca. 1608-1830: 'Goods taken upon Trust by young Unthrifts at treble the Value', B.E.; Grose, 1st ed.; but first in Dekker. Cf. the dial. purse-net, the movable net in which ducks are snared, and rabbit-sucker.—2. Also, though prob. in the singular form: a small purse: ca. 1860-1900. app. likewise s. B.E.

purser's. Contemptuous or derisive in purses' dip, an undersized candle; purses' quart (Smollett), a short quart; etc.: nautical coll.: C. 18-20; slightly ob. Because a purser, i.e. ship's storekeeper and treasurer, was often dishonest. Cf.

*purser's (gen. pursuer's) crabs. 'Navy uniform boots, with toe-caps': naval: late C. 19-20: Bowen. See crab-shells.


*purser's (gen. pursuer's) dirk. Same as pursuer's dagger: naval: late C. 19-20. Ibid.

purser's (gen. pursuer's) grin. A hypocritical grin; a sarcastic sneer: nautical coll.: C. 19-20; ob. Esp. in the o.p., there are no half laughs or pursuer's grins about me; I'm right up and down like a yard of pump water.

purser's grind. A cotion bringing the woman no money but some consolation in the size or potency of the member: low nautical: mid-C. 19-20.


purser's pump. A siphon, because prominent in a pursuer's stores; a bassoon, 'from its likeness to a syphon', Grose, 1788: nautical of ca. 1780-1890.


purser's (gen. pursuer's) tally. A name assumed by a seaman, esp. if naval: (naval) coll.: C. 19. Bowen.

purser's (gen. pursuer's) yellow. Naval soap: naval coll.: late C. 19-20. Ibid.

pursebound. See purse, pursing gimpit. A sulky person: dial. and low coll.: from ca. 1850. Ex glum, gloomy, and dial., purst, to suck.

purty. See perty.

Purse, the. The Pusey House in St. Giles's Street, Oxford: Oxford University: late C. 19-20; ob. On museum.

puch. (As enterprise, moral energy, it has, contrary to frequent opinion, been always S.E.: 1855, O.E.D.)—2. A thronging, a crowd, of people: low s. (perhaps orig. c.) >, in C. 20, gen. s. 1718, C. Hitchin, 'A push, alias an accidental crowd of people'; Vaux, 1812, 'When any particular scene of crowding is alluded to, they [the underworld] say, the push ... at the ... doors; the push at the ... match.' Ex the inevitable pushing and jostling.

—3. Hence, a gang or a group of convicts, as in Davitt's Prison Diary, 1858; or a band of thieves, as in Anon., 'No. 747', reference to the year 1845; or, in Australia, a gang of larrikins, as in The Melbourne Argus, July 26, 1890, and esp. in Morris's dictionary: in C. 19, c.; in C. 20, low s., as indeed the larrikins' sense was from the first.

—4. Hence, any company or party, group, association, or set of people: C. 20. (The U.S. sense (Thornton, 1912), 'a combination of low politicians' derives directly from Australia.)—5. Hence, in G.W. and in post-War military and naval, a military or a naval unit, but esp. a battalion, a battery, or a ship's crew. Cf. military sense of mob, n. —6. A robbery; a swindle; a dealing out of profits: c. from ca. 1860; slightly ob. H., 6th ed. Not unnaturally ex sense 3.—7. See push, do a.—8. Mostly in give or get the puch. A dismissal, esp. from employment: from ca. 1870: s. >, by 1910, coll. Anon., ca. 1875, 'The girl that stole my heart has given me the puch'. Cf. push, order of the.—9. See tidderly push. (—10. The military sense, 'an attack', is S.E. of a century's standing.)—11. A Foreman: Canadian, esp. among lumbermen: from before 1932. John Beamus. Ex his urging the men on.
push, v. See push off and pushed.—2. V.i. (occ. push on), rarely v.t., to cote (with) : low coll., gen. of the male: C. 18-20. Robertson of Struan.

push, adj. See push, adj.

push, do a. See do a push.


push, give or get the. A coll. abbr. (from middle 1920's) of the nursery phrase, order of the. A dismissal, esp. from employment, and gen. as give or get the o, of the p.: s. >, by ca. 1910, coll. ‘Pomes’ Marshall. An elaboration of push, n., eighth sense. Cf. order of the bath.


push a bit of bow back. To have a sleep: Regular Army’s: C. 20. B. & F. L. bowed back.

push-and-pull. A (little) motor-train that reverses at the termini: railwaymen’s (— 1936).

push-bike, s. ; push-cycle, coll. A foot-propelling bicycle as opp. to a motor-cycle; coll.: resp. from ca. 1910 and ca. 1904. Cf. derivatives: push-cyclist. A bicyclist, opp. to a motorcyclist: coll.: from ca. 1905.


push one’s harrow. To move on, away; to depart: mostly costers’: from ca. 1870.

push out the boat. See boat, push out the. The Contrast push the boat out (next entry but two).

push-penny. A coll. variant (— 1903) of show-halfpenny.

push-pin, occ. -pike, play at; play at put-pin. To cote: low coll.: resp. C. 17-18, late C. 17-18, and mid-C. 16-18; Rhymes with, Miasoponos, 1600; Masoniger, 1623: ‘She would never tell! Who play’d at pushpin with her’; Ned Ward, 1707, ‘When at push-a-pike we play [With beauty, who shall win the day?]’ Cf. push, v., 2, push, do a, and pushing-school.

push the boat out! Go ahead! I’m all right: military c.p. in G.W.

push the brush out. (Of a convict) to attract the attention of a warder: e. (— 1933). Charles E. Higgens. It is occ. done in this way when the convict is in his cell.

push-up, be at the. To work with a gang of pickpockets: cf. (— 1933). Ibid. Cf. push, n., 3, 6.


pushed, P, did she fall or was she. A late C. 19-20 c.p. applied to a person stumbling: also, and orig., to a girl deprived of her virginity.


pushing daisies. Dead and buried: see daisy-pushing.


pushing-out. A thief’s scout or watchman that brings intelligence of an accidental crowd or assemblage: e.: C. 18. C. Hitchin, 1718.

pushing up daisies. A variant of pushing daisies, than which it is more gen.


pussey- or Pussey-cat. See next, sense 2.— pussy. See fuss, 1.


put. A rustic; a doit: 1688, Shadwell; Grose (country put, a frequent variant): s. until ca. 1750, then coll. until ca. 1850, then S.E. and archaic. The discrimination of put, a blockhead, and country put, a bumpkin, is logical: but the distinction cannot be pressed.—2. His, her, its, a chap, fellow: coll.: ca. 1800-30. Gen. applied, somewhat contemptuously, to elderly persons: cf. Thackeray in Vanity Fair, I, xi, ‘The captain . . . calls [his father] an old put.—3. A harlot: ? C. 17-18: F. & H., but who else ?! (Ex Fr. putain, a whore).—4. See:

put, do a; have a put-in. To cote: low coll.: C. 19; C. 19-20 (ob.).


put, stay. Remain in position, firm, lit. and fig.; to continue to be safe, satisfactory, sober, honest, faithful, in training, etc.: coll.: from ca. 1915. Ex U.S.; Bartlett stigmatised it in 1848 as ‘a vulgar expression’.

put a bung or sock in it. (Gen. imperative.) To ‘shut up’; cease being noisy: military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Here, it is the mouth.—2 (In barracks hut) to close the door (bung only): id.: id. Ibid.

put (or lay) a churl upon a gentleman. See churl. put a hat (up) on a hen. To attempt the impossible: proverbial coll.: mid-C. 17-19. Ray. put a new face (or head) on. To disguise by
punching; hence, to get the better of: U.S. (-1870); anglicised by 1890; † by 1920.

put a poor mouth on (a-position). To complain (more readily) about: Anglo-Irish (-1884). Ware.

put a sack in it. See put a bung...

put a steam on the table. 'To earn enough money to obtain a hot Sunday dinner': lower classes: from ca. 1860. Ware. 'Refer chiefly to boiled food'

put a tin hat on. See tin hat on, put a.

put across. To achieve; execute successfully: from ca. 1910; coll., now verging on S.E. Whence:

put across a beauty. To execute a smart move: coll., mostly New Zealanders': from ca. 1911.

put along; gen. put her along. To cause (a motor-car) to travel at a high speed: motorists' coll.: 1924, Francis D. Gricerson, The Jumping Man.

put-away. An appetite; a (considerable) capacity for food or drink: low; late C. 19-20. Ex the v., 1.—2. Imprisonment: late C. 19-20; ob. Ex the v., 2.—3. An information to the police: (c. or) low s.: late C. 19-20. Ex the v., 3.


put down south. See south.

put 'em up! Raise your arms!: from ca. 1860; coll.—2. Put up your fists!: coll.: late C. 19-20. A variant is stick 'em up!, in both senses. Contrast put it up!

put-in, n. See put, do a.

put in, v. To pass (a period of time), gen. at or with the help of some occupation: coll.: C. G. Gibson, 1863 (O.E.D.).—2. See put the windows in.


put in a hole. To defraud: c.: from ca. 1860. A variant of put in the hole, q.v. at hole, put in a hole, put in one's eye, as much as one can. (virtually) nothing: coll.: late C. 17-early 19. B.E.

put in one's motto. To 'lay down the law'; but rashly into a conversation: low coll.: from ca. 1850.

put in pie. To spoil or bungle (a thing), lead (a person) astray: printers' (-1887); ob. Baumann. Ex the jumble of printers' pie.

put in the boot. See boot, put in the.

put in the bucket, garden, hole, pin, squeak, or well. See at the sn.

put in the pudden club. See pudden club, put in the.


put it in, v.i. To achieve intromission: perhaps rather an S.E. approximation to euphemism than a coll.: when, however, there is no thought, intension or subconscious impulse towards euphemism, it may be considered a coll. and not, from the psychological nature of the case, S.E.

put it on, v.t. To overcharge: C. 20 coll. Ex put on the price; prob. influenced by: —2. V.t. To extract money from (a person) by threats, lying or whining: low London: late C. 19-20. The People, Jan. 6, 1885 (Ware).

put it on her. To drive a ship hard in a strong breeze; naval col. sailing-ships': mid-C. 19-20. Bowen. The it = her set of sails.

put it over (a person). See put it across, 1, 2: same status and period.—2. See put over.


put it up! Have done!: stop!: shut up!: low (-1869); † by 1910. H., 1st ed.

put it where the monkeys put the nuts! Go to blazes!: a low o.p.: late C. 19-20. An elaboration of the low familiar S.E. stick it up your a**


put-on. A deception, subterfuge, excuse: coll.: from ca. 1860.—2. An 'old woman mendicant who puts on a shivering and wretched look': c. or low (-1900). Ware.

put on, v. To begin to smoke, as in F. W. Crofts, Mystery in the Channel, 1931, 'Dispirited, he sat down on the shore ..., put on a pipe, and gave himself up to thought': coll.: C. 20.

put on a boss. To assume a malevolent look: low (-1909). Ware, 'Squinting suggests malevolence.'

put on a cigar. To assume gentility: lower classes': mid-C. 19-20; ob. Ware.

put on the bee, put on the.

put on the flooence (unnecessary spelling) or finence. See finance.—put on the peg. See peg, put on the.


put one's hair in(to) a curl or put a curl in one's hair. To make one feel (very) fit: coll.: from ca. 1870; slightly ob. H., 5th ed.

put oneself outside. To eat, occ., to drink: from ca. 1890. Ware. Of put outside.


put over. To knock over with a shot, to kill: Australian: 1899, H. Kingsley; ob.—2. To cause to be accepted; to succeed in getting a favourable reception for; orig. U.S.: anglicised ca. 1920 as a coll., > by 1935 S.E.

put paid to. See paid to.

put some jildi into it. To 'jump to it' (q.v.): military: C. 20. B. & P. See jildi.

put stuff on. See stuff on the ball.

put that in your pipe ...! See pipe and smoke it.

put the acid on. To test (man or statement); to put a stop to; lower classes': from ca. 1908. F. & Gibbons.—2. To ask (a person) for a loan: Australian: from ca. 1912.

put the black on. V.i. and t. To blackmail: c.: from ca. 1920. Edgar Wallace, passim. Abbr. blackmail.

put the block. To 'mask' or cover a thief at work: c. (-1933). Charles E. Leach.
**put the gloves on**

To improve (a person); Scots c. 1868; slightly ob. Ware.

*put the hard word on.* See hard word.

*put the lid on.* See lid on.

*put the miller’s eye out.* See miller’s eye.

*put the nips in.* See nips in.

*put the pot on.* To bet too much money on one horse; the pot came from ca. 1820. See pot, n. 1.

*put the strings on.* See strings on.

*put the traveller on.* To tip the traveller.

*put the value on.* To sign (a canvas): artist’s

(- 1909); ob. Ware.

*put the windows in.* To smash them: low urban

(- 1898). Ware.

*put through.* To succeed with (some plan, e.g.)
by swindling: low: late C. 19-20; ob. Ex the S.E. (orig. -1847 - U.S.) sense, carry to a successful issue. (Thornton.)

*put through the hoop.* See hoop, put through the
tooth.

*put to bed.* (The journalistic sense is S.E.-2.)
To defeat: music-halls’ (- 1909); ob. Ware.

*put to find.* To put in prison: low (- 1909).
Ware. (t. fine.)

*put to sleep.* See sleep, put to.

*put together with a hot needle and burnt thread.* To fasten insecurely: ca. 1860-1850: semi-prover-
bial collateral.

*put-up.* A laying of information against a fellow-criminal: c. (- 1823); ob. Bee, who implies that *put-up serves also as n. to put up, v. 2, q.v.*

*put up.* To show, achieve, e.g. a good fight or
G.W.; a good show: coll.: from ca. 1890. The
*Field,* Jan. 30, 1892, ‘Petitt put up a good game.’
—2. To plan in advance (a robbery, a swindle, a fraud): c.: from ca. 1810. Vaux.-3. Hence, to
preconcert anything devious or underhand or dis-
ingenuous: from ca. 1890. ‘Barclay put up a job
to ruin old Overton,’ The *Sporting and Dramatic
News,* Aug. 13, 1902 (O.E.D. - D. See put up.
—5. To wear; military coll., only as in pig, n. 4: C.
1925. To call (a soldier) with a “crime” in a
military coll.: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Cf. the
C. 15-16 S.E. sense, to bring (a person) into court
on a charge.

*put up a squeak.* To give information to the
police: c.: from ca. 1820. Edgar Wallace.

*put up a stall.* To act or speak misleadingly:

*put-up job.* (The chief use of the adj. put-up.)
A prearranged crime or deception: as the former,
c. (from ca. 1838): as the latter, s. >, ca. 1930.
Coll. A put-up robbery occurs in 1810, a put-up
affair in 1812 (Vaux). (O.E.D.)

*put up one’s hat!* put one’s hat up. To pay
serious court; often *put your hat up there!* I see
you mean to make one of the family: lower classes:
late C. 19-20. Ware.

*put the honey on.* See honey, put up the.

*put (a person) up.* To enlighten or forewarn
about; inform of; instruct in: coll.: 1812. Vaux.-2. To incite or excite to (some act, to do something); to induce, persuade (to do something): coll.: 1824 (O.E.D.).

*put wise.* See wise, put.

*put your head in a bag!* Be quiet: (low) coll.: from ca. 1800. A horse with his head in the nose-
bag does not trouble about other things.

*Putney!* go to. Go to the devil: from ca. 1840; ob.
From ca. 1850, occ. go to Putney on a

pig, by a typical assontantial addition. Kingsley,
1863, ‘Now, in the year 1845, telling a man to go
to Putney was the same as telling a man to go
to the deuce.’ Cf. *Bath, Halifaz, Hong-Kong, Jericho.*

*putred.* Incorrect for *putrid:* C. 16-17. O.E.D.

*putrescent.* An occ. variant (ca. 1806-13), noted
by Collinson, of putrid.

*putrid.* A pejorative of the awful kind: C. 20:
a. now verging on coll. The *Sporting Times,*
April 27, 1901, ‘All beer is putrid, even when it’s
pure.’ Prob. suggested by rotten (q.v.); of.
poisonous, q.v.

*put,* See put, n. 1, of which it is a C. 17-18
variant.

*putter-down.* A presenter of forged cheques or
counterfeit money: c. (- 1933). Charles E.
Leach.

*putter-up.* One who plans and pre-arranges
robberies, frauds, swindles; esp. ‘a man who travels
about for the purpose of obtaining information
useful to professional burglars,’ H., 5th ed.;
also, in C. 20, an instigator to crime: c. >, ca.
1910, low s. and police coll.: 1812, Vaux; 1933,
Charles E. Leach.

*putting the black on.* Blackmail. See the
black on.

*puttock.* A whores’ a greedy person: coll.

*putrun.* A regiment: Anglo-Indian, esp. mili-

*putty.* Money: mostly (? and orig.) U.S.:
mid-C. 19-20; ob. Prob. glaziers’ at first.—2. A
plaster, a house-painter: in the Navy, any painter
rating: from ca. 1820. Bee; Bowen. Ex fru-
tquent use of putty.—3. ‘Sticky mud at the bottom
of a body of water’: 1880, P. H. Emerson: dial.
and s. >, by 1910, coll.

*putty.* adj. Stupid, idiotic: low (- 1923).

*putty-brain.* A whores’ a greedy person: coll.

*putty-black on.* Blackmail. See the
black on.

*putty-box.* A whores’ a greedy person: coll.

*putty-down.* A presenter of forged cheques or
counterfeit money: c. (- 1933). Charles E.
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robberies, frauds, swindles; esp. ‘a man who travels
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*putty-black on.* Blackmail. See the
black on.

*putty-box.* A whores’ a greedy person: coll.


puzzling arithmetic. A statement of the odds: gamblers' coll. († > J.): C. 17. Webster, 1613, 'Studying a puzzling arithmetic at the cockpit'.

'puzzling-sticks.' The triangle which to culprit were tied for flagellation: (prob. c. >) low a.: 1812, Vaux; † by 1870.


pygostole. A 'M.B.' coat or waistcoat: Church:

[In F. & H., at Q, there are the following inadmissible terms. 1, S.E. = q, a coin; quah; quaff; quag; quail, a harlot, yet see entry: quaint; quaker (run); qualm, qualmiah; quantum, a sufficiency; quash; quat; quen; quassy; quell; the devil; queen of holes, Rochester's euphemism; queen's or king's ale; queen's or king's carriage or coach; Queen or King's English; queen's herb; quickening peg, a euphemism; quid of tobacco, with corresponding v.; quid for quod, quid pro quo and quidnunc; quietus (est); quiet of hair (but see separate entry); quid-driver, etc.; quill phrases, except the Wykehamist; quillpipe; quillet; quilt, a fat man; quip, n. and v.; quick; quirk; quiver, a euphemism; quiz; n. and v.; quizz; quizity and quizicality; quodding; quok (queen); quoz.

2. Dial: — quavery wavery; Queen Bess; quill; v.: quockerwoger.]

*q. See letter Q.

t. All; q. Que, cue, kew, not worth a. Of negligible value: coll. > S.E.: C. 16. Skelton, 'That lybette was not worth a cue.' Ex q, half a farthing. — see p and q, p's and q's.


2. (or Q) in a corner. Something not at once seen but brought to subsequent notice: legal: from ca. 1850; ob. Perhaps = query in a corner, suggested by the old game of Q in the corner (prob., puss in the corner).

Q.S. 'Queer Street', q.v.: non-arcasitc: late C. 19–20; ob. Ware.

Q.T. (or Q.T.), on the; or on the strict q.t. On the quiet: resp. ca. 1870, 1880. Anon., Brideside Ballad, 1870, 'Whatever I tell you is on the Q.T.'

Q.V.R.'s, the. See Queen Vics, the.

Qantas; pedantically Quantas. The Queensland and Northern Territory Aerial Service: Australian coll. : from 1933.


Quack, v. Play the quack (see quack, n. 1): C. 17–20: coll. till C. 19, then S.E.—2. To change (the title of a book), v.t.: C. 18: booksellers'. Centlivre, 1715, 'He has an admirable knack at quacking titles . . . When he gets an old good-for-nothing book, he claps a new title to it, and sells off the whole impression in a week.' Ex quack, to palm off as a quack would.

Quack, in a. In a mere moment: Scotc coll. : from ca. 1840.

Quack-quack. A buck: an echo nursery coll. : recorded 1866 (O.E.D.), but prob. —as indeed with all such words—used much earlier. Cf. bow-wow.


Quadr- is incorrect for quadri-: C. 17–20, as quadri- is for quadr- in the very few words beginning thus (e.g. quadrumanous: mostly C. 18. (O.E.D.)

Quads, the. See Quins, the.


Quaguer. A student at the Queen's College: Oxford undergraduates: from late 1890's. By

[quail, a harlot, or a courteisen:] C. 17-early 18; may orig. have been coll. or even s., but it is gen. treated as S.E.: cf., however, pheasant and plover. C. 17-18. Motete, With several coated quails, and lively movement, waggishly singing. Ex the bird's supposed amorousness.—It is interesting to note that in U.S. university s. (now ob.), quail is a girl student. Thornton.


quaint. In C. 14-16, quent(e) or queynte; in C. 15-16, also quaynt(e). The female pedunc: C. 14-20; in C. 14-16, a vulg.; in C. 17-20, dial., now f except in parts of the North Country, where ob. Florio, 'Conno, a woman's privie parts or quaint, as Chaucer calls it.' If not a mere variant of, certainly cognate with *quaynt: 'Chaucer may have combined Old French coing with M.E. cunt(e), or he may have been influenced by the Old Fr. adjective coing, neat, dainty, pleasant,' Grose, P. quavering.

quaint adj., as used from ca. 1920 (the practice was on the wane by 1934) to mean amusingly old-fashioned, entertainingly unusual, even occ. as funny in an odd way, is (mostly upper-)middle- and upper-class s. It is less relevant than may at first appear to note that B.E. included quaint, 'curious, neat; also strange' in his glossary, for so far as we are aware, he had no reason to treat it at all.

quake-breath or -buttok. A coward; doll; sot: coll. verging on S.E.: late C. 16-17.


Quaker oat; gen. pl. and more properly, Quaker Oats. A coat: C. 20. P. R., Rhyming Slang, 1932.

Quaker, bury s. To defecate: low: C. (†18-19). See Quaker, 2.

Quaker's bargain. A 'tea or nay' bargain; a 'take it or leave it' transaction: coll.: late C. 18-19. Ex the well-known directness, reliability and integrity of the Quakers, as honourably honest as a well-bred Chinese Quaker's or Quakers' burying-ground. A privy; a w.c.: low: C. 19. Ex Quaker, 2.

Quailing. A calf; a sheep: o. of ca. 1500-1850. Harman. See chaste.

Quailing. Damned, bloody, etc.: euphemistic coll.: 1890, Kipling, 'He was ... told not to make a qualified fool of himself.' O.E.D. (Sup.)

Quality, v.t. To coct: cultured s.: late C. 19. f ex qualify as a man.—2. To register one's name as playing football, or as being changed: Bootham School: from ca. 1910. Anon., Dict. of Bootham Slang, 1925.


Quality, the. The gentry: late C. 17-20: S.E. until ca. 1830, then dial. and low coll. Mrs Centlivre notably omits the; A. Trollope, 1857, 'The quality, as the upper classes in rural districts are designated by the lower... Whence:

Quality hours, the. Late hours for rising and for eating: lower classes' ironic collo: mid-C. 19-20. Manchon.


Quarantine. A state of perplexity; the difficulty causing it: coll. till C. 19, then S.E.: 1579, Lyly, 'Leaving this old gentleman in a great quandarie' (O.E.D.). Occ. C. 17-early 18, as a v.: the Rev. T. Adams (d. 1655), 'He quandaries whether to go forward to God, or... to turn back to the world.' The O.E.D., concerning the etymology, rejects M.E. wondreth, abbr. hypochondry, and Grose's and Baumann's qu'en dirai-je? Prob. L. quem dare? or quando dare?, less likely quantum dare?

Quarant, See Quanta.

Quantum. A drink: from ca. 1870; very ob. Baumann. Ex S.E. sense, a sufficiency.

Quantum Suf. Enough: coll.: C. 19-20; slightly ob. J. Beresford, 1806 (O.E.D.); 1871, Anon., The Stilted, 'I, too, O conrade, quantum suf. would cry.' Ex the medical formula in prescriptions: quantum suff (tit), 'as much as suffices.'

Quaquer is incorrect for quaverer: C. 17-18. O.E.D.


*Quarrom(s) or -s; quarro or -s. A or the body: of. of ca. 1555-1830. Harman and Grose, quarromes; Brome and B.E. quarton; Anon., The Maunder's Praise... 1670, quarroes. Perhaps ex Fr. charogne or It. carogna.

Quarry. The female pedunc: C. 18-19; coll., bordering on S.E. euphemism.


Quart-Mania. Delirium tremens (cf. gallo- 
distermer) : ca. 1850-1910.

Quart-Pot Tea. Billy tea: Australian coll.: Mrs H. Jones, Long Years in Australia, 1878 (Morris); 1885, Finch-Hatton, Advance Australia; ob. Ex its making in a tin pot holding a quart.

Quarter, the; in address, Quarter or Quarters. (The) quartermaster sergeant: military coll.: C. 20. (F. & Gibbons.)

Quarter Blete, the. The same; also, the quartermaster: id.; id. (Ibid.)

Quarter Blete's English is "the business-like, itemised English affected by Quartermasters and their assistants' in the Army; thus gum boots > boots, gum. Military coll.: from 1916. B. & P. Quarter-decker. An officer with manners (much) better than his seamanship: naval coll.: from ca. 1855; slightly ob. Ex deck used by superior officers and/or cabin-passengers. Like the next,
Quartermaster's eraseic. Soap for scrubbing floors; military; C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Jocular ex Easy, the deservedly popular toilet soap.

[quartern. See 'Westminster School slang', at end.]

quarterm of bliss. A small, attractive woman; low London; from ca. 1882; ob. Ware. Cf. pot of bliss.

quarters. See quarter, the.

quarto; Mr. Quarto. A bookseller; a publisher; coll.: mid-C. 18—mid-19.

quash; quash kateer. Resp. good; very good, pleasant, etc.; Eastern Fronts coll. in G.W. F. & Gibbons. In Arabic, kwasu kethk — very good.

quashee, -ese; occ. quassy. A Negro; above all, a Negro seaman from the British West Indies; esp. as a nickname; coll.: from ca. 1830. E.g. Michael Scott, 'I say, quashee.' Ex a Negro proper name. O.E.D.; Bowan.

quat. A contemptuous pejorative applied to a (gen. young, nearly always male) person; early C. 17. Shakespeare, Webster. Ex quat, a simple. (O.E.D.)

quat go to. To defecate; low coll.: C. 19-20; very ob. Ex quat, to squat.

[quatch, as in Shakespeare's quatch-bottom, may be coll. and may = flat.]

quaternity. A quarter = a C. 17 cataphresis. O.E.D.

quatro. Four: from ca. 1850; Parlyaree. Ex It. quatro. Cf. quarter.

quaver. A musician; coll. or a.: from ca. 1860; ob. H., 3rd ed. qua; incorrectly queen. A homosexual, esp. one with girlish manners and carriage; low; late C. 19-20; ob. except in Australia. Prob. ex quean, a harlot, influenced by Queenie, a girl's name, and dial. queanie, effeminate. Cf. queanie.

Queen Street. See Queen Street.

queenie; incorrectly queenie. A 'Nancy'; late C. 19-20; Australian. See queen,—2. A very good-looking man or boy; military; from ca. 1920. queen. See queen.

Queen Anne—Queen Elizabeth—my Lord Baldwin—is dead. A c.p. resort on old news; coll.: resp. 1722; C. 18, eg. in Swift; ca. 1870-1710, as in Ray. A ballad of 1723, cited by Apperson, 'He's as dead as Queen Anne the day after she dy'd; Barham. Swift, 'What news, Mr Neverout? Neverout. Why, Madam, Queen Elizabeth's dead.' The first was occ., ca. 1870-1910, elaborated to Queen Anne is dead and her bottom's cold. Cf. the Yorkshire Queen Anner, 'an old-fashioned tale; a tale of former times', E.D.D.

Queen Anne's fan. Fingers to nose; coll.: mid-C. 19-20; ob. (Manchon).

Queen Anne's Mansions. 'The combined control tower and fore bridge of the Nelson and the Rodney, named after the tallest block of flats in London', Bowen, 1929: naval; from ca. 1910; ob.


queen (or Queen) goes on foot or sends nobody, where the, a water-closet: low coll.; ca. 1860—1915.

queen of the dripping-pan. A cook; coll.; from ca. 1850; ob.

Queen Sarah. The first Duchess of Marlborough (d. 1744). Dawson.

Queen Street, live in; or at the sign of the Queen's Head. To be governed by one's wife; coll.: ca. 1780-1850. Gros, 1st ed.

Queen Vica, the. The Queen Victoria Rifles (9th Battalion London Regiment): military; late C. 19—20. F. & Gibbons. Also the Q.V.R.'s.

queenie. See queenie.—2. queenie! A 'mock embarrassing name called after a fat woman trying to walk young': Cockneys: 1854—ca. 1914. Ex Queenie, come back, sweet, addressed in a Drury Lane pantomime of 1884 to H. Campbell, who, exceedingly fat, was playing Eliza, a cook. Ware.

Queenite (opp. Kingite). A partisan of Queen Caroline, George IV's wife; coll.: † by 1860. Southey, 'He thought small beer ... of some very great ... Queenites.'

Queen's. The Queen's College, Oxford; coll.: C. 18-20. Queen's men do not like outsiders—even undergraduates of other Oxford colleges—to use the term.

Queen's bad or hard bargain or bad shilling. See Q.b.b. and bad bargain.

Queen's Bays, the. The Third Dragoon Guards; military coll.; from ca. 1840. Since Queen Victoria's death, the Bays. Ca. 1767, they were mounted on bay horses, the other heavy regiments—excepting always the Scots Greys—having black horses.

Queen's bus or, as in Baumann, carriage. A prison van; ca. 1860-1901: c. (But the King's bus did not 'take on'.)

Queen's College. See college.
Queen's Gold Medal. (Gen. the.) A shilling: lower classes:— (1887); † by 1902. Baumann.


queen's or Queen's parade. The quarter-deck: naval coll.: ca. 1865-1901. Smyth.


Queen's pipe. See pipe, her Majesty's. Orig.

Queen's tobacco-pipe.

Queen's or queen's stick. A stately person: (low) coll.: ca. 1870-1910.


*queer, adj. (Orig. opp. to rum, excellent, which in C. 19-20 has approximated to queer: see rum.) Base, criminal; counterfeiter; very inferior: c.: C. 16-20. First in Scots, 1608 (O.E.D.), as = odd, eccentric, of questionable character, prob. coll. (not c.) and soon > S.E., this sense being perhaps independent of the c. (not attested before 1661); by 1590, very gen. in Eng. c. Awdelay, as quire: Harman, quier, of liquor: Dekker, quier; Fletcher the dramatist, quere: B.E., quere; The Spectator, queer, as in Grove. Origin obscure, but perhaps ex quire = choir: Awdelay, 'A Quire bird is one that came lately out of prison': cf. Grove's (1st ed.) definition of quier-bird, and see canary and canary bird; or, as H. suggests, ex Ger. quer, crooked.—2. Not until C. 19 do the derivative senses occur: drunk, 1800, W. B. Rhodes, 'We feel ourselves a little queer' (in C. 20, gen. he looks, looked, rather, etc., queer), O.E.D.—3. Hence, unwell; giddy: s., in C. 20, coll. (cf. the Australian crook, q.v.): from ca. 1810, e.g. in Vaux. Cf. querri, q.v.—4. Unfavourable, inauspicious: coll.: late C. 19-20.—5. Not honest; 'shady': coll.: late C. 19-20.—6. Shrewd: alert: c.: late C. 16-19 early. Parker, 1789. But this may merge with preceding sense.—7. Of strange behaviour; (slightly) mad, orig. (a bit) queer in the head: coll.: Dickens. This links with sense 3, but prob. deriving imm. ex quier in one's attic. (In gen., cf. the n. and v.; also the queer combinations and phrases.)


queer, v. To ridicule; to puzzle: from ca. 1700; ob. Grove.—2. To hoax; cheat; trick: evade: c. or low s.: late C. 18-20. Anon, 1819, 'There's no quearing fate, sirs.'—3. To spoil, ruin: from ca. 1790. Grove, 3rd ed., 1812, Vaux: c. >, ca. 1850, let. s. Cf. glitch, out the, the, q.v. 'Queer the Giles, blacken someone's eyes (Grose).—4. Hence, 'to put (one) out; to make (one) feel queer,' S.O.D.: 1845. W. Cory, 'Hallam was rather queered,' O.E.D.; Hindley, 1876, 'Consumption was queer ing him.'
*queer diver. A bungling pickpocket; c.: mid-C. 17–early 19. B.E.

*queer doxy. A jilted jade; an ill-dressed harlot; c.: mid-C. 17–mid-18. B.E.

*queer drawers. Yarn, coarse Worsted, ord' nary or old Stockings', B.E.: c.: late C. 17–18.

*queer duke. A decayed gentleman; a starveling; c.: late mid-C. 17–18. B.E.

*queer em or um or um; queerum. The gallowys; c.: ca. 1820–60. Bee, 1823 (queer 'em); Sonnets for the Fancy, 1824, 'The queerum queerly smeard with dirty black'.† Queer them or queer one.

*queer fellow; queer fish. See queer card.

*queer fun. A bungled trick or swindle; c.: late C. 17–18. B.E.

*queer-gammed. Very lame; crippled; c., in C. 20 slightly ob. George Parker, 1788, 'Though fancy queer-gammed smutty Muns | Was once my fav'rite man.' See gam.


*queer it. See queer, v., 3. Cf. pick, queer the.

*queer ken. A prison; c.: ca. 1608, Dekker; Grose. † by 1850.—2. A house not worth robbing; c.: late C. 17–18. B.E. Here, queer = worthless. Cf.:•

*queer-kennel hall. A prison; c.: 1610, Rowlands, who spells quirken hall. C. 17; on queer ken. Prob. genuine c., but Rowlands often 'improved on' Dekker, who, although he used Harman somewhat as in Molère, prob. knew the underworld intimately.

*queer kicks. 'Coarse, ord' nary or old Breeches', B.E.: c.: late C. 17–early 19.

*queer money. See queer bit.


*queer nab. A shabby hat, or a cheap one; c.: late C. 17–early 19. B.E., who uncomprisingly defines it as 'A Felt, Carolina, Cloth, or ord'nary Hat, not worth whippin off a Man's Head'.

*queer-ogled. Squint-eyed; c.: (—1887). Baumann.

*queer on or to. To rob; treat harshly; resp. c. and low a.: C. 19–20; ob. Cf. queer, v., 3 and 4.

*queer paper. See queer bit.

*queer peeper. An inferior mirror; late C. 17–18. B.E.

*queer peepers. Squinting or dim-sighted eyes; c. >, by 1830, low a.: C. 18–20; ob. A New Censuing Dict., 1725.


*queer plunger. One who works a faked rescue of a drowning man; c.: 1785, Grose. It applies both to the 'victim' and to the 'rescue'. In order that the 'rescue' should wrangle a guinea from a humane society; moreover, the supposed 'suicide' often got a small sum.

*queer prancer. An inferior or a foundered horse; late C. 17–early 19 a. B.E.; Grose, 1st ed., who records also 'a cowardly . . . horse-stealer'; c.: late C. 18–early 19.

*queer roost, dorse (or does) or sleep (upon) the. To live together as supposed man and wife; c.: late C. 18–mid-19. George Parker (dorse).

*queer rooster. A police spy residing among thieves; c.: 1785, Grose; † by 1890.


*queer-shower or shover of the queer. See queer, n., 1. From ca. 1870.

*queer soft. See queer bit.


*Queer Street, in. In a serious difficulty; very short of money; c. >, ca. 1840, s. >, ca. 1890, coll. >, ca. 1930. S.E.: 1811, Lex. Bal.: 1837, Lyttton, 'You are in the wrong box—planted in Queer Street, as we say in London'; Dickens.

*queer the pitch. See pitch, queer the.

*queer thing, the. 'A basket or sack hoisted in a Grand Banks schooner to recall the dories'; fishermen's: late C. 19–20. Bowen.

*queer to. See queer on.

*queer topping. A frowsy or inferior wig or other head-dress; c.: late C. 17–18. B.E.

*queer wedge. Base gold or, more gen., silver; c.: ca. 1800–60.—2. A large buckle, says Grose, in his 3rd ed.: c.: late C. 18–early 19.

*queer whidding. A scolding; c.: C. 18–mid-19. F. & H. Ex:•

*queer whilds. Eap. in cut queer whilda, to give evil words; c.: 1667, Harman. Ob.

*queered. Tispy: 1822, Scott, 'You would be quiteared in the drinking of a penny pot of malmsey.' † by 1850. See queer, adj., 2.

*queerer. A quizz, a hoaxer; ca. 1810–50. Colman, 1819, 'These wooden wits, these quizzers, queerrers, smokers'. Ex queer, v., 1.

*queerish. Somewhat 'queer', in various senses; coll.: mid-C. 18–20. Also in dial.

*queerly. Like a criminal; c.: late C. 17–early 19. B.E.

*queerum. See queer 'em.


*queint(e). See quaint.—Queme. See quim. 

*quencer; frequently a modest quencer. A drink; coll.: 1840, Dickens.

*queep, in Scott, is erroneous for queep (= gup). O.E.D.

*quérer. A chimney-sweep irregularly soliciting custom, e.g. by knocking at the doors of houses; low: from ca. 1858. H., 1859; Mayhew (also gumberl). Cf. kneller.

*querry and quetry in Greene's Second Cony-Catching, 1592, are prob. misprints for quarry; nevertheless they are late C. 16 c. and = a certainty (to be victimised).

*question, ask (a horse) a. To test before racing: the turf: The Licensed Victuallers' Gazette, Nov. 7, 1890, 'A thorough judge of horses . . . and . . . not afraid of asking them a question, like some trainers we know of'.

*question, pop the. See pop the question.

*question lay. 'To knock at the Door, and ask for the Gentleman of the House, if a Bed [a-bed] you desire the Servant not to disturb him, but you will
wait untill he raises, and then an opportunity to steal something’; C. Hitchin, The Regulator, 1718: c. C. 18.

queynote. See quaint.—Quehew. See whow, the.

qui, get the. To be dismisshed: printers: from ca. 1875. Ex quietus.


quihi or -hai or -hy. An Anglo-Indian, esp. of the Bengal Presidency: Anglo-Indian coll.: 1816. Anon., Quiz; Thackeray, ‘The old boys, the old generals, the old colonels, the old qui-his . . . paid her homage.’ Ex Urdu koi hai, ‘Is anyone there?’ —in India a summons to a servant. Yule & Burnell, who cf. (Bombay) duck and mull, q.v.—2. In the Regular Army, quihi is used (mid-C. 19–20) in its lit. sense, B. & P.

quip tuck. * qui-tam, qui-tam, qui-tam. A solicitor that seeks such a conviction that the resultant penalty goes half to the informer (i.e. the lawyer himself), half to the Crown: also adj., as in Moncrieff, 1843, ‘The qui-tam lawyer, the quack doctor’; qui tam, as n., app. recorded first in this sense in H., 3rd ed., 1864; in C. 20, ob. except as legal a.—2. The adj., however, figures also in the earlier qui-tam horse, ‘one that will both carry and draw’, Grose, 3rd ed.: legal, † by 1860. Ex the legal solution so named: L., ‘who as well’. —3. But qui tam, an informer, occurs as early as 1816 in ‘Quiz’s’ Grand Master (O.E.D.): coll.

Quible Queer, Sir. See Queer, Sir Quibble.

quick and nimble; more like a bear than a squirrel. A c. addressed to one moving slowly when speed is required: C. 18–mid-19. ‘Proverbs’ Fuller, 1732; Grose, 2nd ed.


quick stick(s). Rapidly; hurriedly. Esp. in the s. phrase, cut quick sticks, to start or depart thus (cf. cut off one’s stick, q.v.): coll.: from ca. 1860. H. 2nd ed. Or quick stick roll (Roll Boldwood, 1890). The first phrase and the last occur also in various diall.; E.D.D.

quiksee. See quicky.


quick(s)ely; occ. quicksee. The act of backing a horse at the result of a race is known: Glasgow sporting (—1934). Perhaps ex quick return on one’s money.—2. A fast bowler: cricketers’ coll.: 1934. P. G. H. Fender in several articles (e.g. on June 21) in The Evening News.

quiconque (loosely quicunque) vult. A very compliant girl (sexually): 1786, Grose; † by 1850. Also an Athenasian wench. Ex quiconque vult salus esse, Whosever will be saved, the opening words of the Athenasian Creed (O.E.D.).

*quis. A ghost? c. 1688, Shadwell; † by 1800. Perhaps L. quid, what?; for ‘the wherewithal’; cf. quids, q.v.—Hence, 2, a sovereign, or the sum of twenty shillings: low: C. 19–20.—3. A shilling, says Grose, 3rd ed., but this I believe to be an error.—4. As a pl. = quids, sovereigns or £, as in Dickens, 1857, ‘Take yer two quid to one’, adds the speaker, picking out a stout farmer.—5. See quids.—6. The female pudend: low: C. 19–20; ob.

‘quis est hoc? ‘hoc est quid.’ A late C. early 19th running c.p.: Grose, 3rd ed. As H. explains, the question is asked by one tapping the bulging cheek of another, who, exhibiting a chaw of tobacco, answers ‘hoc est quid’. Lit., ‘What is this? This is a quid [of tobacco].’


quid to a blaster, (it’s a). (It’s a certain bet: low urban (—1905); slightly ob. Ware.

quidding, vb.n. The chewing of tobacco: Convey training ship (—1900). John Masefield’s history thereof, 1933.

quiddle. ‘Custard, or any sauce for pudding’: Bootham School: C. 20. Perhaps cf. equid.—2. To spit: id.: † by 1925, says the anon. Dict. of Bootham Slang of that date.


Diminutive of quid, 2.—2. In pl. =*

quids. Money, or rather cash, in gen.: late C. 17–20 (ob.): c. >, ca. 1750, low s. B.E. (quidds); Moore, 1819, ‘If quids should be wanting, to make the match good.’ Ex quid, 4.

quids, tip the. To spend money: c. : late C. 17–


quien. A dog: low († orig. c.): mid-C. 19–20; ob. Reade, 1861, ‘Curse these quins,’ said he. Origin obscure, but obviously cognate with L. canis, Fr. chien, a dog. Perhaps ex Northern Fr. dial.

quier. See queer, adj., 1.

quiet, on the. Quietly, unobtrusively, secretly: a. >, ca. 1910, coll.: 1860, H. 2nd ed. Whence g.l. on the, q.v.

quiet as a wasp in one’s nose, (as). Uneasy, restless: coll.: 1670, Ray; ob.

quiff. ‘A satisfactory result: spec. an end obtained by means not strictly conventional’, F. & H.: low: from ca. 1875; ob. Esp. as in F. & Gibbons (C. 20 senses): ‘Any specially ingenious, smart, tricky, or novel or improvised way of doing anything’ (naval); ‘in the Army . . . any drill method peculiar to a battalion’. Ex dial. quiff, a dodge or trick, a knack, a ‘wrinkle’ (E.D.D.).—2. Whence, an idea, fancy, movement, suggestion: Anglo-Indian (—1909). Ware.—3. As an oiled lock of hair plastered on forehead, the S.O.D. considers it S.E., W. as, orig. East End of London. Perhaps ex It. cuffia; cognate with conf. F. & H., 1902 (first record), says ‘military’; Ware states it at 1890.

quiff, v.i. To copulate: C. 18–20 (very ob.); low. D’Urfe, ‘By quiffing with Cullies, three Pound she had got’; Grose, 2nd ed., gives as quiffing, copulation. Not in O.E.D.; origin problematic.—2. V.i., to do well; jog along nicely, merrily; from ca. 1870. Prob. ex the dial. n. quiff (see quiff, n. 1); cf. of:


Ex quiff, n. 1.

quiff in the press. To move a breast pocket to the other side: tailors: from ca. 1870. Cf. the Somersetshire dial. use (E.D.D.).

quiff tack. Materials for cleaning harness
QUIFF THE BLADDER

**equipment**: military: from ca. 1910. F. & Gibbons. Ex *quiff*, adj.

**quiff the bladder.** To conceal baldness: low: from ca. 1870. Lit., to coif the bladder-resembling head; more prob.—cf. *quiff*, n.,—ex dial. *quiff*, a dodge, a trick.

**quilling.** See *quiff*, v., 1.

**quills.** Maneuvres: military: late C. 19-20; virtually †. *Wedra*. Ex *quif*, n., 1 or 2.

**quill.** To curry favour: Winchester College: C. 19-20. Perhaps ex *jump in quill*, to act in harmony, and in *a* or the *quill*, in concert. Cf. *quilled*.

**quill, brother—knight—of the.** See *brother and knight*.

**quill, driver a.** See drive a *quill*.


**quim.** The female pudend: a vulg.: C. 17-20. Variants, *gueme, guim-box, guimseyq, guiss, guis*, all † except the second, itself ob. Grose, 2nd ed., suggests ex 5p, *guemar*, to burn.—Hence such C. 19-20 compounds as *guim-bush, -baskets, -weep, the female public hair;* *quats or -wedge, the penis; *gu-stick, a whoremonger: *qu-sticking or -wedging, and quim- ming, sexual intercourse.

**quimety, quin.** See *quin*.


**quincentenary.** Incorrect for *quingentenary*; late C. 19-20. O.E.D. See also *quin*.


**Quins, the.** The Dние quintuplets of Canada; born May 28, 1934: coll., mainly journalists'. Cf. the *Quade*, the English quadruplets born in 1935.

**quinsey, choked by a hempen.** Hanged: C. 16-early 19. Grose, 2nd ed.

**quin-†.** Wrongly used in combinations instead of *quinque-*, as in *quinquangular* (1787), *quinlagnerian* (1844), for *quinquagenarian* (1843), *quinennial* (1871) for *quinquennial*. Likewise, quint- is incorrect for *quinque*-: late C. 17-20. O.E.D.

**quire.** See *quar*, adj., 1


**quirken.** See *quarken hall*.

**quirkism.** A puzzle: Scots: late C. 18-19.

"(A cant term *in Jamieson* = a.)

**quis?** Who wants some t?: Public Schoolboys: mid-C. 19-20. The answer is *quo* / Collinson. Direct ex Latin.

**quisby.** An idler: 1837 (O.E.D.); † by 1920. Desmond, *Stage Sleuth*, 'That old quisby has certainly contrived to slip out of the house.' † ex *guis*, an eccentric.—2. See *quisby*, do.

**quisby, adj.** Bankrupt, 1853; out of sorts, 1854; queer, not quite right, 1887, *Punch*, July 30, 'Arter this things appeared to go quisby.' † ex *guis*, an eccentric, or ex *quisby*, q.v.

**quisby, do.** To idle: 1861, Mayhew. Ob. See *quisby*, n.


**quit, to leave off in a very lazy or a cowardly manner, and quitter, a shirker, are C. 20 coll. ex U.S. Ultimately ex S.E. *quit*, to cease doing something (in C. 20 U.S.), or ex Anglo-Irish *quit*, to 'clear out'—as in *Drink-allia*—early 19, 'Quit this mints,' cited by E.D.D.

**quillam.** See *qui tam*.

**quite?** quite so! Yes! no doubt? I agree: coll. from the mid-Nineties. Cf. Fr. *parfaitement* and our exactly and rather. (O.E.D. Sup.) The clergyman in Sutton Vane's excellent and most original play, *Outward Bound*, continually says *quite*!

**quite a stranger?** *See stranger*, qtn.

**quite too.** Too; esp. *quite too dull*, which Ware quotes in his introduction: orig. and mainly Society: from ca. 1905. Prob. on the earlier too too.


**quisset.** A release, discharge: late C. 16–early 17: prob. coll.Holinhed. † ex *quisit* est. O.E.D.

**quitter.** See *quit*.


**quiz, v.i. and t.** To watch; play the spy: o. from ca. 1890. Ex dial.

**quockwerdger.** A politician acting under an outsider's orders: political (—1859); † by 1887. H., 1st ed. (Introduction); Baumann. Ex dial. *quockwerdger*, a puppet on strings.

**quod or, never in C. 20, quad.** A prison: late C. 17-20; c until ca. 1780, then low s. B.E.; Fielding: *Tarras, Poemen*, 1804 (quad). Gen. in *quod*. Prob. ex *quadrangle*. Cf.:

**quod, v.** To imprison: from ca. 1810; o., ca. 1840, low s. Vaux, Tom Taylor. Ex n.

**quod-cove.** A turnkey: o. 1812, Vaux; † by 1910. Ex *quod*, n. Cf.:


**quoddled, adj.** In prison: low: from ca. 1820. Ex *quodded*, imprisoned. See *quod*, v.

**quodding dues are concerned.** It is a case of imprisonment: o. (—1812); † by 1890. Vaux.


**quoniam.** A drinking-cup of some kind: drinking s.: early C. 17. Healy, 1608, 'A Quoniam is a glass'—v. well known to *in Drunk-alia*—2. The female pudend: low: C. 17-18,—a learned pun, suggested by *quisin* (q.v.), on *L. quoniam*, whereas (all males desire it).


**quote.** A quotation: 1885.—2. A quotation—
Under R, F. & H. has the following ineligibles: S.E.:—rabbit, a pejorative, also a drinking-can, raffle; rack and manger, rack and ruin; rack off, to tell; racket, v. and (except as c.) n.; racketeer, racket(t)y; play racket and without racket; raft; raffle; raffling-shop; rag, a ragamuffin, a newspaper; rag-tag, rag-tag and bobtail; ragamuffin; rage, v., and ragerie; rag(e)man; ragout; raid the market; raillery; rain proverb; rainbow-chase; rainy day; raise, to rear; rake, rachell, rakehellion, rakeshame; rake, lean as a; rake and scrape, rake-down, rake in the pieces, better with a rake than a fork; rake-kennel and raker, scavenger; rally, in theatrical sense; ragamous; ramhead; rammiss; ramp, a and to wanton; rampage; rampager, rampaging, rampant; rampollion; ramrod, penis; ramshackle; randan; range, ranger, to whose, a whoremonger, or a highwayman; Rangers, military; rank, as intensive adj.;annel; ransack, ramshackle; rant, to talk big; etc.; corresponding ranter, ranting; raptipole; rap, n. and v., indicating quickly forcible or explosive action or speech, also a coin; rapparee; rapper, a lie (but see entry), and rapping, great or very; rapscallion; raree-show(man); raceal; rat, a renegade; like a drowned rat and smell a rat; ratten, rattened, rattier, rattling, ratte; rattle, a dice-box, a clamour, a scolding, a lively talker; and the death-rattle; rattle, to confuse or irritate; rattle-baby; rattle-bag, etc.; rattle down and up; rattled, confused; rattler, constant talker, a smart blow, a snape, anything of notable size or value; rattling, brisk, lively, and as adv. before e.g. good; rattle-trap, n. and adj., (anything) broken down, curiously mechanical; raw, a novice, anything raw, a tender point; the corresponding adj.; raw-flesh or -head, a spectre; ready, prepared, and ready-money; reckon and reckon up; record, beat or cut or lower the; recreant; red, a republican; all red combinations and phrases not hereinunder; red-tape; -taper, -taperism, -tapist; reefer (jacket); reeling; reel, off the, and reel-off, reel-pot; reflector; refresher, a fee; a regular (visitor, etc.); relieve; remainder; remedy at Winchester School; renovator; repartee; reptile, n. and adj.; Republican; respectable; respond; Responses; resty; respec-tation-man or -woman, and resurrectionist; revel-dash, -dout; revenge; reviver (tailor); reward; rex, play; rib; ribald, etc.; rib-roasting; rich face; ride phrases not hereinunder; rider, coin and 'commercial'; riff-raff, etc.; riggiall; all right combinations and phrases not listed separately; rigol; a ring (boxing, racing, etc.); ring, come on the; ring the changes; riotous living; ripple, ready; rip(pon) and its phrases not done separately; rivets, v.; road to heaven or paradise; roadster; roarer, roaring; roaring bucks, drunk, and Mag; roast proverbs; roaster; rob-altar and -pot and -thief; robe, gentleman of the; robbery, exchange is no; Robin Hood terms, etc., not de-
tailed; rock and phrases, etc., not listed separately; rooker; rod; rodomontade; rogerian; rogue, etc., if not separately; roister; Roland for an Oliver; roll combinations and phrases not done hereinunder; roller as go-cart and wave; roley; romance, n. and v.; Romany, etc. (but see note); rock, etc., where not defined; room, leave the; roo(om)below; roost, etc., if not defined; rope, id.; rosary, the coin; rosin, to drink; rosy; and racy about the gills; rouge at Ekton; rough, etc., where not separately; rough-and-tumble; adj.; rough music; rough-hod; round, etc., if not defined; rouse, rouser, rousing; rout, rout about; rout; rove, rover; row in the same boat and row to hoe, a hard; rowdy, etc., where not defined; royster; R's, the three; rub, etc., where not done separately; rubber; rubicon (at cords; n. and v.); ruby and ruck, etc., if not listed; rubashy; rug-goun(ed), -headed; riff; ruffian, etc., where not listed; ruffier, id.; ruffity-tuffy; rug (liquor; tug); rug; rule of thumb; rum-blossom or -bud; rumbling; rumkin; rump, etc., if not separately; run, id.; runabout, runner, runner-up, running; runt; rural; rush, etc., where not defined; rustic and rusticate; rusty-fusty-dusty; rutish; ru
ter. Dial. are these—ramgumption; rannock; randy, n.; randy-dandy; rap, in a; rattler, a sound scolding; rick-ma-tick; rid the stomach; ridiculous; riners; roaring game; router; rudge (= rug, esp. in rug-gown); rumgumpions.

**r.** Intrusive after another r, or as 'Upper rousemair, ain't you, at St. Jimes's Palace?'; W. Pett Ridge, 1888, in his Cockney novel, Mort's Forty: mostly Cockney: C.19-20 (3 from earlier).—2. r More gen. written or /; mostly Cockney: (? late) C.19-20. Manchon suggests that it is an abbr. of right/, certainly 1; more prob. = ah/, i.e. ah, yes /—3. *r* for *-r* (as in *star*) is Cockney: since when?

r.i.p. (or R.I.P.), let him, her, it, etc. Let him, her, etc., rip; i.e. don't bother about him, her, etc. late C.19-20. Ex the abbr. of requsitab in peace, on tombstones. Cf. rip, i.e. let him, her, q.v.


R.O. See relieving officer.


rabbit. A new-born babe, mostly in rabbit-catcher, a midwife: low; ca. 1780-1860. Gross, 1785. —2. Political (ob.) as in report of the House of Commons Election Commission, 1896, 'Out of £200 ... he had paid a number of rooks and rabbits ... In general ... "the rabbits were to work in the burrow and the rooks to make a noise at the public meetings."—3. A rabbit, as a horse that

rabbi, v. In imprecatory, it = confounded, as in Fielding's "Rabbi the fellow!" cries he, 1742, and Smollet's 'Rabbi it! I have forgot the degree,' in the same decade. Cf. drobbl (—1757), and od(d) rabbit: q.v. The O.E.D. considers rabbit an alteration of rat in od rat, drat; F. & H.'s rot it won't fit'.

rabbit or rabbits, buy the. To have the worst of a bargain; to be a dupe: orig. (1825) U.S.; anglicised ca. 1850; very ob. Cf. the C. 16 word, who will change a rabbit for a rat?

rabbit, fat and lean like at. A mid.C.-lateearly 19th century. Explained in Swift's Polite Conversation, Dialogue 1: I am like a Rabbit, fat and lean in Four-and-twenty Hours,' a rabbit responding very promptly to food.

rabbit, live. The male member: low: ca. 19-20; ob. Whence skin the live rabbit or have a bit of rabbit-pie, tocott: cf. rabbit-pie.

rabbit, run the. 'To convey liquor from a public-house'; C. J. Dennis: low Australian (—1910). Why?

rabbit-catcher. See rabbit, n. 1.

rabbit dies, I hope your. See hope ... A variant is may your rabbit die /

rabbit-hunting—or (a) coney-catching—with a dead ferret, go. To undertake something with unsuitable or useless means: coll.: ca. 1870-1920. Ray; Fuller, 1732.

rabbit-pie: A harlot: low; mid.C.-19-20; ob. Ex rabbit, live, q.v. also for phrase.

rabbit-pie shifter. A policeman: low London: ca. 1870-1920. Barrere & Leland quote a music-hall song of ca. 1870, 'Never to take notice of vulgar nicknames, such as "alp", "copper", "rabbit-pie shifter", "peeler"."

rabbit-skin; ooc. cat-skin. An academical hood: university: from ca. 1850; ob. Cf.: rabbit-skin, get one's. To obtain the B.A. degree; university: ca. 1850; ob. Ex preceding; the trimming is of rabbit's fur.


rabbits out of the wood I, it's. It's 'splendid' or sheer profit or a windfall: racing c.p. (—1932).

See Slang, p. 245, note 15.


rabble. Fun of any sort; as v.i., to 'rag'; Bootham School: C. 20. Anon., Dict. of Bootham Slang, 1925.


race-card, the. The morning sick-report: jocu-

lar military: F. & G.; ob. F. & Gibbons. The odds are heavily against the 'entrants'.

Rachel or rachel, v. To rejuvenate; renovate: ca. 1890-5. Ex Madame Rachel, the 'beautiful for ever' swindler. (The C. 20 is kinder to such impositions.)


dack off. To make water: low coll.; late C. 19-20; ob. Ex wine-making.


racknack. A 'gormagun', q.v.: ca. 1786-1850.

Grose, 3rd ed.

rackabimus. 'A sudden or unexpected stroke or fall', Jamieson, who adds that 'It resembles racket': Scots: late C. 18-19.

racket. A dodge, trick; plan; 'line', occupation, esp. if these are criminal or 'shady': o. (—1812) >, ca. 1850, low s. >, ca. 1930, gen. s.; it now verges on coll. Vaux. Ex racket, noise, disturbance.—2. Esp. as in be a racket, be privy to an illicit design, and as set forth in Egan's Grose, 1823, 'Some particular kinds of fraud and robbery are so termed, when called by their flash'—i.e. underworld—names; as the Letter-racket; the Order-racket ... In fact, any game'—i.e., illicit occupation or trick—may be termed a racket ... by prefixing thereto the particular branch of depredation or fraud in question.' Whence the various U.S. 'racketas': see esp. Irwin. Cf. racket-man.—3. See racquet.

racket, stand the. To take the blame for one's gang: o. (—1823) >, by 1850, s. >, by 1900, coll. 'Jon Bee.'—2. Hence, to pay the bill, stand the expense: late C. 19-20: s. >, by 1930, coll.


racket is ... incorrect ... [The implement used in lawn tennis] is spelt 'racket' in all the official books of the various associations, and nearly all the authorities from the early days up to the present time spell it thus. In some mysterious way it has got mixed up with the French spelling 'raquette', Sir Gordon Lowe, May, 1935, in Love's Lawn Tennis Annual (1935).

rad. A Radical: political a., in C. 20 coll.: 1831, The Lincoln Herald, Jan. 7 (O.K.). Disraeli in Comingosby, 'They say the Rads are going to throw us over.'—2. A radiot: servants': from ca. 1900. Francis E. Brett Young, White Ladies, 1935, 'The rads are stone-cold.'


raf or Ralph. A pawn-ticket: low; esp. at
Norwich: from ca. 1860; ob. H., 2nd ed.
Rafferty rules. No rules at all, esp. as applied to
boxing—M.Q. (and Rafferty) rules is the heading of
a boxing section in The Sydney Bulletin of 1935—
hence to a 'rough house'; according to Rafferty
rules, without rule or restraint or, in politics,
honour: Australian coll. (—1914). Ex dial.
raffatory, raffatory, raffactory: refractory (E.D.D.).
Raffish. Anomalous with the Royal Aircraft
Punning S.E. raffish.
raff-teaoffin. A ruffian, lit. a resurrectionist:
C. 19 low coll. Corruption of rifle-teoffin.
raffs. 'An appellation given by the groomsman
of the university of Oxford to the inhabitants of
that place', Grose, 1785: coll.: ca. 1780—1920.
Cf. riff-raff.
rag. (See the S.E. list at beginning of R.—) 2.
A farthing: o., ca. 1690—1890; B.E.: Egan's
Grose. Because of so little value.—3. A bank-note:
1811, Lex. Bal., which proves that rag also = bank-
notes collectively.—4. Hence, money in gen.: from
till C. 20, then S.E. Kipling, 1892. Cf. rag, order of
the, q.v.—6. The curtain: theatrical and show-
men's: from ca. 1875.—7. Hence, a dénouement,
a 'curtain': id.: from ca. 1890.—8. A street
mender: circus: 1875, The Athenæum, April 24—
9. See rag, order of the.—10. The tongue: from
cam. 1825. Ex rag, red, q.v.—11. Talk; banter,
abuse: from ca. 1880. Gen. ragging. Cf.—
12. A jollification, esp. and origin. an undergraduates'
display of noisy, disorderly conduct and great high
spirits, considered by the perpetrators as excellent
fun and by many outsiders as a 'bloody nuisance':
university >, ca. 1910, very common in the Army
and Navy; by 1930, pretty gen.: 1892, The Isis,
'The College is preparing for a good old rag
tonight,' O.E.D.; The Daily Mail, March 10, 1900.
'There was keen excitement at Cambridge yesterday
when the magistrates proceeded to deal with the
last two prosecutions of students arising out of the
notorious rag in celebration of the relief of Lady-
smith'; but in existence from ca. 1880 (O.E.D.
Sup.). Ex the S.E. v., to annoy, tease.—13. See Rag,
the, three senses.—14. See rags.
rag. v.t. To question vigorously or jocu-
larly; waylay, or assail, roughly and noisily; to
create a disturbance, hold a 'rag' (see n., 12):
university: The Isis, 1896, 'The difficulty of
"ragging" with impunity has long been felt,'
O.E.D.; but implied by Baumann in 1887 and.
in the first nuance, recorded by O.E.D. (Sup.)
for 1891. Perhaps abbr. of bully-rag. Origin: see
rag, n., 12.—2. Hence, to wreck, make a mess of,
by way of rag. Public School: 1904, P. G. Wode-
house, The Gold Bat, 'Mills is awfully barred
in Seymour’s. Anybody might have ragged his study.'
In c. (mainly of Norwich) to divide (esp. plunder):
1860, H., 2nd ed. Prob. ex. or at the least cognate
with the, t S.E. sense, to tear in pieces. Also go
rags.
rag, chew the. To scold, complain; sulk or
brood: low and military, 1888. Ex rag, tongue.
rag, dish of red. Abuse: low: from ca. 1820;
ob. Egan, of the Turf. She tipped the party
such a dish of red rag as almost to create a
riot in the street.' See rag, red.
rag, have two shirts and a. To be comfortably
off: coll.: ca. 1870—1800. Rey.
rag-seeker. See rag-seeker.

rag-shop. See rag-box. 2. See rag-and-bone shop. — 3. A bank: or. or low s. : 1860, H., 2nd ed. ; ob. whence:

rag-shop bon or cove. A banker : from ca. 1865 ; ob. — 2. See:


rag-seeker, com. — seeker. C. as in Anon.'s 'The Trump Exposed', 1878. 'The ragsucker, an instrument attached to the end of a long pole for removing clothes-pins from the lines, and afterwards dragging the released clothes over the fence.' Cf. *angler.


rag-stabbler. A tailor ; from ca. 1870. ob. Also stab-rag, q.v. Cf. snip, q.v.

rag-stick. An umbrella, esp. if 'loose and unreefed' ; lower classes ( 1909. Ware.


rag-time girl. A sweetheart ; a girl with whom one has a joyous time ; a harlot : all, from 1901 or 1902. Ex rag-time (music) = jazz. Cf. jazz.


rag-wagon. A sailing-ship : steam or turbine, esp. if Australian (or American) : seamens' protective : from ca. 1910. Bowen. I.e. rag, set of sails. rag-water. Any inferior spirits : late C. 17-early 18. B.E. — 2. Esp. gin : ca. 1780-1860. Grose, 2nd ed. ; these liquors seldom failing to reduce those that drink *such spirits* to rags ; which is not an etymology but a pun.

ragaboneshop. See rag-and-bone shop. 2.

rag, the. The fashion or vogue : 1785, The New Rseoided, 'Fis the rage in this great Raging Nation, | Who won'd live and not be in the fashion ?' Coll. till ca. 1860, then S.E. Cf. go.

ragger. An old, fierce 'bullock or cow that always begins to rage in the stable yard,' Morris : Australian coll. : 1884, 'Rolf Boldworth.'


ragged robin. A keeper's follower : New Forest a. or dial. : from ca. 1860. (Rare in singular.) ragged soph. See soph.

ratter. One given to 'ragging' (see rag, v. 1) schools ( — 1923. Manchon.

rattery. Clothes, esp. women's : coll. bordering on S.E. : very ob. Thackeray, 1855, 'Old rags ... draped in majestic raggery.' Cf. Fr. chiffon. raggie, raggy. A particular friend (ex. the sharing of brass-cleaning rags : Bowen) ; but gen. in pl., as be raggies, to be steady chums : naval ( — 1900). Ware implies that it is mildly pejorative.

raggy, adj. Annoyed, 'shirty' : 1900, G. Swift (O.E.D. Sup.). Ex rag out, get one's.

raging favourite. A coll. variant ( — 1887) of a hot favourite. Baumann.


rags, flash one's. To display, gen. ostentatiously, one's bank notes : low (? orig. c.) : from ca. 1860. rags, glad. See glad rags.

rags a gallop, tip one's. To move ; depart, esp. if hastily : low : 1870, Hazelwood & Williams, in Leave It to Me, 'I see ; told you to tip your rags a gallop, and you won't go.' Here tip = give.

rags and bones. The Salvage Corps ; a member thereof ; an officer in charge thereof : military : 1915 ; ob. F. & Gibbons.

rags and jags. Tatters : coll. : from ca. 1860. very ob. rags and sticks. A travelling outfit : showmen's and low theatrical : from ca. 1870. Hindley, 1870, 'Rags and sticks, as a theatrical booth is always termed.'

rah ! A coll. abbr. of hurrah ! : orig. and mainly U.S., anglicised ca. 1910. N.b., rah ! (shouted thrice) forms the termination of the Maori war-cry, now — and since late C. 19 — affected by Maori and other New Zealand Rugby teams.

rail-bird. A tout watcher of race-horses being exercised : sporting, esp. turf : from ca. 1890 : slightly ob. Ex his vantage-point on gate or hurdle. (Ware.)

railings, count the. To grow hungry : low : from ca. 1860 ; slightly ob. See also Spitalfields breakfast.

railly. Really : a sol. (or an ignorantly affected) pronunciation ( — 1887). Baumann.

railroading. See jarring.


rails, front. The teeth : low : C. 19-20 ; slightly ob. Also head-rails, q.v.

rails, off the. Not in normal or proper state or condition : 'morally or mentally astrey' : 1859, Gen. F. Thomson : coll. >, ca. 1910. S.E. Ex railway phraseology, (O.E.D.)


RAIN, GET OUT OF THE

rain, (know enough to) get out of the. To (be shrewd enough to) look after oneself, e.g. to refrain from meddling: to be common-sensical: coll.: 1848, Durivage, 'Ham was one of 'em—he was. He knew sufficient to get out of the rain': but anticipated by H. Buttes in 1599: 'Foolos . . . have the wit to keep themselves out of the rain' (O.E.D.). In Australasia, to keep out of the rain (C. J. Dennis): cf. U.S. go in when it rains. —2. Hence, get out of the 'rain', to absent oneself when there's likely to be trouble (Lyell): coll.: C. 20.

rain, right as. See right as . . .


rainbow. A discoloured bruise: from ca. 1810; ob. (O.E.D.) An excellent example of what G. K. Chesterton well names the poetry of slang.—2. A torrent: ca. 1890-90. Egan, Life in London, 1821, 'The pink of the ton and his rainbow.' Because dressed in a variety of colours.—3. A footman: from ca. 1820; very ob. Egan, ibid., 'It was the custom of Logic never to permit the Rainbow to announce him.' Abbr. rainbow, knight of the, q.v.—4. A pattern-book: ca. 1820—60. Egan, ibid. Ex the variety of colours.—5. A sovereign: costers: from ca. 1860; ob. Perhaps suggested by rhino: for rainbow is in Costerese pronounced rinebo; perhaps, however, ex rainbow as a sign of better weather—as a sovereign is of better times.—6. A post-Armistice reinforcement or recruit: military: late 1918—19. F. & Gibbons, 'As arriving after the storm was over'.


rain, the. The rainy season: Anglo-Indian coll. (in C. 20, S.E.): 1816, Sir T. Roe. Yule & Burnell. Rainy Day Smith, J. T. Smith (1766—1833): from 1815, when his fascinating Book for a Rainy Day was published; it was reprinted, with excellent notes by 'John o London' (W. Whittam).

raise. A rise in salary: coll.: late C. 19—20. Ex U.S. sense, an(y) improvement (1728: O.E.D. Sup.).

raise, v.i. To rise: in late C. 19—20 ranked as sol. 'The ball didn't raise an inch.'

raise a barney. See rise a barney.—raise Cain. See Cain.


Rahaj, the. The Mogul (place of entertainment): Drury Lane district: ca. 1850—80. Ware.

rake. A comb: jocular: from ca. 1860. Also, garden-rake and: ca. 1840—60, rake: low: says Ware.


rake out. To coit with (a woman): low: C. 19—20.

rake the pot. To take the stakes: racing: from ca. 1825. See pot, n. 1.

raked fore and aft. Desperately in love: naval: late C. 19—20. Ex damage done by well-directed shelling. (Ware.)


rakes, carry heavy. To swagger: put on 'side': C. 17 coll. Terence in English, 1614.

raking. See rake, v.

ral, the. The admiral: naval (—1909). Ware.


Ralph, ralph. See rafe.—2. In printers' s., from ca. 1860, ob. by 1930, 'The supposed author of the bricks played upon a recalectant member of a chapel (q.v.)', F. & H.


ram. To coit with (a woman): low: C. 19—20. Cf. poke and ride.—2. V.t., to get (a boy) off a punishment: Shrewsbury School: from ca. 1880. (D. Coke, The Bending of a Twig, 1906.)

ram and dam(n). A muzzle-loading gun: jocular coll.: 1866; ob. (O.E.D.)

ram boose. See ram booz.


ram-jam, v. To stuff (esp. with food): from ca. 1885. Ex.

ram-jam full. Packed absolutely full: dial. and (mostly U.S.) s.: 1879, Waugh. O.E.D.


ram-rodd. A ball bowled along the ground: Winchester School: from ca. 1840. (Also ray- monder.) Mansfield. Ex the straightness of its flight'.

Ramasamy or r. A Hindu: Southern India. An Indian coole in Ceylon: Ceylon. This coll. (—1886) is a corruption of Ramaswami, a frequent Hindu surname in Southern India. Yule & Burnell. —2. Hence, in Natal and the Cape, this word is used as a generic name for Indian cooles', Pottmann, Afrikanerisms, 1913.

rambouge. 'A severe brush of labour', Jamieson: Scots: late C. 18—mid-19. This ram is the dial. prefix = strong; very. Cf.: rambustious, rambungum. See rambustious, rambungum. (Cf. U.S. rambunctious, 1854. Thornton.)

ramfees. Exhausted, worn out: mostly dial, whence, ca. 1890—1910, coll.

ramiram. Incorrect for ramican, ramadan: C. 19—20. O.E.D.

ramjollock. To shuffle (cards): C. 19. 9 lit.
RANGERS, THE


*ramp, n. a. : late C 18-20 ; ob. Crow, 2nd ed.


ram's, adj. and adv. Ramps(t)y; lower classescoll. (—1887). Baumann has ramping mad.

ram, n. 1 and 2.

ramps, the. A brothel: Regular Army's: late C 19-20. B. & P. Perhaps ex rampant or on the rampage.


Rams, the. The Derby County 'soccer' team: sporting: late C 19-20. Ex the famous breed of Derbyshire rams.


ran-cat cove. See ram-cat.—ran-tan, on the. See rantan.


Randall's-man or randleman. A green handkerchief white-spotted: pugilistic (—1839); ob. Ex the colours of Jack Randall, the famous early C. 19 boxer. (Brandon.)

randan. See rantan.


randle. 'A set of nonsense verses, repeated in Ireland by school boys, and young people, who have been guilty of breaking wind backwards, before any of their companions if they neglect this apology, they are liable to certain kicks, pinches, and fillips, which are accompanied with diverse admonitory couplets,' Grose, 1785; ob. by 1880, † by 1930. Whence: randle, v. To punish (a schoolboy) for breaking wind: C. 19. Halliwell. Ex preceding.—2. See randleing which is much commoner than the v. proper.

randleman. See Randall's-man.

randleing. The punishment, by hair-pulling, of an apprentice refusing to join his fellows in taking a holiday: mostly at Birkenhead: 1879, Notes and Queries. Ob.

random. See random-tandem.


ranny Richard. See Richard, 2.

ran-dyvoo. A tavern that is the resort of recruiting sergeants: military (—1809). Ware.—2. Hence, noise, and wrangling: mostly military (—1809). Ware. Ex render-vow.

ranger. The penis: low: C. 18-20. Ex range, to be inconstant.—2. See Atlantic ranger.

Rangers, the. The Connaught Rangers: military coll. (C. 19), now S.E. (F. & Gibbons.)
RANGING, n. 'Intriguing, enjoying many Women' is S.E.: not, as B.E. says, c.
rank and riches; or hyphenated. Breeches: rhyming s.: 1887, *Jacobin* Sims.
rank and smell. A common person: lower classes: ca. 1870–1905. Ware. Punning rank, smelly and (high) rank + 'swell'.
rantarium. 'One whose scrotum is so relaxed as to be longer than his penis', Grose, 1st ed.: low: ca. 1780–1850. Cognate with, perhaps even a blend of, rantipole and *rapscallion*, so closely related to each other in meaning.
rant; ran-tan. Also randan. A spree: from ca. 1710; coll. > in C. 19, S.E. except as in the next entry; by itself, randan (etc.) is extremely ob. & ex at random.—2. Hence, a riotous person: coll. soon > S.E.: 1809; ob. by 1890, ↑ by 1920. (O.E.D.)
rantan, on the. On the spree; drunk: coll.: from ca. 1760; slightly ob.; since 1865, gen. in the form, on the rantan. See preceding.
rantipole, ride. Same as ride St George (see riding . . .). Low: late C. 19–18. Grose, 2nd ed.
rantum-scantum. Copulation, esp. in play at r.-a. (Grose, 2nd ed.): low: mid-C. 18–early 19. ↑ a rhyming combination ex S.E. rant, to be boisterous or sublunary; cognate with rantipole.—2. A wordy and mutual recrimination: low: ca. 1820–95. 'Jon Bee': Baumann.
Ranzo. 'A native of the Azores, from the number named Alonzo who shipped in the whalers, where "Rueben [sic] Ranzo" was a favourite shanty': nautical coll.: mid-C. 19–20. Bowen.
rap, n. See rap, on the, and rap, take the.—3. A charge; a case: c. c. 20. James Curtis, *The Gift Kid*, 1906: 'it is as if they did not do [arrest] him on this murder rap.'
rap, v.t. To barter: a 'swap': late C. 17–20; a. (↑ by 1850) and dial. B.E.; Grose, 1st ed. Perhaps ex ob. S.E. sense, to transport, remove.—2. V.i., to take a false oath: c.: from ca. 1740; ↑ by 1890. Fielding, in *Jonathan Wild*, 'He [is] a pitiful fellow who would stick at a little rapping for a friend': Id., *Amelia*, I, ch. X, the footnote establishing the c. origin. Grose, 2nd ed. Perhaps ex rap (out) an oath.—3. Also, v.t., to swear (something, against a person): 1733, Budgell, 'He saak'd me what they had to rap against me, I told him only a Tankaard.' O.E.D.—4. To knock out; to kill: c., esp. Australian > low a.: 1888, Rolf Boldrewood, *If he tries to draw a weapon, or move ever so little, he's rapped at that second*; ob. Ex Scoot rap, 'to knock heavily; to strike', E.D.D.
rap, not care a. To care not at all: 1834: coll. > in, ca. 1850, S.E. Ex rap, an Irish counterfeit halfpenny.
rap on the. On a bout of dissipation; slightly drunk: low (—1803). Milliken, 'The way the passengers stared at me showed I was fair on the rap.'
rap, take the. To be (punished or) imprisoned, esp. for another: orig. (late C. 19 or first decade of C. 20), U.S.; anglicised ca. 1920: low a. verging on c.
rapper, an arrant lie: S.E., declares O.E.D.; coll., F. & H. Arising early in C. 17, this sense is prob. best considered as coll. until ca. 1860, then S.E.; in C. 20, it is most probably due to Grose, P.]
rare. Excellent, fine, splendid, as applied to comparatively trivial objects; often ironically. Coll.: 1596, Shakespeare, 'Master Bassanio, who indeed gives rare new livres': 1878, Mrs. Henry Wood, 'Guy will about die of it . . . Rare fun if he does.'—2. As an intensive: coll.: 1893, Harriet Martineau, 'They put me in a rare passion.' (Both senses, O.E.D.) Cf.
— and (another adj.) A coll. intensive: 1848, Mrs. Gaskell, 'We got a good supper, and grew rare and sleepy', O.E.D.; slightly ob. except in Northern dial.
rabbit, Welsh. Welsh rabbit: this sol. would seem to have been inaugurated by Grose in 1785: 'A Welsh rabbit, bread and cheese toasted, i.e. a Welsh rare bit.' With Welsh rabbit cf. Bombay duck; for alteration, cf. catsup for ketchup. (W.)
rarely or ever. Almost never: a catachresis caused by a confusion of rarely if ever and rarely or never: 1768, Anon., 'But those schemes . . . rarely or ever answer the end.' O.E.D.
rarified. A frequent error for rared.
rascal. 'A man without genitals', Grose, 1785; low: ca. 1750–1850. Ex deer.
rasher of wind. A very thin person: from ca. 1850; sligtly ob. Cf. yard of pump-water.—1. Any person or thing of negligible account: from ca. 1890. *The Daily Telegraph*, April 7, 1899, 'Let's 'em howl, an' sweat, an' die, an' goes on all the time, as if they was jest rashers o' wind'.
rasp, v.i. and t. To colt (with): low: C. 19–20; ob. Rare compared with:
do a. To colt: low: C. 19–20. Gen. of the male: for semantics, see pucker-water, which not only astrignes but roughens and hardens.
rasp, get the. A variant of berry, get the.
Raspberries, the. The King's Royal Rifle Corps: military: late C. 19–20. F. & Gibbons. Ex the colour of their (former) facings.

raspberry, get or give the. To 'get the bird,' i.e., to hit a bird; to 'his' theatrical: late C. 19–20. Mainly and apparently when the disapproval is shown by a raspberry, 1.

raspberry, old. See old raspberry.


rasper. A difficult high fence: hunting s. (1812) > ca. 1840. j. > ca. 1870, S.E. (O.ED.). Ainsworth, 1834, 'A stiff fence, captain—a reg'lar rasper.' —2. 'A person or thing of sharp, harsh, or unpleasant character': 1839, Dickens, 'He's what you may call a rasper, is Nickleby.' O.ED.—3. Anything that, in its own way, is extraordinary; e.g. a large profit on the Stock Exchange: from ca. 1860.—4. In cricket, a ball that, on leaving the bat, glides 'fairly' along the ground (e.g. from a slashing stroke by McCabe): from not later than 1910. Cf. rasping shorter. *raspin', the. A house of correction: a gaol: c. early C. 19. J. lit., the unpleasant thing, perhaps a pun on grating, adj., and gratings, n. Cf. the † Scots raspy-house, as in Scott, 1818 (E.D.D.).

rasping. (High and) difficult to jump: 1829 (O.ED.); hunting coll.: ca. 1870, S.E. Dr J. Brown, 1868, 'You cannot . . . make him keep his seat over a rasping fence.' See rasper, 1.

*rasping gang. The mob of roughs and thieves who attend prize-fights', H., 1864: c.: ob.

rasping shorter. The same as rasper (last sense), of which it is the earlier form: a cricketing coll. of ca. 1900–20. F. & H.
rasted, adj. and adv. 'Blasted', of which it is a euphemistic perversion: 1919, J. B. Morton (O.E.D. Sup.).

rat, v.t. To steal or rob; to search the body of (a dead man): military: 1914. F. & Gibbons.—2. See rat it.
rat it. 'To run away quickly', E.D.D.: Berkshire s. (—1903), not dial.

rat, do a. To change one's tactics: coll.: from ca. 1850. Ex S.E. rat, to desert.
rat, smell a. See smell a rat.
rat back-clip. Short hair: lower classes': ca. 1856–1900. Ware.
rat-catcher. Unconventional hunting dress: hunting people's (—1930). O.ED. (Sup.).
rat-firm, house, office, shop. A workshop, etc., where less than full union rates are paid: trades unions' coll. (—1889) >, in C. 20. S.E.
rat-hole. Too large a gap between printed words: printer's: from ca. 1870.

rat it!; rat me! See rat —rat-office. See rat-firm.
rat-shop. A shop or factory that employs non-union workers: lower classes': from ca. 1910. Manchon. See also rat-firm.
ratch. An incorrect form of † trootch: late C. 17. O.ED.

*ratepayers' hotel. A workhouse: tramps' c. (—1935). Workhouses are maintained out of the rates and taxes.
rather! (In replying to a question) I should think so: very decidedly: coll., orig. somewhat low: 1836, Dickens, 'Do you know the mayor's house?' inquired Mr Trot. "Rather," replied the boots, significantly, as if he had some good reason for remembering it.' Occ. rayther, from ca. 1860: very affected; ob. by 1905, † by 1920. Cf. the very genteel quite, q.v. Often emphasised as in Denis Mackail, Greenery Street, 1925, "Rather," said Ian enthusiastically, "Oh, rather!"

rats. A star: back s.: from ca. 1875. (Not very gen.) —2. See rats, get. —3. The rats, delirium tremens: from ca. 1865. Ex rats, (have or see, q.v. rats! A contemptuous retort = 'boosh'! (low) coll.: orig. U.S., but anglicised ca. 1891. 'Pomes' Marshall, 'One word, and that was Rats!' Prob. ex the following:

rats and mice. Dice: from ca. 1870. (P. P., Rhyming Slang, 1932.)
rats, get or have or see. To be out of sorts (rarely with see): 1865, E. Yates, "Well . . . old boy, how are you? . . . Not very brilliant . . . ." Ah, like me, get, rats, haven't you? —2. To be drunk; very drunk: from ca. 1865. Likewise ob., very ob. —3. (Rarely get or hate). To have delirium tremens: low: from ca. 1866.—4. Hence, (though not with get), to be eccentric: (low) coll.:
RAT, GIVE (ONE) GREEN

from ca. 1880.—5. Hence, from ca. 1885, to be crazy.

rats, give (one) green. To malign; slander: ca. 1890–1910. Perhaps ex rats: sick 'em up, a call to a dog . . . Perhaps not.


rats in the garret or loft or upper storey. Eccentric mad: from ca. 1890; ob. Prob. ex rats is the belfry and rats, get . . . 3, 4, 5.

rat's-tail. A writ: legal: from ca. 1870. † ex scroll on cover.

raises'. Rats', exp. in raises' holes: sol. (1887). Baumann.

ratitat. See ratut.


rattle, v. To move or walk quickly and/or noisily: s. and, from ca. 1850, dial.: late C. 17–20. Esp. in rattle away or off. B.E., we wrongly classifies as c.—2. (Also rattle on.) To strike (a person) in (the, e.g. ivories, teeth): c. (1823). Manchr.

rattle, be in the. To be a defaulter: naval: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. See rattle, n., 2.

rattle, spring the. (Of a policeman) to give the alarm: policemen's (1887); ob. Baumann.

*rattle, take. To depart hurriedly: c.: late C. 17–mid-18. B.E., 'We'll take Rattle . . . we must not tarry, but whip away': a quotation that may possibly premise rattle, a coach, as early as late C. 17; otherwise we must suppose that rattle, v., has been substantivised.

rattle, with a. With unexpected rapidity: turf (1–1909). Coll. (Ware.)

rattle and drive (or hyphenated). Scamped work: workmen's coll.: (1887). Baumann.

rattle-bag, devil's (Scots devil's). A bishop's summons: coll.: from ca. 1725; † by 1900. Scott.


*rattle on. See rattle, v., 2.

*rattle one's cash. To 'stump up': c. (1923). Manchr.


*rattler, mashe the. To travel, esp. on a train, without a ticket: c.: mid-C. 19–20. (Manchr.)


rattles, the. A or the death-rattle: (low) coll.: from ca. 1820.—2. (With the often omitted.) The crowd: somewhat coll.: C. 18–20.

rattletrap. The mouth: from ca. 1820. Scott. (O.E.D.)—2. A chatterbox: coll.: 1880, Anon., Life in a Debtor's Prison, 'You're as great a rattletrap as ever.' Both senses tend to be low; the former is somewhat ob.


raughty. See rorty.


raven. A 'small bit of bread and cheese': taverns (1909); ob. Ex the story of Elisha and the ravens. (Ware.)


raw recruit. A nip of undiluted spirits: from ca. 1860; very ob.

raw stock. Coll., from ca. 1925, as in 'Moving-Picture Slang', § 6; q.v.

raw uns or uns, the. The naked fiats: publilistic: 1887, The Daily News, Sept. 15, 'This encounter was without gloves, or, in the elegant language of the ring, with the raw uns'; 1891, Sporting Life, March 28, 'Even Jean Carney . . . has been obliged to abandon the raw-un's for gloves pure and simple.' Slightly ob. (Here, raw = unprotected or uncovered.)

ray. The sum of 1s. 6d.: c.: 1861, Mayhew. † ex or cognate with the already long-† S.E. ray, a small piece of gold or gold leaf.

ray-neck. 'A landman in a clipper packet's crew': nautical: mid-C. 19–20; ob. Bowen thinks that it may represent a corruption of rase-neck.

raymonder. See ram-rod—rayther. See rather.

Razar. Smith, the English right-hand slow bowler prominent ca. 1910–28; cricketers'.

razer, real. A defiant, quarrelsome, or bad-tempered scholar: Westminster School: from 1883; ob. Ware.

razor-strop. A copy of a writ: legal: from some date after 1822, when the lit. sense appears (O.E.D.).


razzle. Abbr. of razzle-dazzle, 2. Esp. in razzle, on the, on the spree.

razzle-dazzle. 'A new type of roundabout . . . which gives its occupants the . . . sensations of an excursion at sea', The Daily News, July 27, 1891 (O.E.D.); † by ca. 1915.—2. A frolic, a spree; riotous jollity: U.S. (1890, Gunter), anglicised ca. 1895, esp. in on the razzle-dazzle, after ca. 1920 gen. abbr. to on the razzle and gen. of a drunken spree. Binstead, More Gal's Gospel, 1901, 'Bank-holidays on the razzle-dazzle'. An echoic word expressive of rapid movement, bustle, active confusion, but orig., I think, a reduplication on dazzle as in Gunter's 'I'm going to razzle-dazzle the boys . . . with my great lightning change act,' 1890, in Miss Nobody.

ra
d

re, in the matter of, is considered rather low except in business letters (etc.) or when jocular. The full form of re is now ob.


reaching, excuse me. A lower-middle class e.p. uttered when one reaches for something at table: C. 20. Rather ob. Punning reaching.

read, v.i. Rarely v.t. To steal: c.: Anon., A Song, ca. 1819, 'And I my reading learnt betime, | From studying pocket-books, Sirs.' Ex reader, I, q.v.—2. To search (esp. a shirt) for lice: militarily: 1914; ob. F. & Gibbons. The shirt spread on one's knees resembled a newspaper being read in that position.


read between the lines. To discern the underlying fact or intention: from ca. 1855: coll. till C. 20, then S.E.
REAL JAM

when no commas intervenes (J. Fox, 1718, 'An Opportunity of doing a real good Office', O.E.D.).

real jam. A very delightful person or thing: a verging on coll.: 1876, Justin McCarthy, 'Real jam, I call her'; Punch, Jan. 3, 1885, 'Without real jam—oash and kisses—this world is a bittherish pill.' Earlier, a sporting phrase for anything exceptionally good: from ca. 1870. H., 6th ed.

real Kate. A kind matron: Clare Market, London: ca. 1882–1900. Ware. Ex Kate, the charitable queen of the market.

real live. See live, adj., 2.


real raspberry jam. The superlative of jam tart, a girl: low: ca. 1883–1915. Ware.

real thing, the. The genuine article (fig.): 1818, Lady Morgan, 'He is the real thing, and no mistake,' O.E.D.


ream-pennies, reckon (up) one's. To confess one's faults: coll.: ca. 1650–1700. Rey. Ex ream-penny, q.v.

rear, rear, the. The latrine: university: from ca. 1860. Cf.

rear, v. To visit the latrine; to defecate: from ca. 1890: university >, ca. 1905, gen. a. Ex rear, n. Cf.


rear-rank private. See lance-private.

rear-up. A noisy argument; a quarrel; a 'row': lower classes: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Ex:


reasew. The up-ending of a vehicle—the wheel(s) on one side going into a ditch, drain, etc.—so that the vehicle turns underside up: 1827 (O.E.D.); very ob.—2. A battleshore: Restoration period.

rebound, catch on the. To get engaged to a person after he or she has been refused by another: coll.: from ca. 1908. Ex lawn tennis. (Collinson.)

rec, the. The recreation ground: lower-class, esp. Cockneys' coll.: C. 20. Ernest Raymond, Market, 1931. Cf. Recker, the, q.v.


receipt of custom (or hyphenated). The female pudend: C. 19–20; ob. Cf. Grose's custom-houses goods, q.v. (Where Adam made the first entry.)


Recent Inclusion. The New Cut, properly Lower Marsh, a busy thoroughfare on the Surrey side of


Recker or Rekker, the. The town recreation-ground, where the School sports are held: Harrow: late C. 19–20. Oxford -er. Cf. rec, the, q.v.

reckernize. See reckonize.

reckoning, cast up one's. To vomit: low (= 1788): very ob. Grose, 2nd ed. More gen. cast up one's accounts.

reckoning, Dutch. A bill that, if disputed, grows larger; a sharing of the cost or the money, plunder, etc.: coll.: late C. 17–20; ob. Swift. See the paragraph on Dutch.

rec(k)onize or -ise. To recognise: sol. (1887), esp. Cockneys'. Baumann. Also reckernize.

reconnitre, v.i. To 'scrounge' (q.v.); military: 1910; ob. B. & P.

[record, a performance superior to all others of the same kind, dates from 1883 (O.E.D.); the S.O.D.—quite rightly, I feel sure—gives it as S.E.: The Times has always (?) spelt it with quotation marks, as though it considers it to be coll.]

record, smash the. To go one better: coll., esp. in athletics: from ca. 1890. Break, cut (?) lower the record are S.E.

Recordite, adj. and (gen. in pl.) n. (Of the Low Church Party of the Anglican Church; a Church coll.: 1854, Conybeare, Church Parties, for both adj. and n.; ob. Ex The Record, the party's official organ.


recourse. See resort.

[recrudescence. See Fowler.]

recruit, n. See recruits.—2. 'To get a fresh supply of money'; Grose, 1785; coll. Cf. the next two entries.

recruiting service. Robbery on the highway: ca. 1810–40: a verging on c. (Lex. Bal.) Ex:

*recruits. Money, esp. expected money: late C. 17–early 19 c. B.E., 'Have you raised the Recruits, ... is the Money come in?' Ex Army.

rector. 'A pokar kept for show: curate (q.v.) = the work-a-day iron; (3) the bottom half of a teacake or muffin (as getting more butter), the top half being the curate, and so forth', F. & H.: coll. from ca. 1860; ob.

[rector of the females. The penis: C. 17–20; ob. Either low coll. or, more prob., euphemistic S.E. Rochester.]

*red. A sovereign; c. or low (1923). Manch. Ex the adj.—2. See read.

*red. Made of gold; golden; C. 14–20: S.E. till C. 17, then c. See esp. red clock, kettle, one or 'un, rogue, stuff, tackle, toy.

red, paint the town. To have a riotously good time: U.S. (1880), anglicised ca. 1890 as a coll. Anon., Harry Pludger at Cambridge, 'Won't he paint the whole place red on Tuesday night!'

red. To be in, fly into, a rage: coll.: C. 20. Ex a bull's reaction to red.


red beard. (App.) A watchman or constable.
red incher. A red bull-ant: Australian children's: C. 20. Opp. black incher. (Some of these bull-ants are nearly an inch long.)
red ink, in. Having no pay forthcoming: naval: from ca. 1910. Ibid. Ex the notation in the ledger.
red keel. See red toy.
Red Knights, The. The 22nd Regiment (in late C. 19-20, the Cheshire Regt.): military: from 1795, when served with red clothes instead of their proper uniform. Ob. F. & Gibbons.
Red (or Scarlet) Lancers, the. The 18th (in C. 10, the Queen’s) Lancers: military: C. 19-20; very ob. They were the only lancers to wear a scarlet tunic.
red-liner. Ca. 1840-80, as in Mayhew’s London Labour, II, 564, ‘The Red Liners, as we calls the Modicity officers, who goes about in disguise as gentlemen, to take up poor boys caught begging’, i.e. putting red line under an offender’s name.
Red Lion Lane. See lane, 2.
red one. See red'un and cf. ruddock.
red petticoat shall pay for it, the less in the. See less in...
red ribbon. Brandy: ca. 1820-60. (Contrast red fustian.) Egan’s Grose.
red-sail (yard) docket. A buyer of ‘stores stolen out of the royal yards and docks’, Grose, 1st ed.: c. of ca. 1780-1840.
red tab. A staff officer: military: 1915; ob. F. & Gibbons. Cf. the more gen. brass hat...
REHOBOAM

red tackle. A gold chain: c. 1879, Macmillan's Magazine. "I touched for a red toy... and red tackle."


red tie. Vulgarity: Oxford University coll.: ca. 1876–1900. Ware.

red toy. A gold watch: c. 1870 (see quotation at red tackle).


red ‘un. The O.E.D. instances red ones in C. 16: prob. coll. But red ‘un is c.: from ca. 1860. Gen., a gold coin and usually a sovereign; occ. an object made of gold (Sims, in The Referee, Feb. 12, 1888); e.g. a gold watch: c. (–1864), as in H., 3rd ed. Cf. redding, q.v.


redge. See ridge. (Brandon; H., 1st ed.) [Reduplication is a common phenomenon of baby speech... esp. in imitative words (bawl-bawl, gee-gee), and in popular words formed either by rime (hurtly-hurtly, roly-poly) or by variation of original vowel (see-see, zig-zag), ‘in which last the fuller vowel is usually the original,’ W.]


red and blue. Blushed: coll. and dial.: C. 19–20.—2. The menues: mid-C. 16–20; S.E. till C. 18, then coll.: almost †.

redshank. See red shank.


redwip. Powder: back s.: from ca. 1890. Collinson.

redraw. See re-rav.


reef. ‘To draw up a dress-pocket until a purse is within reach of the fingers’, F. & H.: c.: from ca. 1860. Ex nautical S.E.

reef on, reef or two. To let out a. To undo a button or so, esp. after a meal: from ca. 1870: nautical > gen. Baumann.

reef taken in, need a. To be drunk: from ca. 1860: nautical > gen. Baumann.

reefer. A midshipman: nautical: 1829, Marryat. Because, says Smyth, he has to ‘attend to the tops during the operation of taking in reefs’. (O.E.D.)

reek. Money: c.: early C. 19. ? ex reek-

REHOBOAM. A shovel hat: coll. of ca. 1845–70. C. Bronte, 1849.—2. A quadruple magnum, a double jeroboam, gen. of champagne: from ca. 1860; ob.
"reign. A period of wrongdoing; a successfully criminal period of gaol: o. from ca. 1810. Vaux; Egan's Grose. Cf.:"

"reign, v. To be at liberty, esp. at profitable liberty. Australian e.>
b. 1816, gen. e. late C. 19–20. James Sower, Loney Breaks In, 1934. 'Full-time crooks don't "reign" long.' Ex preceding.

reign of Queen Dick. See Dick, Queen.

refinestouchment. A reinforcement: Australian military: 1816; ob. See stouchn.

Rekker, the. See Becker, the.

(relations or country cousins) have come, her. She is in her menstrual period: lower classes e.p.: mid-C. 19–20. Manchon (les Anglais ont débarqué).


releasing officer (rarely a). One's father, because he pays one's debts: 1857, G. Lawrence (O.E.D.). Grenville-Murray, 1883, 'The Relieving Officer, or . . . the "R.O."', was a term of endurance which [he], in common with other young noblemen and gentlemen at Eton, applied to his father.' Slightly ob.


religion, get. See get religion.

religious. (Of a horse) apt to go down on his knees: late C. 18–mid-19. Grose, 2nd ed. Cf. devotional habit and contrast the old West American religious applied to horses: free from vice.

religious painter. 'One who does not break the commandment which prohibits the making of the likeness of any thing in heaven or earth, or in the waters under the earth,' Grose, 2nd ed.: ca. 1780–1820. Either a little joke of Grose's or painters a.,—he was a painter and draughtsman (see Grose, P.).


relevance, regret or sorrow, is a catastrophe: C. 18. O.E.D.


'remedy. A sovereign (coin): e.: . . mid-C. 18–early 19. F. & H. Ex the technical S.E. remedy, the permissible variation of weight in coins (also called tolerance).


remember I'm your mother and get up those stairs! A military c.p. of the G.W. (B. & P.)

remember Parson Mallum (or Meldrum, Malham, or Melham)! See Parson Mallum.

remember there's a war on! See war on.

remit. A holiday: Westminster School: from ca. 1860. Ex m. ed. in this sense.

remind. To relate reminiscences, esp. if freely: coll.: from ca. 1880. Ex the Jonnal reminiscence, v.i. and t., to recollect, + reminiscences.


render, v.i. (Of any mechanical thing) to act; to work properly: naval and military coll.: from 1915. F. & Gibbons. Ex nautical j. render, as applied esp. to a rope. 'A rope is said to render or not, according as it goes freely through any place,' R. H. Dana, 1841 (O.E.D.).


rent, collect. To rob on the highway: o.: late C. 18–mid-19. See rent., n., 1; also in Bee, 1823. See esp. rent-collector.

rent, pay (someone) his. To punish: coll.: C. 14–(1) 16. S. Oliphant's New English. (?)


rents (in C. 17, rent) coming in. Ragged; dilapidated: a running coll. e.p. of C. 17–mid-18. Withals, 1616, 'That hath his rent come in', O.E.D.; Swift, Polite Conversation, Dialogue I, 'I have torn my Petticoat with your odious Romping; my Rents are coming in; I'm afraid, I shall fall into the Ragan's Hands.'


rep, on or 'pon or upon. On (my) word of honour, lit. on my reputation: coll.: C. 18, though rare after ca. 1750. See rep, 1. Swift, 'Do you say it upon Rep?'

repaire, no. Neckless; neck or nothing: from ca. 1880; ob. (Gen. of contexts.)

reparty. A repartee: Society: 1874–ca. 90. Ware. (Satirical.)

repeation curl. The English society form of the curl known in Fr. as repentir: 1803–ca. 90. Ware. (Repentation is a mark of illiteracy—or of a minor intelligence. E.g. this dialogue from Freeman Wills Crofts, Sudden Death, 1932, 'It looked bad, that it did! With all the . . . Very bad, it looked. Hersey wouldn't half be interested, he wouldn't!') reporter. A (hair-trigger) pistol: coll., mostly Irish, verging on S.E.; ‡ by 1910. Jonah B. Richmond, 1827. Ex the suddenness of the report.

repease. A final draft: coll.: from ca. 1870. (Repose-inducing.)

repository. A look-up, a gaol: ca. 1780–1830 Grose, 1785.
repent

repellent for apprehend or occ. represent; sol.: late C. 16-20. (O.E.D.)


repulsive. Unpleasant; dull; Society: 1930, Evelyn Waugh, *Vile Bodies*, ‘Isn’t this a repulsive party?’

reserve, an. Au revoir!; jocular coll. (—1897); ob. Cf. olive oil/

residential club. A usual assemblage of idlers, esp. those frequenting the British Museum for warmth or shelter; jocular coll, verging on S.E.; from ca. 1890, as (thanks be it) is the practice.

resin up. To smarten up (a man) at his work; nautical; late C. 19-20. Bowen. Ex resining a fiddle.

resort, resource, recourse; often confused; C. 19-20. See esp. Fowler.

respectively is often used catachrestically, esp. in C. 20. Fowler.

responsible. A sensible actor able to take the lead; theatrical coll.; from ca. 1850. Ware.

respun; occ. rispin. To steal; tinkers’ a., bordering on c.; from ca. 1850. (? origin. Just possibly ex or cognate with Scots risp, to raas, to file.


rest, v. To arrest; mid-C. 15-20: S.E. until C. 19, then dial. and low coll.

rest, P. and thes. A c.p. retort on incompleteness or reticence; from ca. 1860.

rest and be thankful, the. The female pudend; C. 19-20; ob.

rest camp. A cemetery: military; 1917; ob. B. & P. Ex military j.

resting. Out of work; theatre, music-hall; late C. 19-20; since ca. 1920, coll.

results. News of sports results; journalistic coll.; from ca. 1921.


resurrection-cove. A body-snatcher; low; ca. 1810-95. Vaux; Baumann.

resurrection-jarvey. A nocturnal hackney-coachman; ca. 1820-60. Westmacott (O.E.D.)

resurrection-pie. A dish made from remains; from ca. 1864; coll. till C. 20, then S.E.; orig. and esp. a schoolboys’ term. H., 3rd ed.

Resurrectionists, the. The Buffs, i.e. the East Kent Regiment: from 1811, when, at Alberua, they rallied after a severe dispersal by the Polish Lancers. Ob. F. & Gibbons.


rest A restoration in printing; printers’ (—1874). H., 5th ed.

*restore. See tour(s).*

*retrieval. A ‘render’ (q.v.): local o. of ca. 1892. Greene.

retrograde, retrogradation. Incorrect for retrograde, -gradation; late C. 16-18. O.E.D.


return home. (Of a convict) to be released on ticket-of-leave; police coll.: C. 20. (Charles E. Leach, 1933.)

returned empty. A Colonial bishop returning to, and gen. taking up a post in, Britain: Church: from ca. 1890. (Much the same sort of feeling prevails regarding those who, having held professorships in the Dominions, seek for jobs in England.)

reunite. To hold a reunion; 1929, E. W. Springs (O.E.D. Sup.)


revenge in lavender. A vengeance reserved; coll. bordering on S.E.; late C. 17-early 19.

B.E.; Grose. See lavender and cf. rod in pickle.

reverence. See air reverence.

reverent. Reverend, n.: erroneous use; C. 14-15. W.

reverse. Incorrect for revess, revelah (to revest); C. 14-15 (? 16). O.E.D.

*reversed, as given by B.E. and Grose (a man set on his head by bullies, who thus obtain the money in his pockets), is but a special application of S.E.)*

Review. See Magazine.


reviver. A drink (rarely of non-intoxicants): orig. Society: 1876, Beaton & Rice, ‘It was but twelve o’clock, and therefore early for revivers of any sort.’ Cf. refresher, q.v.


rheumatickly. Afflicted with rheumatism; coll.: from ca. 1850.

rheumaticks; often the r. Rheumatism; late C. 18-20; coll.: from ca. 1860, considered increasingly low coll.; indeed, in C. 20, it ranks as a sol. Ex the adj. Cf. rheumatic, and Rheumatickly.

rheumatism in the shoulder. Arrest: low; from ca. 1820; ob. Egan’s Grose. Esp. have r. in the s. to be arrested.

rheumatisms, rheuma, rheumatisms; occ. (esp. until ca. 1830) rheumatise or -ize, or rheumatisms (Baumann). Rheumatism: dial. and low coll. (in C. 20, a sol.); 1760, Foote, ‘My old disorder, the rheumatise’; O.E.D.

rhnio; occ. rino, ryno, but not after C. 18. Money: 1888, Shadwell; B.E.; Grose; Barham. C. until ca. 1820, then low s. >, ca. 1870, gen. s. Often ready rhino: cf. ready, q.v. Origin problematic: there is prob. some allusion to the size of a rhinoceros; cf. next three entries. C. synonyms are bit(e), col(e), gell, loaver, luries, pesiter, quide, reek, ribbin; the s. and coll. synonyms are too numerous to list,—see F. & H. at rhino and H. at pp. 61-6.—2. Rhinoceros: coll. abbr.: 1894 (S.O.D.)—3. Cheese: military: from ca. 1910. F. & Gibbons. Ex the all too prominent rind.


See rhino; abbr. cf.
*rhinocéral. Rich : e. until C. 19, then a.; † by 1890. Shadeill, B.E. Grose. As Shadeill has both rhino and rhinocéral in 1888, the latter may well be the origin of the former. See rhino.


**Rhondidda’be. (Of things to be lost: 19th-century 19: mostly Army officers’. Ex Lord Rhondidd, the food controller (1917) who died for his country W. 1917.


**rubatissus. See rhumatissus.

**ryme-slinger. A poet: coll. : from ca. 1850. [Rhyming slang dates from ca. 1840; originated among Cockneys, where now still common: eschewed by the middle and upper classes, it had its apotheosis in the G.W. E.g. Abraham’s willing, a shilling; the second word is often suppressed, as in elephant’s (trunk), drunk. See my Slang, revised ed.]

**ri. See lep.

**rib, crooked. A cross-grained wife: coll.: late C. 18–20, ob. Grose, 2nd ed. (The S.E. rib, a wife, is Biblical in origin and affected esp. by Scottish poets.)

**rib-baste or, more generally, -roast. To thrash: coll.: resp. late C. 16–17, late C. 16–20, ob. Occ. a n., with variant rib-roasting, -basting. Gascoigne, ‘I hope to give them al a rybble to roste for their paynes’; Smollett, ‘He knew he should be rib-roasted every day, and murdered at last’; H., 1774, ‘Riboast... Old; but still in use’. Cf. next two entries.

**rib-bender or -roaster; occ. rib of roast; rubber. A punch on the ribs: boxing: from ca. 1810; the 2nd and 3rd, very ob. Tom Moore has rubber, ‘Cuthbert Bede’ rib-roaster, Hindley rib-bender. Cf. the next entry.—2. A ball rising so high as to endanger the batman’s body: cricket: 1873; ob. Lewis.

rib-bending or -roasting; ribbing. The vb.n. counterparts of rib-bender, etc.

**rib-roast, -roaster. See rib-baste and rib-bender.

**rib-shirt. A front or dicky worn over a grubby shirt: lower classes: from ca. 1880; ob. Ware. rib-tickle; rib-tickler. To thrash, also tickle one’s ribs. A punch in the ribs; thick soup. From ca. 1850; slightly ob. Cf. rib-baste and -bender.

**riband. See ribbin.—ribber. See rib-bender.

**ribbin; also ribband, ribbon. Money: o.: late C. 17–mid-19. B.E.; Vaux (ribbänd). † cf. fat, being ex ribbing (cf. ribs, q.v.), or ex ribbon, gen. of rich stuff. Cf.:

**ribbin runs thick or thin, the. There is, he (etc.) much or little money: late 17–19. B.E. Grose. See ribbin.


ribbons. B. & P. 1833 (O.E.D.): sporting coll. >, ca. 1880, S.E. Dickens in Pickwick. Esp. in handle or bed of the ribbons.—2. Ropes forming the boundary; hence, loosely, any boundary: cricketers’ from ca. 1920. Neville Cardus, Good Days, 1934, ‘George Gunn cut it to the ribbons, as the saying goes.’


**riba. (A nickname for) a stout person: coll.: C. 19–20; ob.

rib, on the. (Of horse or dog) no good at all: racing o.: from ca. 1929—2. Destitute; down and out: o.: C. 20. James Curtis, The Gill Kid, 1936. Cf. on one’s back and down on the knuckle (q.v. at knuckle).

ribston(e). A Cockney’s term of affectionate address: 1883, Milliken in Punch, Oct. 11; ob. by 1910, † by 1930. Abrb. ribston(e) pippin. See pipin.


rice-cake I, for. Public Schools’ euphemistic s. for for Christ’s sake! : C. 20.

rice Christian. An Aboriginal ‘accepting’ Christianity for food: Society coll.: 1895, The Referee, Aug. 11 (Ware); ob.


rich man’s side. See poor man’s side.

rich one. The wealthy wife of ‘a man who finds home not to his liking’: better-class harlots’ coll. (—1909). Ware.

Richard, Richard Snary, Richardanary. A dictionary: s., low coll., sol.: resp. late C. 18–20, e.g. in Grose, 2nd ed., an abbr. of R. S.; from ca. 1620, as in ‘Water Poet’ Taylor; C. 19–20 (also dial.), a corruption of R. S. All ob. Cf. Dick (or dic), which indicates the semantics.—2. (randy)


Richard, get the (ripe). To be ‘ragged’, hooted, or publicly snubbed: military, esp. officers’: 1915; ob. F. & Gibbons. Perhaps suggested by raspberry, get the, q.v.


Richardanary. See Richard.

riding. The throwing of rice over the bride: middle-class coll. (—1909). Ware.


rick(-)ma(-)tick. Articometric: school s. and gen. sol.: C. 19–20. On ‘arithmetic, as in the three R’s, reading, riting and rithmetic.

ricko. A ricochet: military: from 1914. B. & P.

rick. Rode: after ca. 1850, gen. considered a sol. (Cf. dial. ref.) Beamann.

ride. (Gen. used by women.) An act of coition: low: C. 19–20. Ex ride, v. (Cf. the scabrous smoke-room story of the little boy that wanted ‘a ride on the average’.) Esp. in have or get a ride.
ride, v. To mount a woman in copulation: v.i. and t.: M.E.—C. 20: S.E. till ca. 1780, then (low) coll. D'Urfe 'y has ride tanynty. Cf. riding and rider, 1—2. See rider, 2. (3. For relevant phrases not under ride, see the second member; e.g. ride bodkin.)—4. To cart: South African coll.: 1897, Ernest Glanville, Tales from the Field, 'I want you to ride a load of wood to the house.' Pettman.—5. To keep girding at: Canadian: C. 20. John Beauchamp, For Lancashire dial. ride, to be a burden to (E.D.D.).

ride, take (one) for a. To take a person in a motor-car and then, at a convenient spot, shoot him dead: U.S. (C.), anglicised ca. 1930, often loosely (i.e. in order to thrash). Gordon Fellowes, They Took Me for a Ride, 1934. Cf. the old U.S. ride (one) on a rail, to expel forcibly (Thornton).

ride as if fetching the midwife. To go in haste: coll. late C. 17—mid-19. Ray.

ride behind. See rider, 2.


ride raptipole. See raptipole, ride.—ride rusty. See rusty, ride.—ride St. George. See riding St. George.

ride the black donkey. To be in a bad humour: coll.: mid-C. 19—early 20. H., 2nd ed.

*ride the donkey. To cheat in weight (weighing): c. (—1867). 'Ducange Anglicus.'

ride the fore-horse. To be early; ahead of another: coll.: ca. 1660—1840. Etheredge; Scott. (Apperson.)

ride the fringes. To permambulate the boundaries of a chartered district: Irish coll. of ca. 1700—1820. Anon., Ireland Sixty Years Ago, 1847. A corruption of ride the franchises.

ride the mare. To be hanged: (o. or] low: late C. 16—17. Shakespeare. See three-legged.

ride the wild mare. To play at see-saw (Unions); hence, I conjecture, to act wildly or live riotously: coll.: late C. 16—mid-17. Shakespeare; Cotgrave, De Farrow (grass-land). 'See, to ride the wild mare.' Aperson.

rider. An—esp. customary—actively amorous man; low coll.: C. 18—20; ob. Ex ride, v., q.v. Cf. riding St. George.—2. 'A person who receives part of the salary of a place or appointment from the ostensible occupier, by virtue of an agreement with the donor, or great man appointing. The rider is said to be quartered upon the possessor, who often has one or more persons thus riding behind him.' Grose, 3rd ed. Coll. of late C. 18—mid-19.—3. A passenger: cabmen's coll. (—1887); ob. Baumann.

*ridge. An early variant of:

*ride; occ., in C. 19, ridge. Gold: o.: from ca. 1680; ob. by 1840, § by 1890. Head (implied in ridge-cally, q.v.). A city full of ridge, a pocketful of money.—2. Hence, a guinea: ca. 1750—1830. Grose, 1st ed. i ex ridge, a measure of land.


*ridge-cally. A goldsmith, lit. a gold-man (see ridge and cally): o.: 1865, Head (O.E.D.); B.E.; Grose. Very ob. by 1880. Whence, prob.:
Rig the market. To engineer the (money-) market in order to profit by the ensuing rise or fall in prices: 1865, Tom Taylor, 'We must rig the market. Go in and buy up every share that's offered' in C. 20, coll. Ex rig, v., 2, and n., 4. rig-up, n. An outfit: (style of) dress: coll.: from ca. 1895, ob. Cf. rig-out, n.


rigby. See rigby.

rigged. Ppl. adj. of rig, v., 2, q.v.: O.E.D. records as at 1973, but probably considerably older.—2. Of v. 3.

riggen (riggon: properly, rigging), ride the. To be extremely intimate: dial. and low coll.: C. 19–20; ob. Here riggen(, rigging) is the back(bone), though the coll. use may have been influenced by sartorial rigging.


rigging. See riggen, ride the.—2. Clothes: C. 17–20; ob. Not c., as B.E. asserts, but a.—3. The vb.l.n. of rig, v., 2.

rigging, climb the. To see the climb the rigging.—rigger, ride the. See riggen, ride the.


rigmourolle. An occ. C. 18 form of rigmarole, q.v. Foote. (O.E.D.)


right, adj. See right, all, 2; right, too; right as . . . ; right enough; right you are. —2. Favourably disposed to, trustable by, the underworld: c.: ca. 1865, 'No, 247 has right screw, a good fellow' warder.

[right, adv. With adjl. (e.g. right smart) and advv. (e.g. right away) very: C. 13–20: S.E. that, in C. 19–20, borders on coll.; in C. 20, however, archaic.]

right, a bit of all. Excellent; most attractive, delightful: coll.: from ca. 1870. Often applied by a fellow to a girl, with the connotation that she is very pretty or very charming or, in the sexual act, ardent or expert (or both). Slightly ob. Cf. the mock-French translation: un petit morceau de tout droit.

right !, all. Certainly !; gladly !: 1837. Dickens: coll. till C. 20, then S.E. Like next entry, prob. ex. c. sense (ca. 1810–50), 'All's safe or in good order or as desired': Lex. Bal. Cf. right(A), rightio (rightio-), and right you are! right all, adj. and adv. As expected; safe[ty]; satisfactory[lly]: coll.: 1844. Edward FitzGerald, 'I got your letter all right' (O.E.D.). Ex preceding entry.

Right, Mr.; Miss R. The right person—the person one is destined to marry (i.e. he or she who, before marriage, seems to be the right life-partner): coll.: Sala, 1880, Mr Right' Kipling, 1890, 'Miss Right' (O.E.D). Since the G.W., Miss Right is increasingly rare. (Collinson.)


Right-Abouts, the. The Gloucestershire Regiment: military: from 1801. F. & Gibbons. Also the Back Numbers (q.v.), the Old Buggers, the Slackers, the Whitesbotters.—. Rights (of a case), special circumstances: jocular (—1923). Manchon.

right as . . . There are various coll. phrases denoting that one is quite well or comfortable or secure, that a thing, a job, a prospect, etc., is dependable or quite safe:—right as a fiddle (—1903; F. & H.), an ob. corruption of the much earlier fit as a fiddle; . . . a line (C. 15–early 17; e.g. Chapman); . . . a trivet (1837, Dickens); . . . anything (—1903; F. & H. Very gen.); my glove (1816, Scott; ob.); . . . my leg (C. 17–18; e.g. Farquhar); . . . ninquence (1850, Smedley), in C. 19 often nice as ninquence (H., 5th ed.); . . . rain (1894, W. Raymond; 1921, A. S. M. Hutchinson); . . . the bank (1800, 'Rolf Boldrewood'; 1809, 'on safe as the Bank of England'). O.E.D. and esp. Apperson.


right away. Immediately, directly: U.S. (—1842), perhaps ex Eng. dial.; anglicised as coll. by 1880.

right-coloured stuff. Money: Norfolk s. (—1872), not dial. E.D.D.

right-down. Downright; outright; veritable: low coll. (—1887). Baumann, 'A right-down swindle'. Ex dial., which has also right-up-and-down (E.D.D.).

right enough, adj. Esp. in that's right enough = that's all right so far as it goes (but it doesn't go nearly far enough); or, that's all right from your point of view. Coll.: late C. 19–20. Contrast: right enough, adv. All right, well enough; esp., all right (or well enough) although you may not at present think so. Coll.: from ca. 1880; O.E.D. records it at 1886 in Anstey's The Tinted Venus. Cf. preceding entry.

right eye, or hand, itchies,—(and) my. A coll. c.p.; the former denotes prospective weeping, the latter an(unexpected) heritage or gift of money: C. 18. Swift.

right fanny. 'Real, or pathetic, story or tale': e.: from ca. 1925. George Ingram, Stir, 1933.


right(-)ho, right(-)oh, righto. Very well !; certainly !; agreed !: C. 20. Cf. right you are, rightio (rightio-).

right in one's, or the, head. (Gen. preceded by not.) (Un)sound of mind: coll.: C. 19–20. Randolph Hughes, in The Nineteenth Century, July 1934, 'The meanderings of a man not quite right in the head'. App. orig. dial. of: the Scottish no richt.

right off, put. To give a violent distaste for a thing, a plan, or dislike for a person: coll.: late C. 19–20.

right sort. Gin: low • ca. 1820–50. 'Peter Corcoran' Reynolds.

right tempenny on the cranium, hit. To hit the nail on the head: non-aristocratic jocular coll.: ca. 1890–1915. Ware.

right there !, put it. Shake hands!: coll.: orig. U.S., anglicised ca. 1905.
right up and down, like a yard of pump-water. 'Straightforward and in earnest': nautical: mid-C. 19–20. Bowen. Cf. right-down, q.v.

right you are! All right!; certainly!; agreed!; a. 1860. C. 1889. H. 3rd ed.?. Churchward. 1888. 'Right you are; I don't think I'll go up.' O.E.D. Prob. the origin of right-(A) and rightito (rightito-o), q.q.v.; cf. right I, all, q.v.

righteous. Excellent, e.g. 'a righteous day', a fine one: coll.: from ca. 1860. Contrast wicked.

righteous, more holy than. Very holey or tattered: late C. 19–20. Applied to both persons (now ob.) and, always more gen., garments, esp. school uniforms. (This kind of pun is rare among the upper and upper-middle classes.)

right I, right-o!, righty-o! All right!; certainly!; gladly!: from ca. 1820. Ex right-(A)ho! / Dorothy Seyers, Unnatural Death, 1927, Lord Peter Wimsey loquitur: 'Righty-o! Wonder what the fair lady wants.'

right-ho! See right-ho.

right's, be to. To have a clear (legal) case against: c. of ca. 1850–1910. 'Duncage Anglicus.'

right-y-o(h) or -ho. See rightio.

rigmarole; in C. 18, occ. rigmarol. A string of incoherent statements; a disjointed or rambling speech, discourse, story; a trivial or almost senseless harangue: coll.: from ca. 1730. Mme D'Arblay, 1779 (O.E.D.): A corruption of rignman roll. C. 13–early 16, a rambling-verse game; also a list, a catalogue. (Other C. 18 variations are rig-me-role, -my-roll or -role, and rigmronrole)—2. (Without a or the.) Such language: coll.: C.19–20.

rigmarole, adj. (With variant spellings as for the n.) Incoherent; rambling; trivially long-winded: coll.: from ca. 1730. Richardson, 1753. 'You must all go on in one rig-my-roll way'—1870, Miss Bridgman, 'A rigmarole letter'. O.E.D.

rigmarole, v.i. To talk rigmarole: coll.: from ca. 1830. (O.E.D.) Note: rigmoryery and rigmaroliek are too rarely used to be eligible.

rigmarolish. Rather like a rigmarole: coll.: 1827, J. W. Croker (O.E.D.). The adv. (-ly) is too seldom used to be eligible.


rigsky. A wanton; a romping (lad) or girl: coll.: from ca. 1540. In late C. 17–20, only dial. In C. 16, occ. riggy. Ex rig, a wanton.

rile. To vex, anger: coll.: U.S. (1829), anglicised ca. 1860, though the consciousness of its U.S. origin remained until ca. 1890; the v.i. rile up, grow angry, has not been acclimatised in Britain. A later form of S.E. roll.

rilled, p.p.l.adj. Vexed, annoyed, angry: see rile. — riling, annoying, etc.: id.

rim-rack. To strain or damage (a vessel), esp. by driving her too hard in a sea: Grand Banks fishermen's coll.: late C. 19–20. Bowen. Prob. cognate with the Aberdeen rim-razing, a surfeit (-ing): E.D.D.


ring (gen. with the). The female pudend: low
coll: verging on euphemistic S.E., — or is it the other way about? C. 18–20, but rare after C. 18. Also black—haired—Hans Carrel's ring.—2. 'Money extorted by Rogues on the High-way or by Gentle- men Beggers, B.E.: of, late C. 17–early 19. By 1783, is applied to any beggars; 'from its ringing when thrown to them', Grosse.—3. See ring, the dead.—4. A good-conduct stripe: military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons.

ring, v. To manipulate; change illicitly: from ca. 1785: perhaps orig. c.; certainly low s. (See ring the changes).—2. Simply to change or exchange: from ca. 1810: orig. low, then gen. a. Vaux.—3. Hence, or ex sens. 1, to cheat (v.i. also ring it): low: late C. 19–20. F. & Gibbons. —4. V. reflexive: c. from ca. 1860, as explicated in The Cornhill Magazine, 1863 (vii, 91), 'When housebreakers are disturbed and have to abandon their plunder they say that they have rung themselves.'—5. See ring in.—6. V.I. (of cattle), to circle about: Australian coll. (—1884) >, ca. 1910, S.E. 'Rolf Boldreword.'—7. Even more essentially Australian is ring, v.i. and v.t., to shear the most sheep in a day or during a shearing (at a shearing-shed): from ca. 1896: coll. A. B. Paterson (Banjo as Australians affectionately call him), 1896, 'The man that — rung the Tubbo shed is not the ringer here.' (Morris.) See ringer, 2.—8. See ring a peel.—9. See ring it.


ring, go through the. To go bankrupt: commercial: ca. 1840–50. H., 2nd ed. f ex circus.

ring, have the. To ring true: coll. (—1923), now verging on S.E. (Manchester).

ring, the dead. 'A remarkable likeness', C. J. Dennis; astonishingly or very similar: Australian: C. 20. Perhaps 'as like as ring is to ring?; prob. suggested by the U.S. be a ringer for, to resemble closely.


ring bells. A coll. that (dating from ca. 1930) is gen. in the negative, as in Gavin Holt, Traflagar Square, 1934, 'When a snake doesn't ring any bells in my emotional system, i.e. do not appeal to me. Ex the bell that rings when, at a shooting-gallery, a marksman hits the bull's-eye.

ring-dropper, -faller. One who practises ring-dropping: c.: resp. from ca. 1796 and ca. 1660–1600. Cf. jouney-dropper, q.v., and :

ring-dropping. The dropping of a 'gold' ring and subsequent prevailing on some 'mug' to buy it at a fair price for gold: c.: from ca. 1820. Bee.

ring in. To insert, esp. to substitute, fraudu-

ently: from ca. 1810: orig., perhaps c., certainly at least low s. Vaux. (Notably in gambling.) Cf. ring, v., 1.


ring-man. The ring-finger: from ca. 1480: coll. till C. 18, then dial. Ascham. (O.E.D.)

showing her marriage-lines; perhaps with reference to ring-paper.

ring off. Didst !; shut up !: C. 20 coll. Lyell. Ex telephonic ring off, please !

Levins. (O.E.D.)

ring-duck. A jackaroo: Australian coll. : 1898, Morris, ' In reference to the white collar not infrequently worn by a jackaroo on his first appearance'.


ringle, the. The man that, at two-up, keeps the ring, arranges the wagers, and pays out the winnings: Australian and New Zealand coll. : late C. 19-20.


ring, get out of one's. To sow wild oats: coll. : from ca. 1870; ob. by 1910, † by 1930. Perhaps ex skating; prob. ex Scots rent, 'the sets of players' forming sides at curling and quoit-playing (E.D.D.).


rink. See rhino.

rink. A wash: coll. : 1837, Dickens, " I may as well have a ring," remarked Mr Weller ' (O.E.D.).


rink, v.i. To drink, esp. liquor: from ca. 1870.

Prob. ex rings down (with liquor).


Bullein. (O.E.D.)


Rio. But the: to reproove, administer a reprouse: coll. : from ca. 1880.


rip, let her. Let her go !: U.S. (- 1859) anglicised ca. 1875; in C. 20, coll.

rip, let her or him. A callous punning on r.i.p., i.e. requiescat in pace, let him (her) rest in peace. Late C. 19-20. Cf. r.i.p., l. etc. . . . q.v.

rip and fear. To be very angry: from ca. 1870 (ob.): coll. and dial. Prob. on rip and swear, an intensive of dial. rip, to use bad language, to swear.


rip. Drunk: C. 19-20; ob. Bee. Either ex stealing-ripes (Shakespeare, Tennyson) or ex ripes, (of liquor) fully matured, with the occ. connotation of potent, or merely suggested by mean.

ripley, of. See Richard, get the.

rippen. A sol. variant (- 1887) ofrippis' — ripping, q.v.


ripping, adj. Excellent; very fast; very entertaining: 1826, The Sporting Magazine, ' At a ripping pace '; 1888, ' Ripping Burton ' (ale), O.E.D. Cf. rattling, stunning, thundering (W.).—2. Occ. it verges on the adv., as in ' A ripping fine story ' (Baumann, 1887) and ' A ripping good testimonial ' (Conan Doyle, 1894 : O.E.D.). Cf.

rippingly. Excellently; capacitively; splendidly: 1892, Hume Niets.

ripstone. An incorrect form of ristones: Dickens in Pickwick. O.E.D.

rise; riz. (E.G. he) rose; rizen: both senses, sol. (- 1887). Baumann.


rise, v. To raise, grow, rear: coll. (in C. 20, almost a sol., certainly low coll.): 1844, Dickens, ' Where was you rose ' ? O.E.D.—2. To listen credulously, often—esp. in C. 20—with the connotation of to grow foolishly angry: coll.: 1856, Whyte-Melville. Ex a fish rising to the bait: cf. bite, v., q.v., and the S.E. get, have, or take a rise out of a person.

rise a barney. To collect a crowd: showmen's: from ca. 1855. H., 1st ed.

rise and shine. (Gen. in imperative.) To get up in the morning: military: C. 20, F. & Gibbons. The imperative is partly c.-p., partly †. Rise (or raise) are upwards. To be lucky: coll. : ca. 1670-1800. Ray. Rising thus from the ground was regarded as lucky.

*rise the plant. See plant, rise the.

risky. Secretly adulterous: Society coll. : ca. 1890-1900. ' John Strange Winter.' (Ware.)

rispin. See respun.


river, up the. Reported to the Trade Union officials for speeding: workers' (- 1935). Perhaps ex American c., wherein sent up the river = sent to prison.


river pig. See river hog.

river(-)rat. ‘A riverside thief: specifically one who robs the corpses of men drowned’, F. & H. In the former sense, S.E.; in the latter, c. from ca. 1880.

twist; (gen.) River Twist. (F. & H. refers us to twist, where, however, no reference is made to r.d.) Starring debtors discharged at the end of one’s undergraduate days: Oxford University: ca. 1820-50. Egan’s Grove.


roach, sound as a. See sound as ... Rhode and dace.


road, gentleman or knight of the. A highwayman: C. 18-19; coll. > journalistic S.E. See the paragraph at knight.

road, get the. To be dismissed from employment: Glasgow (—1934). Prob. suggested by walking-orders, q.v.

road, give the. See give the road.

road-bog. An inconsiderate (cyclist) or motorist: 1898 (O.E.D.), though, in U.S., as early as 1891, of a cyclist: coll. >, by 1910, S.E.


road-starver. A long coat without pockets: mendicants’ c.: ca. 1881-1914. Ware.


road. (Coll. of roofs) to breathe noisily: 1880 (O.E.D.): coll. >, in C. 20, S.E. Cf. roarer, 1.

road up. To speak abusively to; shout at: lower classes: from ca. 1905. F. & Gibbons.

roastatorio. See roastario.—roastation. See roastoriation. See rostorious.


roasting. The disease in horses noted at roar and at roarer, 1. From ca. 1820: coll. >, by 1900, S.E.


roaring blade, boy, girl, lad, ruffian. A street bully; a riotous, noisy, lawless female: C. 17-mid-18 (later, only archaic): coll. A roaring blade, 1640, Humphry Mill; r. boy, 1611, J. Davies (O.E.D.); r. girl, 1611, Middleton & Dekker (title); r. lad, 1658, Rowley, etc. (but current from ca. 1610); r. ruffian, 1664, Cotton.

roaring forties; R. E. ‘The degrees of latitude between 40° and 50°N—the most tempestuous part of the Atlantic’, F. & H.; occ. the corresponding zone in the South Atlantic. Nautical coll.: in C. 20, S.E. From ca. 1880.

roaring ruffian. See roaring blade.

*roast. To arrest: c.: late C. 17-early 19. B.E.; Grose, 2nd ed. Perhaps on (arrest, via the idea of giving a person a hot time.—2. (Also roast brown.) To watch closely: c.: 1888, G. R. Sims, ‘A riecer was roasting me brown.’ Cf. roasting, n., c. sense.—3. To ridicule, to quiz (a person), severely or cruelly: 1726, Sh Evelocke: s. >, ca. 1760, coll.; ob. Cf. to warm. (O.E.D.) In C. 20 Glasgow, esp. to pester.—4. In telegraphy, to click off a message so fast that it cannot be followed by (a person; v.t.): 1888 (O.E.D.): telegraph-operators’.


roast and boiled, the. The Life Guards; military: ca. 1780-1830. Grose, 2nd ed., ‘[They are] mostly substantial housekeepers, and eat dally of roast and boiled, i.e. roast meat and boiled potatoes. Cf. roast-meat clothes, q.v.

roast beef dress. Full uniform: naval coll. (—1867); ob. Smyth. Either ex roast meat clothes, q.v., or ex the uniform of the royal beefeaters.


roast (hand and) new (or noo). Roast shoulder of mutton and new potatoes: eating-house waiters (—1909). Ware.

roast, cry. To talk about one’s good fortune or good luck: coll.: C. 17-early 19. Camden, B.E., Grose, Fielding, Lamb. Northall, 1894, notes that in dial. it also = to boast of women’s favours. (Apperson.)

roast meat and beat with the spilt, give (a person). ‘To do one a Curtesy, and Twin or Upbraid him with it’, B.E.; coll.: ca. 1670-1820.


roast meat for worms, make (one). To kill:
ROAST SNOW IN A FURNACE

702 ROCKS, FILE UP THE


roast snow in a furnace. To attempt the absurd or unnecessary; coll.: C. 19–20; ob. Apperson.

roaster. A person burnt to death in a crash:

roasting, vb.l.n. of roast, v., in all senses except the first; sense 2 occurs mostly in give (one) a roasting,
recorded for 1779, and in get a roasting, to be very closely watched.


Rob All My Comrades. The Royal Army Medical Corps: military, more gen. as o.p. than as nick-
name: G.W., but rare after 1916. F. & Gibbons.

rob Peter to pay Paul. See Peter to pay Paul, rob.
rob the barber. To wear long hair; lower classes’ coll.: late C. 19–20. Ware.

robe. See bona robe.

board, n., 2: they may be written board and ‘robe.

Robertsonism. Robert’s man, etc. ‘The third (old)
Rank of the Canting Crew, mighty Thieves, like
Robin-hood’, B.E. &.: C. 18–17. In other than this
technical sense, it covers the period C. 14–20
and is S.E., though long archaic. Prob. on Robert +
robber.

Robert; Roberto. A policeman; coll.: resp.
1870, ca. 1890; both ob. Ex Robert Peel. Cf.
peeler.

robin. See Robin Redbreast.—2. A penny: low:
from ca. 1890; ob.—3. A little boy or girl begging
standing about like a starving robin’: c. and low:
late C. 19–20; ob. Ware.

Robin Hog. (Prob.) a constable: coll.: early
C. 18. O.E.D.

Robin Hood. An audacious lie: coll.: C 18–

Robin Hood, adj. Good: from ca. 1870. P. P.,
Rhyming Slang, 1892.

Robin Hood, the. ‘The 7th (Territorial)
Battalions of the Sherwood Foresters’: military
nickname: late C. 19–20. F. & Gibbons. Sher-
wood Forest was Robin Hood’s reputed haunt.

Robin Hood’s bargain. A great bargain: coll.: C.
18. Cf. pennyworth, Robin Hood’s.

Robin Hood’s choice. This—or nothing. Coll.: C.
17. (Apperson.)

Robin Hood’s mile. A distance two or three
times greater than a mile: coll.: ca. 1850–1700.
Almost proverbial.

Robin Redbreast; v. r. A Bow-Street runner:
ca. 1840–70. Also robin and redbreast.


Manchon. See ruddock.

ob. Ex shape.

Robinson. See Jack Robinson.

Robinson Crusoe. Do so: from ca. 1890. P. P.,
Rhyming Slang, 1892.

rob. An error for robble ( rumble). O.E.D.
robustious was, ca. 1740–90, a coll. See esp.
Johnson.

Roby Douglas. The anus: nautical: ca. 1780–
1850. Grose, 1785, ‘One eye and a stinking
breath’: which indicates an allusion to one so
named.

Rochester portion. ‘Two torn Smocks, and what
Nature gave’, B.E.: late C. 17–early 19. (N.B.,
portion is marriage-portion, dot; what = physical
charms in gen., but sep. the genitals in particular.)

Cf. the C. 18–19 equivalent, a Whitechapel portion.

Pegg, 1755, cites R. p. as a Kentish proverb.

rock. School (opp. to baker’s) bread; Derby
School from ca. 1850. Less s. than coll. J. —
2. A medium-sized stone: Winchester School coll.:
from ca. 1860. Perhaps owing to U.S. and Aus-
tralian use of rock as a stone however small.—3. See
Rock, the.—4. See rocks.—5. See sense 2 of:

‘rock, v. To speak: tramps’ c. (—1893); very
ob. Abbr. rocker ( rokker), q.v.—2. V.t.’ To hit
with a missile; . . . also used by children for a hit
when playing at marbles’, Pettman: South African
coll. (—1813). Ex Dutch rotten, to hit, to touch.

Rock, the. Gibraltar: coll.: from ca. 1841.
Ex the main feature of Gibraltar.—2. See Old
Steadfast.

rock-a-low. An overcoat: dial. and ( low) coll.
(—1860); ob. by 1890, † by 1910. H., 2nd ed.
= Fr. roque-laure.

rock-nosing. ‘Inshore boat work in the old

rock ofages. Wages: rhyming a. C. 20—
by the rock of ages, relying on sight; without
a measure: tailors: 1928, The Tailor and Cutter,
Nov. 29. Cf.:

rock of eye and rule of thumb, do by. To guess
instead of measuring precisely: tailors: from ca.
1860. Presumably rock = a movement to and
from.

Rock(-)Scorpion. A mongrel Gibraltarine: naval,
military: from ca. 1850. Cf. S.E. Rock English,
the Lingua Franca spoken at Gibraltar (Borrow,
1842). Ex Rock, the, q.v.

rocked. Absent-minded, forgetful: low (—1812)
† by 1900. Vaux. Ex:

rocked in a stone kitchen. A little weak in the
head: foolish: coll.: late C. 18–mid-19. Grose,
2nd ed., ‘His brains having been disturbed by the
jumbling of his cradle’ on the stone floor. Cf. half-
rocked.

‘rocker (or rokker); occ. rock, q.v. To speak:
tramps’ c.: from ca. 1850; since ca. 1900, gen. low
s. H., 5th ed., 1874; C. Hindley, 1876, ‘Can you
rocker Romany . . . ’; A. Morrison, 1894,
‘Hewitt could rocker better than most Romany
chals themselves’. Ex Romany roker ( Sampson’s
raker), to talk, speak, with variant voker (cf. L. voz,
vocare); cf. Romany roker(on)menyro, lit. a talk-man,
I.e. a lawyer.

rocker, off one’s. (Temporarily) mad; ex-
remely eccentric: low: 1897 (O.E.D.). Ex the
piece of wood that enables a chair or a cradle to rock.

rocket, off one’s. A military perversion (G.W.)
of the preceding. F. & Gibbons.

rockiness. Craziness: from ca. 1898. Ex S.E.
term influenced by rocker, off one’s.

*rocks. Jewels; pearls; precious stones; c.: from ca. 1920. Ex U.S. rocks, diamonds.

rocks, on the. Without means: coll. (—1889)
† by 1910, S.E. Ex stranded ship.

rocks, pile up the. To make money: U.S.
(rocks, money, 1847), partly anglicised ca. 1896.
Kipling uses it in 1897 (O.E.D.). Prob. ex rock = a
nutlet: cf. rock, n., 2, and in, in C. 20 U.S. c., rock, a
precious stone.
ROCKS AND BOULDERS

rolls and boulders. (The) shoulders: rhyming a.: late C. 19-20. B. & P.


rocky, adj. A vague pejorative: e.g. unsatisfactory (weather), unpleasant or hard (for, on a person): 1883 (O.E.D.). Ex S.E. rocky, unsteady, unstable, tipsy. Hence go rocky, go wrong.—2. Penniless; or almost; coll.: 1923, Galsworthy (O.E.D. Sup.). Ex on the rocks.


rod at, or under, one’s girdle. With various vv., it implies a waving, present or past: coll. depending on S.E.: ca. 1870-1820. Lyly, Jonson. O.E.D.

rod in pickle. See pickle and piss.

rod-maker. 'The man who made the rods used in Bibling (q.v.)', Mansfield, referring to ca. 1840: Winchester School: coll. > j.; † by 1920.


roger. See roger, v.

rodney or R. A (very) idle fellow: coll.: ca. 1860-95. Ex dial., where still exist, in the North and Midlands. Cf. the sad declension of Sauney.

roe. The semen: low: from ca. 1850; ob. Hence, shoot one’s roe, emit. Ex fish-roe.


*roge, rogging. C. 16-17 forms of rogue, roguing, qq.v.


roger; often rodder. To cott with (a woman): perhaps orig. o. 1750, Robertson of Struan, who spells it roger; Grose, 1st ed., *From the name of Roger, frequently given to a bull.*

Roger, jolly; in late C. 19-20, occ. Roger. A pirate’s flag: 1785, Grose: coll. >, o. ca. 1850, S.E. Earliest record, 1723, as old Roger (W.): (A white skull in a black skull: iron). Cf. Roger Gough. Scrub (or brush) bloodwood: Australian coll.: from early 1890’s: An absurd name’, Morris; either ex the general that won the battles of Sobroan and Ferozeahah, or, as The

Australasian, Aug. 28, 1896, suggests, a corruption of an Aboriginal word now lost.

*Roger (or Tib) of the buttery; or r. (or t.) . . .

See roger, n., 2.

Roger. A gaily countenance: Society: ca. 1830-50. Ware. Ex Rogers, the poet when old, or as the Jolly Roger of the pirates.

*rogue. A professed beggar of the 4th Order of Canters: o. mid-C. 16-17; then historical.

Awdeley implies it in wild rogue; Dekker; B.E.; Grose: Whence S.E. senses. Perhaps an abbr. of Roger, n., 1, of problematic origin, unless a perversion of † rorer, a turbulent fellow, on L. rogue, to ask.

*rogue, v. To be a beggar, a vagrant: o. of ca. 1570-1630. Ex the n.

*rogue, wild. A born rogue ever on tramp or a-begging: o. ca. 1560-1700. Awdeley.

*rogue and pullet. A man and woman confederate in their: o. mid-C. 16-20.


Rogues! Walk, the. From Piccadilly Circus to Bond Street: Society: ca. 1890-1905. Ware.


*roguing, n. Tramping as rogue or vagrant: ca. 1575-1720: prob. orig. o. Harrison, 1777 (O.E.D.). The c. origin is postulated, for roguing is ex rogue, n., via the v. Cf.:

*rogualness. The being a rogue, q.v.: late C. 16-early 17: prob. orig. o.

rogum pugon, or dragun pogradum (-um). The plant goat’s beard eaten as asparagus: late C. 18-mid-19: less s. than dial. and low coll. Grose, 3rd ed., 'So called by the ladies’—ironic, this— who gather crosses, &c.'

*roister, royster. In C. 17-early 18 o., one of a band of ‘rude, Roaring Rogues’, B.E.

rocker. A ruler (esp. flat rocker) stick; pokker; schools: from ca. 1850. Ex roke, to stir a fire, a liquid: Halliwell.

*rocker (rare), rokker, v. See rocker.

[r|ole (or unashamedly Fr.) rôle (italicised) is correct, the former being preferable as thoroughly English; but either role (italicised) or rôle (without italics) is illogical—and silly.] roll, n. See rolls. —roll, v. See the next seven or eight entries.—N. 2. Coins: 'side'; presumption: Shrewsbury School: from ca. 1890. Desmond Coke, The Bending of a Twig, 1906. Also at Harrow: witness A. Lunn, The Harrovians, 1913. (Cf. lift, the Shrewsbury synonym.) By pun ex the words roll from side to side.

roll, be at the top of (a person’s). To be heartily scorned by him: Regular Army’s: from ca. 1910. Frank Richards, 1933. Perhaps = at the head of the crime-sheet.

roll in every rig. To be up to every trick: be up-to-date: low: Old Song, 1790. 'We roll in every knowing rig.'

*roll in one’s ivories or ivory. To kiss: 1780 Tomlinson in his Slang Restoral.' To roll in her
ivory, to pleasure her eye.' After ca. 1850, always
po. Cf. ivories, ivories; e.g. flush the

roll into. To pitch into; to thrash: coll.: Aus-
tralian. (and U.S.): 1890, 'Rolf Boldrewood'.
(O.E.D.)

roll me in the dirt (occ. hyphenated). A shirt:
rhyming s. (— 1874); † by 1915. H., 5th ed.
in late C. 18-20, dicky (or Dicky) dirt.

roll me in the sea. Butter: rhyming s.: late

*roll of snow. (A piece of) linen; (bundle of)
roll on, (big ship) I; roll on, duration! A mil-
tary c.p. (1917-18) expressive of a fervent wish that
the war might end. Manchon. See duration; the
ship is that which takes one back home.

*roll on, cocoa! (Ex the preceding phrase and
the phrase succeeding the present one.) A prison
p.o. exp. as the indication of a desire for the evening
meal to arrive: from ca. 1910. James Curtis, The
Gift Kid, 1936.

roll on, demobilisation. Engines of the Railway
Operating Department plying between 'Pop' and
'Wypers': military: 1917-18. B. & P.

roll one's hoop. To go ahead; be successful
(both with a connotation of playing safe): coll.: from
ca. 1870; ob.
roll out. To rise (esp. in the morning): coll.: from
ca. 1880. Abbr. roll out of bed.

*roll the leer. To pick pockets: c. from
ca. 1820; † by 1900. Egan, Boxiana, vol. iii, 'The
boldest lad! That ever mill'd the eye, or roll'd the
leer'.

roll up. A roly-poly pudding: coll.; in C. 20, S.E.
dog in a blanket.—2. A meeting: Australian: 1861
(O.E.D.): coll. till C. 20, then S.E.; anticipated in
Grose (as Huesar-Leyp). 'Rolf Boldrewood', 1890,
'As if you'd hired the bell-man for a roll-up.'—3.
An order for 'three-cross double' (q.v.) doubled:
Glascow public-houses' (— 1894).

roll up, v.i. To assemble: Australian a., >, ca.
1910, gen. coll.: 1887, J. Farrell, 'The miners all
rolled up to see the fun.' Morris. Cf. roll-up, n., 2.
(C.O.D., 1934 Suf. to 1941.)

roll on Deal Beach. Pitted with small-pox:
nautical: late C. 19-20. Bowen. Ex 'the shingly
nature of that beach'.

roller. A roll-oed; Oxford University: 1883
(O.E.D.). Occ. rollers. Oxford -er.—2. See:

*rollers. The horse and foot (police) patrols:
oc.: ca. 1810-40. Vaux. Presumably because they
rolled along at a great pace.—2. U.S. rolling stock:
Stock Exchange: from ca. 1835.—3. See roller.

Boldrewood, The. The 89th Foot Regiment, later
the Royal Irish Fusiliers: from ca. 1830: military:
ob. F. & Gibbons. Ex their habits. Also, in
1788 +, known as Blaney's Blood-Bound.

rolling. Smart, clever: low: ca. 1770-1870.
† ex rolling blade; cf. rolling kiddy.—2. Very rich:
coll.: 1905, H. A. Vasell, 'He's going to marry a
girl who's simply rolling' (Manchon). Abbr. rolling
in money (or wealth).

*rolling kiddy. A smart thief: c.: ca. 1820-90.
E.g. 'a fellow wearing kiddies, Dick would dive and
buy': Lyttton.

rolling off a log, (as) easy as. Very easy, easily:
U.S. (1847), anglicised as a coll. ca. 1870.

rolling-motion Dickie. The three-wavy-lined blue
jean collar worn by the Royal Naval Volunteer
Reserve before the G.W.: naval: late C. 19-early

rolling-pin. The male member: low: mid-

Rolling Rezie. H.M.S. Resolution of 1889:
naval. Bowen.

rolls. A baker: C. 19-20, ob.: coll. Also, but
rather S.E. than coll., master of the role: mid-C.
18-20; slightly ob. Adumbrated by Taylor the Water
Poet. (O.E.D.)

Rolls. A Rolls-Royce motor-car: motorists' 
coll.: from ca. 1925.

Occ. roller. O.E.D.

roly-poly. Un-deux-cinq (a game): Londoners:
ca. 1820-50. Bee.—2. A jam roll pudding: 1848,
Thackeray: coll. till ca. 1880, then S.E. Abbr.
roly-poly pudding, also in Thackeray (1841). Also
roll-up and dog as a blanket.—3. The penis: low:
mid-C. 19-20; ob.

rom. See rum (adj.)—2. Occ. among tramps, rom = a male Gypsy: from ca. 1860. In Romany,
rom is a bridegroom, a husband; any (adult) male
Gypsy: see esp. Sampson.

Romans. 'A soldier in the foot guards, who gives
up his pay to his captain for leave to work; serving
like an ancient Roman, for glory and the love of his
country,' Grove, 1st ed.: military: ca. 1780-1830.

Roman tail. That affected posture in walking
which throws the head well forward and puts the
small of the back well in; mostly among men, the
women favouring the Grecian bend, q.v.: coll.: ca.
1868-71. The Orchestra, March 25, 1870.

[Romany. The language of the English Gypsies.
See esp. O.E.D. and F. & H. It contributes many
words to c. and to low s., esp. gaffers'.]

Romany, pater. To talk Romany: C. 19-20:
low. Vaux; Ainsworth.

Romany rye. A gentleman that talks and associ-
ates with Gypsies: mid-C. 19-20: coll. Ex
Romany rai or rei, a gentleman. Popularised by
Borrow's The Romany Rye, 1857.

*romboyle, or -s. The watch (early police): mid
C. 17-18 c. Coles, 1676; B.E.; Grove. Occ.
rumboiles, -boyle.

*romboyle. To make hue and cry: search for
with a warrant: c.: late C. 17-early 19. B.E.;

rumball. To make hue and cry: search for
with a warrant: c.: late C. 17-early 19. B.E.;

rumbullion. See rumbullion.—rumbustical, rumb-
busious. See rumbustical, rumbustious.

*rome. See rum, adj., 1.—So for combinations,
e.g. rume mort.

Rome, gone to. See gone to Rome. Cf. return
from Rome, (of bells) to resume ringing after the
forty-eight hours' Easter silence: Roman Catholic
coll. (— 1890). Ware.

Rome-runner. A person, esp. a cleric, constantly
running off to Rome in search of spiritual and

*Rome Village, Romeville; in C. 10-early 17, often
-ville. Also Rumville. London: c.: mid-C. 16-
excellent city. See rum, c. adj., 1.

romely. See rumly.

Romeo. Robert Coates (1772-1848), a London
leader of fashion. Also Diamond Coates. He was
very gallant, very wealthy. (Dawson.)

*Romewille. See Rome Village.—Romford. See
Romford.
Rompford. See Romford.

Roming (or Roaming) Catholic. A sol. pronunciation of Roman Catholic: C. 19–20. Dorothy Sayers, Unnatural Death, 1927, 'A nice lady... a Roaming Catholic or next door to one'.

Romp. To move rapidly (and with ease): racing: from ca. 1890. J. S. Winter, 1891, 'To use the language of the turf, she romped clean away from them,' O.E.D. Cf. romp away with.

Romp, Miss. Mrs. Jordan (1762–1816), the actress. She was William IV's mistress when he was Duke of Clarence. Dawson.

Romp away with. To win (a race) easily: racing s.: from ca. 1890. In C. 20, it is gen. coll., often used fig. Ex romp, q.v. Cf.: romp home or in, v.i. To win very easily: racing s.: in C. 20, gen. coll.: 1888, 'Thornmanly' (romp in): Sporting Life, March 20, 1891 (romp home, fig. of the winner of an athletic half-mile). O.E.D. and F. & H.

Ronnny. See ronnny.


Roody Boys. Rue du Bois, near Neuve Chapelle (Flanders): military coll.: G.W. (F. & Gibbons.)


Root, hit the. See hit the root.


Root, v. To cheat; defraud, and defraud of; charge extortionately: late C. 16-20: s. (Orig. c. >, in C. 19, coll.


Room. See room.—room(s), adj. See rum, adj. 1.

Roomer. A lodger, esp. if occupying only one room: coll.: Anglicised ca. 1876 ex U.S.


Rooch, j. A corruption of ruozer, q.v., or ex Scots roos, ruzar, a braggar.

D.U.B.
**ROPE, FOR THE**

F. & H.: this seems viable, for cf. † Scots ropppin, to wrap. (E.D.D.)

**ROSE, PLUCK A**

*roram. The sun: c.: late C. 18–mid-19. Tufta. † ex Roland, suggested by Olivier, c. for the moon, as F. & H. ingeniously suggests.

**Ration; rarely roration.** An oration pronounced with a loud unmusical voice’, Grose, 1785; † by 1890; jocular coll. or s. As in rotoratory, roof is punned. Cf.

roratorio or rotoratorio. *Roratorios and Uproaros, oratorio's and opera's*, Grose, 1788; † by 1890. Sometimes sol. (cf. the Northamptonshire rotoratory, an oratorio), sometimes jocular coll. or s. Cf.: roriorious; rouratorious. (Jubilantly noisy) ca. 1820–60. Egan, 1821, 'The Randallites'—i.e. partisans of the great boxer—'were roriorious and flushed with good fortune.' Punning oratorio and uproarious, and perhaps notorious. Cf. the S.W. dial. rory-tery, 'loud, noisy, stirring' (E.D.D.).

**Rory to. To complain of; blame fiercely: low:** C. 20. (Michael Harrison, *Spring in Tartarus, 1935*, 'It isn't you ... that I'm rorting at.') Ex rorty, q.v.}

**Rortiness; rarely rortyness.** The abstract n. of:

**Rorty; occ. raughty.** Of the best; excellent; dashing; lively; jolly; sprightly: costers: from c. 1860. 'Chickaleary,' Vance, ca. 1884, 'I have a rorty gal'; Millikin, 1883, 'We'd a rare rorty time of it,' Whiteing, 1899, 'A right-down raughty gal.' Ware ranks a rorty toff as inferior to a rothy bloke. W. suggests a rhyme on naughty.— 2. Amorous: low: from not later than 1893. Manchon.—3. Likewise ex sense 1; always in trouble: military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Rorty, adv. to rorty, adj., 1: C. 20. O.E.D. (Sup.).

rorty, do th. To have a good time: costers' (— 1893). Millikin. Ex rorty, adj., 1.

**Rorty dasher; 2, rorty toff.** A fine fellow; 2, an out-and-out swell; costers': from ca. 1880.

**Rory; R. Short for:**

Rory o'More. A whore (— 1874; ob.): a floor (— 1877); a door (— 1892). Resp. H., 5th ed.; 'Ducange Anglicus'; 'Pomme' Marshall, 'I fired him out of the Rory quick.'

**Rorys, the. The 393rd Highlanders, later the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders: military: mid-C. 19–early 20. F. & Gibbons. Rory being a common Scottish name.

**Ros-biff Yorkshire.** A rod-faced Yorkshireman: in the catering trade, esp. in Italian restaurants: C. 20. Ex the fact that Yorkshiremen expect to find roast beef and Yorkshire pudding even in Italian restaurants.

**Rosa, sub. See sub rosa.**

**Rosalie.** A bayonet: rare military: 1915–18. B. & P. Adopted from Fr. s., where it was more common among civilians than among soldiers.

**Rosary, the.** A variation of the confidence trick: c.: C. 20. Charles E. Leach.

**Rosary-counter.** A Roman Catholic: Irish Orangemen's (— 1834).


**Rose, v. Raised. See rise, v.—2.** Risen: S.E. until C. 19, then s.ol. Baumann.

**Rose, pluck a. To take a virginity; (among women) to ease oneself in the open air:** Both coll.

**Coll. Shakespeare, 'Winchester Goose, I cry a rope! a rope!' Butler, 1863, 'When they cry rope!' † Ex hanging rope.

**Rope, for the. Due, or condemned, to be hanged: police coll.: late C. 19–20. Charles E. Leach.**


**Rope to the eye of a needle, put a. To attempt the absurd, the impossible: semi-proverbial coll.: C. 19. Apperson.**

**Rope-Walk (or r. w.), go into the. 'In the law . . . a barrister is said to have gone into the rope-walk, when he has taken up practice in the Old Bailey,' Temple Bar, 1871; ob. As Serjeant Ballantine shows in his *Reminiscences,* 1882, when he says, 'What was called the Rope-Walk [at the Old Bailey] was represented by a set of agents clean neither in character nor person,' the rope-walk meant also a set of shysters battling on Criminal Law; moreover, he implies that the term dates back at least as early as 1850.


**Ropeable.** Agile; quick-tempered: from ca. 1890. Australian. Ex ropeable (i.e. wild) cattle.

**Roper.** A hangman; †, says Bee in 1823. See Mr Roper.—2. One who 'ropes' a horse (1870) or, in athletics, himself (1887): coll. till C. 20, then S.E. See rope, 1 and 2. Occ. (of a horse only), rope-in. Dates: O.E.D.


**Roper, Mr; or the roper. The hangman: jocular coll.: ca. 1650–1750. (Cf. John Roper's window, q.v.) Charles Sackville, 6th Earl of Dorset. Cf. Roper's news, no news, in the Cornish that Roper's news—hang the other! (Apperson.)

**Roper, Mrs; or a Marine: the Mariner: naval (— 1868); ob. 'Because they handle the ropes like girls, not being used to them' (Brewer). Of the. C. 17 S.E. sense of roper: one desiring the rope.

**Roper, marry Mrs.** To enlist in the Mariner: naval (— 1864); ob. H., 3rd ed. Ex preceding.


ropes, up to or know the. To be well-informed, expert: artful coll. (in C. 20, S.E.): 1840, Dana, 'The captain knew the ropes; be up to, not before ca. 1870 and only in artful sense.

**Ropes, on the high. See high ropes.**

**Ropes, pull or work the.** To direct; exercise one's influence: coll. (in C. 20, S.E.): from ca. 1890.

**Ropes, put up to the.** To inform fully; to 'put wise': from ca. 1875: coll. Ex ropes, know the, q.v. Behare & Rice, 1877, have 'You've put me up to ropes; up to the . . . is much commoner, at least in C. 20.

**Roping, vbl.n. See rope, v.**

*roper. A scarf; a comforter: traps'm c.: 1782, Greenwood. † wrapper perverted, asks
Rose, Stab with a


rose, strike with a feather and stab with a. To punish playfully: coll.: ca. 1888–1914. Ex a music-hall refrain; cf., however, Webster's M. If I take her near you, I'll cut her throat. F. With a fan of feathers,' 1612. Cf. run through the rose with a cushion, q.v.

rose, under the. In confidence; 'on the quiet'; secretly; ca. M–16–20: S.E. >, ca. 1850, coll. >, ca. 1920. agd. S.E. Dynakin, 1846; Grose. Here, rose, rose-bush; and rose is modern, not Classic. L. Grose, 2nd ed., mentions that the rose was 'sacred to Harpocrates, the God of Silence', as does Sir Thomas Browne.

rose-coloured. 'Bloody'; coll. euphemism (—1923); ob. Manchon. Also roseate: id.; id. Ibid.

Rosely. London County Council 24½% Stock: non-market, late C. 19–early 20. Ex Lord Rosely, who was the 1st Chairman of the Council. Incorrectly Roseberrys or -berries.


rosella. A European working bared to the waist: Northern Australia (—1898). 'The scorching of the skin ... produces a colour which probably suggested a comparison with the bright scarlet of the parrakeets so named,' Morris, roses and raptures. A literary c.p. (ca. 1830–90) applied to the Book of Beauty kind of publication. Ware.

roseys. See rosey.

rosh; roush. To horse-play: Royal Military Academy: from ca. 1880. Hence, stop roshing /, be quiet! Perhaps a corruption of rouse.


rosin. A fiddler: coll.: 1870, Figaro, Oct. 31, 'They playfully call me “Rosin” ... yet I must ... go on with my playing.' Ex the resin used on violin bows.—2. Fiddler's drink: coll.: mid C. 19–20; ob. H., 3rd ed. Ex S.E. resin, to supply with, or to indulge oneself in, liquor.

rosem-the-bow. A fiddler: coll. (—1864); very ob. Ex a song so titled. Cf. rosin, 1.


rosier. See rozer.—rost = roast. See roast.


rosy, do the. To have a 'rosy', i.e. pleasant, time: Cookney (—1893); ob. Milliken, 'A doin' the rosie, or a man who's 'bargin' and O'Lines lot'.

rost, give the. See give the rosy.


rot. Nonsense trash, 'bosh' (q.v.): s. >, ca. 1920, coll.: 1848, O.E.D. ; 1861, H. C. Pennell, 'Sonnet by M. F. Tupper'. A monstrosity made of quintessential rot.' Like rotter, 'app. first at Cambridge', W. Ex rot, dry rot, decay. Also Tommy rot, q.v., and dry rot: coll. (—1887); † by 1920 (Baumann).

rot, v. To chaff severely: 1890, Lehmann, 'Everybody here would have rotted me to death'; slightly ob. Ex rot, n. (O.E.D.—2. To talk nonsense: 1899, Eden Phillpotts; ob. (O.E.D.—3. In imprecations: late C. 16–19: coll. Shakespeare, 1558, 'But vengeance rot you all.' Sonnets: 'may you go rotten!' Also in rot & c. 17–18, and rot (up)on, C. 17. In rot um, um = 'em, them. (Extant, though ob., in dial.—) 4. To spoil; mar nonsensically or senselessly: 1908, A. S. M. Hutchinson, 'He was rotting the whole show.' Also rot up, as in Desmond Coke, The House Prefect, 1908: orig. Public Schools.

rot! Nonsense!: box 1: from ca. 1860. Henley & Stevenson, 1892, 'Oh, rot, I ain't a parson.' Ex the n., q.v.; quite independent of rot, v., 3. Cf. roten /

rot about. To waste time from place to place; to play the fool: from late 1890's. Ware.


Rot-He-s-Bone, be gone to. To be dead and buried: late C. 18–early 19. Grose, 1785. Punning Rabison. Cf. be gone to the Diets of Worms. rot it /; rot on 1; rot um 1; rot upon! See rot, v., 3.—For rot up, see roo, v., 4.

roten. A wheeled vehicle: 1725, A New Canting Dict.; Grose; † by 1870. Prob. o. Ex La rota. Whence, according to Bee, comes Roten Row: which etymology may be correct.

Rothschild. See come the Rothschild.

rotten. In a deplorable state or ill-health; ill; worthless; 'beastly': from ca. 1880. R. L. Stevenson, 1881, 'You can imagine how rotten I have been feeling.' O.E.D.—2. Drunk: Glasgow (—1934). Proleptic.


rotten! An expletive corresponding to rotten, sense 1: from ca. 1890.


rotten orange; Rotten Orange, the. A follower of William III: William III himself: Jacobites: 1686-ca. 1700. Ware. Because he was Prince of Orange.


Rotten Row, belong to. (Of ships) to be in ordinary; naval: C. 19. Bowen.—2. Whence (likewise of ships) to be discarded as unserviceable: nautical: from ca. 1890; ob. A pun on Rotten Row, perhaps via rotten borough.

rotten sheep. A useless person (esp. male), s


Rouen, client for. A soldier venereally infected: military coll.: 1915; ob. F. & Gibbons. The main venereal hospital was there.


roul.-sl. See Roul.


rough, adj. See rough on. — 2. Of food, esp. fish: coarse, inferior, stale: London coll.: from ca. 1850; slightly ob. Mayhew, 'The ... " rough " fish is bought chiefly for the poor.'

rough, a bit of. A woman, esp. if viewed sexually; low: from ca. 1870.

rough, cut up. See cut up rough.


rough and tumble (often hyphenated). A free fight; a go-as-you-please fight: from ca. 1810; boxing coll. >, ca. 1910, S.E. (The adj. is S.E.) — 2. The female pudend: low: from ca. 1860. Also the rough and ready. Cf. rough, a bit of, and rough maikin.

rough as a sand-bag. (Of a story) very exaggerated; (of a person) uncool or objectionable; military coll.: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Cf. rough as bage.


rough as bags. (Of persons) very rough or uncoo]; Australian coll.: C. 20.

rough as I run or it runs. Though I am rough, coarse, ignorant; it's certainly rough: coll. late C. 17–mid-19. T. Brown, 1687, 'If you don't like me rough, as I run, fare you well, madam'; Ray, 1813, 'Rough as it runs, as the boy said when the ass kicked him.' Apperson.

rough diamond. A person of good heart and/or ability but no manners: from ca. 1750: coll. till ca. 1860, then S.E. The Adventurer, 1765; Lytton.

*rough fam or family: occ. hyphenated. A waistcoat pocket: c.: ca. 1810–50. Vaux. In, fam (q.v.) is the hand; ? ex the habit of putting one's tucker in the pocket.

rough house. Disorder; a quarrel; a noisy disturbance or struggle; coll.: U.S. (1887) anglicised ca. 1910.

rough-house, v. To treat roughly: coll., orig. (ca. 1900) U.S.; anglicised ca. 1914. O.E.D. (Sup.). Ex the n.—2. Hence, to act noisily or violently: coll.: 1920, 'Sapper' (ibid.).

*rougher Walkin (or m.). The female pudend: low Scott. Cf. rougher.

rough on. Hard for; bearing hardly on: coll.: U.S. (1870, Bret Harte), anglicised ca. 1885 (e.g. Besant, 1887). ? ex tough luck (cf. tough luck) — 2. Severe on or towards (a person): coll.: U.S. (1870), anglicised ca. 1890. Hardy, 1895. O.E.D. Cf.:

rough on rias; gen. it's ... Rough luck: from ca. 1890. See rough on.

rough-rider's (or -ers') wash-tub. The barracks water-cart: military: ca. 1890–1915.

rough-up. A contest arranged at short notice;
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round shaving. A reprimand: (low) coll.: from ca. 1870; ob. Ex dial.
round the buoy. See buoy, round the.
round the corner. A military c.p. reply to 'How far is it?': 1914; ob. B. & P.
*round the corner, get (one). Deliberately to annoy an irritable person; cf. c. ca. 1810-50. Vaux, who notes the variant get (one) out.
round the corner, wrong (all). Having had something strong to drink: lower classes: from the middle 1890's; slightly ob. Ware.
round 'un. See round one.
*roundy(-ken). A watch-house or lock-up: c. of ca. 1825-60. Egan. Lit. round place.
rose and shine (naval, c. 19); rise and shine (naval and military, c. 20). A c.p. order to get out of bed. Bowen. B. & P.
rouse. See rouset. See 'Winsome College slang' and of houset (q.v.) for bussle.
roust. An act of kind: coll.: late C. 16-17. Hall, Satires, 'She seeks her third roust on her silent toes.' Ex roust, a roaring or bellowing.
roust, v.i. To coot: coll.: late c. 16-17. Ex roust, n., q.v.; the corresponding S.E. sense is 'to shout, bellow'—2. To steal: c. ca. 1820-80. Haggart. Ex dial. roust, to rout out.—3. See rouse, 3.
*rouser-putters. Cows' feet: c.: ca. 1820-60. Haggart. Ex rouser, (Scots dial. for) a cow

row. A disturbance; a noisy quarrell: 1785, Grose, who says that it was a Cambridge term. S. until ca. 1910, then coll. Esp. in make a row (1787, O.E.D.), kick up a row (1789, O.E.D.), and get into a row. Origin obscure; W. suggests that it is cognate with rouse = carouse.—2. A noise: 1846 (O.E.D.); s. >, ca. 1910, coll. eton School Days, 1884, 'Cheorley cried, Hold your row, will you?'
row! 'Shut up!'; 'pax': Charterhouse: from ca. 1920. Perhaps elliptic for stow that row
row, v. To assail roughly: attack (a person or his rooms): 1790 (O.E.D.): s. until ca. 1890, then coll.; ob. Ex row, n., 1.—2. V.i., to make a disturbance; to quarrel: 1797 (O.E.D.).—3. To 'rag', v.i.: university: ca. 1820-80.—4. To scold severely, to repri mand (v.t.): from ca. 1810: s. > coll. ca. 1810. Byron. n.—5. To criticise harshly or sharply: from ca. 1825; in C. 20, coll. (O.E.D.).—6. See row in the boat.
row?, what's the. What's the noise about? What's the matter or trouble?: 1837, Dickens, 'What's the row, Sam?' (O.E.D.)
row in. To conspire: low: from ca. 1800. Ware. Ex next entry.—2. To work or enter into association (with): grafters' s. (1923). Philip Allingham, Cheapside.
row (in the boat). To go shares (with): c. of ca. 1810-60. Vaux.
row-man. Incorrect for rouderman, a peripatetic labourer: from ca. 1830; ob. O.E.D.
rowdy. Money: from ca. 1840: low. Ob. Leman Redo (roundy); Thackeray (the r.). t ex roddy, n.
rowdy, adj. (Of horse or bullock) troublesome: Australian s. (1872) >, by 1900, coll. C. H. Eden, 1872; A. B. Paterson, 'And I can ride a rowdy colt, or swing the axe all day.' Extension of S.E. sense. Morris. Cf. roughy, q.v.
rowdy-row. Abbr. of next, q.v., or ex rouse-dow, a din. From ca. 1860. H., 2nd ed., 'Low, vulgar; "not the cheese", or thing.'
rowlock phrase. See rullock.
'Roy. 'Fitzroy, a suburb of Melbourne; its football team', C. J. Dennis: Australian coll.: late C. 19-20.
royal. A member of the Royal Family: coll.: 1788, Mme D'Arlay (O.E.D.); ob.—2. A privileged labourer working regularly enough but not on the staff: dockers' coll.: 1883, G. R. Sims.—3. See Royals.—4. See spread the royal.
royal, adj. Noble; splendid; excellent: coll.: from ca. 1850; but not gen. before ca. 1890. E.g. a royal time. (O.E.D.)
person; excessive curiosity or inquisitiveness; U.S. (— 1900), partly Anglicised, esp. in Australia, ca. 1905; slightly ob. Ex 'considerable craning and stretching', as though one's neck were made of rubber as in *The Pall Mall Gazette*, March 8, 1902.

rubber-neck, v.i. in sense of the n. (q.v.): 1932, Dorothy Sayers, *Have His Carcase*, 'She...could not waste time rubber-necking round Wilcombe with Lord Peter [Winsford].'


rubich. See rubbidge.

rubbing-up. The act in rub up, v., q.v. Also rub-up.


rube; reub, reuben or Reuben. A country bumpkin: U.S. (middle 1900's); Anglicised, among 'movie-fans', by 1931. O.E.D. (Sup.). Cf. nick (ex Richard).

rubiform, in Johnson and later lexicographers, is erroneous for rubriform, O.E.D.

rubigo. The penis: (low) Scots coll.: late C. 16–17. R. Samp. † ex L. ruber, red. On L. rubigo (or robigo), rust (on metals), perhaps influenced by L. purigo, lasciviousness.

rubric, in or out of the. 1n. out of, of holy orders: coll.: late C. 17–18. Farquhar. Like rubigo, it is by the O.E.D. considered as S.E.: provisionally, I believe F. & H. to be right.

rub. Blood: boxing: 1860, *Chambers's Journal*; 'Tomes' Marshall, ca. 1886, 'You'd be sore to mark the ruby round his girt.' Cf. carmine, claret, q.v.—2. See:

Ruby, cross the. To cross the Rubicon: fast life: early C. 10, when ruby was s. for port wine. Ware.

Ruby Queen. A young nurse or nursing sister of fresh complexion: military: 1916–18. F. & Gibbons. Ex the issue tobacco so named.

ruby red. The head: rhyming s.: C. 20; ob. F. & Gibbons. (Not very gen.)*


*rub*, v. To lay information (see also ruck on): o. >, by 1900, low s.: from ca. 1884.—2. To grow angry or irritated: low: from ca. 1890; ob. sense 1, or independently ex ruck (up), as applied to clothes; origin of sense 1 is hazy.

ruck (or rucked) along. To walk quickly: ca 1900. Oxford University. While ruck, prob. the earlier form, may derive ex dial. ruck, to go, rucket may be an elaboration suggested by rocket along.

*rock on*: o. rock upon. To 'split on a pal'; blab about (a person): o. >, ca. 1900, low s.: 1884, *The Daily News*, 'I told the prisoner that I was not going to ruck on an old pal.' See ruck.

ruck up, v.i. To get angry; 'blow up': lower classes ('—1923). Manchon.

ruckbery. Recherché: Society: 1890's. Ware quotes *The Daily Telegraph* of April 4, 1898.

rucket along. See ruck along.

rucktion; gen. ruction. A disturbance, uproar, noisy quarrel, 'row': dial. (—1825) >, ca. 1830, coll. In the pl., trouble, esp. noisy and avoidable trouble. The C. 19 variant 'ruction, combined with Lover's use of the word, points to origin in insurrection; P. W. Joyce, in *English in Ireland* postulates 'the Insurrection of 1798, which was commonly called "the Ruction."' (W.; O.E.D.)


ruddock. A gold coin: 1567, Turberville: † by 1750; ob. indeed by 1650, it occurs in neither B.E. nor Grose. Occ. red or golden ruddock. Prob. ex ruddock, a robin (redbreast); cf. ruddy.—2. In pl., money, gold; esp. gold money: late C. 16–17. Also red or golden r. Heywood, ca. 1607 (printed 1631), 'They are so flush of their ruddockas.' Cf. glister and rudy and red one (or an). *Ruddy. A sovereign: o. and low sporting (—1887). Baumann has thirty ruddy, £30. Ex colour. Cf.;

ruddy, adj. Bloody; confounded: euphemistic s.: from ca. 1905 (see Collinsin, p. 26). (Synonymous colour; rhyme.) Cf. rose-coloured, q.v.—2. Hence, the ruddy edge, the utter 'limit' (—1923). Manchon.—3. Adv., as in Maurice Lincoln, *Oh! Definitely, 1933, 'I had ruddy well... locked the door.'


*ruffler or -er. See ruffer.

*ruffmans. A variant of ruffmans.

ruffer. One who is rough: lower classes (—1900). Ware.

*ruffian. See ruffin.—2. In boxing s., a boxer disregarding science in his desire for victory: ca. 1820–90. Egan's Grose.

ruffin or Ruffian; also spelt Ruffan. The devil: o. 1567, Harman (ruffian); Dekker (*Ruffin*); B.E. (*Ruffin*); Grose (Ruffian); Ainsworth (*Old Ruffin*). Ruffin, the name of a fox (C. 13–early 16), influenced by ruffian, a cut-throat villain.—2. Whence, a justice of the peace: o. ca. 1630–1820. Fletcher, ca. 1822 (Ruffin); B.E. (Ruffin); Grose (ruffin, 1st ed.; 2nd ed., ruffian).

*ruffin, to the. See nines, to the.


Ruffin's (or -ans) Hall. A coll. of ca. 1590–1860, thus in Blount, 1674, 'So that part of Smithfield was antiently called, which is now the Horse-market [in London], where Trials of Skill were paid by ordinary Ruffianly people, with Sword and Buckler.' Neshe, Massinger. (O.E.D.)

Ruffians' Hall, he is only fit for. A c.p. applied to an apprentice overreached: London: coll.: ca. 1640–1820. Fuller; Grose's *Provincial Glossary*. Ex preceding.

*ruffian. See ruffer.


*ruffer; also ruffler or -er, ruffer, ruffner, ruffer. A vagabond: o. ca. 1830–1850. Cop-
land.—2. Esp. one of the 1st or the second order or rank of ‘canters’: C. 17–18. B.E. and Grose (1st order); A New Canting Dict. (2nd).—3. A beggar pretending to be a maimed soldier or sailor: c. of ca. 1860–1830. Awdayle; Grose, 1st ed. (The term derives ex ruffe, to deport oneself arrogantly.)

*ruflman, n. A hedge: c. of ca. 1820–1840. Fleisch (1822). Grose. Lit. rough time.—2. Harman and B.E. define it as the wood, a bush; Grose as a wood, a bush, or a hedge: as wood or bush, it is a special application of sense 1: ca. 1565–1840. See -mans.

*ruf. See ruffern.

*ruflus or Rufus. The female puldow: low: mid-C. 19–20; ob. Ex rufous.

rug. See bus.—See rug, at.—Rug. A Rug-beam: Rugby School (—1892).—See:


 Cf.:

rug, at. In bed; saddle: low (c.): ca. 1810–60. Prob. rug (of bed) influenced by all rug; an interesting clue is offered by the Devonshire rug, warm. Cf. ruggins, q.v. (Egan’s Grose).

Rugby, real. Cruel: Public Schools (—1909); virtually †. Ware, Ex the roughness of Rugby football.

[Rugby School slang.—Its sole (?) remarkable feature is that -er which, when introduced among Oxford University undergraduates, > ‘the Oxforder’, q.v.


*ruggins: more gen., as in Vaux and in Egan’s Grose, Ruggins’s. Bed: c. of ca. 1810–60. Lyttleton, 1828, ‘Todle off to ruggins’. An elaboration of rug of rug, influenced by all rug and at rug; or perhaps merely rugging (coarse blanket cloth) pluralised or genitivised (‘rugging’s), with g omitted.

*ruggy. Safe; withdrawn, secluded: c. (—1887) ob. Baumann. See rug, all.


*rules over, run the (occ. a). To search: c. (—1810) gen; now coll. H., 58th ed.; Horlerey; ‘Pomes’ Marshall, ‘Run the rule through all | His pockets.’ Cf. rub down, which has remained low c., and friek, ob. c. ‘No. 747’ has it for 1845; (of a pickpocket) to feel over the person of (a prospective victim).

rufer, v. To rap, beat, with a ruler: coll. 1850, Dickens; ob. O.E.D.

rullock. A rowlock: nautical coll. (—1887). Baumann, who has sho% one’s ear into a seaman’s rullock (to seek a quarrel with a sailor), which is ob.


*rum bleating cheat*. A (very) fat wether: c.: late C. 17–early 19. B.E.

*rum blown* (C. 19) or *blower* (late C. 17–18). 'A handsome wench', Grose, 1st ed.; esp. one 'kept by a particular Man', B.E. See blowen, blower.


*rum boh*. 'A young Prentice; also a sharp, sly Trunk, and a pretty short wig', B.E.: late C. 17–early 19, except the third (t) by 1780.

*rum-boole*. A variant of *romboyle*, n.: q.v.

*rum boose, bouse, buse, buze*. (See booshe, n.) Good wine (mid-C. 18–19) or other liquor (C. 17–19): c. Harman; B.E.; Grose.


*rum bubbler*. 'A dexterous fellow at stealing silver tankards from inns and taverns', Grose, 1st ed.: c.: late C. 17–18. B.E. Ex bub, liquor.


*rum chant* or *chaunt*. 'A song', Grose, 3rd ed.: 'a good song', Vaux, 1812: the latter seems to be the correct definition. A late instance of *rum*, adj. 1.


*rum clan* is Baumann’s misprint for...


*rum clout, wipe, wiper*. 'A Silk, fine Cambrick, or Holland Handkerchief', B.E.: c.: late C. 17–19; *wipe* not before C. 19.


*rum coll*. A rhymo-needed variant, early C. 18, of *rum cul*, 1.


*rum cully*. Elisha Cole’s variant (1676) of *rum cul*, 1.

*rum customer*. A person, an animal, that it is risky, even dangerous to meddle with or offend: late C. 18–20. Cf. *queer cuss*.


*rum dab*. 'A very Dextrous fellow at filieing, thieving, Cheating, Sharping, &c.', B.E. (at dab, not at rum): late C. 17–early 18: c.

*rum degen* or *tol* or *filter*. A splendid sword; esp. a silver-hilted or silver-inlaid one: c.: late C. 17–18. B.E.; Grose.

*rum dell, doxy, mort*. A handsome whore: C. 17–early 19. Jonson (room mort); B.E. (in this sense, *dell* and *doxy*); Grose (id.).—See separately *rum doxy* and *rum mort*.


*rum drawers*. Silk, or very fine worsted, stockings: c.: late C. 17–18. B.E.; Grose.

*rum dropper*. A vintner (wine-merchant); landlord of a tavern: c.: mid-C. 17–18. Coles, 1676; Ned Ward (1709); Grose.


*rum duke*. A jolly, handsome man: c.: late C. 17–18. B.E.; Grose, who (1785) adds, 'an odd eccentric fellow' or, as he defines at *duke*, 'a queer unaccountable fellow': c.: late C. 18–mid-19. Extant in East Anglian dial, in 1903 (E.E.D.D.).—3. Gen. in pl.: 'The boldest and stoutest fellows lately among the Alastians [see Alasias], Minters, Saoyards, and other inhabitants of privileged districts, sent to remove and guard the goods of such bankrupts as intended to take sanctuary in those places', Grose: c.: late C. 17–mid-18. B.E. (This is the only one of Grose’s *rum*-terms that we find in dial.: in sense 3.)

*rum fam* or *fem*. A diamond ring: c.: ca. 1850–90. F. & H. See *fam*.


*rum fun*. A sharp trick; a clever swindle: c.: late C. 17–18. Ibid.

*rum gagger*. One of those impostors ‘who tell wonderful stories of their sufferings at sea, or when taken by the Algerines’, Grose, 1st ed.: c. of ca. 1780–1850; then nautical s. (witness Smyth, 1867), with the Algerian gambit omitted; ob. *rum gait* or *gill*. (In B.E. and Grose, *rum gal*.) See *rum coe*.


*rum glimmer*, gen. spelt *gymmar* (or -er). The chief of the link-boys: c.: late C. 17–18. B.E.; Grose. See *glim* and gymnar.

*rum go*. A puzzling and not too respectable contretimp; a mysterious (not merely because wholly unexplainable) offence or esp. development of a plot, situation, etc.: from ca. 1850. Thackeray, 1850 (O.E.D.), and George Eliot, 1876; *rummy go* is in Punch, 1841. See *rum*, adj., 2, and *go*, n.


*rum goy*. A smuggling and not too respectable contretimp; a mysterious (not merely because wholly unexplainable) offence or esp. development of a plot, situation, etc.: from ca. 1850. Thackeray, 1850 (O.E.D.), and George Eliot, 1876; *rummy go* is in Punch, 1841. See *rum*, adj., 2, and *go*, n.

*rum hopper*. A drawer at a tavern: c.: late C. 17–18. B. E. One who hopes or ’springs to it’ with great alacrity.


*rum Joseph* or *Joseph*. A very good coat or cloak: c.: late C. 17–18. B. E. at Joseph.


*rum kicks*. ‘Breeches of gold or silver brocade, or richly laced with gold or silver’; Grose, 1st ed.: c.: late C. 17–early 19. B. E.


[rumkin, postulated by F. & H., is prob. an error on S.E. rumkin.]

*rum maund* (or *maund*). ‘One that Counterfeits himself a Fool’ while begging: c.: late C. 17–18. B. E. Grose. See maund.

*rum maundr*. A late C. 18–19 early form of the preceding. F. & H., where it is defined as ‘a clever beggar’.


*rum nab*. ‘A Beaver, or very good Hat’; B. E.: late C. 17–early 18, the former (Shadwell, 1688); until ca. 1830, the latter. See nab, n.


*rum omece* (or omer), oo. rum homer, of the case. See omece, omer.


*rum peck*. Good food: c.: late C. 17–early 19. B. E. (at peckidge); Grose; Moncrieff.


*rum phiz or phys*. ‘An odd face or countenance’; Grose, 1st ed.: low: from ca. 1780; ob.


*rum quick* is a misprint in Baumann for:


*rum Row*. ‘Position outside the prohibited area taken up by rum-running vessels’; coll.; U.S., anglicised before 1927; ob. Collinson; C.O.D. (1834 Sup.)


*rum slim* or *slum*. Punch: c. ca. 1780–1890. Parker (slim); Egan (slum); H., 3rd ed. (slim).

† the ‘originator’ of rum sling, rum punch (of gin sling).


*rum squeeze*. Copious drink for the fiddlers: c.: id. Ib.

*rum start*. An odd occurrence: s. and dial.: from ca. 1840; slightly ob. as s. Recorded in *No. 747* as used in 1845.


*rum tilter*; rum tol (see tol). A rum degen, q.v.: c.: late C. 17–early 19. B. E.; Grose.

*rum Tom Pat*. A clergyman (not a hedge priest): c. of ca. 1780–1840. See adam, v.

*rum topping*. A rich head-dress: c. of ca. 1670–1810. B. E.; Grose. Orig. of the style designated by commode.

*rum touch*. See touch, rum.—rum un (‘un’). See rum one.


*rum wipe or wiper*. See rum clout and quotation at rummy, adj.

*rumble*. An (improvised) seat for servants at the back of a carriage: 1808 (O.E.D.): coll. till ca. 1840 > then S.E.; ob. Abbr. rumble-tumble, q.v.—2. A stage-coach: coll.: ca. 1830–50. This differentiation (F. & H.) is open to dispute.—3. The surreptitious opening of the throttle to enable one to land at the desired spot: Royal Air Force’s: from 1932. Perhaps ex sense 2 of:

*rumble*, v. To rule out unceremoniously, handle roughly: ca. 1810–50. (O.E.D.) Ex rumbodye, v. —2. Hence, to test, try; handle; examine; c. of ca. 1820–1900. Haggart.—3. Hence, v.i. & t., to detect; fathom; understand; low: from ca. 1875. Benstead, 1895. ‘I soon rumbled he was in it when I heard...’ Cf. tumble to, by which this sense may have been suggested and has certainly been influenced.

*rumble-tumble*. See rumble, n. 1. C. 19: coll. till ca. 1830, then S.E. Ex the noise.—2. Any wheeled vehicle that rumbles: 1800, J. Beresford (O.E.D.); † by 1910. Coll. till ca. 1840, then S.E. and dial.

**RUMBLER, RUNNING**


rumbo! Splendid!: lower and lower-middle classes: ca. 1860-1915. Ware: ex Sp. via the Greek.


rumbolling. Anything inferior or adulterated: nautical (—1864). H., 3rd ed. (Occ. as adj.) Prob. a corruption of S.E. *rumbolline*.—2. Grog: nautical (—1885). Ex sense 1, but perhaps influenced by rumbo and:


*rumbustious*: occ. († in C. 20) *rumbustious*. Same as *rumbustious*, q.v.: coll.: 1778, Foote, ‘The sea has been rather rumbustious.’ Lyttton, 1863, *rumbustious*. Prob. a perversion of robustious on dial. ram, very, strong, and rum, adj., 1. (This type of word >, ca. 1840, very gen. in U.S.: cf. *calumcamps, rumbfunctions*.)


rumgumption. Common sense: coll. (mostly Scots and Northern): from ca. 1770. A strengthened form of gumption, q.v. (The adj. is gen. considered to be dial.)

*rummy. Finely; excellently; gallantly; strongly: c. of ca. 1670—1770. Head; B.E. In C. 17, often romdy, as in Bowlands, 1690. Ex rum, adj., 1—2. Oddly; eccentrically: a.: 1819, Moore, ‘Thus rumly floored.’ Ex rum, adj., 2.

rummage. To caress a woman sexually; possess her: low coll.: C. 18—20; ob. Ex S.E. rummage, to disarrange, disorder; to knock about.


rumny. A Canadian term of address (—1932). John Beams. Perhaps ex:


*rummy, adv. ‘Capitally’, excellently, well: c. of ca. 1825—40. Moncrieff, 1830, has ‘We chaunt so rummy’ (cf. rum chant, q.v.) and ‘We frisk so rummy.’ Ex rum, adj., 1, via some of the *rum combinations.

rumour, i. it’s a; often ‘s a rumour. A military c.p. (1915—18) in retort on ‘an opinion expressing a very well-known fact or [on] a statement emphatically (and, usually, disagreeably) true’, B. & P.


rump, he hath eaten the. A semi-proverbial c.p. applied to one who is constantly talking: ca. 1670—1800. Ray.

rump, loose in one’s or the. (Of women) wanton: coll.: C. 18—mid-19. D’Urbyve.

rump and a dozen. An Irish wager, ‘A rump of beef and a dozen of claret’, Grose, 2nd ed.: coll. late C. 18—mid-19. Also called butlock and trimmings (Grose).


rump(-and)-stump, adv. Completely; utterly: dial. and coll.: from ca. 1820; ob. Lit., rump
and tail; cf. lock, stock, and barrel. A rhyming phrase perhaps suggested by (utterly) stumped. The synonymous rump and rig is wholly dial.

**Rump Parliament**. (See Rump.) Not before 1670; soon S.E.


**rump Administration.** Copulation: low coll.: C. 19-20; ob. Cf. rump, v., 2, and :—

*run*ped. See rum pad.

**rump.** A whore; a whoremonger: low: C. 19-20; very ob. Ex rump, v., 2, though partly a pun on Rump, a member of the Rump Parliament.

**rumpotion.** A 'rumpus': 1802 (O.E.D.): coll. till ca. 1820, then dial. Prob. ex rumpus on rumpotion.

**rumpity.** One thirty-second of £1: Stock Exchange: 1887. Cf. tooth, q.v.

**rumpus.** An uproar or, † in C. 20, a riot; a 'row', quarrel: coll.: 1764, Foote, 'Oh, Major! such a riot and rumpus! Always in collocation with riot before ca. 1785; Grose has it in his 2nd ed. Also without article, gen. as riotousness, noise, quarrelling: 1768, O.E.D.; slightly ob.

W. suggests a s. use of Gr. ἄδουλος, spinning top, also commotion, disturbance; tentatively, I suggest a fanciful perversion of rumble, used, esp. as v., of the noise made by the bowsels (C. 16 onwards), for Grose, 1785, says 'There is a rumpus among my chitterlings, i.e. I have the collick.'—2. A masquerade: c. : ca. 1810-40. Vaux.

**rumpus, v.** To make a 'rumpus': coll.: 1830, Hood (O.E.D.): ob.

**rumpitum.** In fine condition, gen. of a bull or a whoremonger: ca. 1810-40. Egan's Grose. Cf. rumpitum, rumtiddly-tum, in refrains, though these are unrecorded before 1820.

*Rumville. See Rome-Ville.*

**rumy.** A good girl or woman: tramps' and Gypsy c. (—1859). H., 1st ed. A perversion of Romany romeni, a bride, a wife.

**run.** To manage: U.S. (1827), anglicised as coll. ca. 1860; in C. 20, S.E.—2. Run (the preterite tense): a frequent C. 18-20 col. Cf. give for gave—3. To seize, irritate, nag at: Australian coll. (1888) >, ca. 1910, S.E. ; rather ob. 'Rolf Boldrewood'. (O.E.D.)—4. To charge with a 'crime': naval (Bowen) and military: from not later than 1915. Ex run in, q.v.—5. To arrest: military (C. 20) > gen. s. (—1931). Lyell. See run, be, for it is gen. in the passive. —6. To report (a prisoner) to the governor of a gaol: c. (—1932). Anon., Dartmoor from Within.—7. To go out often with (a person, or the subject of a) man and a girl: from ca. 1910. Prob. ex the turf.—8. To let the water run into (the bath): domestic coll.: C. 20. R. Highens, The Paradise Case, 1933, 'Without summoning his valet, [he] went to "run" the bath.'

**run-about.** From ca. 1890: coll. See compulsory.

**run, be.** 'To be placed in arrest': military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Cf. run, 4, 6, and run in.

**run, do.** To take a walk, a 'constitutional': coll.: from ca. 1880.—2. Esp. have a run for it, q.v. run, let it. See let it run.

*run, on the.** Wanted by the police: orig. (late C. 19), c.; by 1925, coll. In c., however, it implies leaving the usual haunts when one is wanted by the police.

*run a rule over.* See rule over.

**run across.** To meet by chance: late C. 19-20: coll. till ca. 1905, then S.E.

**run as swift as a pudding would creep.** To be very slow: coll.: early C. 17. Appleton.

**run away and play marbles!** An insulting c.p. rejoinder or dismissal: late C. 19-20. C. H. Bacon, a Sadbergh boy, aptly pointed out, in July 1934, that an exact equivalent occurs in Shakespeare's Henry V: where the Dauphin sends the King a present of tennis balls. Cf.: run away and play trains! See trains.

**Run Away, Matron's Coming.** Less a nickname than a military c.p. directed at the Royal Army Medical Corps: G.W., but not very gen. F. & Gibbons.

**run big.** To be out of training: sporting: late C. 19-20; ob.

**run down.** The gangway or bridge between stage and auditorium: conjurors' coll. (from ca. 1880) >, in C. 20, S.E.

**run (something) fine.** (Esp. run it or that fine.) To leave only a very small margin (gen. of time): coll.: 1890 (O.E.D.).

**run for, have a.** To make a fight: coll.: from ca. 1850; slightly ob.

**run for one's money, a.** An ample quid pro quo; extended liberty; a good time in exchange for one's money: from ca. 18: racing a. >, ca. 1890, coll. >, by 1930, S.E.

**run goods.** 'A maidenhead, being a commodity never entered', Grose, 2nd ed.: ca. 1786-1840. Punning the nautical sense, contraband.

**run in.** To arrest: coll. >, in C. 20, S.E.: 1872 (O.E.D.); H., 6th ed.

**run of one's teeth and knife and fork, the.** Victuals free: a, 1841 (in C. 20, coll.): coll. (ca. 1860) >, in C. 20, S.E. Ex the run, freedom, of a place.

**run off one's legs.** Bankrupt; gen. he is run off his legs. Coll.: ca. 1670-1760. Ray. (Apple-

**run on.** To run up an account: lower classes' coll. (—1887). Baumann.

**run on (a person), get the.** To play a dirty trick on (him): c. (—1887). Baumann.—2. See run upon.

**run on, get the.** See run upon ... run one way and look another. To play a double game: coll.: from ca. 1850; ob.

**run one's face, or shape, for.** To obtain an article on credit: coll. orig. (—1848) and mainly U.S.; anglicised ca. 1880; ob. (O.E.D.); F. & H.)

**run one's tail.** To be a whore: from ca. 1850. See tail.

**run out on.** To embroider, enlarge on: coll.: late C. 19-20; ob.

**run-out, the; often abbr. to R. O. A faked auction: grafters': C. 20. Philip Allingham, Cheapjack, 1934. See also R. O. workers.

**run over him, the coaches won't.** He is in gaol. Also where the cockshes . . . , gaol. A coll. c.p. ca. 1820-70. Cf. where the flies won't get at it.

**run over shoes; be run over shoes.** To get, be, heavily in debt: coll.: late C. 18-early 17. Appleton.

**run rings round.** See rings round.

**run rusty.** See rusty.—run the rule over. See rule over.
run the show. To manage an enterprise, entertainment, etc.: from ca. 1915.

run thin. To back out of a bargain: from ca. 1880; ob. Ex dial.

un to. To understand, comprehend: coll. (—1859). H., 1st ed.—2. To afford, be able to pay: 1869, H.: coll. till C 20, then S.E. Always in the negative or the interrogative. Ex horse-racing, thus:

run to it, won't. A sporting c.p. (—1909; ob.) applied to a horse that has insufficient staying power to reach the winning-post. Ware.

run to seed; occ. hyphenated. Pregnant: low coll.: from ca. 1860; ob.—2. Shabby: coll.: 1837, Dickens, 'Large boots running rapidly to seed'.

run upon (a person), get the. To have the upper hand of; be able to laugh at: coll. (—1850) >, by 1890, S.E.; very ob. H., 1st ed. Also get the run on.

Runaway Prestonpans, the (Great). The 13th Hussars: military: 1745; ob. Some of their men panic'd in this battle which Sir John Cope lost to the Young Pretender. Also the Evergreens and Green Dragoons; Geraniums; Ragged Brigade; runned. Run; ran: sol., esp. Cockneys (—1887). Baumann.


runner-up. A docker 'employed by gangers to live upon the gangs and expedite the work': nautical: late C. 19–20. Bowen.

*runners. He who 'calls over' the names of the horses competing or running in a race: turf c. (—1932).

*running glazier, glazier. A thief posing as a glazier: c. of ca. 1810–70.


running leather, havers shoes of. To be given to wandering or rambling: semi-proverbial coll.: from ca. 1850; ob.

running (occ. flying) patterer or stationer. A hawker of books or more, broadsheets, newspapers, about the streets: C. 19, c. > low s. (Mayhew); late C. 17–19, coll., as in B.E., Grose, H.

*running-rubber. See rubber.

*running smobble. 'Snatching goods off a counter, and throwing them to an accomplice, who brushes off with them,' Grose, 2nd ed.: c. of ca. 1787–1840. Cognate with smovable (or smable), q.v.; of the next entry; as running smamble, it occurs in 1718, in C. Hitchin, The Regulator.

*running snavel. A thief specialising in the kinchin-lay, q.v.: c. C. 18. Cf. preceding entry and see snaffle, of which snivel is a corruption on smable.

running stationer. See running patterer.


rural, do a. To ease oneself in the open air: coll.: C. 19–20; ob. Obviously suggested by Swift's pluck a rose (see at rose).

rural coach. A tutor not attached to a college: undergraduates' (—1897); ob. Baumann.

*rush. (See also rusher.) A robbery (specifically with violence) of many objects at one rush: c.: from ca. 1785. Cf. U.S. rush, a street encounter, which Thornton records at 1860.—2. Hence, any swindle: c. or low s.: from ca. 1840. Cf. rush, v., 1 and 2.—3. See Moving-Picture Slang', p. 6.


rush, do a. To back a safe horse: racing: from ca. 1860; ob.—2. To lay a dummy bet: bookmakers': from ca. 1870. I.e., rushing the public into betting on this horse.

*rush, give it to (one) upon the. To make a violent effort to get in or out of a place: c.: ca. 1810–40. Vaux.

rush, give one the. To sponge on a person all day and then borrow money from him at the finish, 'or pursue some such procedure,' H.: low: from ca. 1860.


*rush-dodge. See rush, n., 1, and rusher, 1.

rush for and rush out of. See rush, v.


rush one's fences. To be impetuous: 'County' coll.: C. 20. Ex the j. of hunting.

rush up the trills or petticoats or straight. To colt with a woman without any preliminary blandishments: low coll.: from ca. 1850; ob. The third comes from horse-racing (cf. rush, room on the).

*rusher, gen. in pl. 'Thieves who knock at the doors of great houses, in London, in summer time, when the families are out of town, and on the door being opened by a woman, rush in and rob the house; also housebreakers, who enter lones—unoccupied—houses by force,' Grose, 1st ed.: c. of ca. 1790–1860. Cf. rush, n., 1.—2. A person (gen. male) of a 'go-ahead' nature or habits: coll.: late C. 19–20; ob.

rushing-business. Robbery by adroitness or with apparent fairness: c.: from ca. 1890.

ruskit. Rustic; a late C. 19–20 sol.

*ruskit; B. A pocket-book: c. (—1877); ob. The reference in 'No. 747' is valid for 1845. Because made of Russia (leather).


Russian Coffee-House, the. The Brown Bear tavern in Bow Street, Covent Garden, 'a house of call for the thief-takers and runners of the Bow-street justices,' Grose, 2nd ed.: ca. 1787–1830. Because the brown bear is a characteristic of Russian fauna.
Russian duck. *Musk:* rhyming s. (—1923). 

Russian law. 'A 100 blows on his bare skin,' John Day, 1641: mid-C. 17 coll.

Russian socks. Rags bound about one's feet on a march: French Foreign Legion (—1935).


*rust,* v.i. To collect and sell old metal: London: (1884) = ob.

*rust,* in. Out of work; theatrical: 1889 (O.E.D.); ob. *Punning rust,* (see *rust,* in.)

*rust,* nab the. To be refractory (orig. of horses); hence, take offence: of ca. 1780-1890. Grose, Ist ed.; H., 5th ed. *Cf. rusty._—2. To be punished: of: ca. from 1890; † by 1850. *Cf. nab the toop,* the tease, quiz, v.—3. See *rust,* n., 2.

*rust,* take the; also *nab the rust.* (Of horses) to become restive: coll.: 1776, Colman (take *rust.* Ob. (O.E.D.))

*rustic.* A recruit; military (mostly officers): from ca. 1925. Ex his 'greenness.'

*rustiness.* Annoyance (state of); bad temper: 1860, Whyte-Melville (O.E.D.); ob. *Ex rusty,* adj.

*rusting.* The frequent vbl.n. of *rust,* v., q.v.

*rustle.* To become oneself, esp. in business: U.S. (—1872), anglicised ca. 1886 as a coll. But *rustler* (adopted by Morley Roberts in 1887) has not caught on. In C. 20, gen. *rustle,* q.v.—2. Among Canadian soldiers in the *O.W.*, *rustle* and *rustler,* ex the U.S. senses, to steal cattle and cattle-stealer, were the equivalents of *scrounge* and *scrounger.* B. & P.

*rusty.* An informer: c.: 1830, Lytton, 'He'll turn a rusty, and scrag one of his pals!' † by 1910. Ex.

*rust-y.* Ill-tempered; annoyed: coll.: 1815, Scott, 'The people got rusty about it, and would not deal.' Esp. cut up, or turn, rusty. Prob. ex: *rusty* (or grub), rids. To be sullen: coll.: ca. 1780-1840. Grose, 1st ed. *Ex rusty,* restive, applied esp. to a horse.

*Rusty Buckles.* The 2nd Dragoon Guards: military: C. 19-20; ob. F. & Gibbons. Also *the Bays.*

*rusty guts,* rusty-guts; *rustyguts._—An old blunt fellow,' B.E.: late C. 17—mid-18.—2. Then, though now slightly ob., any 'blunt surly fellow,' Grose, 1756. Both B.E. and Grose consider it a 'jocular misnomer of rusticus_—

*rust, keep a.* To make mischief: coll.: late C. 17-18. † ex dial. *rut,* friction (itself ex *rub;* the O.E.D. considers it ex *t* rut, noise, disturbance, which is the more likely, for dial. *rut* may not date back so far.


*rustier._—1. One of a party (gen. numbering four) of swindlers; he stood at the door: c.: late C. 16, Greene.


*rux._—Bad temper; (a gust of) anger, passion: *Public Schools* (—1934). C.O.D. (1934 Sup.). Either ex Lincolnshire *ruck,* a noise, a racket, or, more prob., ex Kentish have one's rack up, to be angry (E.D.D.). —2. To 'rag,' to get up to mischief: Dartmouth Naval College: C. 20, Bowen. Either ex the origin, of sense 1 or ex *rags._—ry. A sharp trick; a dishonest practice: Stock Exchange: late C. 19-20; ob. It may possibly be a distorted abbr. of *rig,* n., q.v.

*ryakonite._—Incorrect for *ryhacolite._ C. 19-20. O.E.D.


*ryder._—A cloak: low: ca. 1870-1910. † **rider,** that which rides on.

*rye._—See *Romany rye._

*rue mort,* rye mush._—A lady; a gentleman: c.: C. 20. James Curtis, *The Gin Kid,* 1936. For *rye,* see *Romany rye._ mort, c. for a girl or woman; and see *mush,* n., 7.—cf. *coring mush* and *tobor-mush._

*ryer._—One shilling and sixpence: turf c. (—1932). Perhaps a corruption of *kye,* q.v.

*ryno._—See *thino._

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[F. & H. records the following ineligible under s. S.E._—Sabbing or s.; *Sachsevere(l);* saddle a place, s. one with a thing; sadly (> dial.); safe phrases not done separately; sail near (etc.) the wind; St. Martin's evil and St. Lawrence's tears; for (old) sake's sake, etc.; salad days or stage; salamannder, anything fire-proof; sally-port; salmagundy, the dish; salt (senses and phrases not treated separately); saltimbanc; sample of sin; Samson's posts; sandwich boeat; sandy pale; sap, ale; sapper (—skull) and /save-head(s); sappy, polish; sand, scarce, vegetables; sauce for the goose . . . ; sauce-pate; sauce, pay, pay an exorbitant price, serve with the same sauce; saunter; save-all, a miser; saw in cords; say-so; scabhard (sexually); scabdomian; scabby sheep; scaffolders; scalas- bance; scamp, a rogue—to do badly; scampery; scandal-proof, lost to shame; scant of grace; scape; scape-gallow, -grace, -shift; Scaresmouch(e); scarlet, to wear; Scarlet Woman; scatterbrain(ed); scattergood, scattering; scene and behind the scenes; sceptre; schimm-monger; scissors and paste; scrob; scronch; a fine; scorpion of the brow; soundbed; scout, watchman, mean fellow; scraggy; scramble; scrape, trouble, a miser, a term at fiddling, and scrape, to bow; scrape-shoe and fencer, scraper, scraping, scraping; scrapey, etc.; scratch(e), also dial. 'scratch,' adj. and v.; screecher and screechly; screw, senses, etc., not listed; scroyle; scrub where not herannder; scrum; sound, v.; scal (or skul)-duggery; soum; soumber; scramble; sourry; scute;
Sack, Break a Bottle...

stroker; stroller; strum (v. in music); strumpet; strut-noddy; stub, a fool; study; unspecified stuff's; stuffy, airless; stump, etc., unrecorded; suburb, etc.—but see note on; succuba, -us; suck, etc., where unspecified; sufferer, a loser; sugar, flattery, and sugar-loc'l; suit (complete series, etc.); sulky, n.; sullen; unrecorded summer; sumplins; unspecified sun's; Sunday best; Sunday's fanny; suferer, a loser; Dow, sure's, including surey; surmount; unpercollate; swab, etc., unspecified; swag-belly; swaining; unrecorded swallow's; swarm; swaah (and -er, -ing); unspecified sweare's; sweet, id.; sweater, a jersey; sweep, etc., undetailed; sweet, id.; swim, etc., where not detailed; swine, id.; swing, id.; swinge, id.; swish, id.; swobber; swollen head.

Dial.—Sandgate rattle; sancebox, the mouth; scaffold-and-ruff; scallops; scale; scree'd o' drink; screw, a stomach-sore; shrudge; shack, n. and adj.; shag, etc.; shackle, -gab; shamrock; shaney; shant it; shard; sharge; sherry-mow; (do a) shift; shine, n.; shinefast; shoard; shoot-and-shot; side-winder; sit (of milk), sit a woman sit in, sit-still nest; skelpie; skinnemedam; skitter-brain; sky-wannoking; (on the) skite; slab; slate; slammocks; slammock; slanmerkin and slanmerkkin; slatnap; slapper; slave-Andrew; slavey; sliving; slump, adv.; smekit; smokin; (smot) (hat); smug (small); manly; snuff (a breath); snip; snoach; snoob (moons); snook, n. and v.; so (pregnant); soldier, v., and soldier's thigh; sonkey; sow-child and -drunk (of. swine-drunk, S.E.); sozzle, a heavy fall; spiddock-pot legs; spitter; spruq; aquit; squatters; stacia; stag (a romping girl); staggering Bob; slam-hang; stand-further; stang(e)y; star-bason; start; stepmother; stickit minister; stiffer, a bussybody; stumble; stink-a-puss; (go a good) stitch; stocky, irritable; Stockport coach (properly chaise); strava(i)g; strut (liquor); stump and rump (perhaps also coll.); sumph; swad (lout, lump); swankey (small beer); swattled.

's; rarely 'a. A coll. euphemistic abbr. of God' in oaths; gen. continuous with governing words as in 'blood and strife'; C. 16-20; from mid-C. 18, or earlier.

's. (Contrast with dial. s, shall.) Is: late C. 16-20; S.E. until C. 18, then coll. (though permissible in verse). Richardson, 1741, 'The Devil's in't if we are not agreed in so clear a case' (O.E.D.). Or even 'it is (the s forming liaison with the next word)'; coll.: C. 20. Eg. H. C. Bailey, Mr. Fortune Wonders, 1923, 'You wouldn't blame your dear boy! Your only one! 'tis too bad.'—2. Are; sol.: C. 19 (and presumably centuries earlier).—Bamberg.—3. Has; coll.: from C. 1540.—4. Us: late C. 16-20; S.E. until C. 18, then dial. except in 'let's', which is coll. Richardson, 1741, 'Let's find him out' (O.E.D.).—5. As: C. 18-20; dial. and, more rarely, coll.—6. As; a mostly in 'matter of fact': low coll.: late C. 19-20. Eg. J. A. Bloom in The Passing Show, July 7, 1934.—7. As = 'his', 'a has not emerged from formal and, in C. 19-20, dial. speech.—8. This; coll.: late C. 19; from mid-C. 18, or earlier. Dora; coll.: late C. 19-20. Neil Bell, Winding Road, 1934, 'When's Parliament reassemble, Stephen? 'Mostly after when but not unknown after how, as in 'How's he do it? It beats me!'—10. See preceding entry.

's. 'As I write (1917) there is a slang tendency to say enice for nice, etc.,' W. See esp. enice mince pie.

S.A.; S.A. Sex appeal: from ca. 1929. Agatha Christie, 1930; Dorothy Sayers, Have His Carcase, 1932, 'The girl... exercising S.A. on a group of rather possessive-looking males.'

's luck! (Fron. 'stuck'; occ. written so.) Here's luck!'; coll.: from D. Francis D. Grierson, Murder at Lancaster Gate, 1934.

S. and b.; S. and B. An occasional variant (—1887; very ob.) of b. and a. Baumann.

S.M., the. The company sergeant-major; military coll.: C. 20. (Never in the vocative.) F. & Gibbons.

S.O.B. or s.o.b. 'Son of a bitch'; mostly Australian: from ca. 1926. Christina Stead, Seven Poor Men of Sydney, 1934, 'That s.o.b. Montagu got me the job 'ere, you know.'

S.O.L. Unlucky: Canadian: C. 20. B. & P. Euphemistically 'short of luck', actually 'sh*t, out of luck'.

S.O.S. See same old stew.

S.O.S. course. The Sniping, Observation and Scouting 'course of training at the Sniping Schools established in 1916; military jocular coll.: 1916-18. F. & Gibbons. Prompted by S.E. 'S.O.S.'

S.P.E. Small profits, quick returns: jocular coll.: C. 20. O.E.D. (Sup.)

S.R.D. See seldom reaches destination.


sa.; Six; showmen's, mostly Parliarce: from ca. 1850. P. H. Emerson, 1893, 'I was hired out... for so sold a day.' Ex Lingua Franca.

sa. Save, esp. in God as' me: C. 17-mid.19: S.E. till ca. 1600, then coll. Shadwell, 1808, 'As God shall sa' me, she is a very ingenious Woman' (O.E.D.).

saam. 'Eg. 'Can I come saam?'' 'He went saam'' meaning ''Can I come with you?'' 'He went with them.'... An imitation of the Dutch idiom, '—saam, together—and is current in the Midland districts of the Cape Colony,' Pettman: South African coll.: C. 20.

Sabela. Incorrect for Sabian: C. 19-20. O.E.D.

sabe, save, savvy. See savvy.

sable Maria. A variant († by 1920) of black Maria, q.v.


sack, v. To 'pocket' take (illicit) possession of: coll.: C. 19-20; ob. E. S. Barrett, 1807, 'He sacked the receipts, without letting them touch one farthing,' O.E.D.—2. To dismiss one from employment or office: from ca. 1840. Gen. in passive. Ex (get and/or) give the sack. —3. To defeat (in a contest, esp. in a game): from ca. 1820 (orig. Anglo-Irish); rare after ca. 1860. I ca'sack, to plunder.—4. To expel: Public Schools: from ca. 1880. Desmond Coke's school stories, etc. Ex sense 2.

sack, bestow or confer the order of the. See sack, order of the.

sack, break a bottle in an empty. To make a
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chesting bet, a hocus wager, 'a sack with a bottle in it not being an empty sack,' Grose, 2nd ed.; coll.: late C. 18–mid-19.

sack, buy the. To become tipsy: s. > coll.: ca. 1720–1840. A New Canting Dict., 1725; Grose, 1st ed. Ex sack, generic for the white wines formerly imported from Spain.

*sack, dive into a. To pick a pocket: e.: late C. 17–early 19. B.E.

sack, get or give the. See get or give the sack. Cf.:

sack, the order of the. Gen. as get or give (occ.
bestow, confer) the order. . . . A dismissal from employment, a discharge from office, a being discarded by sweetheart or mistress (rarely lover): from ca. 1860. Yates, 1864, "I'd . . . confer on him the order of the sack." See also give the sack, and cf. order of the.


*sacking, prostitution; sacking law, harlotry as practised by the underworld with a view to further gain: c. of late C. 16–early 17. Greene, 1592, 1591 resp. Ex the S. E. v., sack, to lay waste.


sacks to the mill, more. Pile it on; there's plenty here!: coll.: late C. 16–18, then dial. Nashe; Middleton & Rowley in The Spanish Gipsie; Richardson. (Apperson.)


sacrauli, -tytle. An error for serratitle: ca. 1540–80. O.E.D.


sacrifice. A(n alleged) loss: coll.: ca. 1880, S.E. Dickens, 1844, "Its patterns were last Year's and going as a sacrifice." Esp. alarming or astounding a.

sacrifice. To sell, or claim to sell, at less than cost price: from ca. 1800: coll., >, ca. 1880, S.E. Ex the n.

sad. Mischievous, troublesome, merry, dissipated: late C. 17–20 (ob. except in sad dog); coll. Chiefly of a place ('London is a sad place,' Mackenzie, 1771) and of a person, esp. in sad dog, in C. 18–19 a debauched fellow, and thereafter rare except in playful reproach. Farquhar, 1706, "S. You are an ignorant, pretentious, impudent Coxcomb. B. Ay, ay, a sad dog."


saddle. The female pudend; woman as sexual pleasure: coll. verging on euphem. S.E.: C. 17–20, but rare since C. 18.—2. 'An additional charge upon the benefits' from a benefit-performance: 1781, Parker: theatrical, † by 1920.

saddle-back. See saddleback.—saddle becomes . . .

See saddle suits.


saddle on the right or wrong pole, put the. To blow:—to praise the right or wrong person (loosely, act thing): coll. (in C. 20, S.E.): from ca. 1750. Ex the earlier set . . . (1607) and lay . . . (1652), both † by 1840. An occ. variant: place, mid-C. 19–20, ob. (O.E.D.) Also a. upon . . .


saddle suits a sow, suit one as a. To suit, become, fit ill; be very incongruous: coll.: C. 18–19.

Swift, who has become for suit.

saddle the spit. To give a meal, esp. a dinner: coll.: late C. 18–mid-18. Grose, 3rd ed. Ex S.E. saddle a spit, to furnish coll. [saddle up. To saddle (a horse). Considered by Pettman to be a South African coll.: but it has always, and everywhere, been S.E.]

saddle upon . . . See saddle on . . .


safe . . . . a. E.g. 'He is a safe second,' i.e. he is sure to obtain second-class honours: coll.: late C. 19–20. (S.O.D.)

safe (and sound), be or arrive. To have duly arrived, be at one's destination: coll.: 1710, Swift, 'I send this only to tell that I am safe in London.'

safe as . . . . As. Very safe: coll.: none recorded before 1800, thus: as safe as a church, 1801, Hardy (not very gen.): safe as a crow (occ. sow) in a gutter, ca. 1630–1730, Clarke, Ray; as a mouse in a cheese, ca. 1670–1750, Ray; as a mouse in a mall-heep, ca. 1630–1700, Clarke, Ray; as a mouse in a mill, ca. 1600–60, Davenport; as a thief in a mill, ca. 1620–1750 (then dial.), Beaumont & Fletcher, Swift; as anything, from ca. 1890, P. & H. (1903); as Chelsea is dial.; as coons, 1864, † by 1920; as horses, 1864, Yates; as safe, 1860, Whyte-Melville (O.E.D.); as the bank of England, 1923, J. S. Fletcher; as the bellows, 1851, Mayhew (mostly Cockney, † by 1930). With hearty thanks to Apperson, the 'locus classicus' for safe as; as for so many other coll. similes and semi-proverbial c.p.p.


safe uns. A horse that will not run, certainly will not (because meant not to) win: the turf: 1871, 'Hawk's-Eye', Turf Notes. 'The safe uns, or... uns . . . horses that have no chance of winning.'

sag. 'To drift off a course': nautical coll.: late C. 19–20. Bowen.


sahibs; saddles bit or girl. See bint.

said. Have said; esp. in you said it: U.S., anglicised ca. 1931 via the 'talkies'. Dorothy Sayers, Murder Must Advertise, 1933, "The idea being that . . . ?" ... "You said it, chief." said he. E.g. "Do you like that?" ... "No, said he flourishing!" ... a coll. c.p. (—1927). Collinson. Prob. ex the novelist's trick and the journalist's mannerism.

said than done, no sooner: 2, (that's) easier. Both these phrases, obvious in meaning, are C. 19–20 coll.
sail about. To saunter about: coll.: late C. 17-mid-18. B.E.

sail in, v.i. To arrive, to enter: coll.: from ca. 1870. Ex B.E. sail in, to move in a dignified or a billing manner.—2. Hence, to begin boldly (to act): from ca. 1880.—3. Hence the special sense, to begin to fight: 1891, The Morning Advertiser, March 30. Cf.: sail into. To attack, e.g. with one's fists: from ca. 1991. —2. To begin vigorously on (e.g. a meal). Cf. sail in, 3.—3. To enter (a building, a room, etc.): C. 18-20. Tom Brown, 1700, 'From thence I sailed into a Presbyterian Meeting near Covent-Garden,' O.E.D.: cf. sail about, q.v.


sailor's blessing. A curse: nautical: from ca. 1890. Cf. 'seek you, Jack, I'm all right and sailor's farewell.'

sailor's champagne. Beer: lower classes' jocular coll. (—1909); ob. Ware.


sailor's pleasure. Yarning, smoking, dancing, growing, &c.: Clark Russell, 1883; ob. As applied to the first three, it is S.E.: to the last, coll. Cf. sailor's privilege.—2. 'Overhauling his sea chest and bag and examining its contents': nautical: C. 20. Bowen.

sailor's waiter, the. A second mate on a sailing-ship: nautical: (—1840); ob. Dana; Bowen.


sails, take the wind out of one's. To nonplus; surprise, gen. unpleasantly: mid-C. 19-20: coll. (orig. nautical) >, ca. 1905, S.E.

sails like a haystack. See haystack.

saint. 'A piece of spoil in the cabin of a cooper master's shop, like a saint, devoted to the flames,' Grose, 2nd ed.: ca. 1785-1800.—2. (Saint.) One belonging to a religious association at Cambridge: a nickname: ca. 1793-1830. They affected a great sanctity and a marked zeal for orthodoxy (see e.g. Gradua ad Cantabrigiam, 1803).—3. A member of that party which, in England, instituted and fostered the agitation against slavery: a nickname: ca. 1830-50. O.E.D.—4. An inhabitant of Grahamstown, the City of the Saints (q.v.): South African (—1913). Pettman.—5. (Gen. pl.) See Saints.

St is more logical than St., as the Fowler's indicate. (St's, more accurate still, is pedantic.) The same applies to Bp (Bishop), Dr, Mr, etc.]

St Anthony, dine with. A variant of dine with Duke Humphrey, to go without dinner or, loosely, any other meal: 1749, Smollett, translation of Gil Blas.

St Alban's clean shave. The clean-shaven face of a high churchman: ecclesiastical: late C. 19-early 20th.

St Alban's doves. Two active canvassers of 1869: political of that year. Ware. Ex their church.

St Anthony pig. See Anthony.—St Anthony's pigs. See Anthony's pigs, St.

St Benedict. See St Peter.


St Francis. See St Peter.


St George, riding and the dragon upon. See riding St George.

St George a-horse-back. The act of kind: C. 17-18. Massinger, ca. 1632, omits St. Cf. St Giles, dine with. See dine with St Giles.—St Giles's bread. See Giles's bread.


St Giles's Greek. See Giles's Greek, St.

St Hugh's bones. Shoemaking tools: coll.: C. 17-mid-18; then dial., extant in Cheshire. Dekker, 1600; E. Ward, 1700. Apperson.

[St John to borrow, 'See borrow', F. & H.: but not there. † = a nut: see E.D.D. at St John. Or perhaps a loan or a pledge or surety: see E.D.D. at borrow. Prob. there is an error.]

St John's Wood donas. Harlots, courtesans: taverns: ca. 1880-1912. Ware. Many once lived there.

St Lubbock's day. A bank-holiday: 1871: coll.: ob. Ex Sir John Lubbock, the institution, who brought in an Act in that year. Ware records St Lubbock, an orgy or drunken riot: lower London: ca. 1880-1914.

St Luke's bird. An ox, 'that evangelist being always represented with an ox,' Grose, 1st ed.: c. or low: ca. 1780-1850.


St Martin's lace. Imitation gold-lace: coll.: 1607, Dekker; H., 5th ed. (Cf. etymology of tassery.)

St Martin's ring. A copper-gilt ring: coll.: C. 17-early 18. Anon., early C. 17, Plain Percival, 'I doubt whether all be gold that glistereth, sith Saint Martin's rings be but copper within, though they be gilt without.'

St Martin's the Grand. A hand: rhyming a: (—1857). 'Dancing Anglos.'

St Mary's knot, tie with. To hamstring: Scota coll.: 1784, The Poetical Museum. (F. & H.)

Saint Monday. Monday: South African coll.: (—1896). Because observed as a holiday by the Malays. Pettman. Ex.:—2. Esp. keep Saint Monday, to be idle on Monday as a result of Sunday's drunkenness: 1763, The Scots Magazine, April, (title) 'St Monday; or, the tiping trademen.' O.E.D.

St Nicholas. See Nicholas.


St Peter. Silence and mortification; St Radegonda, a small cross studded with nails; St Benedict, a hair-shirt; St Francis, the discipline, i.e. the whip or
St Peter's son. (Gen. in pl.) A general thief, having every finger a fish-hook; Grose, s.v. *fidiam ben*, q.v.; c. of ca. 1780-1840. *St Peter's son.*

St Peter's the Beast. St Peter-le-Bailey; Oxford undergraduates; from ca. 1890. To rhyme with St Peter's in the East. Ware—whose definition is incorrect.

St Radegonda. See St Peter.

St Stephen's hall. No. 15 Committee Room, House of Commons: Parliamentary: in the 1880's. Ware. (See also Addenda.)


St Thomas a' Watering, the 'Spital (or 'spital) stands too nigh. A semi-proverbial c.p. derived ex London topography, *watering* being a pun: C. 17-mid-18; e.g. in the anon. play, *The Furlan*, 1607. 'Wide where we ship' most tears are sometimes guilty of such indiscretions as render them proper subjects for the public hospitals,' Hazlitt. (There is a cynical early C. 17 play dealing with a woman successfully courted at her husband's funeral.)


sakes (alive)! A (low) coll. exclamation: from ca. 1840: mostly dial. and U.S. (O.E.D.)


sal hat, or S.H. An umbrella: lower classes (—1900). Ware. Perhaps ex a proper name: cf. *Mrs Camp* and † S.E. *sal hat*, a dirty wench.

sal slappers. A common woman: costers' (—1900). Ware.

salams! (My) compliments (to you, her, etc.): Anglo-Indian coll., fairly genuine in C. 20 and almost S.E. Ex Arabic for 'Peace (be upon or with you).'

sala. After having been waked to, have another man's nautical, applied only to officers (—1877) Cf. the C. 16-early 17 S.E. P. *pick a salad*, to be trivially engaged.

sala march. A 'March of ballet girls in green, white, and pale amber—from the usual colours of salads': late C. 19-early 20 theatrical coll. Ware.


*salamon*. A C. 17-19 form of *salamon*, q.v.


Salisbury. A civil lie; a polite evasion: political: ca. 1860. *The Pall Mall Gazette*, March 5, 1890. 'The famous Salisbury about the Secret-Treaty... must henceforth be read 'cum grano salis-burry', 'Ex the statesman.'

Salenger's (or Sellinger's) Round, dance. To wanton; oppugne; coll. C. 17-early 18. Salenger's *Round* was an indecent ballad of ca. 1600; lit. *St Leger's*.

Sally. See Johnnycake.

Sally. See Aunt Sally.—2. (Also sallow.) An Australian corruption of Aboriginal *sallee*, acoa. Morris.

*sally, v.; sallying, v.b.n.* These c. terms, valid for 1865 in *'No. 747'*, are of obscure sense: it is, however, clear that they refer to some not very skilled 'dodge' for illicitly obtaining money.

Sally Nixon (occ. sall.). Salenixon (sal enixum); workmen's: from ca. 1880. O.E.D. (Sup.). By *Hobson-Jobson*.

Sally Booze. Sally-la-Bourse, a village on the Western Front: military: G.W. (F. & Gibbons.)


*salmon; occ. *sallamon, salomor or an, and* salomon. The Mass: Harman defines as also an altar, a sense not recorded after C. 16. Rare except in by *salmon*, by the Mass; the begging's expletive or oath, or in the C. 18-early 19 *so help me salmon*: c. of ca. 1530-1830. Copland, *Overbury, Moore-Carew, Scott.* Prob. a corruption of the Fr. *serment*, an oath.—2. A C. 19 aab. of sense 3 of:


salmon-gundy. A (rather low) coll., indeed almost sol. form of *salmagundy*: late C. 18-early 19. Grose, 2nd ed. (See also *salmagundy*.)

*salmon, -mon.* The former a frequent, the latter a rare variant of *salmon*, q.v.: resp. C. 17 and mid-C. 18-early 19. Resp., *Overbury, Harman, Middleton, Shirley*.

Sal's sleep at. To sleep at a Salvation Army shelter: lower classes (—1923). Manchon.

salt. A sailor; esp. one of long experience, when often old salt (as in Hughes, 1861) coll.; c. 1840. Dans, 'My complexion and hands were enough to distinguish me from the regular salt.' Ooc., perhaps by 1910, ob.: *salt-water*.—2. (An instance of) sexual intercourse: coll. mid-C. 17-early 18. Ex *salt* amorous, lecherous. Cf.:

salt, v.i. To copulate: coll. (?): C. 17-early 18. Ex the S.E. adj.: cf. *salt*, n., 2.—2. V.t., to admit (a freshman) by putting salt in his mouth, making him drink salty water, or practising on him some similar burlesque: students': ca. 1570-1600. (O.E.D.)—3. In an invoice or account, to price every article very high, gen. in order to allow a seemingly generous discount on settlement (*salt an account, an invoice, etc.*): commercial: 1882. Ogilvie. Perhaps directly ex next sense.—4. To insert in the account books fictitious entries with a view to enhancing the value of a business to a prospective buyer: commercial (—1864). H., 3rd ed. (Gen. *salt a book, the books, etc.*). Prob. suggested by.—6. In mining, to sprinkle or plant an exhausted or a boggy claim with precious dust, nuggets, or gems: orig. (—1864), of gold in Australia; of diamonds, ca. 1890; of oil, ca. 1900. H., 3rd ed.; *The Pall Mall Gazette*, Dec. 22, 1894. 'Even experienced mining men and engineers have been made victims by salters.'—6. To introduce
salt, adj. Dear, costly, excessive in amount (of money); C. 18–20 dial. >, ca. 1850, s.; as a, slightly ob. H., 2nd ed., "It's rather too-salt," said of an extravagant hotel bill"; F. & H., "as salt as fire = salt as may be." Also saltily. —2. Aristocratic; wealthy: 1868 (O.E.D.); slightly ob. Ex salt of the earth, a phrase that began ca. 1840 to be used of the great in power, rank, wealth,—a trivial use that, during the G.W., > ob.—3. Drunk: late C. 19–early 20. Abrbr. salt jink, adj. (q.v.). Ware.

salt, we shan't take. Our box-office returns will be very small: theatrical c.p. (—1909). Ware. 'We shall not take enough money to pay for salt, let alone bread.'

salt and spoons, come after with. To be slow or dilatory: coll. late C. 17–18. B.E., 'One that is none of the Hastings' = Hastings (sort), q.v.

salt away. See salt down.


salt-beef squire. More usual than salt-horse squire, q.v. (F. & Gibbons.)

*salt-box. A prison cell; esp. the condemned cell at Newgate: c. of ca. 1810–90. Vaux; Egan's Grose; H., 2nd ed. Ex (1 smallness and) bitterness.


salt down; occ. in C. 20, away. To put by (money, 1873, or stock, 1897) to store it away. Ex salt, to preserve with salt. O.E.D.

salt el. A rope's end, esp. in have (a) salt el for supper, to receive a thrashing: ca. 1820–1850: naval coll. Mabbe, Congreve, B.E., Smollett, Colman, Grose. (O.E.D.)


salt it for (a person). To spoil or ruin something for: C. 20. Manchon. Ex salt, v. 5.

salt jink, adj. Drunk: rhyming s.: ca. 1890–1910. Ware.—N., see salt horse.

salt on one's, its, the, tail—cast or fling or lay or put or throw. To ensnare, capture: coll. mid. C. 17–mid-19, C. 18–19, late C. 16–mid-16, mid. C. 16–20, and C. 19–20. Lyly; 'Hubrida' Butler, 'Sue': Sue's achievements cannot fail' = To cast salt on a woman's tail = (see tail) (Swift) (Fling); Lamb, 1806, 'My name is ... Betty Finch ... you can't catch me by throwing salt on my tail' (Apperson); Dickens, 1861 (put).


saltash luck. 'A wet seat and no fish caught': naval: C. 19–20 Bow. Ex Saltash, a small town four miles N.W. of Devonport.


sailer. One who salts mines: from ca. 1890. See salt, v. 5.

sailing, vb.n. See salt, v. 2.—2. See salt, v. 5.


salts and sennas. A doctor: a nickname from ca. 1860; ob. Ex salls; cf. No. 9.

salt's pricker. A 'thick roll of compressed Cavendish tobacco': naval (—1909). Ware.

sally. See salt, adj. 1: mostly U.S. (1847, Rabb.)

salubrious. Drunk: from ca. 1870; ob.—2. In reply, esp. to a query as to health, 'Pretty or very well, thanks!' = from ca. 1880; ob. Perhaps via scrupulous, q.v.

salvage. A New Zealand soldiers' synonym of to make (steal), scrounge, souvenir, win: in G.W. By meliosis.

Salvation Army, the. The Salvation Corps: military: from 1815. (B. & F.) Contrast salvo.


salve over. To persuade or convince by plausibility or flattery: coll. 1862 (O.E.D.).


Sam. occ. sam. A Liverpudlian: dial. and s.: from ca. 1840. Perhaps ex sammy, 1, q.v. Also and gen. Dicky Sam (1864, H., 3rd ed.)—2. Hence, a fool: 1845, Moncrieff, 'I'm a ruined homo, a muff, a flat, a Sam, a regular ass.' Ex sammy, n., 1, and adj.—3. See sam, upon my, and sam, stand.


sam, or Sam, stand. To pay the reckoning, esp. for drinks or other entertainment: 1823, Moncrieff; 1834, Ainsworth, 'I must insist upon standing Sam upon the present occasion'; Henley. Prob. the sam is cognate with that of upon my sam, and derives either ex salmon, q.v., as I prefer, or ex Samuel, as the O.E.D. suggests; H.'s theory of U.S. origin (Uncle Sam) is, I feel sure, untenable. Also stand sammy.—2. stand sam to, to promise (a person something): C. 20. (Neil Bell, Andrew Otway, 1931.)

Sam, uncle. See Uncle Sam.

sam i, upon my; more gen. 'pon my sam! A jocular asseveration: 1879, F. J. Squires (O.E.D.). See preceding entry for etymology; it is, however, not improbable that 'pon my sam is a corruption of dial. 'pon my song(e), recorded as early as 1860, by my song occurring at least as early as 1790, and my song ca. 1840 (E.D.D.). Cf. say-so, on my (sammyn), q.v.

Sam Hill. Hell, e.g. 'What the Sam Hill': Cockney euphemism: C. 20.

Sambo, gen. in address. A Negro: coll.: from
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c. 1860; orig. U.S. (Nautically, any Negro rating.) Ex S.E. sense, a Negro with a strain of Indian or European blood.

same, the. The same person: coll. 'in confirming a conjecture as to the identity of a person mentioned by the speaker': 1889, Chatterbox, Aug. 24, "The bushranger, do you mean?" asked Allan. "The same": O.E.D.

same like. Same as: exactly like: coll., almost so. From c. 1870. W. Pettig, Mord Emly, 1898, 'Beef Pudding same like Mother makes'—a cheap eating-house's advertisement.


same old 3 and 4. Three shillings and four pence a day wages: workmen's (c. 1900); by 1920. Ware.

same time. At the same time: i.e. nevertheless, or, 'but, mark you,...': coll. (mostly in dialogue): C. 20. E.g. Freeman Wills Crofts, Myster in the Channel, 'Same time, if we do not learn of her elsewhere, we shall see the skipper of every lugger on the coast.'

same to you with knobs on, (the). See knobs.


sammy (or S.), stand. A variant of sam, stand, q.v.: 1923, Moncrieff; ob.


sammy up; samming-up. See sammy, v.


sample. To caress intimately, or to 'occupy', a woman for the first time: coll.: C. 19-20. Ex sample, to obtain a representative experience of: Cf. —2. To drink: from ca. 1840. Porter, 1847, 'Old T.' never samples too much when on business. Via 'drink as a test or trial.'

sample-count. A commercial traveller: commercial coll.: 1894, Egerton; very ob.


sam(p)son or S. A drink of brandy and cider, with a little water and some sugar: dial. and s.: from ca. 1840; ob. Halliwell. Also, mainly dial. and from ca. 1880, Samson with his hair on, which denotes a very strong mixture of the same ingredients, as in 'Q ', Troy Town, 1888 (E.D.D.).—2. A baked jam pudding: Durham School: from ca. 1870. Both senses ex the sense of power, the second perhaps also ex toughness.


Samson and Abel. Oxford University: from ca. 1860. 'A group of wrestlers in the quadrangle of Brasenose. [Some said it represented Samson killing a Philistine; others Cain killing Abel: the matter was compromised],' F. & H., 1903; H., 6th ed., 1874.

san fairy (Ann or Anna). See sanfairyann.


san skillets, or S.S. The same-culottes of Paris: protelactor: late C. 18. Ware.


sanc. A hiding-place (e.g. for pipes): Dartmouth Naval College cadets': C. 20. Bowen. Ex sanctuary.

sand pipers. See sank.


sand, eat. (Gen. of the helmsman) to shorten one's watch by turning the hour-glass before it has quite run out: nautical: or coll.: ca. 1740-1820. Memoire de M. du Guay Trouin (properly Du Guay Trouin or Duguay-Trouin), 1743. Ex the sand in the glass.

sand-bag, -boy, -proper, -man, -paper. See these as single words.

sand-storm. 'A soup of boiled maize...from its brownish colour': military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons.

sand-storm medal. (Gen. pl.) An Egyptian Army decoration; military: late C. 19-20. Ibid.

*sandbag. A long sausage-shaped bag of sand used as a weapon: orig. (—1871) c.; by 1900 gen. s. and by 1820, S.E. Pocock, Rules of the Game, 1895. (It leaves almost no mark; often employed by soldier deserters or gangsters on Salisbury Plain and on the Etaples dunes during the G.W.) Hence: sandbag, v. To fell with a sandbag: orig. (—1890) c.; > ca. 1910, gen. s.; > ca. 1919, S.E. App. both weapon and word—see O.E.D.—were first used in U.S. Hence sandbagger.

sandbag duff. An Army pudding made from ground biscuit: New Zealanders: in G.W.

* sandbagger. A ruffian using a sandbag as a
weapon: c, orig. (1884) U.S., anglicised ca. 1890: by 1910, gen. a; by 1920, S.E. Sapper.
Sap-American. The Grenadier Guards: from ca. 1856: military. Ob. Also known as the Bermuda
Exiles, Coal-Heavers, Housemaid's Pets, and Old Eyes.

sandy (properly sand-boy), as happy or jolly or merry as a. Very happy, etc.: resp. late C.19—20,
never very gen.; 1823, 'Jon Bee,' this being the usual form; 1841, FitzGerald, 'We will smoke
thee together and be as merry as sandboys' (O.E.D.). These coll. phrases > S.E. ca. 1850, ca. 1870,
ca. 1910.

Sandgroper. (Gen. pl.) A Western Australian: specifically
Australian's: C. 20. The State of W.A. consists
mainly of sand.
sandman (from ca. 1870, occ. sandy man) is
calling, the. Addressed to, or remarked of,
children showing signs of sleepiness: a nursery
coll.: 1881 (O.E.D.). Cf. drowsman, q.v. Ex rub-
ing eyes as if sand were in them.
sandpaper. To rub out or off; to remove: 1889,
Anon., Feb. 9, 'Can't do it,' said Lancaster,
and I hope to be sandpapered if I try.' Ob.
sandpapering the anchor. 'Doing unnecessary
work aboard ship': nautical jocular coll.: mid-

sands, leave or put a person to the long. To
abandon; places in a difficulty: Scota coll. of.
ca. 1670—1700. J. Brown, 1678, 'How quickly they
were put again to the long sands (as we say),' O.E.D. Ex sands, a desert or perhaps a sand-bank.
sandwich. A sandwich-man: 1864 (H., 3rd ed.)
though adumbrated by Dickens ca. 1836: coll. >,
ca. 1910, S.E.—2. One of the two boards carried
by a sandwich-man: a cachetistic sense dating
from ca. 1880.—3. A gentleman between two ladies:
from ca. 1870 (H., 6th ed., 1874); ob. Perhaps ex
Thackeray's 'A pale young man ... walking ...
as sandwich' (Vanity Fair, 1848). Rather coll.
than s.
sandwich, v. To set or insert between dis-
similar: from ca. 1860: coll. >, ca. 1910, S.E.
sandwich board. A police-ambulance stretcher:
lower classes': ca. 1870—1914. Ware.
sandy. A Bookman; a coll. nickname (—1785),
mosty Scott, Gros, 1st ed. Ex Sandy, abbr.
Alexander, a very gen. Scottish name.—2. (sandy.)
Gen. pl., 'Thames barge men who dregge for sand
in the river': nautical coll., esp. Thames-side: late

(—1916). O. J. Dennis.
sandy man. See sandman is coming, the.
sanfairyann is; or san Fairy Ann? It doesn't
matter: military c.: from late 1914. B. & P.; F.
& Gibbons; Hugh Kimber ends his War novel, San
Fairy Ann, 1927, thus: 'There is a magic charter.
It runs, "San Fairy Ann"', a perversion of Fr.
ca ne fai rien (that makes no odds). Variants
san fairy, san fairy Anna, and (Aunt) Mary Ann.
sang (occ. sank) bon. Very good indeed; as n.n.,
a 'nap' hand at cards: military: 1915: ob. F. &
Gibbons. Ex Fr. cing foi bon. Cf. sanka.
sap, a. A drink of drinking (to excess): coll.:
ca. 1820—70. Halliwell. Ex S.E. sense, a cold
drink made of spiced wine diluted.

Ex the inventor of a special kind. (Ware.)
sanguinary, jocular for bloody, is a, verging on
coll.: C. 20. O.E.D., 1909. Cf. blood-stained, rose-
coloured, ruddy.

Sanguinary Doublets, the. The Piccadilly Saloon:
ca. 1850—62. H., 3rd ed. Because situated at
No. 222 (Piccadilly).

Sanguinary James. (Cf. bloody Jimmy, its
sanitary is incorrect for sanitary: mid-C. 19—20.
O.E.D.
sank, sanny, occ. sancipees or centipes, —F. &
erroneously centipers. A tailor employed by a
clotliier in the making of soldiers' clothing: ca.
1780—1870. Grose, 1st ed. Perhaps ex Yorkshire
dial. sanny, boggy, spongy, but prob. cognate with
dial. sank, to perform menial offices as servant in a
dining-room, itself a variant of skink, to wait on the
company (see Grose, F.).
sank bon. See sank bon.
sank-work. The making of soldiers' clothes:
coll.: ca. 1850—1920. Mayhew, 1851; Baumann.
This word bears a curious resemblance to the C. 14
S.E. sank, to bring together; cf. blown together,
q.v.; see, however, remarks at sank, whence it
derives, and cf. Mayhew's suggestion that the origin
resides in Fr. saney (Norman san), blood, in refer-
ence to a soldier's work or to the colour of his
coat.
sankey. A five-frame note; military; late 1914;
ob. F. & Gibbons. Ex Fr. cing france.
Sankey's Horse. The 39th Foot, now the Lorcet-
shire Regiment; military: C. 18—20. F. &
Gibbons. Ex the name of its colonel in the War of
the Spanish Succession (1701—13) and a 'tradition that
the battalion was mounted on mules for special
service.'
sanmieran. Rare for sanmieren.
san's ill-used: see Fowler.—2. Worthless; use-
less; 'dud': Bootham School (—1925). Anon.,
Dict. of Bootham Slang. Ex the Shakespeare
quotation. Cf. the Bootham wet.

Santa. Santa Claus: coll., mostly of the nur-
santar or —er. He who, in a trio of thieves work-
ing together; carries away the booty: c. late C.19—
early 17. Greene, 1591. L.e. to sanctuary.
santeit! See under galek!

Santy. Santa Claus: coll., mostly Canadian:
late C. 19—20. (John Beames, Gateway, 1932.) Cf.
Santa.
sap. A fool or a simpleton: 1815, Scott: coll.
> ca. 1900, S.E. Milliken, ca. 1893, 'Sour old
sap.' Abbr. sapokull.—2. One who works, esp.
studies, hard; a book-worm: schools: 1708,
Charlotte Smith; 1827, Lytton, 'When I once
attempted to read Pope's poems out of school hours,
I was laughed at, and called a sap'; Goschen, 1888,
'Those who ... commit the heinous offence of
being absorbed in [work]. Schools and col-
leges have invented ... phrases ... such as
'sap', 'smug', 'swot', 'blote', 'a mug-
ster': Whence?
sap, v. To be studious or a great reader: schools:
1830 (O.E.D.), but implied in sapping. See also 'Eton slang', § 3.
sap out. To work up (a subject); resolve (a problem or a 'construe'): Shrewbury School:
from ca. 1880. Desmond Coke, The Ending of a
sapper. One who studies hard: Eton: 1825,
SAPPERS, the. The Royal Engineers: military coll.: from 1866, when the Royal Sappers and Miners were amalgamated with the Royal Engineers as the Corps of Royal Engineers. F. & Gibbons.
sappy. Of (a coming) severe: Durham School: from ca. 1870. Ex S.E. sense: vigorous, rich in vitality, perhaps influenced by dial. sense, putrescent. (—As = foolish, sappy dates from C. 17; certainly S.E. up till ca. 1860; by 1870, it seems to have > coll.: see e.g. H., 8th ed.)
Sara. A Saratoga trunk: Australian: C. 20. E.g. John G. Brandon, Th’ Big City, 1931. (Often personified.)
sarc. (Occ. sark.) Sarcasm: schools’: from ca. 1820. Cf. sarky, q.v.
[sard, to copulate, C. 10–17, seems to have, in late C. 16, > a vulg.]
Sardine. ‘The nickname of the Prince of Wales, son of King George V, when [a few years before the G.W.] he was a naval cadet at Dartmouth,’ Bowen. SARIDINE-BOX. A prison-ven: lower classes’ (—1909); ob. Ware. (Packed as if with sardines.)
sarga; sarge. Sergeant: military coll.: sarge only, sarge mostly, in address: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. (Not merely, nor prob. even orig., U.S.)
sarlgentemente. So gentlemanly: satirical low coll.: ca. 1870–1900. Ware.
sark. To suck: Sherborne School: from ca. 1860. P. of sar, q.v.: cf. sarky.—N.: see sark.
sarnit. ‘A smart and soilderly pronunciation of sergeant’, used only before the surname; sarnit-major can, however, be used without the surname: coll.: C. 20. B. & P.
sasby, have (in dancing): sol.: mid-C. 19–20; mostly U.S.
Saucebox.
sashey. See sasby.
sasstiny. A jocular form of satinity and a sol. form of society: both, from before 1887. Baumann.
sat-upon. Repressed, humiliated: down-trod- den: coll.: from ca. 1890. O.E.D. (Sup.)
Satan Montgomery. Robert Montgomery (1807–55), who, at the ripe age of twenty-three, wrote a long poem entitled Satan, compound of puffing pretentiousness. (Dawson.)
saturation. An occ. variant (—1891; ob.) of soaked, very drunk. Lyell.
saturday nighter. At Harrow, an exercise to be done on Saturday evening: late C. 19–20.
Saturday pie. A ‘resurrection pie: lower classes’ (—1900); ob. Ware.
Saturday-(to-)Monday. A mistress for the week-end: coll. (—1905); very ob.
sauce, v. To charge (a person) extort-ionately: coll. (or jocular S.E.) : late C. 16–early 17. Shakespeare.—2. To strike; to thrash: coll.: 1598, Jonson; † by 1750.—3. Hence, in C. 17–18, to reprimand (severely); rebuke smartly: coll. Shakespeare. (Extant in dial.)—4. Hence, to address impertinently: low coll.: from ca. 1860. Dickens, 1865, ‘Don’t sauce me in the vicious pride of your youth.’ (All dates, O.E.D.)
sauce, carrier’s or poor man’s. Hunger: mid-C. 19–20: coll.; but the latter much S.E.
sauce, eat. gen. to have eaten sauce. To be saucy: coll.: C. 16. Skelton, who has the variant to have drunk of sauce’s cup.
Sauce than pig, (have) more. (To be) very impudent, impertinent: coll.: late C. 17–18. B.E. Cf. saucepan run over, q.v.
saucebox. An impudent or impertinent person: coll.: 1688, Marples’s Epitaph: ob. Tyldon, 1594, ‘You, master saucebox, lobcock, cockesbomb;’ Fielding; Miss Mitford. Cf. sauce, n. 1.—2. (Also dial.) ‘In low life it also signifies the mouth’; H., 3rd ed., 1884; recorded, without comment, in the ed. of 1860.
saucepan on the fire, have the. To be desirous of, ready for, a scalding bunt: coll. and dial.: mid-C. 19–20; almost † as coll. Cf.:
saucepan runs (occ. boils) over, your. You're very saucy: a late C. 17–18 e.p. or coll. B.E. (runs ...). Cf. sauce than pig.
sauces. Eyes, esp. if wide-opened or very large: coll.: 1864, Mark Lemon, 'I always know when he has been in his cups by the state of his saucers.' Ex S.F. eyes like (or as big as) saucers, saucer-eyes (or -eyed), etc.
saucy box. A 'saucesbox' (1), q.v.: coll.: 1711, Swift; † by 1780. (O.E.D.)
Saucy Pompeys, the. See Pompadours, the.
Saucy Seventh, the (old). The 7th Hussars: military: C. 18–20; almost †. Also the Lady-White Seventh, Old Straws, Strawbosc, and Young Eyes.
Saucy Sixth, the. The 6th Foot Regiment >, in 1881, the Royal Warwickshires: military: late C. 19–20; ob. F. & Gibbons. Also Guise's Geese and the Warwickshire Lade.
sauled. Incorrect spelling of sauced, 1, q.v.: from ca. 1890. (O.E.D.)
saulty. See sauced.
sausage; live sausage. In sexual sense, it is on the marches of coll. and S.E.—2. (sau(s)age or s.) A German: lower classes': late C. 19–20. Ware; B. & P.; Manchon. Suggested by German sausages.—3. A German heavy trench-mortar bomb: military coll.: 1915–18. F. & Gibbons. Ex its shape.
Sausage Hill, go to. 'To be taken prisoner, "Sausage Hill being generic for a German prison camp' (F. & Gibbons): military: 1915–18.
sausanmash. A sausage and mashed potatoes: junior clarka' (— 1909). Ware.
savage, adj. Furiously angry; unsparing in speech: from 1820's: mostly coll. (O.E.D.)
savage a meat-axe. See meat-axe.
savvy, rabbits, do. To wait in readiness for action: to conceal small concentrations of tanks for local counter attacks against an enemy offensive: 'Tank Corps: Feb., 1918; ob. F. & Gibbons, 'From a phrase used by General Ellis' in that month; Clough-Williams-Ellis, The Tank Corps.
save. A piece of economy, a saving: dial. >, ca. 1905, low coll.
save, v.t. To protect oneself, or one's book of beta, by being cautious; to keep (a horse) on one side, not betting against it, thus making it a clear winner for oneself: the turf: 1869. In C. 20, coll.
save!; save? See savy.
save-all. One of 'boys running about gentle- men's houses in Ireland, who are fed on broken meats that would otherwise be wasted,' Grose, 1785: Anglo-Irish coll.: mid-C. 18–mid-19. Prob. ex the save-all candlestick.
save oneself. To hedge: racing coll.: 1869, Broadwood, The O.V.H., 'Most who received the news at least saved themselves upon the outsider.' See save, v.
save-reverence. See sir-reverence.
Saveloy Square. Duke Place, Aldgate: East London (— 1909). Inhabited by Jews, it rarely sees a sausage. Ware, 'On the locus a non tuendo principle.'
saver. A prudent covering bet: the turf: from ca. 1890. Nat Gould, 1891, 'I've put a saver on Caloola.' Ex save (oneself), to bet thus.
savvy, savie. See savvy.
saving, hang. See hang saving.
saving chin. A projecting chin: coll.: ca. 1776– 1840. Bridges; Grose, 'That catches what may fall from the nose.' Cf. the proverb he would save the dropplings of his nose, applied to a miser.
savvy; also sabby, sabe, savey, savie, savevy, scavey. Common sense; good sense; gumption: 1785, Grose; 'Rolf Boldrewood', 1888, 'If George had had the savey to crack himself up a little.'—Hence, acuteness, cleverness: 1894, H., 3rd ed. Forms: savey, mid-C. 19–20; saddle, q.v. (<— 1880); save, late C. 19–20, now rare; savey, 1785; savie, Scottish, C. 19–20; savevy, from ca. 1880; scavey, C. 19 Ex Negro-isings of Fr. savoir, to know, or more prob of Sp. sabe usted, do you know; imm. ex: savvy; also sabby, sabe(s); savey; saviey; scavey.
(Resp. C. 19–20; mid-C. 19–20; C. 18–20; C. 19–20; C. 18.) V.t. (in C. 20, occ. v.), to know: ca. 1785, Grose, 'Massa me no savey'. For etymology, see end of n.—2. In pidgin English, also to have, to do, etc., etc.: C. 19–20.
saw, held at the (occ. a) long. Held in suspense: coll.: ca. 1730–1830. North's Lord Guilford, 1733, 'Between the one and the other he was held at the long saw over a month.'
saw your timber! Go away! low: from ca. 1855; ob. H., 2nd ed. On cut your stick; a further elaboration is amputate your mahogany.
sawbones. A surgeon: from ca. 1835, Dickens in 1837 saying 'I thought everybody know'd as a sawbones was a surgeon.'
sawder, rare except as soft sawder. Flattery; soft speech: 1836, Haliburton (O.E.D.); Grant Allen, 'I didn't try bullying; I tried soft sawder.' Perhaps ex solder, n.; prob. sawder, v. Cf. blarney.
sawder, v. To flatter; speak softly to: 1834, Lover. Prob. on to solder, perhaps influenced by scudast, for cf. next two entries.
sawdust. Same as sawder, n.: rather low (— 1887). Baumann; 1803, Milliken, 'True poetry . . . not sawdust and snivel'; ob. Either sawder (n.) corrupted or ex sawdust as used, in various sports, to soften a fall.
sawdusty. The adj. of the preceding: low: 1854, Punch, Oct. 11, 'Me doing the sawdusty reglar'; ob.
sawmill, the. The operating theatre in a hospital: military: 1916; ob. F. & Gibbons.
sawn(e)y. A fool; a stupid or very simple (gen. man): late C. 17–20. B.E., Gross. In late C. 19–20, through (non-Scottish) dial. influence, it often was a soft, good-natured fellow. Prob. ex sawy (in 1667 spel saune in Edwards's Damon and Pythias), though conceivably influenced by Sauney, q.v.—2. Bacon: c. (—1812). Vaux, Mayhew, who restricts to stolen bacon. In ex sawy, bacon being cut off in slices (rasheurs). Cf. sauney-hunter, q.v. *sawn(e)y. v. To wheel or whine: coll.: ca. 1805–90. Southey, 1808, 'It looks like a sawneying sawneying Methodist parson.' Ex the adj., perhaps also in part ex, or influenced by the East Anglian sawny, 'to utter a whining, wailing cry without apparent cause', E.D.D.—2. To be soft; to 'fool about': coll.: mid-C. 19–20. Ex n., 1, and adj., 2.


*sawney(e) (rarely sawny)-hunUer. One who pursues bacon and/or cheese from grocers’ shops: 1856, Mayhew, The Great World of London. See sawny, n., 2.


sax(e)pe, bang goes. A c.p. (—1890) addressed to a person excessively careful about small expenses. Manchon. Popularised by Sir Harry Lauder.


say! I say! An introductory interjection; a mere exclamation: coll.: resp. orig. U.S., anglicised ca. 1900; C. 17–20. Beaumont & Fletcher, 1011, 'I say, open the door, and turn me out of these manly companions,' O.E.D.

say. See ape’s paternoster, boh, Jack Robinson, knife, mouthful, nothing, prayers, Te Deum, thing, when.


say for oneself, have nothing to. Be by, habit, silent: coll.: mid-C. 19–20.

say it with flowers! See flowers, say it with.

say nothing when you are dead. Be silent! c.p. of ca. 1670–1750. Ray.

say-so, on my (s Sammy). On my word of honour: coll.: mid-C. 18–20 ( . s Sammy ... not before ca. 1880); ob. Cf. sam, upon my.

say so, you don’t. Exclamation of astonishment (occ. of derision) at a statement: coll.: from ca. 1870. (O.E.D.)

say-ing(e) were, as the. As one says; as the saying is: lower classes’ coll. (—1923). Manchon.

says, it. The book mentioned, or its author, says: C. 10–20: S.E. until mid-C. 19, then coll. (O.E.D.)


shad or ‘shad. A coll. form of (by) God’s blood! late C. 16–mid-18, then archaic. See ‘s and cf. the following more or less coll. oaths: 'shobs (i.e. Od’s bobs), late C. 17–mid-19; ’Shokia (= God’s bodikins), ca. 1670–1800, then archaic;

'shody (God's body), C. 17; 'Shores (like Shocks, obscure in meaning), C. 17; 'Shod(e), which is 'Shokia, ca. 1670–1760, then archaic. (O.E.D.)

scab. A pejorative applied to persons, a ‘soury fellow, a rascal or scoundrel: from ca. 1890; slightly ob. except in next sense; not after C. 18 applied to women. Occ., as in Lyly, a constable or a sheriff’s officer (not after C. 18). Shakespeare, Defoe, Kipling. Ex the skin-disease or the crust forming over a sore: cf. scarf, 2.—Hence, a workman refusing to strike, esp. one working while his companions are on strike: orig. (1811), U.S., anglicised ca. 1880. Occ. attributively.—3. Among tailors, a button-hole: from ca. 1870; ob. Ex the shape of a sore-crust.

scab, v. To behave as a, be a, ‘scab’ (n., 2): C. 20, O.E.D. recording at 1905.—2. See Addenda.

scab coal. See black coal.

scab-raiser. A drummer: military: ca. 1850–95. H., 3rd ed. Because one of his duties was to wield the cat-0-nine-tails, thus raising sore.


scabby neck (or S.M.). A Dano: esp. a Danish sailor: nautical (—1864); ob. H., 3rd ed.

scadger. A mean fellow, a contemptible beggar of loans: low: from ca. 1860; ob. Perhaps ex cadger (q.v.) on Cornish scadgan, a tramp. At Winchester College, a rascal: † by 1901. E. J. K. Wrench.

scafl. A selfish fellow: Christ’s Hospital: mid-C. 19–20. (Cf. scabby, 3, and scalar.) Perhaps influenced by dial. scalf, one who wanders idly about, or derived ex † dial. scalf-and-ruff, the rabbit (E.D.D.).


scalawag; more gen. scalawag and (esp. in C. 20)

scalaywag; occ. scal(l)iwag, scalawag, skalawag, but very rarely in C. 20. A ne’er-do-well or disreputable fellow; a scoundrel. (Esp. in C. 20, frequently playful like rascal.) U.S. s. (—1845), anglicised ca. 1880 and ex S.E. scalawag, 1st ed. Coll. Bartlett, 1st ed.; Haliburton, 1856, 'You good-for-nothing young scalawag'; The Melbourne Argus, 1870, 'Vagrants are now [in Melbourne] denounced scalawags.' The earliest recorded dates (considerably earlier ones prob. occur in unpublished letters) of the various forms are: scalawag, 1849; scalawag, 1854; scalaywag, 1864; scalawag, 1881; scalawag, 1885; skalawag, ca. 1870. Origin problematic: I suggest that wag (a playful scamp) has undergone a long reduplication scag-wag, hence scalag-wag, > scalp(ly)-wag; but it is possible that the term = (scabby >) scalawag, as applied to 'lean and ill-favoured kine', as in O.E.D. at scalawag, p. 2, second quotation; W. suggests origin in dial. scal,}
scalawag.—2. Hence, in politics, an impostor or a rascally intriguer: 1864, Sala (O.E.D.); s. >, ca. 1890, coll.—3. Ex sense 1, in trade-union s., one (rarely of women) who will not work: 1891, in the Labour Commission glossary (O.E.D.).

scalawag, etc., as adj., dates in England from ca. 1865. In C. 20, coll.


scal-drag. A dyer: a C. 17 coll. nickname. 'Water 'Poot 'Taylor.'

scalder. A venerable infection, esp. a 'clap' (q.v.): low: from ca. 1810; ob. Lex. Bal. Cf. scalding-house, q.v.—2. Tea, the beverage: low: from ca. 1890. Sydney Watson, Wops the Wolf, 1892. 'I'm good at a hoperation, I can tell yer, when it's on spot and scaler (which being interpreted, meant cake and tea)'. Ex the heat.

[scalding-house (Cupid's). A brothel: late C. 18–17: on border-line between coll. and S.E. Middleton's quotation, cited by F. & H., makes it, however, appear as if the term had no such gen. meaning, though it may have been so used in allusively jocular S.E.]

scalings ! A warning, esp. among sailors and at Winchester: 'got out of the way !'; 'be off !'; 'look out !' : mid-C. 19–20; slightly ob. Smyth's Word-Book and Adam's Wykehamica. Ex cry scalings, to announce loudly that one is carrying scalings, i.e. boiling liquid. Cf. gangway for a naval officer, q.v.

"scaldrum. A beggar: tramps' c.: mid C. 19–20; ob. Prob. ex: 'scald-drum-dodge. Tramps' c. of mid-C. 19–20 (ob.), as in Mayhew, 1861, London Labour, vol. i. 'By then Peter was initiated into the scaldrum-dodge, or the art of burning the body with a mixture of acids and gunpowder, so as to suit the hues and complexion of the accident to be deplored.' Practised chiefly by 'schools of shallow coves', groups of men pretending to have escaped from shipwreck, fire, or similar perils. Prob. a perversion of scald or scalding (nn.).

scale. To mount a woman: coll.: C. 17–20. W. of S. Smith, The Puritan, 1607.—2. To impress; to astound: low (—1887); ob. Baumann. Perhaps ex S.E. scale, take by escalade.—3. (Also scale off.) To run away; depart hurriedly or furtively; to disappear of one's own motion: C. 20: mostly Colonial (esp. Australian). Possibly ex scale in, (of a jockey) to be weighed after a race.—4. To steal (a thing); rob (a person): New Zealanders: C. 20. Perhaps ex sense 3.


scal. See scal.—scalwig, scalawag, scalli-rag, scallaway, scalawag, scally-wag, scally-wag. See scalawag.

scalp. A charm worn on a bangle: Society: 1896–1914. Ware, 'Given by young men to young girls.'

scalp. To buy very cheap so as to sell at less than ruling price: Stock Exchange coll.: >, ca. 1905, S.E.: 1888, The Pall Mall Gazette, Oct. 15, ' . . . Scalped" ' the market on a big scale for a small profit per bushel' (O.E.D.). One who does this is a scalper, which occurs in the same article; scalping arose about the same time: both coll. > S.E. not later than 1910.

scal; incorrectly scally. Shabby, poor, in poor health: late C. 18–20; ob. Soutby, 1793 (O.E.D.). Ex S.E. skin-disease sense.—2. Hence, stingy: from ca. 1810; like sense 1, slightly ob. Lex. Bal.; Egan, 1821, 'If you are too scally to tip for it, I'll shell out and shame you.' The sense is very common at Christ's Hospital (cf. scuff, q.v.)—3. Ex sense 1 and 2, deselect: mid-C. 19–20. Besant & Rice, 1875, 'If I were an author—they are a scally lot, and thank Heaven I am not one.' O.E.D.


scally blits. A thin man: New Zealand (—1905).—2. See scally, 2 and 3.


scamander. To loaf: 1860, H., 2nd ed., 'To wander about without a settled purpose.' Coll. Cf. (perhaps ex) Yorkshire dial. skimauldering (hanging about), which may—or may not!—derive ex the Classical river Scamander.

scampered. Tiptsy: low: from ca. 1840; ob. 'Ducange Anglicus': Carew's Autobiography of a Gipsy, 1891—the reference being valid for the year 1845. Perhaps (scuppered on) dial. scammer, to climb or scramble.

'ascamp. A highway robber: 1781, Messink, 'Ye scamps, ye pads, ye divers.' Ex v., 1, q.v.—2. Hence, highway robbery (cf. scampery): 1786 (O.E.D.); like sense 1, by 1840 or, at latest, 1850.—3. A cheat or a swindler: ca. 1805–40: rather s. than c. Ex sense 1. (Other sources, S.E.)

'scamp, v. To be, or go out as, a highway robber: c.: ca. 1750–1840; implied, however, as early as C. 16 in scampannt, 'used in imitation of rampant in a rogue's burlesque coat of arms', W. The Discovery of John Poulter, 1763, 'I'll scam on the panney, i.e. go out and rob on the highway. Prob. ex scamper.—2. V.t., to rob (a person) on the highway: c. (—1812); by 1870. Vaux.


'scamp, go (up) on the. To rob as occasion offers: c. of ca. 1820–1910. Bee; Baumann. (Applied to tramps and beggars, and occasionally thieves.)

'scamp, royal. A highwayman who robs civilly.' Grosse, 1st ed.: c. of ca. 1780–1840.

'scamp, royal foot. A footpad who does this. Ibid. and id.

scampfire. To run hastily; to 'bolt': 1687, 'Facetious' Tom Brown: s. until mid-C. 18, then coll. till ca. 1830, then S.E. (B.E. err in calling it c). Either ex scamper, of motion, or ex † Dutch schampen, to go away, to escape. O.E.D.: W. "scampersom. A street ruffian: C. 18–early 19 prot. orig. c. Steele. (O.E.D.)

'scamp, adj. Dishonest: ca. 1820–60: orig., prob. always a. Bee, 1823, 'Fellows who pilfer in markets, from stalls or orchards, who snatch off hate, cheat publicans out of liquor, or toes up cheatingly—commit scampering tricks.'


scandaloon. An occ. form of Scandihoonian, q.v. (John Beames.)

scandal-broth, -potion, -water. Tea: coll.: resp. 1785 (Grose), 1788 (Burns), 1864 (H., 3rd ed.): all ob. by 1900; † by 1930.

Adj. applied to 'a thorough
**SCANDALOUS**


Scandinovian, Scandweigan. A Scandinavian:


scamag, from ca. 1850; scan-mag, from ca. 1850; scam. mag. (or S.M.), 1779, Sheridan. Scand. Abbrev. Scamag, by Dim. Magnese, an old law term for a scandal of magnates. (O.E.D.)


Scapery. See Johnny Scaparey.

scape. A snipe: a coll. nickname: from ca. 1800. Ex flushed snipe’s cry.—2. See 2 in:

scapes. ‘To neglect one’s brush,’ Bee: artistic: ca. 1820–50.—2. N. and v. (To) escape: S.E. in Shakespeare, but by 1850 it is coll. Baumann.


(E.D.D.)

Scarrow warning; in C. 19, occ. s. surprise. A very or very odd notice, or none at all: coll.: mid-C. 16–20; ob. ‘Proverbs’ Heywood, Fuller, Grose, P. H. Emerson. ‘In 1557 Thomas Stafford entered the took possession of Scarborough Castle before the townsmen were aware of his approach,’ E.D.D.

scare, make oneself. To retire; to absent oneself, disappear: coll. : 1749, Smollett, ‘It was my fixed purpose to make myself scarce at Seville’; Grose, 1st ed. : 1821, Scott, ‘Make yourself scarce—depart—vanish!’

scare up. To find, discover (e.g. scare up money); coll. : from ca. 1850. Ex shooting game.

*scarecrow. C. : 1884, Greenwood, ‘The boy who has served [a thief] until he is well known to the police, and is so closely watched that he may as well stay at home as go out.’ Ob.


scart-bolt. Erroneous for scarpe-bolt: from ca. 1870. O.E.D.

scatol. Catachrestic when used of a mild attack of scarlet fever: mid-C. 19–20. Properly, scarlatina (C. 19–20) is merely another name for scarlet fever (1676). O.E.D.

scarlet. A Mohock or aristocratic street ruffian: coll. or s.: ca. 1750–60. J. Shebbeare, 1755 (O.E.D.). Either ex colour of dress or on blood.

scarlet, dye. To drink deep or hard: late C. 18–early 17. Shakespeare.

scarlet beans. See sow potatoes.


Scarlet Lancers. The 16th Lancers: military: from ca. 1880; ob. F. & Gibbons, ‘The only British lancer regiment wearing scarlet.’ Also Red Lancers.


*scarper. To run away; v.t. to decamp from: Parlyaree and o.; as latter, it > low Cockney ca. 1905. Selby, 1844, ‘Vamooser—scarper—fly!’ Ex It. scappare via Lingua Frana. See Slang.—2. On the stage, it = to leave a play without notice: from ca. 1900.


scat! Go away: coll. : 1869 (O.E.D.). Hence, ooc. as jocular v. Mostly U.S. The O.E.D. ingeniously proposes sa / cat (i.e. a hiss + cat); 1, a hiss + get / There are, however, of the dial scat (see E.D.D.) several senses that might easily have originated our term. (But see Adomda.)

scatter, esp. in imperative. To go (away); move quickly: coll. : C. 20. Prob. influenced by scat/, q.v.


scavenge. To clean up a mess; Public Schools: from ca. 1820.

scavenger’s daughter. An instrument of torture: coll.: C. 17. (Afterwards, merely historical.) Journal of the House of Commons, May 14, 1804. On Skevington’s (or Skeffington’s) torture, the technical S.E. term being Skevington’s gyves (1564) or trons. Invented ca. 1545 by Leonard Skevington (or Skeffington), Lieutenant of the Tower of London.

scavenging party. In society s. of 1822–34, thus in Ronald Knox, The Body in the Silo, 1933: ‘A scavenging party—what on earth’s that?’ ‘Miles, dear, don’t be old-fashioned. A scavenging party is when you go round in cars picking up tramps and feeding them fish and chips . . . or collecting sandwich-boards and doorscrapers and things like that. All the brightest young people do it.’

scavvy. See savvy—*scawfer. See scoffer.

scen. Incorrect for seen, a dish in the form of a pill: mid-C. 19–20. O.E.D. (Sup.).

*scellum. See skellum.

scene-cat. A supernumerary in ballet or pantomime: theatrical: from ca. 1880; ob.


scene-box. The nose: pugilists: from ca. 1825: virtually †. Cf. smeller.

sceptre; in C. 18, occ. sceptor. A sceptred gold unite: coll.: C. 18–20; in mid-C. 19–20, virtually

School-Street. The University: Oxford University coll.: C. 18–early 19.

schoolgirl complexion, that. A c.p. dating from ca. 1923; P. G. Wodehouse has the phrase in Uridge, 1924. Ex the inspired advertisement-poster by Palmolive Soap. (Collinson.)


schooling. A term of confinement in a reformatory: c. (—1879); slightly ob. —2. 'A low gambling party,' H., 1869: c. >, ca. 1890, low a. See school, 1.—3. Hence, a, or the, the playing of pitch and toss: c. (—1888); slightly ob.

schoolman. A fellow-member of a 'school' (q.v.): c. or low a. —1834, Alnsworth; ob. schoolmaster. (Gen. in training other horses) a horse good at jumping: 'stables' coll.: late C. 19–20. Prob. ex S.E. sense, the leader of a school of fishes; esp. of a bull whale.—2. schoolmaster, bilk the. See bilk.

schooly. See schoolie.


scientific, the. Boxing or, as in Dickens (1837) fencing: from ca. 1830: s. >, ca. 1870, coll (O.E.D.) Cf. profession, the. q.v.

scientist. A scientist: coll.: 1830, Lyell; De Morgan. Slightly ob. O.E.D.

science, the. Scientific matters: low coll.: ca. 1840–70. Lover. (O.E.D.)

scintillation. Catachrestic for scintilla, a fig spark: mid-C. 17–20. O.E.D.


scissors!; oh, scissors! Indicative of disgust or impatience: 1843, Selby; ob. Cf.: 

scissors, give (a person). To treat drastically, pay out; mid-C. 19–20; ob. 

scorff. Food: South African coll.: 1856, the Rev. F. Fleming, Southern Africa (Pettman); 1879, Athelney. Ex Cape Dutch: see the v. —2. Hence, a meal: id.: late C. 19–20. (The term, ca. 1890, >, gen. among tramps and sailors, often as scorff.) Cf.:

scorff; often scorff; in South Africa, gen. scorff. V.t. To eat voraciously: s. (—1864) and dial. (1849). H. 3rd ed. Prob. ex dial. scorff. —2. Hence, modified by South African usage (see scorff,
**SCOOP**

n., v.t., simply to eat: from ca. 1890: outside of South Africa, nautical. (W. Clark Russell, 1883).
—3. Occ., but seldom after ca. 1920, v.i.: late C. 19–20 and rare outside South Africa. But this may be the primary sense, as we see from Lady Barnard's *South American Journal*, 1798, ‘The Boer’ concludes that the passengers want to scoff (to eat) ’ — see W. — (Ex sense 1.) To seize; to plunder: 1893, Kipling, ‘There’s enough [gold-leaf] for two first-rates, and I’ve scoffed the best half of it,’ O.E.D.


**scoild.** A scolding; coll. and dial.: from ca. 1726; ob. except in Scots.

**scoild,** v.i. To be constantly uttering reproofs: coll.: mid-C. 19–20.

**scoildum** (dodge). A variant of *scaldrum* (dodge).

**scoild’s cure.** A coffin: low: ca. 1810–60.

**scoilecoid.** Incorrect for *scoileoid*: mid-C. 19–20. O.E.D.

**scolologue.** To live or act dissipately, wildly; low (—1657); † by 1900. ‘Ducange Anglicus.’ Perhaps ex *scaulaway*, q.v.


**scolependria.** Incorrect for *scolependra*, a centipede: C. 17. O.E.D.

**scoone.** The head; esp. the crown of the head: 1567, *Damon and Pythias*; Thackeray. Perhaps ex *sconce*, a fort, or its Dutch original, *scheun*.—2. Hence, Wit, sense, judgement, ability: coll.; mid-C. 17–20; ob.—3. Occ. the person himself: coll.: ca. 1570–1750. Kendall, 1877 (O.E.D.)—4. See *sconce*, build a. (— As a fine, *sconce* is S.E.)

**sconce,** v. To fine, mulct: university (orig.—see Minueh, 1617—and mainly Oxford): C. 17–20. Until C. 19, of officials fining undergraduates; in C. 19–20, of undergraduates fining one of themselves (gen. a tankard of ale) for a breach of manners or convention. Randolph, ‘Honours of Oxford’ Miller, Colman the Elder, ’C. Bede.’ Perhaps ex *sconce*, n. 1 (‘so much a head’).—2. (Gen. sconce, build a.) To reduce (the amount of a bill, etc.): coll.: 1768, Foote; † by 1910. Occ. to *sconce one’s diet*, to eat less: coll. (very ob.): C. 19–20.—3. V.i. and v.t. to hinder; get in the way (of): Winchester, mainly in games (e.g. a catch at cricket); late C. 19–20. *The Public School Magazine*, Dec. 1899. Prob. ex preceding sense.

**sconce, build a.** To run a score at an ale-house, Bailey (1730); ‘run deep upon tick,’ B.E. der. ‘gild a large score.’ There is often the connotation of lack of intention to pay the account, for Grose, 1785, defines it as ‘a military term for bilking one’s quarters.’ Ca. 1840, Shirley; Tom Brown; Goldsmith. † by 1840. *Ex sconce*, a (small) fort.

**sconce off; sconce one’s diet.** See *sconce*, v. 2. *sconcing* is the vb.n. of *sconce*, v., all senses. Very gen.

[secon.]

Despite many purists, the pronunciation *scon* is usually correct with *scon*; indeed, in C. 16–19, *scon* (or *skon*) was a frequent spelling. The Scottish town, however, is always pronounced with the *o* long.

**scooch.** Spiritual liquor(s): naval and hence, occ., military: from ca. 1890. Bowen. A corruption of *hooch.*

**scoody.** The fouling of a ship’s bottom: nautical coll.: C. 19–20; ob. Bowen. Possibly by antiphrasis ex dial. *scoot*, to clean, scrape clean; but prob. ex Shetlands dial. *scowin*, crust adhering to a vessel in which has been cooked (’E.D.D.).*

**scoop.** Male hair worn low and flat on the forehead: military: ca. 1860–90. Ware.—2. See *scoop*, on the.—3. News obtained (and, of course, printed) in advance of a rival newspaper: journalistic; orig. U.S., anglicised ca. 1890.—4. In the money-market, a sudden reduction of prices enabling operators to buy cheaply and to profit by the ensuing (carefully planned) rise: Stock Exchange; orig. (—1870) U.S., anglicised ca. 1890: after ca. 1920, coll.—5. An advantage, a (big) ‘haul’, a very successful or, more properly, a lucky stroke in business: 1883, Kipling; *The Daily Chronicle*, July 27, 1890. ‘Her engagement . . . at the Palace is a big “scoop”’. O.E.D. This last sense follows ex nos. 3, 4, which, in their turn, derive ex the S.E. sense, an act of scooping.—6. In singing, the attack on a commencing note by way of a chromatic slide from the “fourth” below: coll. (—1911). O.E.D. (Sup.)

**scoop, on the.** On the drink; engaged in dissipation: 1884 (O.E.D.); ob.

**scoop, in.** To persuade (a person) to participate: nautical; from ca. 1915. Hamish Maclaren, *The Private Opinions of a British Blue-Jacket*, 1929.—2. See *scoop, d., 1.*

**scoop out.** See *scoop, v., 2.—scoop up.* See *scoop, v., 1.*

**scoop, occ. *skoot* or *skute.* A scooting (see the v.): s. and dial. from ca. 1860. Esp. in *do a scoop*, run away, late C. 19–20, and on *the scoop*, on the run (lit. and fig.), 1864.

**scoot; occ. — though, as to the n., very rarely in C. 20—*skoot, skute,* *skoat; skout* seems to have remained U.S. (Gen. with about, along, away, off, round, etc., as adv.) To go (away) hurriedly or with sudden speed: orig. (ca. 1840) U.S.; anglicised ca. 1860: s. until ca. 1910, then coll. *The Quarterly Review*, 1869, ‘The laugh of the gull as he scoots along the shore.’ Ex the mainly nautical s. *scoot*, to dart, move quickly; see *scoot*, v. 1.—2. Loosely, to go, to depart: C. 20. Collinson.

**scoot-train.** An express train; late C. 19–20; ob. Ex *scoot*, n., but see v.

**scooter.** One who goes with sudden swiftness or hurriedly: dial. (—1626) and (from ca. 1860) s. ->, ca. 1910, coll. See *scoot, v., 2.* A coastal motor-boat; from 1915, when introduced as a defence-measure: naval coll. Bowen. *Ex scoot*, v., q.v.

**scoop, scep.** Pedantic; errors for *scoot*, poet, minstrel: mid-C. 19–20. O.E.D.

scorch. A very fast run on (motor-) cycle or motor-car: 1886 (O.E.D.): coll. >, ca. 1905, S.E. Ex: [no text visible]

scorch, v.i. To ride a bicycle, drive a motor-car, etc., at considerable or very great speed: coll. (—1891) >, ca. 1905, S.E. Implied in n. and in: scorcher. A furious or killer of cycle or car (etc.): 1885 (O.E.D.): coll. The Daily Telegraph, Jan. 7, 1901, 'The police have been keeping a sharp look-out for scorchers.' Ex the v.—2. An exeedingly hot day: coll. 1874 (O.E.D.). Often a regular scorcher.—3. Any thing or person severe, notably eccentric, deplorably hasty; a soating remark, vigorous attack, etc.: orig. schoolboys: 1856, Hawley Smart.—4. Hence, a sensation-causer, habitual or incidental, deliberate or unintentional: 1899, Conon Doyle (O.E.D.): ob.—5. A rotten potato: green-grocers’ (—1887). Baumann.

scorching, n. Furious riding (of cycle) or driving (of car, etc.): from ca. 1890: coll. till ca. 1905, then S.E. Ex scorcher, v.


scorching your eyes out; the sun’s. A military c.p. at revellia, no matter whether it is summer or winter, clear light or pitch-darkness: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Prob. suggested by rise and shine.

score, n. The gaining of a point or points in games: coll. from ca. 1840.—2. Hence, a notable or successful ‘hit’ in debate, argument, or keen business; likewise coll. from ca. 1890. Cf. the v. —3. Twenty pounds (£20); o.: late ca. 19–20. (George Ingram, Str, 1893.)

score, v.i. and v.t. To gain (a success): from ca. 1850: coll. Cf.: score off. To achieve a success over, make a point at the expense or to the detriment of (gen. a person): coll. 1882, 'Lucas Malet', ‘For once she felt she had scored off her adversary,’ O.E.D. Ex scoring at games: cf. the n., sense 1.

scoref. See scotf. (A low variant, more frequent of the v. than the n.)

scoret. A catastrhical singular, ca. 1690–1710, of scorria (slag). O.E.D.

scorny; occ. scormy, Scornful: low coll. 1836, Haliburton. Also Cornish dial. E.D.D.

scorp. A late ca. 18–20 naval and military abbr. of the next, sense 1. Bowen.

scorpion. A civilian native inhabitant of Gibraltar: military: 1845. Also, from ca. 1870, as in H.M. Field, 1889, 'A choice variety of natives of Gibralter, called “Rock scorpions”.' (O.E.D.) Ex the v. in that which injure the Rock of Gibraltar. See Rock and of. Gib.—2. A very youthful actor or actress, whose advice and remarks are of little use: theatrical (—1909). Ware. (There is no sting in his tale.)

scot. A very irritable or quickly angered person: from ca. 1810; slightly ob. Vaux; Bee, 1823, shows that, orig. at least, it may have been a butchers’ term, ‘the small Scots oxen coming to their annual remonatation to fete.’—2. Hence, gen. scot, a temper, or passion of irritation: 1859, H., 1st ed. Cf. scotty and scotish, adj., and paddy, n. q.v.

scotch or (though very rare in C. 19) scotch. (A drink of) Scotch whiskey: from ca. 1885; coll. >, ca. 1905, S.E. (‘Pompe’ Marshall, ‘He had started well on Scotch(es).’)—2. A leg: abbr. Scotch peg, q.v.

scotch, adj. Mean of (persons); ungenerous (of acts): coll. C. 19–20. Esp. be Scotch, as in ‘He’s (or He must be) Scotch,’ (The Scot’s, like the Jew’s, meanness is actually aporyphical.) Ex following combinations.

scotch bair. A halt and a rest on one’s staff as practised by pedlars: coll. ca. 1780–1860. Grose, 1st ed.


scotch casement. A pillory: late ca. 18–mid-19.


scotch fashion. answer. To reply to a question by asking another (à la Jésus): coll. 1834, Michael Scott, The Cruise of the Midge; slightly ob.

scotch fiddle. The itch: coll. 1675, Rochester; ob. Also Welch (welsh) fiddle.

scotch fiddle, play the. To work the index finger of one hand like a fiddle-stick between the index and middle finger of the other: coll. ca. 1820–1890. H., 2nd ed. To do this ’provokes a Scotman in the highest degree, it implying that he is afflicted with the itch,’ H.


scotch or (mid-C. 19–20) Scotch mist. Rain: coll. 1680, Anon., Pap with a Hatchet; ‘Phraeo- logia’ Robertson, 1861; Grose, 1st ed., ‘A sober soaking rain; a Scotch mist will wet an Englishman to the skin’; Scott. (Apperson.)


scotch peg. A leg: rhyming s. from mid-50’s. H., 3rd ed., has it in full, whereas H.. 1st ed., only implies it in ‘scotches, the legs’; it occurs, however, in ‘Ducange Anglicus,’ 1857.

scotch pint. A bottle holding two quarts: from ca. 1820; ob. Egan’s Grose.

scotch prize. A capture by mistake: coll. mostly nautical (—1867); ob. Smyth.

scotch rabbit. A Welsh rabbit (cf. at Scotch fiddle): ca. 1740–70. Mrs. Glasser, the C. 18 Mrs. Beeton, gives its rule in 1747. (O.E.D.)

scotch seaman ship. Seamen ship by brute force: nautical coll. from ca. 1890; slightly ob. St James’s Gazette, April 9, 1900. Cf. Scotch prize, q.v.

scotch tea. See tea.

scotch up. V.I. and t. To follow up (an attack): military coll. from 1916. F. & Gibbons. Ex scotchting a snake.


scotchies (or scotches). A marble with gay stripes: schoolboys’ (—1887). Baumann. In reference to


Scots, the. The 26th Foot Regiment (in late C. 19-20, the 1st Battalion Camerons Scottish Rifles): military: coll. rather than s.: C. 19-20; slightly ob.

Scots Greys. See Scotch Greys.

Scotsman's Cinema, the. Picaudilly Circus: Londoners': from 1933. Ex the numerous electric-light advertisements to be seen there—without admission charge.

Scott, great. See great Scott!


Scottish mist, warming-pan. See Scotch m., w-p.


scotty. Angry; apt to grow easily annoyed: late C. 19-20. Ex Scot, 2, q.v.

scur. A cleansing; a polishing: coll.: C. 20. *Give the floor a good scour*, O.E.D. Ex Scotch: often spell sázár, sázär, scow. To decamp, run away, depart hurriedly: ca. 1590-1870: a. with more than a tinge of c., as have the next three senses. Greene, Shadwell, Grose. Ex S.E. scour, to move rapidly or hastily.— 2. V.i. to roam noisily about at night, smashing windows, waylaying and often beating wayfarers, and attacking the watch: ca. 1870-1830. Shadwell, Prior.— 3. Hence, v.t., to ill-treat (esp. the watch or wayfarers): by the sent-rostering: ca. 1680-1760. Dryden, 'Scouring the Watch grows out of fashion with'.— 4. V.t. 'to roister through (the streets)': ca. 1690-1830. Grose.— 5. To wear, esp. in *scur the cramp-ring* or durbies, to wear, i.e. to go or lie in chains: ca. 1450-1840 (cramp-rings not before mid-C. 16, durbies not before late C. 17): s. >, ca. 1690, c. Avdelay, B.E., Egan's Grose. Ex *scur*, to cleanse by rubbing. (Ex this sense comes sousing.)— 6. To coat with (a woman): coll.: C. 17-18. (All dates, O.E.D.)


*scurrying. (An) imprisonment: . . 1721, Defoe; † by 1820.— 2. Adj. to *scur, v., 2-4, q.v.


Ex S.E. scours, diarrhoea.


scoot, v.i. To dart; go move, suddenly and swiftly: mid-C. 18—early 19: orig. and mainly nautical. Captain Tyrrell, 1758; Anon., *Splendid Folliks*, 1810, 'Sponge was actually obliged to scour out of the room to conceal his risible muscles,' O.E.D. Ex Swedish skjuta, v.i., to shoot (W.). Cf. shoot, v., q.v.— 2. See scout on the lay.— 3. To shoot pigeons outside a gun-club enclosure, F. & H.: coll.: from ca. 1880. Ex S.E. pigeon-shooting sense of the n.

scoot, good. (Occ., scout is used independently = a fellow.) A good, a trustworthy or helpful person: U.S., Anglicised ca. 1820. Cf. the Scottish scout, a term of contempt.


scoot-master, scoutingmaster. A schout (Dutch chief magistrate): catastroëtie: ca. 1850-1700. O.E.D.

*scout on the lay. To go searching for booty: o. late C. 18-19. See o. lay.


scowbanker; also show-, occ. skull- and, ca. 1890-1910. *Showbanker*. A loafer, a tramp; mostly Australian (— 1864); by 1910 slightly, by 1930 very ob. H. 'lrd. 3rd ed. Prob. ex scowbank, v., q.v.— 2. 'An outside paper-maker, one who has not served seven years to the trade': paper-maker' (— 1909). Ware, who spells it *skal-banker*.


scow(e)r. See scour.—scowere(r). See scour, v., and, scouerer.

*scrag. A person's neck: o. : from ca. 1760; slightly ob. ❄ ex crag, Scottish craig, the neck.— 2. The gallows: C. 19 o. Ex scrag, v., 1, or abbr. scrag-squeezr, q.v.— 3. At Shrewsbury School (— 1861), a rent across a paper signifying 'no marks'. Perhaps ex scrag, to handle roughly.— 4. A very rough tackle at Rugby football (cf. scrag, v., 4): Public Schools': C. 20. (P. G. Wodehouse, *Tales of St. Austin's*, 1908. 'There's all the difference between a decent tackle and a bally scrag like the one that doubled Tony up.')
*scrag, v.t. To hang by the neck: from ca. 1750 (slightly ob.): c. until ca. 1840, then a. Toldery (O.E.D.); Tomlinson; Grose; Barham.—2. Hence, to wring the neck of: from ca. 1820. —Jon Bee.—3. To garotte: c. or low s.; mid-C. 19–20.—4. To manhandle, properly (as in Rugby football), to twist the neck of a man whose head is conveniently held under one's arm: late C. 19–20. Kipling, Stackly & Co., "I don't drop off my 'Fors', or I'll scrag your scrum." (I'll scrag you has > a vague threat and à.p. esp. among schoolboys) Ex dial.

*scrag a lay. 'To steal clothes put on a hedge to dry,' Tufte: c.: late C. 18–early 19. Cf. snow, q.v.

*scrag-boy. A hangman: c. from ca. 1780; ob. Ex scrag, n. 1 and v. 1.


*scrag-hole. The gallery: theatrical (—1909); ob. Ware. Ex the craning of scrag or necks. Ex dial.


*scragger. A hangman: c. or low s.: 1897, P. Warung. B.D.D.


*Scrags's Hotel. The workhouse: tramps' c.: from ca. 1880; ob. The Daily Telegraph, Jan. 1, 1886.


*scran to, bed. Bad luck to ———: Anglo-Irish coll.: from ca. 1840. Lever, P. H. Emerson. Perhaps ex *scran*, n., 2, q.v. Cf. cess, q.v.

*scrand. An occ. variant of *scran*, n.


*scrap, v.i. To fight, esp. with the fists (—1874). H., 5th ed. Ex *scrap*, n., 3.—2. To scrimmage (—1891). O.E.D.—3. Ex sense 1, v.t. to box with: 1893, P. H. Emerson, 'I was backed to scrap a cove bigger nor me.' *scrap, do a. See do a *scrap.*

*scrap-up. An occ. variant of *scrap*, n., 3: Barrère & Leland.


*scrape, v.t., v.t., and v. reflexive. To shave: jocular coll.: from ca. 1770.

*scrape, bread and. Bread with but a smear of butter: orig. schools': coll.: 1861 (O.E.D.). 1873, Rhoda Broughton, 'Happiness thinly spread over their whole lives, like bread and scrape.' Ex S.E. *scrape*, a thin layer.—2. Hence, short commons: coll.: from ca. 1865.


*scrape the enamel. To scratch the skin by falling: cyclists: from ca. 1890; ob.

*scraped 'em off me putties! A ranks' c. directed against the Staff: G.W. military. B. & P. The allusion is to *sh*?, n., 2.


*scrapers, take to one's. To make off: Anglo-Irish: from ca. 1820. Here, *scrapper* = a foot, esp. a heel; cf. *scrape* with one's foot.


*scrapings, be away to. To be doomed or done for or dead: lower classes: C. 20.

*scrapings of his nails, he wouldn't give you the. A semi-proverbial, coll. c. (<—1887), applied to a very mean person; slightly ob. Baumann.

*scrap. See *scrap*, n., 2.

*scrapper. A pugilist; any fighter, whether with fists or weapons: from ca. 1870. H., 5th ed.

*scraping. Fighting or boxing: from ca. 1890. See *scrap*, v. and cf. *scrapper.*

Scratch. Gen. and orig. Old Scratch. The devil: coll.: 1740 (O.E.D.); Amory, 1768 (Scratch). In late C. 19–20, mostly dial. Ex sorat, a goblin, on scratch.


scratch, bring to the,—come (up) to or toe the. To bring oneself or another to the requisite point, lit. or fig.; to do, or cause to do, one's duty: coll. >, ca. 1860, S.E.: resp. 1827, Scott; 1834, Ainsworth; 1857, 'Cutthbert Bede.' Ex the line drawn on the ground or floor to divide the boxing-ring.

scratch, no great. Of little value or importance: orig. (1844), U.S., anglicised ca. 1858; slightly ob. H., 1st ed. Lit.: not very painful.

scratch a beggar before you die, you'll. You will die a beggar: a semi-proverbial c.p. of ca. 1830–1860. Clarke, Ray, Fuller. (Apperson.)


scratch my breech and I'll claw your elbow. Let us indulge in reciprocal flatttery: C. 17–19: a semi-proverbial c.p. Cf. ca me, ca thee, and S.E. scratch me and I'll scratch thee.

scratch one's arse with, not a sixpence to. Penniless: low coll.: mid-C. 19–20; ob.

scratch one's wool. To puzzle; wonder greatly: tailors' : from ca. 1870. On S.E. scratch one's head; and see wool, hair.

scratch-platter. See tailor's ragout.


scratch, with, not a sixpence to. Penniless: coll. (—1931). Lyell. Ex scratch one's arse . . . , q.v.

scratched. Tipsy: C. 17 c. or s. 'Water-Pot' Taylor, 1622.


scratchy. (Of a bateman) lacking sureness and confidence in his strokes: cricket coll.: 1904, P. F. Warner (Lewis).

scream. An extremely ridiculous or funny person or thing: 1915 (S.O.D.); s. >, by 1935, coll. Of the poet's. An abbr., with modification of sense, of screamer, 2 and 3.

scream. To turn King's evidence: low: from the early 1920's. O.E.D. (Sup.) Cf. squeal.


screaniness. The quality of being screamy, q.v.: coll.: from ca. 1858.


screaming gin and ignorance. Bad newspaper-writing: quoting reporters': 1868–ca. 80. Ware.


screamy. Apt to scream; (of sound) screaming; fig., very violent, exaggerated, or excessively in expression; (of colour) glaring: coll. : in 1882, The Spectator describes two of Swinburne's sonnets as 'thoroughly unworthy and screaming'. O.E.D. Cf. scream and screamer (2), q.v.

*screave. See screave.

*SCRarmacy. See scrarmacy.

screruch. Whiskey: low: from ca. 1880; ob. 1 ex its strength, or possibly ex its tendency to make females [sic] scream. See also seeruch.


screwed. Ca. 1870–90 a journalistic coll. (later S.E.) for 'an illogical or badly written article or paper upon any subject,' H., 5th ed.—2. Hence, a picture execrably painted: artists' (—1878); ob. Baumann.

*screen. A bank or currency note; esp. if counterfeit: from ca. 1810: c. Vaux. (Cf. screw, queer, q.v.) Ca. 1820–50, it often meant esp. a £1 note (cf. screene, n. 2), as in Egan, 1821. The word, which may be a witty perversion of screwee (q.v.), was ob. by 1900, virtually ↑ by 1930.


*screw (1801); also screw (1821), screwie (from ca. 1850), scrive (1788). Any piece of writing: 1788; Scott s. or coll.—2. Whence, a banknote: (mainly Scottish): c. : ca. 1800–1890. The Sporting Magazine, 1801, 'The one-pound screwies'; Haggart. —3. A begging letter, a petition, a testimonial: c. : from ca. 1810. Vaux, Mayhew. (From ca. 1890, letter is the predominant sense.)—4. A drawing in chalk on the pavement: c. : from ca. 1855. Ex screw, v. 2; and see screwing. (Dates, mainly O.E.D.) The etymology is not so simple as it looks: prob. ex. dial. scrive, to write, or ex the Dutch schrijven; ultimately ex L. scribere; cf.:

*screewe; occ. scrive. V.t. to write (esp. a begging letter, a petition): c. and East-End s. : mid-C. 19–20; 'No. 747', reference 1845; Mayhew, 1851. Ex It. scriver for Lingua Franca, perhaps imm. ex scrave, n., 1–3–2. Whence, v.i. draw on the pavement with chalk; to do this as a livelihood: c. : 1851, Mayhew.

*screwe, fake a. See fake a screw.

*screwe-faker. The same as screwe, 1, q.v.: ca. 1850–1910.

*screwer; occ. scriver. One who, for a living, writes begging letters: c. 1851, Mayhew. Ex screw, v. 1, q.v.—2. A 'pavement artist': c. and East-End s. : implied by Mayhew in 1851 (see quotation at screwing) and recorded by H. in 1869.
Scrimehaw (work)

Punch, July 14, 1883. 'Here is a brilliant opening' for merry old Academicians, festal flagstone scrimshavers, and "distinguished amateurs".


*scrive*ing. Vbl.n. of scrive, v., 1 and 2. Mayhew, 1851. 'By scriving, that is, by petitions and letters'; ibid. 'Scriving or writing on the pavement.'


*screw*, fake a. See fake a screw.
screw, under the screw. See under the screw.
screw loose, a. A phrase indicative of something wrong: from ca. 1820: a. until ca. 1840, then coll. till ca. 1880, then S.E. Egan, 1821; Dickens; Trollope. Ob. in this gen. sense.—2. Hence, (slightly) crazy or mad, gen. as have a screw loose: coll.: from ca. 1870.
screw, pointing. To 'dodge a blow aimed at the head': London lower classes: from the early 1890's. The People, Jan. 6, 1895 (Ware). A double pun—on nut and on screw.
screw-thread, drunken. A defective spiral ridge of a screw: a technological coll.: from ca. 1850. Ronalds & Richardson, Chemical Technology, 1854. O.E.D.
screw up, v.i. To force one into making a bargain: v.i. late C. 17–mid-19. B.E. Ex S.E. sense, to tighten up with a screw.—2. To garotte: c. : 1845 (p. 419 of 'No. 747'); ob.
screwed. Tippy: 1838, Barham, 'Like a four-bottle man in a company screw'd,' Not firm on his legs, but by no means subdued.' S. >, ca. 1870, coll. >, ca. 1910, S.E. For semantics, cf. light. Cf. screw, 2, and blind, blot, corned, elevated, fuzzy, fuzzy, mushy, paralyzed, scammed, oryfied, three sheets in the wind, up a tree, wet. F. & H. gives a magnificent synonymy; H., in the Introduction, a good one.
screwed on right or the right way, have one's head. To be shrewd and businesslike; be able to look after oneself: coll. mid-C. 19–20.
screwed up. Vanquished: Oxford and Cambridge undergraduates'; late C. 19–early 20. Ex 'the ancient habit of screwing up an offender's door,' Ware.—2. (Also screwed up in a corner.) Penniless: artisans (—1909). Ware. 'Without money—can't move.'
screwers or scrimehaw. Occ. variants (C. 20): Edgar Wallace, Sooper Speaking, has the latter; 'Stuart Wood', the former of scrimehaw.
screwings. A house or shop-breaking: c.: from ca. 1810. See screw, 1.
screww. Mean, stingy: 1851, Mayhew, 'Mechanics are capital customers . . . They are not so screwy,' coll. >, ca. 1890, S.E. Ex S.E. screw, a miser.—2. Drunk (cf. screwd., q.v.): 1820, Creevey (O.E.D.): coll. >, ca. 1890, S.E.; ob. —3. (Of horses) unsound: 1852, Medley, 'It's like turning a screwy horse out to graze,' O.E.D.; coll. >, ca. 1890, S.E. Ex screw, n., 4, q.v.—2 Crazy, mad; (very) eccentric; lower classes' (—1935). Perhaps ex sense 2.
scribbler's luck. 'An empty purse and a full hand,' The Pelican, Dec. 3, 1898: coll. of ca. 1890–1915.
scribe. See scrive.
scrib. An abbr. (—1923) of both scrimshank (n. and v.) and scrimshanker.
scribomage. A free-light, scuffle, or confused struggle: coll. : 1750, Johnson (C.scrimehaw); 1825, Fenimore Cooper (scribblemage); 1844, The Catholic Weekly Instructor (scribblemage); 1859, H., 1st ed. (scribblemage). Ex S.E. sense, a skirmish, prob. via dial. (O.E.D.)
scribomander. See scrimshaw.
scribomansion; occ. scribem. A shirking of duty: military: C. 20. Ex:
scribomansion; occ. scribem. V.i. to shirk work: military (—1890). Barrère & Leland; Kipling, 1893. Prob. a back-formation from scrimshanker, q.v.
scribomander; occ. scrimshanker. A shirker: military (—1890). Barrère & Leland. Tit-Bits, April 28, 1890, 'Besides the dread of being considered a scrimshanker, a soldier dislikes the necessary restraints of a hospital.' Etymology obscure: perhaps a perversion of scowbucker, q.v. The importance of the subject may be gauged from the fact that in 1845 there appeared a book entitled On Feigned and Factious Diseases, chiefly of Soldiers and Seamen.
scribomanking; scribm. Vbl.n. and ppl. adj. ex scrimshank, v., q.v.
scribomace (work); occ. scrimshander, -y, mostly
U.S. Small objects, esp. ornaments, made by seamen in their leisure: naval; from ca. 1850; also, related to 'seaman.'

**scrap.** A small (gen. written-upon) piece of paper: from ca. 1615: S.E. until ca. 1850, then c. till early c. 18, then dial.; in c., esp. in blot *the scrap*, it occ. == a bond. B.E., Groce. v ex *scrap*: if the same sub. *scrap* of paper. (In its commercial sense, despite Groce, 2nd ed., *scrap*, having originated as an obvious abbr., has prob. always been *S.E.)*

*scrap-scorp.* Odds and ends: *coll.: C. 19-20.* Reduplication on *scrap.*

**scrapper.** He who, in a swindle, keeps watch: c. late C. 16—early 17. Greene, describing "high law": t etymology, unless ex t Scotts *scrap*, to jeer. *Anam.* 4. *scrap* was a misprint for, rather than a variant of, the preceding: *id. Ibid.*

- **scriptrience** is a variant of *S.E. scriptriency* and lies on the borderland between literary a. and literary j.: late C. 19-20; very ob. Ware; and see esp. *Slang,* p. 178.

**scrive.** See *scrivee, n.*

- *scroby, or claws, (for breakfast),—be tipped the.*
  - "To be whipt before the justices," Groce, 1st ed.: c. (orig. at least) of ca. 1780—1850. The C. 18 form is *be tipped the *scroby; *claw* came ca. 1810. for *breakfast* (rare with *scroby*) was added about the same time; from ca. 1850 († by 1890), the term survived as *get scroby* (H., 1st ed., 1859, "to be whipped in prison before the justices"). See *tip, v.*; with *claws of cat-o'-nine-tails; *scroby is a mystery unless perchance it = *scroy, scurvy, here used fig. (cf. *do the dirty on.)*

**scrooler.** See *scrouge, v.*

**scrool.** A sponger: c. or low († by 1890). Egan's *Groce.*

- A variant form of *scrufl*, scurf, hence anything worthless.

**scroop.** To skirt very closely; to rub: *coll.* (—1923). Manchon. Ex S.E. *scroop,* make a scraping sound.

- *scroope.* A farthing: c. of ca. 1710—1820. Hall; Grose, 2nd ed. † origin.

**scrouge.** See *scrouge, v.*


**scrouge, the earliest and gen. form:** also *scroo(f)ge* (C. 19-20), *scrooge* (C. 19-20), *scroogew* (C. 19-20), *skrowge* (C. 19-20), and *skrowdew* (C. 18). *V.t.* to crowd; to inconvenience by pressing against or by encroaching on the space of: low coll.: ca. 1830—1920, to squeeze, "still preserved, at least in its corruption, to *scrouge,* in the London jargon," Johnson, 1755. (O.E.D.) 2. *V.i. in same senses: from ca. 1820. Egan. (The vbl.n. *scrouging* is fairly gen.)

**scrouge.** *Esp. in do a *scrouge,* to go looking for what one can *find*; to take it: military: 1914 or '15. Ex the v.—2. A "*scrouger*": from ca. 1916.

**scrouge, v.t.** To hunt for; cadge, to get by wheedling; to acquire illicitly; hence, to steal; also *v.i.* military in G.W.; from ca. 1920, fairly gen. Ex dial. *scrouge, to steal* (esp. apples) or ex dial. and coll. *scrouge, q.v., of which, clearly, *scrouge* may be a variant; cf. *skrump, q.v.* The
is called "merchantable", that being the term for fish of the best quality; while the lowest stratum is "scuff" or "dun". Ex ob. S.E. scuff applied to anything valueless or contemptible.


**scrumpolious.** 'Scrumpolious', of which it is an elaboration: late C. 19–20. (J. B. Priestley, *Paraway, 1932.*)

**scrummy.** 'Scrumpmy' (whence it derives): from ca. 1906, on the evidence of Collinson (p. 24); 1918, Galsworthy (O.E.D. Sup.).—2. An occ. corruption of *crummy*, lousy: *New Zealand soldiers* in O.W.

See *skrimp.*

**scrumpomatics.** First rate, excellent, 'glorious': coll.: 1860, H., 1st ed.: 1885, Meredith, 'Hang me, if ever I see such a scrumpomatic lot,' O.E.D. Ex U.S. coll. sense, stylish (of things), handsome (of persons).—2. The sense 'fastidious, hard to please' is by the O.E.D. queried as U.S. only: perhaps orig. U.S. (whence the O.E.D.'s quotation, 1946), but appr. current in England ca. 1855–75, for the life time add. of H. define the word as 'nice, particular, beautiful.' Prob. ex dia. sense of mean, stingy; sense 1, therefore, as W. points out, may have been influenced by *sumptuous.*

**scrumpomically.** The adv. of the preceding: coll.: from not later than 1880.

**scruncher.** A glutton: coll.: from ca. 1860. Ex *srunchn*, to bite crassingly.

**scruncht.** An illiterate form of (to) *scrunch*: 1851, Mayhew.

**scud.** A fast runner: schools': 1857, Hughes in *Tom Brown*, 'I say... you ain't a bad scud'; ob. Ex *scud*, to move quickly.—2. Hence, a fast run: from ca. 1870; slightly ob.

**scuddick.** The gen. form; also *scuddock, scurrick, scutick* (mostly dia.), *skiddick* (idk), and *skuddick*. An extremely small sum or coin, amount or object: a. and dial. form: from ca. 1790 (E.D.D.); in C. 20, only dial. 'Jon Bee', 1923, 'Used negatively; 'not scuddick'. ... 'Every scuddick gone'; "she gets not a scuddick from me". ... Perhaps ex. † S.E. *scud*, refuse; more prob. ex. dial. *scud*, a wisp of straw, despite the fact that this sense is not recorded until 1843 (O.E.D.);—many dial. terms were almost certainly 'ages' before their earliest appearance in print.—2. In c. of ca. 1820–60, a halfling: only in form *scurric.*

Egan's *Grose, 1823; Moncrieff, 1843.*

**scull.** (a)ny crowd: c. from late 1780's. *Magazine*, 1787 (XII, 601), 'This got a scuff round us' : 'Dagonet' *Sims in The Referee*, Feb. 12, 1888. Ex more gen. S.E. sense, a noisy crowd.

**scull-hunter.** One who hangs about the docks on the pretence of looking for work but actually to steal anything that "comes his way": c. and naval sense, from ca. 1790; ob. Colquhoun's *Police of the Metropolis*, 1790; Bowen.

**scullery.** Inferior, contemptible: *Christ's Hospital* (c. 1817), Baumann. Prob. ex *scurvy*.

**scutter.** A policeman: Northern c. (cf. *bulky*): ca. 1855–90. H., 2nd ed. Ex either *scuffe*, to throw up dust in walking (cf. dial. *scurf*, to shuffle), or, more likely, *scurf*, to buffet.

**scout**; also (very rare in C. 20) *skrug*. An untidy or ill-mannered or morally undeveloped boy; a shirker at games; one 'undistinguished in person, in games, or social qualities': Eton and Harrow: from ca. 1820. Westmacott, 1825, refers it to *staggish*; perhaps, however, ex Scots and Northern *scug* (*skrug*), a pretense; ex Yorkshire and Lancashire dial. *scupp, scum*, but possibly *scudder*, q.v. See esp. 'Eton Slang'; § 2. *staggish*; *scurvy*. Adj. to the preceding.

**scull.** The head of a college: university (1785); ob. by 1864 (see H., 3rd ed.), *by* 1890. Grose, 1st ed. Cf. *scull-race* and *Goldgofla*, q.v.—2. 'A one horse chaise or buggy,' Grose, 1st ed. (also *sculler*): ca. 1780–1830.—3. See *scullers.*

**scull-race.** An examination: University: ca. 1810–70. Ex *scull, 1, q.v.*

**scull-thatcher.** A wig-maker: coll. (1785); ob. Grose, 1st ed.—2. Hence, a hatter: C. 19–20; ob. **sculler.** See *scull, 2.*


**sculling around.** (Of a person) wandering aimlessly; (of a thing) left lying about: nautical: C. 20. Bowen. Ex leisurely rowing.


**scum.** Enough: c. of ca. 1720–50. Street *Rubbishes Considered, 1729*; etymology.


**scurf.** A mean, a "scurrvy" fellow: ca. 1850–1915. Mayhew, 1851, "There's a scurf!" said one; "He's a regular scab," cried another. Cf. *scarb*, n., 1.—2. A 'scab' as in *scab*, n., 2, q.v.: from ca. 1850.—3. Also, an employer paying less than the standard wage: from ca. 1850. Like sense 2, first in Mayhew.

**scurf, v.** To apprehend, arrest: c. of ca. 1810–50. Vaux. t ex S.E. *scuff*.

**scurrick.** See *scuddick.**

**scurse or *scuse.* (Esp. in 'scuse me!') To excuse: late C. 15–20: S.E. until C. 19, then (when not, as occ., deliberately humorous) coll. verging on illiteracy. T. E. Brown, 1887, 'Scuse me, your honour.' O.E.D.


**scuth.** The female pudend or pubic hair: coll.: late C. 16–20: ch. Ex *scurf*, a short upright tail, esp. of hare, rabbit, deer. (Implied in Shakespeare, Cotton, Durfey, and several broadsides, but not, I believe, defined as the pudend before Grose, 1st ed.) Also, the behind: C. 18. Ned Ward, 1709
scutter. To go hastily and fussily or excitedly or timorously: coll. and dial.: from ca. 1780. Mrs. Delany, 1781, 'She staid abt 24 hours, then scutter'd away to Badminton.' The vb.n. is frequent, the ppl. adj. rare. O.E.D. Prob. ex scuttle. Imm. ex dial. (1777: E.D.D.).

scuttlet. See scuddick.


scuttler. An advocate of 'scuttle' (see the n.): political: 1884 (O.E.D.); ob. scuttling. The policy implied in scuttle, v., 1: political 1884 (O.E.D.); ob.—2. As street-fighting between you & me. scuttling, like scuttle the v. (1890) and the n. (1894), is gen. considered S.E.: perhaps orig. coll. or dial.—see E.D.D.

'sdeath l., 'sydnys l., 'sliggers l. Abbr. God's death l., deynys l., or dines l., and diggers l.: resp. C. 17–18, then archaic; early C. 17 (Jonson); late C. 17. (O.E.D.) All coll. except perhaps the first, which should perhaps be considered S.E.; all may be euphemistic, though this is to underestimate the power of collocu to, which is at least as great as that of euphemism. 'sheart. See 'sheart.—se. See sey.


sea?' who wouldn't sell a farm and go to. A nautical c.p. spoken when something unpleasant or extremely difficult has to be done: mid-C. 19–20. Bowen.


Sea-Boots, the. 'The naval name for the old turret-battleships "Hero" and "Conqueror", which had... the upper works bunched a/sf... early C. 20. Bowen.


sea-cott. A seaman, esp. if of fresh water or scant ability: nautical: (1876); ob. Baumann; Manchon. Prob. ex preceding, with a pun on (silly) coot.


sea-galley. A special correspondent: naval coll.: C. 20; ob. The Army and Navy Gazette, July 13, 1901, 'These sea-gallops—to use Lord Spencer's historical designation.'


sea-pork. The flesh of young whales: id.: id. Ibid.

sea-rover. A herring: mostly London: (—1900). Gen. in a doortstep and a sea-rover, a slice of bread and a herring, and doortsteps and (a) sea-rover, a herring sandwich, as in Whiteing's No. 5 John Street, 1899.


sell. A preacher's convert: ecclesiastical: ca. 1560–80. Conybeare, 1853. Either ex see one's sell to or ex under (one's) sell. Cf. own, q.v.

sell., v. To impugnate (a woman): C. 19–20; ob. Cf. see sell.


seam. See white seam.


seaman if he carries a millstone will have a qualit out of it, a. A mid-C. 17–mid. 18 semi-proverbal c.p. alluding to the ingenuity displayed by sailors as regards meat and drink. Ray.

seat; serene. The female pudendus: coll.: late C. 16–17. Partly ex sear, the touch-hole of a pistol, and partly ex light (or tickle) of the ear or sheer, wanton.

search. (Of a pickpocket) to rob (a person): c.: C. 20. David Hume.

search for me, or you can (or may) search me! I don't know: c.p.: C. 20 (U.S., anglicised by 1910); slightly ob. by 1936. (Sc.—but you won't find it.) searcher. A searching question, an embarrassing problem: coll. (—1923). Manchon.

seaside mists. Bed vermin: middle classes' (—1909); ob. Ware.


seat. A rider: sporting coll. (—1887). Baumann. Ex have a good seat (in the saddle).

seat of honour, shame, vengeance. The posteriors; jocular coll. (in C. 20 ob.): resp. 1792, Woloot (adumbrated in Bailey's *Erasmus*, 1725); 1821, Combe, and rare; 1749, Smollett,—likewise rare. Ex the fact that he was commonly accounted the most honourable that was first seated, and that this honour was commonly done to the posteriors (Bailey).

seat of magistracy. 'Proctor's authority'; Egan's Grove: Oxford University: ca. 1820–50.

seat, hot. See hot seat.


Sebastianist. A Mr Micawber, one who believes that something good will turn up some day: coll. (late C. 19–20) among the English Colony at Lisbon. Ex the Portuguese. In 1578, King Sebastian was defeated in Morocco and never again heard of: but half Portugal, refusing to credit his death, believed that he would return and lead them to victory.


secrecy or -try. Incorrect pronunciation of *secretary*: C. 18–20.

second; third. Second mate; third mate: nautical coll.: mid-C. 19–20. Often in address, as in 'Go easy, third!'


second fiddle. See fiddle.


second-like. A second (e.g. drink) like—the same as: the first: taverns: 1884; slightly ob. Ware.


second peal. See peal.

second picture. The 'tableau upon the rising of the veil': to applause, after it has fallen at the end of an act, or a play': theatrical coll.: 1885. Ware.

see the devil. To become drunk: mid-C. 19–20; ob.

see the king. To be very experienced, knowing, alert: ca. 1870–90. H., 5th ed. An English modification of the orig. U.S. to have seen the elephant (see elephant).

see things. To experience hallucinations: coll.: late (mid-C.) 19–20. see through. To ‘get through’ (a meal): coll.: 1859 (O.E.D.); slightly ob.

seed, see’d. Saw: (dial. and) sol.: C. 18–20. Foote, 1752 (O.E.D.)—2. Seen: id. id. Pegge, Anecdotes of the English Language, ‘The common people of London... will say, for instance, “I see’d him yesterday”; and “he was see’d again to-day.”’ (O.E.D.)—3. seed in lawn tennis is S.E.

sea run, to. See run sea. seed-plot. The female pudend: C. 19–20 (ob.): coll. verging on S.E.


see others and lose oneself. To play the fool: coll.: late C. 16–17. Florio.

Seeley’s pigs. Pig iron, origin and properly in Government dockyards: nautical: ca. 1870–1910. H., 5th ed. Ex Mr. Seeley, the M.P. for Lincoln, who revealed that some of the yards were half-paved with iron pigs: cf. the use in the G.W., of boxes of ammunition and bully-beef as trench-flooring,—for which, however, there was often justification.

seem to, cannot or could not. See cannot seem to.

seems to me. Apparently: coll.: 1888. ‘John Strange Winter,’ ‘Seems to me women get like dogs—they get their lessons pretty well fixed in their minds after a time,’ O.E.D.

seem dead with, (he, I, etc.) would not be. I detest (properly a person, loosely a thing): it, he, etc., is disgusting: coll.: late C. 19–20. Lyell.

seen the elephant. See elephant. (Ware’s sense was not adopted.)

seen. Saw (all persons, both numbers): sol.: late C. 18–20. Cf. see (2), seed.


sees. The eyes: c. or low s.: from ca. 1810. Lex. Bal.: Moore, 1819, ‘To close up their eyes—alias, to sew up their sees,’ in a boxing context. Cf. see and daylight.


segotitic. Incorrect for segnotitic (ca. 1870–1750), as sesiant (C. 17) is for sgeant. O.E.D.

self-reaches destination. A c.p. parallel with see run dry, g.v. (B. & F.)

self-run, Light Horse. Short-service ratings under Lord Selborne’s scheme: naval: G.W. Bowen. Ex discipline of certain Light Horse units in the Boer War.

self. be. (E.g. be himself.) To be in one’s normal health or state of mind: coll.: 1849, 1863; Macaulay; The Daily News, May 23, 1883, on a cricket match, ‘Mr Grace was all himself.’ Also, late C. 19–20 (very rarely of things), to feel like (e.g. one-self). Cf. be one’s own man or woman: see own.—2. Hence, of things, be in its usual place: mid-C. 19–20.—3. self and company (or wife, etc., etc.) is jocular coll., excusable only as a jocularity: late C. 19–20. O.E.D.; Fowler.

sell. A successful deception, hoax or swindle (the latter rare in C. 20): 1850, Smedley, ‘Ex the v.—2. Hence, a planned hoax, deception, swindle: from ca. 1860.—3. Ex sense 1,—a (great) disappointment: 1860, H., 2nd ed.; 1874, Mrs H. Wood, ‘It’s an awful sell... no hunting, and no shooting, and nothing.’ sell, v. To take in, deceive; impose on, trick, swindle (these more serious senses being somewhat rare in C. 20): C. 17–20. Jonson, 1607, Volpone, ‘When bold, each tempts the other again, and all are sold’; Smedley; ‘Ralf Boldrewood’. Prob. ex sell, to betray (a person, cause, party, or country).—2. See sold out and sold up.

sell (a person) a pup. See pup, sell a.

sell (a person) blind. To deceive or swindle utterly: o. (—1837). Baumann.

sell-out. A contest for which all the seats are sold: sporting coll.: from ca. 1930. G. Simpson, in The Daily Mail, Dec. 1, 1934, ‘The interest in MaAvoy’s fight with Kid Tunero... is so great that... the match is a sure sell-out.’

sell the pass. To give away an advantage to one’s opponent(s): coll.: C. 20. Ex mountain warfare.

seller; sellinger. A selling race (one in which the winner must be auctioned): sporting coll.: from ca. 1921. O.E.D. (Sup.)

sellow. Apples: back s. (—1859). H., 1st ed. (A few back s. terms are only in the pl.: pi. pinurt pote, seeo, spionrap, starpa, stooch, q.q.v.)

s’elp (loosely, sell). So help, esp. in s’elp me God: C. 14–20: S.E. until C. 19, then coll.; in C. 20, almost a sol. Kipling, 1888, ‘S’elp me, I believe e’s dead,’ O.E.D. Cf. swelp and:

s’elp me Bob (bob)! So help me God!: low coll.: from ca. 1840. Barham; J. Payn; ‘Pomes’ Marshall. Cf. preceding entry and s’elp my greens.

s’elp me never! ‘May God never help me if I lie now’ (Waro): low (—1909). Ware.

s’elp my greens! So help me God!: low coll.: ca. 1850–1910. Mayhew. Obviously greens (q.v., however) jocularly varies Bob, which itself euphemises or perverts God. See preceding three entries and swelp and swop my Bob!

semi-bejan. See bejan.


semola. Incorrect for semoletta, a variety of semolina: mid-c. 19–20. O.E.D.

semper. A Winchester term explained by Mansfield (1866) in reference to ca. 1840 as ‘A very common prefix; e.g. a horse was said to be semper continent, tardy... if he was often at Sick House, or late for Chapel... An official who was always at the College meetings went by the name of Semper Testis.’ Ex L. semper, always. (The a., coll., and j. at Winchester, even more than
at Westminster, abound in Latinisms: both schools have always been rightly famous for the excellence of the teaching given in the Ancient Classics). See also ‘Winchester College slang,’ § 6.

**Senal Pervitute.** Penal servitude: cheap urban witticism: ca. 1900–14. Ware. In addition to the switch-over of initial letters, there is a glancing pun on send.

*send.* See Coventry, daylight, fleas in (one’s) ear, and the next ten entries.

**send for Gulliver!** A Society c.p. (1887–ca. 95) on ‘some affair not worth discussion. From a cascadescient incident’ in Part I of *Gulliver’s Travels* (Ware).

**send for Mary Ann!** An occ. variant of san-fairyns, q.v. (F. & Gibbons.)

**send (a person) for yard-wide pack-thread.** To despatch on a fool’s errand: coll.: ca. 1800–60. Apperson.

**send in.** To drive in: ca. 1810–60. *Lex. Bal.*, ‘Hand down the jemmy and send it in; apply the crow to the door, and drive it in.’

**send it down, David!** See *David I*, send it down.


**send round.** C. 20. coll. a, v.t. to send to someone near-by; b, v.l. to send a message to a neighbour. (O.E.D.)

**send round the hat.** See hat, send round the, send up. To commit to prison: orig. U.S. (1862); anglicised by 1887, when Baumann recorded it without comment on its American origin. *The Westminster Gazette*, April 30, 1897, ‘Two prisoners . . . occupied the prison-van . . . Burns was being ‘sent up’ for wife-beating, and Tannahill for theft, O.E.D.: s. >, ca. 1910, coll. >, ca. 1920, S.E.—2. (Gen. in passive.) *En masse* to scoff at and mock: upper- and middle-class coll. (—1911), Lyt. ‘He was sent up unmercifully by half the room.’ Ex the Public School j., to send (a boy) to the headmaster for punishment. sender. A severe blow: from ca. 1890; ob, Perhaps ex send spinning.

**sencechance.** Incorrect for sensachale, a sensehul’s territory (C. 16); senical for sinical (C. 17–18). O.E.D.

**senior.** See junior.

**Senior, the.** The United Service Club in London: naval and military: C. 20. Bowen.

**sensation.** Half a glass of sherry: Australian: ca. 1850–1890. (O.E.D.) Prob. ex sense 3, though this is recorded later.—2. In England, a quarter of gin: 1859, H., 1st ed.; ↑ by 1920.—3. A (very) small quantity, esp. of liquor, occ. of food, rather rarely of other things: mid-C. 19–20: coll. Lit., just so much as can be perceived by the senses; cf. the French *soupe*. [sensational, adopted from U.S.A. ca. 1870, is, to its exhibition by journalists and crunte authors, on the border-line between S.E. *dicher* and s. Ware.]

**sense, it stands to.** It stands to reason, it’s only sensible: coll.: 1856, George Elliot (O.E.D.). Ex ↑ it is to (good) sense on it stands to reason.

**sensual; —ity.** ‘Obstinate self-willed’; ‘self-willed obstinacy’: catachrestio: ca. 1520–90. O.E.D., which also notes sententious wrongly used by Lyttton for a sententious discourse.

**sent.** Sent to prison: lower classes’ coll.: late C. 19–20. *The People*, March 20, 1898. (Ware.)


**sent for, be.** To be done for; to be dead (has been sent for) or dying, doomed to die (is sent for): C. 20, esp. in the Army.

**sent to the skies.** Killed, murdered: lower-middle class’s (—1909); ↑ by 1920, the G.W. intervening. Ware.

**sent up, be.** See send up, 2.—sententious. See sensual.

**Sentimental Club, the.** The Athenæum: literary: ca. 1800–1015. Is this prompted by a jealousy that imputes to the members a ‘mushy’ anecdote? sentimental hairpin. ‘An affected, insignificant girl’: Society: ca. 1880–1900. Ware.

**sentimental journey, arrive at the end of.** To coot with a woman: ca. 1870; very ob. F. & H. says ‘common’ (i.e. used by the lower classes): should not this be read as ‘cultured’? Ex the conclusion of Sterne’s *Sentimental Journey*, ‘I put out my hand and caught hold of the fille-de-chambre’s —. Pruss.’ The unworidly postulate ‘hand’; the worldly, ‘***’; to those who know their Sterne. verb. *sup.*

**sentiments I, them’s my.** That’s what I think about it: jocular c.p.: C. 20. (Galsworthy, *Swan Song*, 1928.)


**sentry, on.** Drunk: rather low: ca. 1885–1914. Ex *on sentry-go*: but why? Perhaps homeservice sentries are tempted to take a tot too many in the laudable desire to keep out the cold on night-duty.

**sentry-box, Chelsea Hospital to a.** See *Chelsea Hospital.*


**separate between.** Catachrestic for *distinguishing between or, occ., separate (one thing) from (another)*: ↑ before C. 20. E.g. Freeman Wills Crofts, *Mystery in the Channel*, 1931, ‘He had . . . to separate between what was essential and what was accidental.’

**separate (or, occ., private) peace, I’ll make a or I think I’ll make a.** A fittingly jocular soldiers’ c.p. of 1917–18. B & P.

**separates.** The period (often three months) served in a local prison by one condemned to penal servitude before he begins that servitude; o. (—1932) ‘Stuart Wood’, *Shades of the Prison House*. *Ex separate, q.v.*

**Sepoy.** Any Indian foot-soldier, esp. an infantryman: Regular Army coll.: late C. 19–20. B. & P.

**septa-** is incorrect for septua- in septuagenary, etc.; septual, for sepal, O.E.D.

**septic.** Sceptic: jocular: C. 20. (The author first heard it in 1912.)—2. Unpleasant; objection-
able: from ca. 1930. (H. A. Vachell, Moonhills, 1934.) Suggested by poisonous, q.v.

sepulchre. A large, flat cravat: London middle classes: ca. 1870-85. Ware. Ex the 'sins' it covered.

seraglio. A 'lowly, sorry Bawdy-house, a mere Dog-hole,' B.E.: coll.: late C. 17-18. A diminutive of:

seraglio. A brothel: coll.: late C. 17-early 19. B.E. Grose. Ex seraglio, a harem, though seraglio itself was orig. incorrect when used for serai, a Turkish palace. (The term > gen. ca. 1750 with Mrs Goadby, 'the great Goadby', who kept an excellent house in Berwick Street, Soho; Beresford Chancellor, Pleasure Haunts of London.)

serang. See head serang.—ser. See serag.

serene,—eno. See all serene,—eno.


sergeant. See come.—2. A commander: naval: C. 20. Ex the 'similarity of his three gold stripes to a Marine sergeant's chevron' (Bowen). Contr.—major.—3. Sergeant I kiss me. (Occ. kiss me, corporal! if a corporal is deputising for a sergeant.) A military c.p. of C. 20. Meant to annoy and gen. uttered during the sergeant's final rounds of barracks, tents, etc. Either derivative of nunsmaids' invitations or, less prov., reminiscent of Nelson's kiss me, Hardy.


Sergeant Snap. See Sergeant Kite.


serpent by the tail, hold a. To act foolishly: coll.: C. 19-20; ob. Ray, 1813.

Serpentiners. Those who like (?) to bathe in the Serpentine when it is icy: from ca. 1925.


serpiform. Rare error for serpiform, C. 19.


serve (a person) glad. See glad, serve.


serve out, v. To take revenge on, to punish; retaliate on (a person) for: from ca. 1815: boxing s.: 1830, gen. coll. The Sporting Magazine, 1817, 'The butcher was so completely served out, that he resigned all pretentions to victory,' O.E.D. By 'an ironic application of nautical serve out (grog, etc.)', W.—2. To smash (a fence): hunting s.: 1862 (O.E.D.).


serve out slope. To administer punishment at the gangway: naval: ca. 1830-90. Bowen. Cf. serve out, 1, q.v.

serve right. Coll. only in (and) serve (e.g. you) right/, and serves (e.g. you) right/, which indicate satisfaction that someone has got his deserts: from ca. 1830. Dickens, 1837, 'Workhouse funeral—serve him right,' O.E.D.

serve the poor with a thump on the back with a stone. To be a miser: semi-proverbial coll.: ca. 1870-1750; Ray.

services you right ! See serve right.

Servica(.). An improper form, very gen. until 1914, of Service(.

service. An imposition: Bootham School: late C. 19-20; 'practically obsolete', says the anon. Dict. of Bootham Slng, 1925.

service about, sling one's. See sling one's service about—service-book, to have eaten one's. See toothward.

'service lay. The 'dodge' by which one hires oneself out as a servant and then robs the house: c.: C. 18. C. Hitchin, The Regulator, 1718.

—ses, for —s, the sign of the pl., is frequent in illiterate speech: C. 19 († earlier)—20. Mayhew, 1861, 'You want to know if they rowes is common.'

sessions. To commit (one) to the sessions for trial: 1857. Mayhew: O.E.D.

sessions I. Well, I'm scared !: late C. 19-20; ob. Ex dial. sessions, a fuss, disturbance, argument, difficulty, task (E.D.D.).

set. Abbr. dead set (see set, dead): 1829, The Examiner (Q.E.D.): s. >=, ca. 1800, coll. >, ca. 1900, S.E.
—As a beginning (1821), set-out is rather S.E. than coll. O.E.D.—7. A to-do or fuss: (low coll.) late C. 19–20. D. Sayers, Murder Must Advertise, 1933, 'Cool that was a set-out, that was.'

set the hare's head to the goose giblets. To balance matters, to give as good as one gets: coll.: C. 17–early 18. Dekker & Webster.

set the swede down. To have a (short) sleep: military: from ca. 1910. F. & Gibbons. Ex the resemblance of a large Swede turning to a man's head. Cf. cough a hoghead.


set up, v. To sit up late: late C. 17–20: S.E. till C. 20, then coll.; in C. 20,—except in dial.—it is sol. Cf. set, v., 1.


set up for, be. To be well supplied with: coll.: 1883, Mrs Henry Wood, 'I'm set up for cotton gowns,' O.E.D. Ex S.E. set up, to establish or to equip in business, etc.

setaceous. Incorrect for cetaceous, C. 17–18; setaceous, for setaceous, C. 19. O.E.D.

set-off, -out, -to. Incorrect for set-offs, -outs, -los, mn.: C. 19–20. Even off's, out's, -los are catachrestic.


setter, clock. One who, to shorten a spell of duty, tampers with the clock: nautical coll.: mid-C. 19–20; slightly ob.—2. Hence, a 'sea-lawyer' late C. 19–20 (ob.): nautical.

'setting-dog. See setter, 4.—setting jewels. See set jewels.


settle (a person's) hash. See hash, settle one's. settlement-in-tail. An act of generation: legal: C. 19–20; ob. (Pun.)


Settler's Bible, the. The Grahamstown Journal:
seven up. To impregnate (a woman): coll. C. 19–20; ob.—2. See sewed up, 1–8.

seven up to a person's stocking. To silence, confute: coll.: 1850, C. Reade; ob.

seven(-)up; occ. sewn up. Pregnant: coll. (not upper nor middle class): C. 19–20; slightly ob.—2. Exhausted: from ca. 1825 (orig. of horses; not till 1837 of persons): as in Dickens's Pickwick; Smedley, 1860, 'I thought she'd have sewn me up at one time—the pace was terrific': slightly ob.—3. Cheated, swindled: 1838, Halliburton (O.E.D.).—4. At a loss, nonplussed, brought to a standstill: 1855, Smedley; 1884, Clark Russell; slightly ob.—5. Severely punished; esp. with 'bunged-up' eyes: boxing: from ca. 1860; ob.—8. Grounded; nautical coll.: mid-C. 19–20. Also sued up.


sewn up. A variant of sewed up (q.v.), esp. in senses 4, 6, 7.

sexy. Incorrect for sez(1)—in a few scientific terms: late C. 19–20. O.E.D.


sey; occ. se. Variants of say, q.v.: mid-C. 19–20; 20 † by 1920.


'sflesh !, 'foot !, 'sgad ! Coll. euphemisms for God's flesh !, foot !, and Esgad!: C. 18, C. 17, C. 18. (O.E.D.)

[sh for ts, as in trash for that's, is one of the commonest devices for representing the bloored speech of drunk persons. Truncations are common (cf. rt for rgt, as in 'All ri, o' man'), as is the omission of a syllable in tryllables or longer words, and of two syllables in long words. Cf. the thickening effect of a cold in the head.]

shab. A low follow: 1637, Bastwick; 1735, Dyohe & Pardson, 'Shab, a mean, sorry, pitiful Fellow, one that is guilty of low Tricks, &c.'; 1861, Borrow. Ex shab, a sore. Cf. scab, n., 1, q.v.


shab(a)roon; also shabbaroon (C. 18–19), shabb(1)eroon (C. 17–18). A ragamuffin; a mean, shabby fellow; an otherwise disregutable or a mean-spirited person: late C. 17–mid-19. B.E.; Ned Ward; Halliwell. Otherwise shab, n., on pickaroon (O.E.D.).
SHABBY, CUT UP

shabby, cut up. See cut up rough.

Shabby Woman, the. The statue of Minerva at the portal of the Athenæum: literary: ca. 1860–1860–1910. Ex shabby, stingy, 'for since the Athenæum Club was established, no member has ever afforded the simplest rites of hospitality to a friend', H., 3rd ed. (All that has been changed!)

shakeroom. See shak(a)room.

shaker, listed by F. & H. as a variant of shab, n., is not in the O.E.D., nor is it supported by quotation in F. & H., nor have I seen it elsewhere. Prob. genuine, but rare and of ca. 1860–1900.

shack. A misdirected or a returned letter: Post Office: late C. 19–early 20. Perhaps ex shack, 'grain fallen from the ear, and available for the feeding of pigs, poultry, etc.' (O.E.D.), or ex dial. shack, a vagabond, a worthless fellow. F. & H.


shade. A very small portion or quantity added or taken away: coll.: mid-C. 19–20. Ex shade, 'a tinge, a minute qualifying infusion' (O.E.D.).

*shado, v. To keep secret: o.: late C. 19–20; ob. Ex shade, to hide.

shadow. A now boy in the care of one who is not new (the ' substance') and learning the ropes from his temporary guardian: Westminster School: from ca. 1860. Wm. Lucas Collins, Public Schools, 1867.

shadow never grow (ooc. be) less i., may your. May you prosper: a Persian phrase introduced to England by Morier in 1824 and, ca. 1890, generalised as a coll. The Rev. J. R., Jan. 2, 1887. (O.E.D.)

shadowworking. 'A grotesque rendering of shadowing': Society: ca. 1900–14. Ware.


shady side of, the. Older than: 1807, W. Irving. 'The younger being somewhat on the shady side of thirty,' O.E.D.: coll. >, ca. 1910, S.E.

shaft or a bolt of it, make a. To determine that a thing shall be used in one way or another; late C. 19–20; coll. till 1890; then proverbial S.E.; in C. 19–20, merely archaic. Nashe, 1594; Issac D'Iralisi, 1823. (Apperson.)


shag, v.t. To colt (with a woman): late C. 18–20. Very gen. among soldiers in G.W. Gros., 2nd ed. Prob. ex † shag, to shake, toss about. Cf. n., 1, 2,—2. Whence perhaps, i.v.i., to masturbate: Public Schools: certainly ca. 1900 and prob. many years earlier. Cf.: shag, adj. Exhausted, esp. after games: Marlborough College: C. 20. Perhaps ex shag, v., 2, q.v. (A thin and woody dog that, ca. 1919–23, haunted the college precincts, was known as Shapok or Shagfat, as Mr A. R. R. Fairclough, formerly of the Alcuin Press, tells me.)


shag back. To hang back; refuse a fence: hunting coll.: from ca. 1870.


shake, v.t. To colt (with a woman): coll.: † C. 16–20; ob. In late C. 19–20, rare except in shake a tart. Halliwell. 'This seems to be the ancient form of shag, given by Gros' (see shag, v., 1).—2. Hence, v. reflexive, to masturbate: C. 19–20. Cf. shake, v., 2; † shake, v.t., to rob (a person): low s., or perhaps c.: C. 19–20. Lex. Br. ; in C. 20, mainly Australian. Cf. the C. 15–16 S.E. shake (a person) out of (goods, etc.).—4. († hence) to steal: from ca. 1810: o. >, ca. 1890, low a. Vaux; H. Kingsley, 1859, 'I shook a nag, and got bowled out and lagged.' In C. 20, almost wholly Australian. See also shook,—5. See shook on.—6. See shake an elbow.—7. See:

shake! Shake hands! from ca. 1890; mainly U.S. Often shake on it! (Other forms are very rare, except for, e.g., 'Well satisfied, they shook on it.')

SHAKE A FALL  749

shake a fall. To wrestle: C. 19–20; ob. shake a flamin'. To fight: navvies': ca. 1870–1914. Ware. A flamin' is a flannel shirt or jacket.

shake a leg. (Gen. in imperative.) To hurry: coll. (mainly military and nautical): late C. 19–20. Anstey, 1892, ' Ain't you shot enough? Shake a leg, can't yer, Jim? ' Ex S.E. shake a foot, leg, etc., to dance.


shake (a person's) fleas. To thrash: low: C. 19. Ware.

*shake-glim. A begging letter, or petition, on account of fire: ca. 1850–90. Cf.:

*shake-lurk. The same, only for shipwreck: o. of ca. 1850–1900. Mayhew, 1881. See lurk, a dodge or 'lay': and cf. lurker.

shake one's shambles. See shambles ...

*shake one's toe-rag. To descamp: vagabonds' and beggars' c. (1900). Ware. Cf. toe-ragger.

shake-out. A sudden revulsion and following clearance—due to panic': Stock Exchange coll.: from ca. 1880. Ware.

shake the bullet or red rag. See bullet and red rag.—2. To threaten to discharge a person: tailors: from ca. 1870; slightly ob.

shake the (occ. one's) elbow. To dice: C. 17–20 (ob.): coll. >, ca. 1800, S.E.

shake the ghost into. To frighten (a person) greatly: mid-C. 1920; ob.


shake up, v.i. To masturbate: C. 19–20; ob. Cf. shag, v. 2.—2. V.t., to hurry: nautical coll.: late C. 19–20. Bowen. Ex S.E. shake up, to rouse with, or as with, a shake.

shake your ears (!, go). C.p. advice to one who has lost his ears: ca. 1570–1700. G. Harvey, 1573; Shakespeare; Mrs F. Sheridan, 1764. (Apperson.) Cf. the modern craddity get the dirt out of your ears!; wake up!


shakes, in a brace or couple of. See shake, n., 5.

shakes, no (occ. not any) great. Nothing remarkable or very important or unusually able or clever: from ca. 1835; coll. till ca. 20; then familiar S.E. Moore, 1819, ' Though no great shakes at learned chat.' Ex dicing.

shakes, the. Any illness or chronic disease marked by trembling limbs and muscles: coll.: from the 1830's. O.E.D.—2. Hence, delirium tremens; coll.: from ca. 1880. The Cornhill Magazine, June, 1884, ' Until she is pulled up by an attack of delirium tremens, or, as she and her neighbours style it, a fit of the shakes. '—3. Hence, extreme tremor: coll. C. 20. 4. *shakes?, what? What's the chance of stealing anything: o. (1850). H., 1st ed.

SHAPES, SHOW ONE'S

sham-legger. A man that offers to sell very cheaply goods that are very inferior: low s. (mostly London) of ca. 1870-1910.

sham the doctor. To malinger: military: from the 1890's. F. & Gibbons.

[shamateur, contrary to gen. opinion, is S.E. and it dates from ca. 1900. O.E.D. (Sup.)]

shambles, shake one's. (Gen. in imperative.) To be off: late 17-mid-18: either low s. or perhaps, orig. at least, c. B.E.

shambly. Shambling, lurching: nautical coll.: late C. 19-20. W. E. Llewellyn has described sailors thus: 'Their hands were in a grab half-hook [i.e. as though grasping a grapple], always, and their shoulders shambly.'

shame. Anything very ugly, painfully indecent, disgracefully inferior: coll.: 1764, Gray; 'His nose is a shame'; 1816, Scott, 'Three [hens] that were a shame to be seen.' O.E.D.


shanny. See shan, n., last sense.


sharrock from the. To drink or go drinking on St. Patrick's Day, properly and nominally in honour of the sharrock: 1888, *The Daily Telegraph*, March 22, but prob. in spoken use many, many years earlier: coll. till ca. 1910, then S.E.

*shan(d). Base or counterfeit coin: c. (- 1812); very ob. Vaux. Ex dial. shan, patly. Cf. sheen, q.v.

[shandy, for shandy-gaff, is on the border-line between coll. and S.E.]

shanghai. To stow up and then put on a vessel requiring hands: nautical a. (orig. U.S.) >, in C. 20, coll.: 1871 (U.S.) and 1887 (England). Ex Shanghai as seaport, or perhaps as propelled from a shanghai or catapulta (*shanghai* to shoot with a shanghai, is not recorded before C. 20). O.E.D.

Shanghai gentleman. One definitely not a gentleman: naval (- 1909). Ware.

Shanks-End, the; hence Shankender. The Cape Fishermen, an inhabitant thereof; South African jocular coll.: late C. 19-20. Pettman. Cf. the *heel of Italy*.

Shanks's) mare, nag, naggy, pony. One's legs as conveyance: coll. (in C. 20, E.), resp. 1795 (S. Bishop); nag, 1774 (Ferguson), and naggy, 1744 (an anon. Scottish song, W.), the former being mostly, the latter wholly Scots; pony, 1891, *The Globe*, June 5. (O.E.D.) Jocular on shanks, the legs, and gen. as ride s. m. (or n., or p.).

shandy close-fisted': military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Perhaps ex one who walks (see preceding entry) when the ordinary person would ride or go by bus or train.

Shannon, to have been dipped in the. To be anything but bashful, the immersion being regarded as a cure completely effectual and enduring against that affliction: coll.: ca. 1780-1850. Grose, 1st ed.

shanty. Idiotic, silly mad: Cockneys' (- 1825). Ex Kentish dial.

*shant. A quart or a pot; a pot of liquor (esp. shant of gaffer, a pot of beer). mid-C. 19-20: a. and low s. Mayhew, 1851; P. H. Emerson, 1893.

†stylogy: cf. shanty and shanty-liqour, q.v.

shantn't (less correctly, shant'n). Shall not: coll.

1684, S. Crossman, 'My Life and I shan't part'; 1741, Richardson (shan't); 1876, Black, 'He shan't marry Violet' (app. earliest record of this form). O.E.D. -2. As a n., 1850, Smedley, 'A Sally, half-muttered "shant" was the only reply,' O.E.D.: likewise coll.

shan't! A somewhat uncouth and gen. angry or sullen form of:


shan't be long, I now we. It's all right: a c. of ca. 1895-1915. *The Daily Telegraph*, Sept. 8, 1890; Maugham, *Liza of Lambeth*, 1897, 'Now we shan't be long! she remarked.' Ware derives it from 'railway travellers' phrase when near the end of a journey.'


shay. See shape.

shape, spoil a woman's. To get her with child: coll. late C. 17-20; ob. Facetious Tom Brown, 'The . . . king who had spoil'd the shape . . . of several mistresses.' By an indelicate pun.

shape, travel on one's. To live by one's appearance, to swindle: coll.: C. 19.

shape for you I, there's a. A c. in respect of an extremely thin person or animal: mid-C. 19-20; very ob. Cf. shapes.

mid-C. 18—early 19.—3. To come into view: coll.: 1828, Scott; ob. (O.E.D.)

shapes and shirts. Young actors' term, ca. 1834—
1900, for 'old actors, who swear by the legitimate
Elizabethan drama, which involves either the
"shape" or the "shirt"—the first being the cut-in
tunic; the . . . shirt being independent of shape.'

Ware. *shapo, rare gen. shappeau or shappo; rarely
"shappo"]—less rarely shap. A hat: late C. 17—
early 19; c. B.E.; *shappeau, c. or *shappo, c. for
"Chappesau,"—properly Fr. chapeau — a 'Hat, the
newest Cant, N'ab' being very old, and grown too com-
m'—Grose, 2nd ed., has shappo and shop, in
1st ed. only shappo; C. Hitchin, 1718, has shap.

share that among you! A soldiers' c.p. (from
1810) on hurling a bomb into an enemy trench or
dug-out. B. & P.

shark. A pickpocket: c. of C. 18. J. Stevens,
1707; Grose. (O.E.D.)—2. († hence) a customs
officer: ca. 1780—1880. Grose, 1st ed.—3. See
sharks.—4. (Also black shark; Baumann.) A
lawyer: nautical coll.: 1840, Marryat (O.E.D.)—
5. A recruit: military: ca. 1890—1910. † on
rooky, a rook being a shark.—6. A sardine: jocular
Slang, p. 241.

shark-baiter. A too venturesome swimmer:
Australian coll.: (*1935).

shark out. To make off; decamp silyly: dial.
(—1828) >, by 1880, low coll. Manchon.

sharks, the. The press-gang: 1828, D. Jerrold;
† by 1900.

shark's mouth. 'An awning shaped to fit round a
mast': nautical coll. verging on: late C. 19—20.
Bowen.

sharp. A swindler; a cheat: coll.: 1797, Mrs
M. Robinson (O.E.D.); Vaux; Maskelyne's title
for a most informative book, Sharps and Flats.—
2. Hence, an expert, connoisseur, actual or would-
be wise man: coll.: 1865, The Pall Mall Gazette,
Sept. 11, "Sharps" who advertise their "tips" in the
sporting journals, O.E.D. Ex sharp, alert.—
3. (Gen. in pl.) A needle: c.: late C. 19—20.
Ex S. ; three grades of needles, including the longest and most sharply pointed.

Sharp come in yet?, has Mr. A traders' c.p.
adressed by one (e.g.) shopman to another to
'signify that a customer of suspected honesty is about': from ca. 1860. H., 3rd ed. Cf. two-pun-
ten, q.v.

sharp and blunt. The female pudend: late C. 19—
20 rhyming s. on "tr.

sharp as the corner of a round table. Stupid:
coll. (lower classes): from ca. 1870; ob. Prob. by
opposition to S.E. sharp as a needle or razor or fthorn.

sharper's tools. Fools: rhyming s.: late C. 19—
20. (As = dice, it is S.E.)

*sharpen ome. A policeman: c. and Parlyaree:
ca. 1800—90. H., 1st ed. See ome.

sharpo. See go on the sharpo.

Sharpy's Alley bloodworms. Beef sausages; black
pudding: ca. 1850—1900. Ex a well-known
abattoir near Smithfield. H., 1st ed.

sharply the word and quirk's the motion. A c.p.
implying that a person is 'very attentive to his own
interest' Grose, 2nd ed.: late C. 18—20; slightly
ob. Ex sharply the word, an enjoining of prompti-
tude.
SHAVING-BRUSH


shaving-brush. The female pubic hair: from after 1838; ob.

shaving-mill. An open boat, sixteen-oared, of a type used as privateers in the war of 1812: Canadian. Bowen.

shaving the ladies. A drapers' phrase for overcharging women: 1863, 'Ouida', 'We have all heard of an operation called shaving the ladies'; ob. Ex shave, n. 1.


shay (or so), you don't. A jocular form of 'really': C. 20. Ex tipy distortion of say and perhaps influenced by so say, q.v. Also I should shay shor so i; certainly, as in Ian Hay, David and Destiny, 1934, 'I should shay shor! Go right ahead I'

She. Queen Victoria: Society's nickname: 1857–88. Ware. Ex Rider Haggard's She, published early in 1887: it was so popular that Andrew Lang and W. H. Pollock, in the same year, parodied it as He.


she didn't seem to mind it very much. A proletarian ironic c.p. intimating jealousy: ca. 1885–1900. Ware.


she has (or she's) been a good wife to him. An ironic proletarian c.p. 'cast at a drunken woman rolling in the streets' (Ware): from ca. 1905; not wholly †.


she's a catt's mother. A c.p. addressed to (esp.) a child constantly referring thus to his mother: mid-C. 19–20; slightly ob.

she-lion. A shilling: from ca. 1780; very ob. Grose 1st ed. by a pun.

she-male, n. and adj. Female: orig.: ca. 1880—London lower classes > by ca. 1912 fairly gen. jocular. Ware. Pairing with he-male, q.v.


she-oak net. A net spread under the gangway to catch seamen drunk on 'she-oak': nautical: late C. 19–20; ob. Bowen.


she thinks she's wearing a white collar! She's putting on 'side': a W.A.A.C.'s c.p.: 1917–18. B. & F. Among the 'Wacces', a white collar was worn by N.C.O.'s.

she will go off in an aromatic faint. A Society c.p. of 1883–ca. 86, 'said of a fantastical woman, meaning that her delicate nerves will surely be the death of her' (Ware).


shears. There's a pair of. They're very like: coll. C. 17–18. Ex the more gen. there goes or went but a pair of shears between (e.g.) them.


sheba. An attractive girl or woman; esp. as the counterpart of sheikh (sense 1): from 1926, and mostly American. Ex the Queen of Sheba, reputedly alluring.

shebang. As a hut, room, dwelling, shop, it has remained U.S.; but derivatively as a vehicle (Mark Twain, 1872) it was anglicised in the late 1890's; the debased sense, a thing, matter, business (— 1895 in U.S.) esp. in the whole shebang, is not, in C. 20, unknown in the British Empire. Prob. ex Fr. cabane (De Vere).


sheckles. See shekels. (The form given by Ware.)

she'd. She would: coll. See 'd.

shed. To give; to give away (something of little value); drop, let go: coll.: 1856, Dickens, 'Would shed a little money [for] a mission or so to Africa.' O.E.D.

shed a tear. To make water: mid-C. 19–20.— 2. (I hence by antiphrasis) to take a dram, hence— from ca. 1860—any drink: 1864, H., 3rd ed.; 1876, Hindley, 'I always made time to call in and shed a tear with him.' Less gen. and very ob.

sheddon. A middle-class corruption (— 1900) of chef-d'œuvre. Ware.

shee. See she, 2.—sheela(h). See sheila—sheela. See le.

sheen. Counterfeit coin: s. (— 1539). Brandon; H., 1st ed. Occ., from ca. 1880, as adj. Ex sheen(d), q.v. very prob. (cf. Brandon's and H.'s designation as Scottish); but perhaps influenced by: sheeny (gen. s.); occ. sheeney, —nie, or shen(y). A Jew: 1824 (O.E.D.); in 1830, opprobrious (witness S.O.D.); in C. 20, inoffensive (witness H., 5th ed., 1874 = 1873). Thackeray, 1847, 'Sheeney and Moses are ... smoking their pipes before their lazy shutters in Seven Dials.' From ca. 1890, occ.
as adj., as in The Licensed Victuallers' Gazette, Jan. 23, 1891, “‘Don't like that Sheenny friend of yours,” he said.—2. Hence, a pawnbroker: mid-C. 19–20.—3. A dark-coloured tramp; tramps’ c. (—1932). F. Jennings, Tramping with Tramps.—4. A very economical, money-careful man: military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. W. risks the guess that sheeny may derive ex Yiddish pronunciation of Ger. schön, beautiful, used in praising wares; very tentatively, I suggest that the term arose from the sheeny, i.e. glossy or brightly shiny, hair of the average 'English' Jew: cf. snide and shine, q.v.
sheeny or S.; etc. Adj. See sheeney, n., 1.—2. Fraudulent (person); base (money): late C. 19–20.
A rare sense, due prob. to sheen, q.v.

sheep by moonlight, keep. To hang in chains: late C. 18–mid-19. A. E. Houseman's note to The Shropshire Lad (1898), ix. (O.E.D.)
*sheep-shearer. A cheat or swindler: c.; late C. 17–mid-18. B.E.

sheep-walk. To duck: Winchester: from ca. 1890. Ex sheep-dipping.

sheep's head,—two heads are better than one even if one is only a. A c.p. aimed at the second party to a plan, etc.; often in retort to the trite two heads are better than one. C. 20 († late C. 19–20).
sheep-cloth is incorrect for cerecloth; ↑ sheathide for shahi. O.E.D.

Sheer Nasty; Sheer Necessity. Sheerness: naval: late C. 19–20. Bowen. (Naval men go there only when necessary.)
sheet, on the. Up for trial; 'crimed': military coll.: from ca. 1905. F. & Gibbons. See sheet if home to.

sheet in the wind or (less gen. and, by 1930, slightly ob.) wind's eye, a. Half drunk: 1840, Dana, in adumbration; 1882, Trollope, 'A thought tipsy—a sheet or so in the wind, as folks say,' C.E.D.; R. L. Stevenson, 1883 (wind's eye). S. †, ca. 1890; now virtually S.E. Ex three sheets in the wind, q.v. below.
sheet of triple. A plate of triple: low urban (—1900). Ware.
sheets, between the. In bed: from ca. 1860: coll. now verging on S.E. Sheenie, three. Drunk: 1821, Egan; 1840, Dana: mainly sporting a.; ca. 1860; coll. >, ca. 1890, S.E.
sheveo. See sheave-o.
Sheffield handicap. A sprint race with no defined scratch, the virtual scratch man receiving a big start from an imaginary 'flyer': Northern coll. and dial.: late C. 19–20; ob.

sheik; often incorrectly sheik. A 'he-man': from 1926. Collinson; Slang. Lit., Arabico for a chief; Miss Edith Maude Hull's best-seller The Sheik, for its sales, lit. and fig., phenomenal, appeared in 1924.—2. Hence, a lover, a girl's 'young man': from ca. 1930; mostly U.S. (O.E.D. Sup.)
sheila or —er: occ. shiela(h) or sheelah(h). A girl: Australian, hence New Zealand: late C. 19–20. The -a form has, in G.W. and after, been much the more gen.; presumably influenced by the female Christian name. A perversion of English dial. and low s. skler (Brandon, 1839; H., 1st ed.)
sheoeks; occ. sheoekies. Coin; money in gen.: coll.: 1883, F. Marion Crawford, but prob. used at least a decade earlier,—cf. Byron's anticipation of 1823. Ex shekel, the most important Hebrew silver coin.
shele. See 'le.

sheel, off the. See sense 4 of:

*shelter. An informer to the police: New Zealand c. (—1932). Ex sheil, q.v.

sh'll. She will: coll.: C. 18–20. Cf. he'll, q.v.
sheil, old. See old sheel.
sheil-back. A sailor of full age, esp. if tough and knowledgeable: nautical coll. (—1883). Perhaps for the reason given by W. Clark Russell in Jack's Courtship (1883), 'It takes a sailor a long time to straighten his spine and get quit of the bold sheil that earns him the name of sheil-back.'
sheil out. To disburse; pay (out): coll.: C. 19–20. Maria Edgeworth, Tom Moore, Headon Hill. Scott, in 1816, has shell down, but this form is very rare. Ex shell, remove a seed from its shell (etc.).—2. As v.i., to hand over what is due or expected, pay up: coll. from ca. 1820. Egan, 1821.—3. To club money together, gen. as vbl.n.: ca. 1820–50. Egan's Grose.—4. shell (a person) out, to pluck him at cards or dices: low (—1923). Manchon. Ex senses 1, 2, —5. V.t., ex sense 1, to declare: a rare coll. of ca. 1809–910. Two Henry Wood. (O.E.D.)


shell with name on it. See bullet...

shelling peas, as easy as. Very easy: coll. C. 19–20. (O.E.D.)


*shela. See shells.

[Shells is 'a kind of cryptic Irish spoken by tinkers and confirmed tramps; a secret jargon composed chiefly of Gaelic words disguised by changes of initial, transposition of letters, backslinging and similar devices," F. & H. Discovered in 1876 by Leland, who published his account of it in his Gypsies, 1882; considerable attention has been paid to its since the Gypsy Lore Society started in 1889, its Journal in 1890. (See, e.g. soby.)]

shelter-stick. An umbrella: Cumberland a. (-1904), not dial. E.D.D.

shelve, gen. v.t. To hold over part of (the weekly) bill: printers' coll.: from ca. 1870. Contrast horseing, q.v.

shemozzel; occ. shimozzel, s(c)hlemozzle, even chimozzle. A difficulty or misfortune; a 'row': from late 1890's: East End, orig. (esp. among bookmakers) and mainly. The Unres, Dec. 1, 1890, schlemozzle; Instead, 1899, shimozzel; Anon., From the Front, 1900, chimozzle; J. Maclaren, 1901, "If Will comes out of this chimozzle." Ex Yiddish (Ware).—2. Hence, loosely, 'an affair of any sort' (F. & Gibbons): lower classes: and military: C. 20.

shemozzle (etc.), v. To make off, decamp: orig. (ca. 1901) and mostly East End, >, by 1914, fairly gen.

shenanigan or in; occ. shenan(n)igan, shi—(with either ending), and, nautical, shenaneking (Bowen). Nonsense. chaff; (the predominant C. 20 sense) trickery, 'funny' games: orig. (ca. 1870). U.S.; anglicised ca. 1890. R. Barr, 1902, "If I were to pay them they might think there was some shenanigan about it." Perhaps fantastic on the Cornish shenachrum, a drink of boiled beer, rum, sugar, and lemon; but much more prob. the base is shenan(n)igan (etc.) and the origin the East Anglian and Gloucestershire name(s)ek, num(s)ek, to play the fool, make fun in the vbln, swanking, etc. (ed.) E.D.D. It has, however, been suggested by Mr. A. Jameson (of Sennen) that the term derives from the Erse shinmísc (pronounced shinnuch): cf. Anglo-Irish foxing, hiding or malingering. —2. Hence, as v.i. and t.: late C. 19–20.

shenan(n)igan, v.i. A shirker: from the middle 1890's. Ex. preceding, 2.

shen(e)y. See sheney.


Shepherd, v.t. To shadow; watch over (e.g. a rich relative, an heiress, a football or hockey opponent): 1874, H., 5th ed., 'To look after carefully, to place under police surveillance': s. >, ca. 1910, coll. See esp. Barrère & Leland. Perhaps ex the tending of sheep. (O.E.D.)—2. To follow (a person) in order to cheat or swindle him, or else to get something from him: from ca. 1890: Australian s. >, ca. 1920, coll. Morris.—3. To force (the enemy) into a difficult position: military s. (Boer War) >, ca. 1915, coll.; by 1930, almost S.E. The Daily Telegraph, April 2, 1900, ' Cronje was shepherded with his army into the bed of the Modder by a turning movement.'


shepherd's pie. Bad: from ca. 1870. P., Rhyming Slang, 1932. Contrast Robin Hood, q.v. sherbet. (A glass of) any warm alcoholic liqueur, e.g. a grog: a. (-1900) ex catachresis. (Not among the upper classes.) Barrère & Leland. Cf. sherbet(ty). Drunk: 1890, The Licensed Victuallers' Gazette, Feb. 8, 'By the time one got to bed Tom was a bit sherberty'; ob. Ex sherbet, q.v.


sherif's ball and roll out one's tongue at the company, dance at the. To hang (v.i.): ca. 1780–1850. Grose, 1st ed. Cf. go to rest in a horse's night-cap (ibid.), and a variant of the entry-phrase: dance on nothing at the sheriff's ball (Grose in his Oio).

sheriff's basket or tub. A receptacle set outside a prison for the receipt of charity for the prisoners: resp. late C. 16–mid-17 (Nashe) and ca. 1630–60 (Massinger). O.E.D.


sheriff's posts. 'Two painted posts, set up at the sheriff's door, to which proclamations were affixed,' O.E.D.: late C. 16–mid-17. Jonson.

sheriff's tub. See sheriff's basket.—sherek. See shirk.

Sherry. The English dramatist Sheridan: from ca. 1770. (The title of an important review in The Observer, Oct. 8, 1933.)

sherry; shirry. A scurry; a rapid or furtive departure: from ca. 1820; even in dial., very ob. Haggart, 1821, 'The sherry became general—I was run to my full speed,' O.E.D. Ex the v. —2. A sherry: low (—1859); ob. H., 1st ed., at tip the double.—3. Cheap ale: taverns: late C. 19–early 20. Ware.

sherry, v. (Also sherry off). To run away (esp. hastily): 1788, Grose, 2nd ed. In C. 19–20, often sherry (as in Haggart, 1821) and, from ca. 1860, except in dial. The O.E.D. prob. rightly, suggests ex (to) shear (off); less likely, a perversion of Fr. charrier, to carry off; less likely still, though not impossibly, ex an offensive-nationality idea, sherry the wine being from Xeres (now Jerez) in Spain.


sherry-lobber. A cobbler made with sherry: coll.: 1809; ob. 'Ouida.' (Thornton.)

sherry-fug. To tipple sherry: university: ca. 1870–1915. (Cf. fug, q.v.)

sherry off. See sherry, v.

Sherwood Foresters, the. The 45th Regiment; from ca. 1881, the 1st Nottinghamshire Regiment; mid-C. 19–20: military coll.: by 1910, S.E. (Dawson.)

shet for shut, sheltered for shuttered: sol. pronunciation seen in other words as well: C. 19 († earlier)–20. Ware.
shevoo. A party, esp. in the evening: C. 20; mostly Australian. Prob. ex Fr. chez vous: cf. sheevo-o, q.v.

shevloe. C. 1860–90, as in The Daily News, Dec. 2, 1884, ‘This is a term recently introduced as a genteel designation for cat’s meat, and evidently derived from cheval, French for horse, as mutton from moujin, &c.’

shev'oe. To run away: c. (—1823); † by 1900. Egan’s Grose.—2. (Gen. in imperative.) To rise from bed: mid-C. 19–20: nautical >, ca. 1910. military. Lit., show a leg from under the bedclothes. John Masefield, The Conway, 1933, notes that the full call on that training ship has, from before 1891, been: ‘Heave out, heave out, heave out, heave out! Away! Come all you sleepers, Hey! Show a leg and put a stocking on it.’ Cf. rise and shine.


shice, catch a. See shice, n., 4.

*shice* (chice, schice, shise), adj. No good: c. or low s. (—1869). H. 1st ed. at chise, ‘The term was first used by the Jews in the last century.’ † ex Ger. Scheisse. (See also shich.)—2. Whence (or directly ex shice, n., 3, q.v.), spurious, counterfeit: c.: 1877, ‘Two shice notes’ (sources as in n., 3.—N.B.: Senses 1 and 2 have variants shicer, shicker, shickery.—5. Drunk: low: late C. 19–early 20. Presumably ex sense 1 influenced by shicker, adj., q.v.

shicer; occ. schicer, shicer, and, in sense 2, rarely skycool. An unproductive claim or (gen. gold-) mine: Australia: 1855, The (Melbourne) Argus, Jan. 19: a. >, ca. 1880, coll. >, ca. 1910, S.E. (The occ. spellings are, in this sense, merely illiterate and, in any case, very rare.) Either ex shice, adj., 1, or n., 2, q.v.v., or— as W. suggests— direct ex Ger. Scheisse, a collocation of excrement, or, just possibly, ex shicer, q.v.—2. († hence, or ex shice, adj., 1) A worthless person (the predominant, and virtually the only C. 20, sense); a very idle one; a mean, sporing man; a humbug: low (—1857). ‘Ducange Anglicus’; H., 1st ed. Also skyler (H., 1874).—3. A whaler or defaulter: Australian racing: from mid-1890’s. Morris. Ex sense 1 or 2—or both.

shick. Bad; spurious: c. or low s.: from ca. 1860; very ob. F. & H., giving no illustration. Either ex shicer, 2, or a perversion of shicker, q.v.


shicker. Intoxicating liquor: C. 20; mostly Australian. C. J. Dennis. Much less gen. than its origin:

*shicker, v.i.; occ. shicker, shicker, shikker, shiktor. To drink liquor; get drunk: C. 20 (prob. from late 1890’s: cf. next entry): mostly Australian and not gen. considered respectable. † ex Arabic, as is the tradition in Australia and New Zealand, or, as is more prob., a derivation and corruption of she-oak, q.v. No; ex Hebrew shikur, drunk, as in: shicker, etc. Adj., drunk: from late 1890’s. (? ex the v.) Binsstead, 1899. ‘She comes over shikker and wants to go to shleebe.’ Cf.

shickered; shick. Tipsy: C. 20 (? also very late C. 19). Ex shicker, v. Cf. 2 in:

shickerly; rarely shikkery. (Cf. shickey, q.v.)


shilk, shilli, shik, shil, shikler, etc. See shicer, adj.

shikkel; shikkel, skik, skikler, etc. See shicer, adj.


shie. See shy, v.—shielah (Jice Doone). See shills.—shier. See shyer.


shift, v.t. To dislodge (a body of the enemy): coll.: 1898.—2. To murder: 1898.—3. (The operative origin of senses 1, 2) to dislodge from its back, i.e. to throw (of a horse its rider): coll.: 1891.—4. To eat; more gen. to drink: s. (1896) >, ca. 1910, coll. All four senses, O.E.D.—5. To change (clothing): nautical coll.: C. 20. Bowen. Ex dial.

shift, do a. To stool: low: from ca. 1870; slightly ob.


shift yer barrow! Move on! : Glasgow, mostly lower classes’ (—1934).


Shiteborough. See Old Tony.

[shifting. A warning; esp. an alarm conveyed by the watching to the operating thief: s. from
shiners (n.)igan or in or i(0)kim. See shenan(n)igan, shiny. A spere or noisy merrymaking: from ca. 1820. Egan, 1821, 'The Jack Tar is ... continually singing out, "What a prime shiny, my mess mates".' Either ex 'the rough but manly old game of "shintry"' (J. Grant, 1876) or, more prob., ex sense 3, which therefore presumably derives ex shinny.—2. A (rough) dance among sailors: nautical (—1811). Lax. Biol.; Smyth.—See shiness (cf. shinny, 1, 2). (The sense, a row or a commotion, from the 1840's, is gen. considered S.E., but it may orig. have been coll. Ex sense 1 or sense 3.)


shine, adj. Good; likable, e.g. 'A shine chap': New Zealanders': C. 20. Ex brightness as opp. obscurity. shine, v.i. To raise money, or display it: late C. 19–20; ob. Ex shine, to excel.—2. shine up to, see shine to, take a.—3. To boast: tailors': from ca. 1860; ob. Cf. shine, 4.—4. See shine like, etc.


cut a shine. To make a fine show: coll. : 1819 (O.E.D.). Occ. ↑ in C. 20), make a shine. shine! rise and. See rise and shine!

shine from or out of, take the. To deprive of brilliance; to surpass; put in the shade: coll. : 1818, Egan, Boviana. I, out of; 1819, Moore, from, which is ↑ in C. 20. (O.E.D.)

shine-rag, win the. To lose; be ruined; London, ca. 1850–1910. Mayhew. Occ. shiney-rag, as in H., 1st ed., 'Said in gambling when any one continues betting 'after the luck sets in against him.

shine to, take a. To take a fancy to or for: coll. : U.S. (—1850), adopted ca. 1890 by Australians, who, occ. in, C. 20, use shine up to. Cf. dial. shine, a sweetheart, one's first.


Shiners, the. The 5th Foot Regiment >. in late
C. 19, the Northumberland Fusiliers: military; since the Seven Years War, in which they alone with 'spit and polish'. F. & Gibbons.


shiny-rag. See shine-rag.

shingle. Incorrect for single (tail of roebuck or deer); from ca. 1860. O.E.D.

shingle short, have a. To have a 'tile loose', to be mentally deficient: from ca. 1850: Australian s. > ca. 1910, gen. coll. Mundy, 1582; Mrs Campbell Praed, 1885. (O.E.D.)

shingle-splitting. The bilking of creditors by retiring to the country: Tasmanian: 1830, The Hobart Town Almanack; † by 1900. Here, shingle = a piece of board. Morris.

shingle-tramper. A coastguard's: naval coll. (—1867); ob. by 1900; † by 1920. Smyth. Because he constantly walked the shingle of the (pebbly) shore.


Shinkin-ap-Morgan. A Welshman: a coll. nickname: mid-C. 17–mid-18, when Taffy (q.v.) > gen. A broadside ballad of ca. 1660 (see Farmer's Muses P pedestal) has: 'With Shinkin-ap-Morgan, with Blues-cap, or Teague [q.v.]; We into no Covenant enter, nor League.'


shino. An ob. variant of shiny, q.v.: from ca. 1860. On rhino, q.v. Cf. shineras, shinery; see also shine, n., 2.

shins, break (one's). To borrow money (cf. U.S. shinner, shinsky): late C. 17–20; slightly ob. F. & E. Ex the old Russian custom of beating on the shins those who have money and will not pay their debts (see O.E.D.).

shins, clever. See clever shins.

shins, adj. See Shiny Seventh.

shiny, the. See shinny. Cf. shine (n., 2), shiners, shino.

shiny rag, win the. See shine-rag.

Shiny Seventh. The. The 7th Battalion City of London Regiment: military; late C. 19–20. F. & Gibbons. Ex 'the always brightly polished brass buttons of their tunic, in contrast to the dark metal buttons worn by the other three battalions with which they were brigaded under the Territorial System.' —2. Also, the '7th Hussars and the 7th Royal Fusiliers: military; mid-C. 19–early 20. 'Shiny' is the normal nickname of all regiments bearing the number Seven,' R. J. T. Hills, 1934.

Shiny Tenth. the. The 10th Royal Hussars: military; late C. 19–20. (R. J. T. Hills, Something about a Soldier, 1934.) Formerly the China Tenth, q.v.

ship. A body of composers working together: printers' coll.: 1875, Southward's Dict. of Type-
shirk, in its orig. sense, 'shark, sharper', 'needy parasite' and 'to live as a parasite' (C. 17-18), may have been coll. or a. or even c. Also shoker, shurk. A variant of shuck.

shirkster. One who shirks: Winchester: from ca. 1860. Ex shirk, q.v.

shirralee. See shirelee. —shirry. See sherry, n. and v.

shirt. See boiled shirt and historical or illustrated s.

shirt, fly round and tear one's. To bestir oneself: coll.: C. 19-20; ob.

shirt, lose one's. To become very angry: from ca. 1885. Ex shirt out . . . q.v.

shirt !, that's up your. That's a puzzler for you! mid-C. 19-20; ob. F. & H.

*shirt, up my (your, etc.). For myself, to my account (etc.): c. (— 1920). Manchon. Cf. *watch, my.

shirt collar. (The sum of) five shillings: rhyming s. (on dollar): from ca. 1850; ob. Everybody, March 28, 1931. Oxford scholar is more usual.

shirt does !, do as my. Kiss my a**e!: low c.p.: C. 18-20; ob. D'Urfe.

shirt-front wicket. A cricket-pitch that looks glossy and is extremely hard and true: Australian cricketers' coll. (— 1920) >, by 1934, S.E. (Lewish.) shirt full of sore bones, give one a. To beat him severely: coll.: C. 18. Thomas Fuller, Gnomologia, 1732. (Apperson.)

shirt in the wind. A piece of shirt seen through the fly or, much more gen., through a hole in the seat: late C. 19-20; ob. Gen. flag in the wind.

shirt on, bet or (in C. 20, much more gen.) put one's. To bet all one's money on, hence to risk all on (a horse): from ca. 1890. The O.E.D. records bet at 1892, put at 1897.

shirt out, get or have (a person's). To make or become angry: from middle 1850's. 'Ducauge Anglicus' (lave?); H., 1st ed. (get). Ex the dishevelment caused by rage. Cf. shirty, q.v.

shirt-sleeve. A flannel dance: Stonyhurst; late C. 19-20. 'The costume is an open flannel shirt and flannel trousers,' F. & H.

shirtley. Incorrect for shirley, q.v.

shirtliness. The n. (late C. 19-20) formed from shirley, n.

shirt-sleeves and shirt-sleeves is a lower classes c.p. (ca. 1900-12) distinguishing the poor from the rich, hard work from luxury. Ware.

shirtly. Angry (temporarily); ill-tempered (by nature); apt to become quickly angered: from late 1850's. H., 1st ed.; Maugham, 1897, Liza of Lambeth, 'You ain't shifty 'cause I kissed yer! ' Ex shirt out, q.v.

shirt, shicer. See shire, shicer.

shirt. A late C. 19-20 variant of shicer, adj., 1, and the v., q.v. Perhaps on shifty(Cf. shisty).

*shish joint. A 'shady' bookmaker and assistant: turf o. (— 1932). Also knocking-joint.


shirt, shite. Excrement; dung: late C. 16-20 (earlier as diarrhoea, a sense ♀ by C. 15): S.E., but in C. 19-20 a vulgarism. As n., shite is in C. 19-20 comparatively rare except in dial. As excrement, prob. ex the v., common to the Teutonic languages: cf. shive, shicer, q.v. I.e. it is ultimately cognate with shoot. —2. As a term of contempt applied to a person (rarely to a woman), it has perhaps always, C. 16-20, been coll.: in C. 19-20, it is a vulgarm. In C. 19-20, esp. a regular shite, in late C. 19-20 an awful s. Cf. skit-house, q.v.—3. (Gen. subjectively.) A bombardment, esp. with shrapnel: G.W. military. B. & F. Cf. shite, in the, the, 2.—

4. Mud: military: G.W., and prob. before, as certainly after. B. & F.—N.B., 5, many compounds and all overwords (even Swift's shitten-cumshites) from n. and v. are S.E., but where they survive (e.g. shite-breck) they survive as vulgarisms; they (e.g. shite-fire, a-word) do not here receive separate definition unless (e.g. shite-tack) in a specifically unconventional sense: all those which are hereinunder defined have always been coll. or s. See Grose, P., and A. W. Read, Lexical Evidence, 1935 (Paris: privately printed), for further details.

—6. 'Before the war (of 1914-18), didn't you sportsmen call everybody who didn't hunt and shoot by a very coarse name, which we can change euphemistically into—squirt? ' H. A. Vachell, The Disappearance of Martha Penny, 1934.

shite, shyte. V. To stool: C. 14-20: S.E., but in C. 19-20 a vulgarism; at the latter stage, shite is less gen. than shit. See n., 1—2. To vomit: low coll (— 1887). Baumann.

shite !, rarely shut! An exclamation: rather low coll. than a vulgarism: C. 19 (♀ earlier) —20 Cf. Fr. merde !


shite*-bag. The belly; in pl., the guts: low: mid-C. 19-20. F. & H.

shite*, cinders !, go and eat coke and. A low, desirously deft variant of c.p. of late C. 19-20; ob. (A good example of popular wit.)

shite*, eml,—soldiers (tor?), I've, C. 20 military c.p. desirous of another unit. Prob. suggested by the proverb, applied to the mean, misshapen, ridiculous: He (etc.) looks as though the devil had shit him flying.


shite*-house. A C. 20 variant of shire*, n., 2, q.v. Cf. shite*-pot, q.v.

shite*-hunter. See shite*-stir—.


shite* or bust with (e.g.) him, it's. He loves bragging: low coll.: late C. 19-20. Key: 'He's all wind.'

shite*-pot. A thorough or worthless humbug (person); a sneak: low s., and dial.: mid-C. 19-20. Key: 'He's all wind.'

shite*-sack. A Nonconformist: 1769, Granger's Biographical History of England, concerning Wm. Jenkin; this coll. term may have arisen in late C. 17; ♀ by 1860. Grose, 2nd ed., repeats Granger's anecdotal etymology.


shite*-shoe (occ. a.-shod). 'Desirous to one who has bedaubed his boot,' F. & H.: a low coll. of mid-C. 19-20; very ob. Cf. shite*, only a little clean.
sh** through one's or the teeth. To vomit; low: late C. 18–mid-19. Gros, 2nd ed., gives the following o.p., (Hark ye, friend, 'tis your turn now, you've got a goodlock on your a**e, that you sh**e through your teeth?


shite. See shit, n. and v.—shitten door. See shites like .


shittle-cum-shaw, shittle (or shiddle)-cum-shite, shittleides. Occ. as nn. in, allusion, often as exclamations: both contemptuous: C. 19–20 (ob.) dial. and low coll. reduplications on shit and shite, app. influenced by shittle, fickle, flighty.

Shitten Saturday. Easter Saturday: (dial. and) schools: from ca. 1855; ob. H., 2nd ed. Ex Shut-in Saturday, for on it Christ's body was entombed.

shivaroo. (Much) official talk: 1826, Galsworth, *The Silver Spoon*, concerning a law-suit, 'Next came the usual shivaroo ' about such a case, and what would be taken next, and so on.' For the stymyology, see:


shiver my timbers! See timbers!, shiver my.


shivers, the. The ague: coll.: 1861, Dickens, in *Great Expectations* (O.E.D.);—2. Hence (often cold shivers), horror, nervous fear: coll.: from ca. 1880. In C. 20, both senses are S.E. Cf.:

shivery-shakes. The same; chills: coll.: mid-C. 19–20. Whence:

shivery-shaky. Trembling, esp. with ague or the cold: coll.: mid-C. 19–20. Anon., *Derby Day*, 1864, 'He's all shivery-shaky, as if he'd got the staggers, or the cold shivers.'


shooal-water off, in. E.g. 'In shooal-water off the horrors,' on the brink of delirium tremens; 'near' in any fig. sense: nautical coll.: late C. 19–20; ob. Fowen.


shocker. See shining-shocker, which, from 1890, it occ. displaces. Coll. > S.E.

shocking. Extremely shocking or disgusting or objectionable: coll.: 1842, Browning, 'Shocking To think that we buy gowns lined with Ermine [For dolts...]' O.E.D., but doubtless in spoken use a decade earlier at least. Cf. shockingly.

shocking, adv. Shockingly low coll.: 1831, 'You shock a bad hat!—' the slang Cockney phrase of 1831, as applied to a person: in 1833, Sydney Smith describes New York as 'a shocking big place!'; O.E.D.

shockingly. Extremely or very, esp. in pejorative contexts: 1777, Miss Burney, 'Dr Johnson...is shockingly near-sighted,' O.E.D. Cf. shocking, adj.—2. Shockingly ill: coll.: 1768, Goldsmith, 'You look most shockingly to-day, my dear friend,' O.E.D.—3. Hence, from ca. 1860, 'abominably,' very badly. W. G. Marshall, 'Shockingly paved,' O.E.D.

shocks. Chooses, a small Fr. town near Bethune: military: G.W. (F. & Gibbons.)

shod, come in hosed and. To be born to a good estate: coll.: C. 19–20, ob. Cf. be born with a silver spoon in one's mouth.

shod (all) round, be. To know all about married life: coll.: C. 18–early 19. Swift, in *Conversation*, I, '‘Mr Buzzard has married again...’ ‘This is his fourth wife; then he has been shod round.'—2. 'A person who attends a funeral is said to be shod all round, when he receives a hat-band, gloves, and scarf: many shoeings be only partial,' Gros, 2nd ed.: late C. 18–mid-19.


shoe is on the mast, the. 'If you like to be liberal, now's your time': a c.p. of C. 19: sailors': > gen. lower classes'. In C. 19, when near the end of a long voyage, the sailors nailed a shoe to the mast, the toes downward, that passengers might delicately bestow a parting gift.' (Ware.)


shoe pinches him, his. He is drunk: coll.: C. 18. Franklin's *Drinker's Dict.

shoe the cobbler. 'To tap the ice quickly with the fore-foot when sliding,' F. & H.; coll.: from ca. 1840; ob. Cf. cobbler's knock, q.v.


shoe the horse. To cheat one's employer: lower classes' (— 1923). Manchon. Perhaps ex:

shoe the (wild) colt. To demand an initiation-fee from one entering on office or employment: dial. (— 1828) and coll.; very ob. as the latter. Punning colt, a greenhorn. F. & H. favours wild. Apperson omits it.


shoes, die in one's. To be hanged: ca. 1660–1910: S.E. until C. 19, then coll. Motteux; Barham: H., 5th ed. (O.D.)

shoes, make children's. To be occupied absurdly or trivially; (to be made) to look ridiculous: coll.: late C. 17–19; in C. 19, mainly dial. Behn, 1882, 'Fox! shall we stand making children's shoes all the
SHOES, MAKE FEET FOR . . . 760

SHOOT BETWEEN . . .

year? No: let’s begin to settle the nation, I say, and go through-stitch with our work." Cf:


shoes are made of running leather, my, your, etc.

I, you, etc., am—of a wandering disposition, or very restless: semi-proverbial coll.: from ca. 1750; ob. Churchyard, 1755; Hone, 1831. Apperson.


*shoeful (1854, but implied for ca. 1850 by Carew’s Gipsy): occ. shoeful(1) (1839), shoeful (1859), shoeful (1859), shoeful (1859), shoeful (1859), shoeful (1859), shoeful (1859).—1. (Only in sense 1 as an adj.) Counterfeiter money: Brandon, 1839; 1851, Mayhew: Carew’s Autobiography of a Gipsy. Yiddish almost imper. > Cockney, s. verging on c., which indeed it may orig. have been—as Smythe-Palmer, 1882, says it was. Ex Yiddish shoeful, worthless stuff, ex Ger. schofel, worthless base, ex Yiddish pronunciation of Hebrew shophel (or -ai), low, as the O.E.D. so clearly sets forth. (Also shoeful money: cf. shoeful-man, q.v.—2. A low-class tavern: low: ca. 1850–1910, and perhaps never very gen. Mayhew, 1851. Prob. directly ex the adj. shoeful (see sense 1) with place or tavern suppressed.—3. A humbug, an impostor: ca. 1860–90. H., 3rd ed. See sense 1.—4. (Often spelt shoafe, occ. shoivel.) A hansom cab; among cabmen, a ‘shoful’ cab, according to Mayhew (London Labour, iii, 321), is one infringing Hanson’s patent: 1864, Household Words, vol. viii. (O.E.D.); ob. by 1910, virtually f by 1930. There is little need to suppose with the O.E.D. that this sense may have a distinct origin, though H., 3rd ed., suggests the similarity of a hansom to a shoal or a scoop, and his successor in the 5th ed. cites (à titre de curiosité) a friend’s ‘shoful, full of show, ergo, beautiful—handsome—Hansom.’—5. See:

shoeful (jewellery). Sham jewellery: 1854, H., 3rd ed., but prob. a decade older. Here, shoeful may be adj. or n. (see shoeful, 1): cf. shoeful money.

shoeful (money). Counterfeiter money: c.: from the 1850’s. See shoeful, 1.


*shool. (Gen. v.t.) To crush the wearer’s hat over his eyes: c.: from ca. 1860; ob. H., 3rd ed. f ex shola (hat), a solo tope.

shoo to a goose, cannot say. To be timid, bashful: from ca. 1690: coll. till 1759, then S.E.—with both meanings in the 1800’s.

*shook, plt. (adj.), itself sol. Robbed; lost by robbery: c. of ca. 1810–80. Vaux, 1812, ‘I’ve been shook of my skin, I have been robbed of my purse.’ See shake, v., 3 and 4, and cf. next entry.


shook on. (Sense 1, gen. of a man; 2, of either sex.) In love with, or possessed of a passion for: Australian: 1888, ‘Rolf Boldrewood’, ‘He was awful shook on Madge; but she wouldn’t look at him.—2. Having a great fancy for (a thing): 1888, Boldrewood, ‘I’m regular shook on the polka.’ Cf. the very Australian crook, ill.


shool; Shool. A church or chapel: East London: from ca. 1870. Ware. Ex the Jews’ term for their synagogue.

shool; occ. shoole (Grose, 2nd ed.) or shoal (C 19): often shool (C. 18–20). To go about begging, to sponge, to ‘scrounge’; dial. and s.: from 1730’s. Smollett, 1748, ‘They went all hands to shoole and begging’; Lover, 1842. Perhaps ex shook, a shoal, via dial. shook, to drag the feet, to saunter.—2. Hence, to skulk: dial. and s.: from ca. 1780; ob. Gros. 1st ed.—3. To impose on (a person): 1745, Bampfylde-More Carew (O.E.D.). Ex sense 1.—4. To carry as a ‘blind’: 1820, Clare: dial. and s.; ob. O.E.D.


*shoon. A fool; a lout: c. of late C. 19–20; ob. on loan.

shoot. Amount, number: see shoot, the whole. —2. Dismissal, esp. in get or give (a person) the shoot: C. 20.—3. See Shoot, the.


shoot! Go ahead; speak! from ca. 1925. Ex the cinema: in making a film, shoot! = use your camera now: orig. U.S.

Shoot, the. The Walworth Road station: London: late C. 19–20; ob. Because ‘a large number of workpeople alight there,’ F. & H.; punning rubbish-shoot.

shoot, the whole. The entire amount or number or price, etc.: 1884 (O.E.D.) or perhaps from as early as 1880 (Ware): s. >, ca. 1920, coll. Occ. the entire shoot (?) first in 1890. Hence, go the whole shoot (—1903), to risk everything. Suggested by whole shot. Cf. shooting-match, q.v.

shoot P, will you? Will you pay for a (small) strong drink?: Australian c.p.: ca. 1900–14.

shoot a man. Gen. as b.i.n., shooting a man, the common practice of jobbers who, guessing whether a broker is a buyer or a seller, alter their prices up or down accordingly: Stock Exchange ( —1935).

shoot a paper-bolt. To circulate a false or unauthenticated rumour: coll. (—1923). Manchester.

shoot-about. See shootabout.


shoot between or (be)wint wind and water. Tooit with a woman: coll.: late C. 17–20; ob. Implyied in Congreve, 1665.—2. To infect venereally: late C. 17–early 19. B.E., Grosse. Gen. in
SHOOT-FLY

the passive, punning the S.E. sense, 'to receive a shot causing a dangerous leak'.


shoot in the eye. To do (a person) a bad turn; coll.: late C. 19–20.

shoot in the tail. To coll with (a woman); to sodomise: low: mid-C. 19–20.

shoot into the brown. To fail: Volunteers': ca. 1860–1816. Ware. Ex rifle-practice, at which the poorschot misses the target, his bullet going into the brown earth of the butt.

shoot off one's mouth. To talk; esp. to talk boastfully or indiscreetly; to tell all one knows (cf. spill the beans): orig. (1887) U.S. and = talk abusively; anglicised, thanks to the 'talkies', in 1930–31; in Canada, by 1925. Cf. say a mouthful, spill the beans.

shoot one's linen. To make one's shirt cuffs project beyond one's coat cuffs: coll.: 1878, Yates, in The World, Jan. 16. Cf. shoot your cuff, q.v.

shoot one's lines. To declaim vigorously: theatrical: from ca. 1870.


shoot one's mouth off. A variant of shoot off one's mouth. Dorothy Sayers, Murder Must Advertise, 1933. Also, as H. Wade, Constable Guard Thyself, 1934, shoot one's mouth.

shoot one's star. To die: late C. 19–20; ob. Ex evanescent shooting stars.

shoot (out) one's neck. 'To butt into a conversation with an unwarranted air of authority; to make a long speech where either brevity or silence is indicated. Often with an implication of boasting or exaggeration': military: from 1915. B. & T. Of American origin.

shoot over the pitcher. To brag of one's shooting: coll.: C. 19.

shoot that I! Ob, be quiet!: late C. 19–20. Possibly ex such Americanisms as shoot that hat I!—2. Stop talking (about), as in shoot the shop /! late C. 19–20.

shoot the amber. (Of a motorist) to increase speed when the amber light is showing, in order to pass before the red ('stop') light comes on: motorists': from late 1935.

shoot the cat. See cat, shoot the. — 2. 'To sound a refrain in the infantry bugle call to defaulters' drill, which, it is fancied, follows the sound of the words "Shoot the cat—shoot the cat":', F. & H.: military: late C. 19—early 20.

shoot the crow. To depart without paying: 1887, Fun, June 8; ob. Cf. burn.

shoot the moon. See moon, shoot the; also shoot up.

shoot the sitting pleasant. 'To injure or destroy the life or reputation of one who is entirely helpless to defend himself, and therefore has no chance': coll. (— 1931) now verging on S.E. Lyell, 'To shoot at a bird, except when it's in flight, is the height of unpunsportsmanship.'

shoot up the straight, except a. To coll with a woman: low: mid-C. 19–20. Cf. do a rush... and shoot the tail.

shoot (a person) up with. Not to do something that someone wishes done; to do something other than what was desired: military: from ca. 1925.

your cuff! 'Make the best personal appearance you can and come along' (Wares): lower classes': ca. 1875–90. The semantics are those of shoot one's linen, q.v.

shootable. Suitable: sol. when not jocular: from ca. 1830. (O.E.D.)


shooter. A gun or pistol; esp. a revolver: resp. 1840, 1877: s. >, ca. 1910; coll. O.E.D.—2. A shooting-stick: printers': from ca. 1860. Prob. on sense 1—3. A black morning coat as distinguished from the tail coat worn by the Fifth and Sixth Forms: Harrow: from ca. 1870. Hence, more gen. = any black morning coat: C. 20. O.E.D. (Sup.).


shooting a man. See shoot a man.

shooting-gallery, the. The front line: military: 1914–18. The metaphor exists also in Ger. military a.

shooting-match, the whole. The whole thing, affair, etc.: from ca. 1916. (R. Blaker, Night-Shift, 1934.) Ex the whole shoot by influence of the G.W.

Shop, always preceded by the. The Royal Military Academy: Army: mid-C. 19–20. Kipling. A special use of:—2. (shop.) A place of business; where one works: coll.: 1841, Thackeray. An extension of the basic sense (a building, a room, where things are sold)—3. Often, Oxford or Cambridge University: from ca. 1840: s. >, ca. 1880, coll.: slightly ob. Clough in his Long Vacation Pastoral, 'Three weeks hence we return to the shop'; Thackeray, 1846. Esp. the other shop, which is often used of a rival (chiefly, the most important rival) establishment of any kind.—4. Linked with the preceding sense is the jocular one, place—any place whatsoever. (Thus, in political s., the House of Commons, as in Trollope's Framley Parsonage, 1861; among small tradesmen, one's house or home, as in H., 5th ed.; among actors, the theatre, from ca. 1850, says Ware.) Mid-C. 19–20. Cf. shop, all over the, q.v.—5. Hence, in racing, a 'place' (1st, 2nd, or 3rd): from ca. 1870. H., 5th ed.—6. An engagement, 'betch', 'theatrical': 1888, Jerome K. Jerome, 'Being just before Christmas... there was no difficulty in getting another shop.' O.E.D. From twenty years earlier in dial.: see the E.D.D. (Also gen. s.: 1898, W. Pett Ridge, Mord Emly.—7. (Cf. sense 1.) the Shop. Stock Exchange s.: >, ca. 1900 coll.: >, ca. 1910 j., as in The Rialto, May 23, 1886, 'The latest name for the South African gold market is the Shop'. s. (the shop). The promoting interest behind an issue of stock: Stock Exchange (—1935) —9. (shop.) A prison: o.: late C. 17–18. B.E.; Grose. Cf. to shop in o. —10. If hence, the mouth: dial. and s.: from ca. 1880. Whence shut your shop /, to be silent!—11. (Certainly ex 'prison' sense.) A guardroom: military: mid-C. 19–20; ob. by 1914, virtually j. by 1930.—12. A causing to be arrested: o.: from ca. 1920. Edgar Wallace, e.g. in A King by Night, 1925. Ex: shop, v. To imprison: late C. 16–20: S.E. until mid-C. 17, coll. till late C. 17, then o. B.E.; Grose.—2. To put (an officer) under arrest in the guard-room: military (—1864). H., 3rd ed.—3. To lay information on which a person is arrested:
c.: mid-C. 19–20. Frequent in Edgar Wallace’s detective novels. Ex sense 1.—4. Whence, or directly ex sense 1, to kill: c.: late C. 19–20. F. & H. Perhaps influenced through ship, to send packing.—5. To dismiss (a shop-assistant); from ca. 1860; ob. H., 3rd ed. Prob. ironically on S.E. shop, to give a person work (1855, O.E.D.) —6. to shop, get a shop: to gain 1st, 2nd or 3rd place: the turf: from ca. 1870. H., 5th ed. (get a shop; the other from ca. 1890). Ex the corresponding n.—7. (Gen. in passive.) To engage a person for a piece: theatrical: (—1909). Ware. Ex shop, n., 6.

shop, all over the. Much scattered, spread out, dispersed; erratic in course: 1874 (=1873), H., 5th ed., ’In yuggistic slang, to punish a man severely is ’’to knock him all over the shop’’, i.e. the ring, the place in which the work is done’’; 1886, The Pall Mall Gazette, July 29, ’Formerly, the authorities associated with our fisheries were ’’all over the shop’’, if a vulgarism of the day be permissible,’ O.E.D.: coll. >, ca. 1910, S.E. Ex shop, n., 4.

shop, come or go to the wrong. ’To come (go) to the wrong person or place to get what one requires’: coll.: late C. 19–20. Lyell. See shop, n., 4.


shop, shut up. To cease talking: mid-C. 19–20. Cf. shop, n., penultimate sense.—2. shut up (a person’s) shop. To make him cease; to kill him: late C. 19–20; ob.

shop, sink the. To refrain from talking shop: coll.: late C. 19–20. Prob. on sink the ship. (This sense of shop is excellent S.E.; in many ways preferable to jargon, except where a technical term is indispensable.)


Ex:


*shop-lift. A shop-thief; esp. one who, while pretending to bargain, steals goods from the shop: ca. 1870–1830: c. until ca. 1700, then S.E. Head 1737, B.E. See lift.

*shop-lifter. The same: 1860, Kirkman (O.E.D.): or as. until ca. 1719, then coll. till ca. 1840, then S.E. Cf. shop-lift. (Perhaps always S.E.: shop-lifting.)


shop-un. A preserved as opp. to a fresh egg: coll.: 1878, dramatist Byron, ’I knows ‘em! Shop—uns! Sixteen a shilling!’

shopkeeper. An article still, after a long time, unsold: 1849, G. Daniel, who uses the frequent ver. shopkeeping. (O.E.D.)


shoppy. See shoppy.—shop(p)ly. See shoppy.

shoppy. A shop-girl or, less often, -man: coll.: C. 20 (H. A. Vachell, Martha Penny, 1894).

shore boss. ’The steward’s name for the superintend-ent steward’: nautical coll.: C. 20. Bowen.


shore saints and sea devils. A nautical (mid-C. 19–20; ob.) c.p. applied to such sailing-ship skippers as were beiming the owners and lions with the crew. Cf. ship one’s land-fuck, q.v. Bowen.


short. A card (any below the 8) so tampered— with that none above the 8 can be cut, thus reducing the chances of an honour’s turning up to two to one: gaming: mid-C. 19–20. (Not to be confused with shorts, short whistle.)—2. The same as short, something, q.v.: coll. 1823. Egan’s Grose. Cf. short, adj.—3. A short excerpt; a short film or musical composition: coll.: from not later than 1927.

short, adj. Undiluted: coll.: from ca. 1820.

See n., 2, and short, something.—2. A cashier’s ’Long or short?’ means ’Will you have your notes in small or large denominations?’, short because thus there will be few notes, long because many, or because the former method is short, the latter long; bankers’ gen. commercial coll.: from ca. 1840.—3. ’A conductor of an omnibus, or any other serv-ant, is said to be short, when he does not give all the money he receives to his master,’ H., 3rd ed.: from ca. 1860; ob. Cf. short one, q.v.

short, bite off. To dismiss, or refuse, abruptly: tailors: from ca. 1870. Prob. ex the habit of biting instead of cutting thread or cotton.

short, something. (A drink of) undiluted spirits: coll.: from ca. 1820. Either because, as Egan (1823) suggests, ’unlengthened by water’ or, as O.E.D. proposes, ex short name—e.g. ’brandy’, not ’brandy and water’.

short, the long and the. See long and the short.


short hairs, have by the. See hairs, have by the short.


SHOULDER, OVER THE (LEFT)

shot, pay the. v.i. and t. To call (with a woman) : coll. : C. 17-19. F. & H. quotes two C. 17 broadside ballads. Ex pay the shot, to pay the bill or one's share of it, now coll. (see shot, n., 1.).


shot-bag. A purse: 1848, Durivage, 'Depositing the " tin " in his shot-bag '; slightly ob. Ex shot, money, as in shot in the locker.

shot between or (be)twist wind and water. See shoot between ... shot-clog. A simpleton tolerated only because of his willingness to ' pay the shot ' : mid-C. 19-20; ob. Cf. shot-ship, q.v.


shot first, I'll see (him, her, gen.) you. Damned if I'll do it 1: low coll.: 1894, ' John Strange Winter ' (O.E.D.). A variant of:

shot if — , I'll (or may I) be. Mildly imprecatory or strongly dissenting: low coll.: 1826, Buckstone, ' He, he, ho! I'll be shot if Lunnun temptation be anything to this.' H., 1st ed., has the ob. variant, I wish I may be shot if — . Cf. shot first ... shot in the eye. An ill turn: coll.: late C. 19-20; slightly ob. Pearson's Magazine, Sept., 1897, ' Getting square with the millionaire who had done him such an unscrupulous shot in the eye.'


shot of. A mid-C. 19-20 Cookney variant of shot of, q.v. H., 2nd ed.

shot on the post, be. To have a competitor pass one as one eases for, or weary at, the finish: athletics coll.: 1897. Ex —: 2. The same of horses in racing: adumbrated in 1868: coll. (By 1920, both senses were S.E.) O.E.D.

shot-ship. ' A company of poachers or poachers like,' F. & H.: printers': from ca. 1875.


shot 'twixt ... See shot between ... shot up the back, be. To be put out of action or detected: military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons.

shoth. See fly-balance.—shoufly. See shoulful.

shoulder, v.i. and t. To suppose, think, 1. I'm very much inclined to say, etc.; I certainly do say, etc.: coll.: 1775, C. Johnston, ' I should rather think he has a mind to finger its finances,' O.E.D.

shoulder, v.i. and t. To take passengers without entering them on the way-bill, thus defrauding the employer: coaching: ca. 1820-70. ' Jon Bee ', 1823; cf. his Picture of London, 1828 (p. 33). —2. Hence, v.t., of any servant embezzling his master's money: from ca. 1860. H., 2nd ed.; ob. Both senses very frequent as vbl.n.

shoulder (or, more gen., shoulders), narrow in the. Not good at taking a joke: coll. (— 1923). Manchon.

shoulder, over the (left). See left (shoulder), over the.
SHOULDER, SLIP OF THE

shoulder, slip of the. (Of the woman `victim') seduction: coll. : C. 19.


*shoulder-stick. A passenger not on the way-bill, i.e. one whose fare goes into the pockets of driver and guard: coaching: ca. 1825–70. Cf. short one.

shouldering. See shoulder.


shout. 'A call to a waiter to replenish the glasses of a company: hence, a turn in paying for a round of drinks. Also, a free drink given to all present by one of the company; a drinking party,' this last being rare: Australian, hence New Zealand; by 1903 (indeed, long before that: see H., 3rd ed., 1864), fairly gen.: 1863, H. Simcox, 'Many a "shout" they're treated to.' O.E.D. and Morris. Ex shout, v.i.—2. Hence, one's turn to entertain another: from ca. 1885. E.g. 'It's my shout this time.' Baumann.

shout, v. To stand drinks to the company, hence to even one person: v.i., 1859, H. Kingsley; v.i., to pay for drinks for (a person, persons), hence for (easy) 'smokes', 1867, Lindsay Gordon; hence, late C. 19–20, to entertain (a person, persons), Australian, hence New Zealand; by 1864—witness H., 3rd ed.—well-known in England. (Morris; O.E.D.) Ex shouting to the waiter to fetch drinks.

shout on the. To embark on a bout of drinking; to drink to excess; from ca. 1890: orig. Australian; by 1905, gen. Kipling (O.E.D.). See shout, n., and next two entries.

shout stand (a). To pay for drinks all round: 1887, 'Hopeful!', 'There is a great deal of standing "shout" in the Colonies,' O.E.D. See shout, n. 1.

shout oneself hoarse. To get drunk: gen. s. (— 1903). Punning lit. sense of the whole phrase and the s. sense of shout, v. (q.v.).

shout the odds. See odds, shout the.

shout up. To address vigorously by way of warning: coll. : from ca. 1930.


*shov. A knife: o. (— 1909). Ware. Ex chin(e) on shov.


shove, v.t. To thrust, put, carelessly or roughly or hurriedly into a place, a receptacle: familiar S.E. often merging into coll.: 1827, Scott, 'Middlemas... shoved his bosom a small packet.' Also shove aside (1864) or away (1861). O.E.D.—2. Gen. v.: (with): coll. C. 17–20; ob.:—3. See vblm. phrases here ensuing.


shove, get and give the. See above, the.

shove, on the. On the move; moving: coll. : late C. 19–20. Milliken, 1893, 'There's always some fun afoot there, as will keep a chap fair on the shove.'

shove, the. A dismissal: 1899, Whiteing in No. 5 John Street, has both the shove and give the shove, to be dismissed, to dismiss. Cf. push, or get or give the.

shove along. See shove off.

shove for. To go to; to make a move towards: coll.: 1884, Mark Twain, 'Me and Tom shoved for bed.' Cf. shove, be on the, and shove off.


shove in (a thing). To pawn it: low coll.: late C. 19–20. Ware.

shove in one's face. To put in one's mouth: low coll.: late C. 19–20. A. A. Milne, Two People, 1931, (self-made millionaire logistur) 'For years... I used to say, "Here, shove that in your face," whenever I offered anybody a cigar.'

shove in the eye, etc. A punch in the eye, etc.: coll.: late C. 19–20. Whiteing, 1893, 'Mind your own bloomin' business, or I'll give yer a shove in the eye.'


shove the moon. To slip away with one's goods without paying the rent: low: 1800, G. Andrews, slang-lexicographer; ↑ by 1890. Cf. moon, shoot the.

*shove the queen, the article being occ. omitted. To pass counterfeit money: c.: mid-C. 19–20: orig. U.S. Matesell. See queen, n.


shove-up. Nothing: c. or low s. of ca. 1810–60. Ex ↑ shove-up socket, a 'gadget' enabling a candle to burn right out. (Vaux.)


[shovel, bloody. Generic for unnecessarily coarse speech: C. 20. Ex the chestnut of the bishop who, to a workman speaking that he always called a spade a spade, replied that that was all right but that he thought the workman usually called it a bloody shovel.]

shovel, or fire-shovel, he or she was fed with a. A c.p. applied to a person with a very large mouth: ca. 1780–1850. Grose, 1st ed. (fire-shovel).


shovel, that's before you bought your. That is one against you; that settles your hash: coll. : ca. 1850–1910.


"showerv. of the queen. The same: c. U.S., Anglicised ca. 1870. *Figaro, Feb. 20, 1871, 'A saloon ... headquarters of all the counterfeilers and showers of the queen in the country.' See queen. n.

show. Any public display (a picture-exhibition, a play, a fashionable assembly or ceremony, a speech-making, etc.): coll.: 1863, Sala. O.E.D.

Ex show, an elaborate spectacle.—2. Hence, a matter, affair, 'concern': 1888, RIDER HAGGARD, in the Summer Number of the Illustrated London News, 'Their presence was necessary to the show.'—3. A group or association of persons. Mostly in boss the show, and implacably in give the show away, q.v. —A fight, an attack: G.W. military, but not, I think, before 1915. Ex sense 1. (cf. show, put up a.) B. & P.

show, v.i. In boxing, to enter the ring as a combatant: boxing coll. of ca. 1813–50, the O.E.D.'s latest example being of 1828.—2. Hence, to appear in society or company; at an assembly, etc.: coll.: 1828, Westmancott, 'He shows in Park'; 1898, JANE OWEN, 'If the king was in the cabin ... no subject might show on deck.' O.E.D.

In C. 20, this sense is ob., show up being much more gen.: show up, likewise coll., occurring first in W. BLACK'S YOLANDE, 1833 ('Don't you think it prudent of me to show up as often as I can in the House ... so that my good friends in Slagpool mayn't begin to grumble about my being away so frequently?') and meaning also to 'turn up' for an appointment.—3. To exhibit oneself for a consideration: coll.: 1898, THE DAILY NEWS, April 2, 'He got a living by "showing" in the various public-houses,' O.E.D.

show, boss or run the. To assume control; act as manager: 1889, boss (perhaps orig. U.S.): in C. 20, often run. See show, n., 2, 3.

show, do a. To go to a public entertainment: coll.: from ca. 1906. See show, n., 1.

show, put up a. To give some, gen. a good, account of oneself. Usually defined as (a very) good, a bad (or rotten) show: from 1915, orig. military, etc. See show, n., last sense.

show, run the. See show, boss the.

show, steal the. To gain most of the applause; greatly to outshine other performers: music-hall and variety s.: C. 20. THE NEW ZEALAND FREE LANCE, late June or early July 1934 (reprinted in EVERYMAN, Aug. 24, 1934), in an article entitled 'The Star Turn', represents a British Lion batman saying to an Australian Kangaroo bowler, 'It's a shame we've taken the show away.'

"show, there's another. A "tic-tac" (q.v.) has signalled new odds: turf c. (—1932).

show a leg! See show a leg.

show a point to. See point to.

show away, give the. To blab, confess; to expose the disadvantages or pretentiousness of an affair, esp. one in which a group is concerned: 1869, DELANNOY, £19,000, 'I didn't want to give the show away: s. > by £19,500, coll. (Lyell).

show (him) London. To hold one, upside down, by the heels: schools: from ca. 1880. Opp. see London, to be thus held; also, to hang by the heels from a trapeze, a horizontal bar, etc.

show kit. To go sick: military coll.: from 1915. F. & GIBBONS. If, as a result, one left one's unit, certain equipment was, in certain circumstances, handed in at the quartermaster's stores.

show-leg day. See show-leg day.

show off, v.i. To act, talk, ostentatiously or in order to attract attention to oneself: coll.: from ca. 1796. GILBERT WHITE; D. C. MURRAY. O.E.D.

Frequently as show-off.

show-up. An exhibition (of work): coll.: 1930. O.E.D. (Sup.) Prob. suggested by Fr. exposé and exposition.


showful (and compounds. See showful.

showing, a front. A short-notice parade: military: late C. 19–20; ob.: Because while one might possibly pass muster in front, at the back ... [Showman, Th. For this 'gag'—recitation, see B. & P., 3rd ed., pp. 271–72.]

[Showmen's s. is an 'odd mixture of rhyming slang, Yiddish and Romany [and Italian and cant],'] P. ALLINGHAM in THE EVENING NEWS, July 9, 1934. Cf. 'Grafters' slang', q.v.

shrap. Wine used in swindling: very local c. of ca. 1592. GREENE, THE BLACK BOOK'S MESSENGER. Prob. ex shrap(e), a bait, a snare.—2. Shrapnel: military coll.: from 1914. F. & GIBBONS.

shrapnel. French currency notes of low denomination: New Zealanders: in G.W. They were often holey, as though punctured with shrapnel.


shrewd head. A New Zealand and Australian variant (C. 20) of:

shrewdy. A shrewd, esp. a cunning, person; a trickster: coll.: late C. 18–20. Mostly military and Australian. (F. & GIBBONS.

Shrewsbury clock. by. A coll. phrase lessening or even cancelling the period of time—or the fact—mentioned: late C. 16–20; ob. SHAKESPEARE; GAYTON, 'The Knight that fought by th' clock at Shrewsbury'; Mrs Cowley, 1783; STEVENSON, 1891. APPerson.


shrieking sisterhood. Women reformers, hence female busybodies: journalistic coll.: ca. 1890–1910. MILLIKEN, 1893, 'This yere shrieking sisterhood lay ain't 'arf bad.'

shript, he hath been at. An ecclesiastical c.p. of C. 16: applied to one who has been betrayed he knows not how. TYNDALE, THE OBEDIENCE OF A CHRISTIAN MAN, 1528. The implication is that the priest to whom he confessed has betrayed him.

shrimp. A harlot: ca. 1630–70. WHITING, 1638, in ALBINO AND BELLLAMA.
shoff. See shoff.
shoffery. (Gen. the female) pubic hair: coll.: late C. 19–20.
shomer. See stomer.
shocks 1. Nonsense! † I don't care!: coll.: 1885 (O.E.D.): U.S. partly anglicised ca. 1900. Ex shuck, typifying the worthless, itself orig. (and still) a husk or shell.
shuffler. A chauffeur: from ca. 1905. (Millward Kennedy, Death to the Rescue, 1931.)
*shuffler. (App.) a drinker; prob. one who 'wangles' or 'scrounges' drinks: Brathwait, 1852. Always with ruffler and snuffler. O.E.D.
shule, shuler, shuling. See shool, shoolder, shooeling, —shulling-day. See shew-leg day.
'shun! Attention!': military coll. (from the mid-1880's > ca. 1910). Cf. shipe, q.v.
*shurk. A variant of shank. See shirk.
shut it! Be silent!; stop that noise!: from mid-1880's. 'Pomes' Marshall, ca. 1890, 'Oh, shut it! Close your mouth until I tell you when' 
shut of, be or get. (See also shot of.) To be free from, rid of: late C. 16–20: S.E. until C. 19, then coll.; in late C. 19–20, low coll. Rolf Boldwood, 1888, 'Father. . . . gets shut of a deal of trouble. . . by always sticking to one thing': R. L. Stevenson, 1891, 'What we want is to be shut of him.' In active mood from ca. 1500, whence this passive usage. Cf. dial. be shut on, as in Mrs Gaskell's Mary Barton, 1843, and shut, a reddance.
shut one's lights off. To commit suicide; whence, loosely, to die: from ca. 1929. (Lyell.)
shut up. To end (a matter): coll.: 1857, Dickens, 'Now, I'll tell you what it is, and this shuts it up,' O.E.D.—2. (Gen. in imperative: cf. shut it! and shut your face, head, mouth, neck!)
To cease talking; stop making a noise: 1853, 'C. Bede' (O.E.D.); Mursell, Lecture on Slang, 1858, 'When a man .. . holds his peace, he shuts up'; Maugham, 1897. S. >, ca. 1890, coll. Ex S.E. sense, to conclude one's remarks. The C. 17 equivalent was sneck (or snick) up i, q.v.—3. V.I. 'To give up, as one horse when challenged by another in a race,' Krik, Guide to the Turf. (Krik being the pseudonym of B. Reid Kirk, Amicus Equus i. . . . And a Guide to Horse Buyers, 1884): racing coll. († orig. s.). Cf. shut up, adj.—4. Hence, to stop doing something (no matter what): low: C. 20.
shut up shop. See shop, shut up.
shut up shop-windows, have. To be bankrupt: coll.: ca. 1675–1850. Ray, 1878 (Apperson). Cf. shutters, put up the, 2.
shut up, you little . . . See what did you do . . . shut up your garret! Hold your tongue! low (—1890). Ware. Cf.:
shut your face, head, neck, rag-box! Be quiet!; Stop talking: low: from mid-1870's: perhaps (except for last, which occurs in Kipling, 1892) orig. U.S., for shut your head! is recorded first in Mark Twain in 1876 and this appears to be the earliest of these phrases; shut your neck is in Run-ciman, Chequers, 1888; shut your face, from before 1903. All on the analogy of shut your mouth!, which, though admittedly familiar, is yet S.E. Cf. shut it! and shut up, 2, q.v.
shuts. As n., a hoax, a 'sell'; as interjection, 'sold again!' Christ's Hospital: from ca. 1860. Cf. done!
shutter. gen. pronounced shelter. To convey a 'drunk' on a shop-shutter to the police-station, the police carrying him: low Cockney (—1909); very ob. Ware.
shutter-racket. The practice of stealing from a building by boring a hole in a window-shutter and taking out a pane of glass: c. of ca. 1810–60. Vaux.
shuttered (often pron. sheltered). In a state of complete ignominity: low (—1909). Ware. Perhaps ex sense 2 of:
putters, put up the. To 'bung up' the eyes of one's opponent: boxing: mid-C. 19–20; slightly ob.—2. To stop payment, announce oneself bankrupt: coll.: mid-C. 19–20. Ex S.E. sense, to close a shop for the day. Cf. shut up shop-windows.
shutters up, got the. See got the shutters up.
shuvly-kouse. A public-house: low urban (—1809); virtually ♦. Ware, 'This phrase spread through London from a police-court case, in which a half-witted girl was heard this phrase.'
shy. A quick and either jery or careless (or jerkily careless) casting of a stone, ball, etc.: coll.: 1791, Brand (O.E.D.). Ex v., i, q.v.—2. Hence, A 'go', attempt, experiment, chance: coll.: 1823, Egan's Grose; 1824, Egan (vol. iv of Boyziana), 'I like to have a shy for my money.' —3. Fig., a 'fling', a jibe or sarcasm (at . . .): 1840, De Quincey, 'Rousseau . . . taking a "shy" at any random object,' O.E.D.—4. The Eton Football sense, orig. (1868) coll., soon > i.—5. A thrower, esp. in cricket: coll.: 1884 (O.E.D.)
shy, v. (In late C. 19—early 20, occ. shite.) V.I., to throw a missile jerkily or carelessly or with careless jerkiness: coll.: 1787, Bentham, 'A sort of cock for him . . . to shie at,' O.E.D. Perhaps ex shy()-cock, q.v.—2. Hence, v.t.: To throw, toss, jerk: coll.: lit., 1824, Egan; fig., Scott, 1827, 'I cannot keep up with the world without shying a letter now and then,' Hogg. shy, adj. Short, low (of money): 1821, Haggart, 'Although I had not been idle during these three months, I found my blunt getting shy.' ♦ by 1900.—2. Whence shy of, short of (money;
hence provisions, etc.) : Australia late C. 19–20. Cf. U.S. shy, shy of, lacking, short of (O.E.D., 799, § 6, b), a usage perhaps influencing, but not originating, the Australian. 3. Disreputable; not quite honest : 1849, Thackeray, 'Mr Wagg ... said, “Rather a shy place for a sucking county member, say, Pymest [!]” ; 1864, H. J. Byron, 'Shy turf-transaction.' S. >, ca. 1900, coll.; by 1930, ob. Prob. ex S.E. sense, timid, bashful.—4. Hence, doubtful in quantity and/or quality : 1850, Thackeray, 'That uncommonly shy supper of dry bread and milk-and-water'; Mark Lemon, 1865, 'Her geography is rather shy, and I can make her believe anything,' O.E.D. Rare in C. 20, virtually † by 1935.

**Shy, coco-nut.** An amusement (and its means) consisting in throwing balls at coco-nuts: 1903 (S.O.D.) : coll. >, ca. 1920, S.E. shy [—cock]. A wary person, esp. one who keeps in doors to avoid the ballifs: 1788, Goldsmith (O.E.D.); Grose, 1st ed.—2. Hence, a cowardly person: 1796, F. Reynolds (O.E.D.). Both senses † by ca. 1850, the latest record being of 1825 (F. & H.). Prob. ex lit. sense, a cock not easily caught, one that will not fight.

**Shy-making.** Alluded-to by Somerset Maugham in Cakes and Ale, 1930, thus, 'Popular adjectives (like 'divine' and 'shy-making'),' this adj., used lit., was nevertheless ob. by 1934. It was coined, or rather first recorded, by Evelyn Waugh.


shyster. An unprofessional, dishonest, or rapacious lawyer (1886); hence, anyone not too particular as to how he conducts business (1877); hence (—1903), a generic pejorative: U.S., Anglicised resp. ca. 1890, 1900, 1905. Either ex shy, adj., 3, or ex shicer : cf. next sense. Thornton, F. & H., O.E.D.—2. A duffer, a vagabond.' H., 3rd ed.: from ca. 1860. This sense, independent of U.S. shyster, is a variant of shicer, 2, q.v.

**Si quis.** A candidate for holy orders: from ca. 1860; ob. H., 3rd ed. Ex the public notice of ordination, so named because it began Si quis, if any ...—S.E.

Sixpence: o.: ca. 1680–1650. Tatham, 1690 (O.E.D.); Cowen Garden Drolery, 1722; B.E.; Grose; Lytton. Ex sixc, the six in dice.


**Sick.** Disgusted; exceedingly annoyed or chagrined: 1853, Surtees, 'How sick he was when the jury ... gave five hundred pounds damages against him,' O.E.D. Ex sick (of), thoroughly weary (of), prob. via sick and tired (of)—2. (Of a ship) quarantined on suspicion of infectious disease' (Bowen): nautical coll.: C. 20.

**Sick, enough to make a horse.** See sick as a cat.

**Sick, knock (a person).** To astound, 'flaggernast': coll. (—1923). Manchon. Ex sick 1.

**Sick, the.** See sick, the.

**Sick as a cat, cushion, dog, horse, rat, — as.** Very sick or ill indeed: coll. verging on S.E.: resp. 1869, Burton at large (S.E.). Ray, Swift: late C. 16–20, G. Harvey, Garrick, Mrs. Henry Wood; ca. 1868–1830 (Meriton, 1885; Sterne; Grose), then coll.; late C. 19–20, ob. (F. & H.). As a horse does not vomit, to be as sick as a horse connotes extreme discomfort. Northamptonshire dial. is logical in that it applies the phrase to a person 'exceedingly sick without vomiting' (Miss Baker, 1824).

**Sick-bay moocher.** A malingerer: Conway, cadets: from before $901. (John Massfield, The Conway, 1933.) See moocher.

**Sick friend, sit up with a.** (Of a man) to excuse oneself for absence all night from the conjugal bed: from ca. 1860; slightly ob. Cf. see a man about a dog.

**Sick list, on the.** Ill: coll.: C. 20. Ex s.—, an official list of the sick.

**Sick man (or S.M.) of Europe, the.** 'Any reigning sultan of Turkey': political nickname (coll. verging on S.E.) : 1853, when used by Nicholas I of Russia to Sir George Hamilton Seymour, the English Ambassador at St Petersburg; slightly ob. (Ware.)

**Sick of the fever burden.** To be 'bone' lazy: coll.: C. 16–17. E.g. in Fullwood's Enemy of Idleness, 1583, 'You have the pulseys or eke the fever burden'; Ray. (Apperson.) Cf. sick of the Lombard fever.


**Sick of the idles.** Exceedingly lazy; idle without the will to work: coll.: 1639, John Clarke; Ray, 1670. Ob. by 1850, but not yet †. Cf. preceding two entries and :


**Sick of the simples.** See simples, be cut for the, sick up, v. 1 and 2. To vomit: low coll.: late († mid) — C. 19–20.

**Sickening.** Unpleasant; inconvenient; (of persons) rude: Society coll.: from ca. 1920. Denis Mackail, Greenery Street, 1925, "Just a little demonstration of two men telephoning to each other. Twenty seconds by the clock," "Don't be sickening, Ian," [said Felicity].

**Sicker, the.** The medical officer's report: military, mostly officers' from: from 1914. F. & Gibbons. Is sick + the. 'The Oxford ere'.

**Sickkel.** A puny, sickly Creature,' B.E.: late C. 17–early 18. O.E.D. says that it is c.: but B.E. does not so classify it. Pejorative on sick: cf. cockerel on cock.

**Sicks (occ. sick), the.** A feeling of nausea. Esp. in give one the sicks, to get on a person's nerves: late C. 19–20. (Compton Mackenzie, Water on the Brain, 1933, the sick; John Brophy, Waterfront, 1934, the sick). Sick down. A low, slovenly form of sick down, esp. in the imperative, which is occ. written siddown, as, e.g., in James Curtis, The Gift Kid, 1936. The † has been blunted by the d of down.

**Siddown! See siddown.**

side. Conject, swagger; pretentiousness. Earliest and often put on side, to give oneself airs, to 'swank'. Hatton, 1878; 'Pomes' Marahall. Ex side, proud, or more prob., as W. suggests, by a pun on put on side at billiards.

**Side! Yes: Northern c. (—1864); ob. H., 3rd ed. † on It., Sp. si, yes.

side, on the (e.g. cool). Rather cool: 1923. A. J. Anderson: coll. >, by 1933, S.E. (Collin-
son; O.E.D. Sup.—2. Often tautological, as in the musical side, music. Cf. purpose, q.v.

side, over the. See over the side.

side about. —To put on 'side': Public Schools; C. 20. (P. G. Wodehouse, Mike 1909.)

side-boards. A shirt-collar: low (— 1857); † by 1900. 'Ducange Anglicus'. Prob. the same collar as that defined at sideboard,—2. See sideboards.

side-kick. A close companion; a mate, occ. an assistant in office; Canadian and Australian; from not later than 1914. Ex the side-kicker of U.S.A., where, since 1920, side-kick has been the more frequent; side-kicker is occ. heard in England, as e.g. in P. MacDonald, Rope to Spare, 1932. Cf. affiancer, q.v.

side-lever. gen. in pl. Hair growing down the cheek at the side of the ear: C. 20. (Author first heard it in 1923.) Cf. side-wing, side-boards, and the U.S. side-burns.


Bowen.

side-pocket, wanted as much as a dog (or toad) wants a. A c.p. applied to one who desires something unnecessary; late C. 18–20; ob. Grosb, 1st ed., toad (at toad); dog in Grosb, 2nd ed., where also the variant as much need of a wife as a dog of a side-pocket, applied to a debilitated old man. Quiller-Couch, 1889, 'A bull's got no more use for religion than a toad for side-pockets.' Occ. monkey, unrecorded before 1880 and † by 1930; very rarely cow, as in Whyte-Melville, 1862. (Apperson.)

side-scraper. 'Side-wings'; 'side-levers', qq.v.: London middle classes: ca. 1879–89. Ware.


side up with. To compare, or compete, with: 1896. Punch, Feb. 23 (O.E.D. Sup.); ob.


sideboard. A 'stand-up' shirt-collar: 1857, 'Ducange Anglicus'; ob. Gen. in pl. (H., 1st ed., shows that the term was applied to the collars of ca. 1845–55.)

sideboards. Whiskers: from ca. 1850; very ob. Cf. side-wings; contrast side-lever.—2. See sideboards (above).

'sides. Besides; moreover; late C. 16–20; S.E. until C. 19, then coll. and dial.

sidey. See siddy.—sidi-boy. See seedy-boy.


siddy; occ.—but incorrectly—sidey. Concocted; apt to 'swank it': 1898 (O.E.D.): a., ca. 1910, coll.; ob. Ex siddy, q.v.

sift, sift. See syph.

sift, sift. v.t.; occ. v.i. To steal small coins, i.e. such as might be conceived of as passing through a sieve: thus F. & H. (1903); but in 1864, H. says that it = to purloin 'the larger pieces, that did not readily pass through the sieve!' It appears, however, that F. & H. is right, for in H., 1874, we find 'To embezle small coins, those which might pass through a sieve—as threepennies and four-pennies—and which are therefore not likely to be missed.'


sigarnoe. A loose form of sigarnoe. See Sir

sigh. Incorrect for sick; C. 16. O.E.D. sighing Sarah. See Whistling Willie.—2. A shell that 'sighs' in its distant flight: military; 1915; ob. (G. H. McKnight, English Words, 1923.)

sight. A multitude or a (great) deal: late C. 14–20; S.E. until mid-C. 18, then coll. (In C. 20, virtually 's'). Sheridan & Tickell, 1778, 'They wear... a large hat and feather, and a mortal sight of hair;' O.E.D.—2. As adv.: coll. >, ca. 1830, s. : 1836, T. Hook; 1889, Grant Allen, 'You're a sight too clever for me to talk to.' O.E.D.—3. An oddity, often jeoparously ('You've made yourself a perfect or regular sight'): late C. 17–20; S.E. until C. 19, then coll. Cf. fright, q.v.—4. An opportunity or chance. Exp. get within sight, to near the end, and get within sight of, to get anywhere near. Coll.: late C. 19–20.—5. 'A gesture of derision: the thumb on the nose-tip and the fingers spread fan-wise: also Queen Anne's fan. A double sight is made by joining the tip of the little finger (already in position) to the thumb of the other hand, the fingers being similarly extended. Emphasis is given by moving the fingers of both hands as if playing a piano. Similar actions are taking a grider... or working the coffee-mill...; pulling bacon...; making a nose or long nose; cocking smokes, &c,' a passage showing F. & H. to advantage. (The custom seems to have arisen in late C. 17; see the frontispiece to the English Theophrastus, 1702, and cf. The Spectator, 1712, 'The 'prentice speaks his disrespect by an extended finger'.) T. Hook, 1836, 'Taking a double sight,' O.E.D.; Dickens, 1840, 'That peculiar form of recognition which is called taking a sight': cf. H., 2nd ed., at sight.

sight, v. 'To tolerate; to permit; also, to see; observe,' C. J. Dennis: Australian: C. 20.

sight, put out of. To consume; esp., to eat; coll.: from ca. 1870. Cf. get outside of.

sight, take a. See sight, n., 5.


sights, take. To have a look, to glance; v.t. with of: low: C. 20. Philip Allingham, Cheapside, 1834.


sign of a house or a tenement to let. A widow's weeds: 1785, Grosb; ob. by 1900, virtually † by 1930. In American low s, a house for rent (Irwin).

sign of the cat's foot, live at. To be hen-pecked: C. 19–20; very ob.

sign of the feathers, the. A woman's best good graces: mid-C. 19–early 20.

sign of the five, ten, fifteen shillings, the. An inn or tavern named The Crown, Two Crowns, Three Crowns: late C. 19–20; ob. Grosb, 2nd ed. sign of the horn, at the. In cuckoldom: C. 19–20; very ob.

sign of the prancer, the. See prancer.

sign of the three balls, the. A pawnbroker's: C. 19–20; coll. >, ca. 1910, S.E.

sign on the dotted line. See dotted line.

Signalese is the use of Ack for A, Beer for B, &c. See, e.g., a pip and pip emma.]

signboard. The face: from ca. 1870; very ob. Cf. label, q.v.

signed all over. (Of a good picture) clearly characteristic of its creator: artists' (— 1909). Ware.
signed servant. An assigned servant: Australian coll.: ca. 1830–60. Morris. Ex that convict system under which convicts were let out as labourers to the settlers.

significant. Attractive, esp. as being in the forefront of modernity: art s. verging on: from ca. 1920. A vogue-cheapening of significant, very expressive or suggestive, perhaps influenced by significant in a similar or notable.

Silk or Psych (pron. site), the. The Society for Psychical Research; from middle 1880's. Bau mann.—2. A member thereof: id. Ibid. (Also site.)

*sil. See silver-beggar.


[silent match, one that makes no noise on being struck, is classified by Baumann as: but a S.E. term does not > c. simply because it is used by criminals.]


silk, carry or sport. To ride in a race; turf coll.: 1884, Hawley Smart. Ex the silk jacket worn by jockeys.

silk, obtain, receive, take. To attain the rank of Counsel: legal coll.: >, ca. 1906, S.E.: obtain, very rare before C. 20, and perhaps always S.E.; receive, 1872, The Standard, Aug. 16; take, 1890, The Globe, May 6. Contrast: silk, spoil. To cease being Counsel; esp. on promotion: legal coll.: >, ca. 1900, S.E. ; obtain, 1882, Society, Nov. 4, 'Ere long he "spoiled silk" (as the saying is), and was made a Serjeant.' * ex deep spoil one's silkings. A beer-stained coat-front: tailors: C. 20.

silk-gown. See silk, 1.

silk-port. *Assumption of a gentleman commoner's gown*: Oxford University: ca. 1820–60. Egan's Grove, 1823. (Pierce Egan added a fair amount of Oxford s. to Grove.)

*silk-smasher. A thief addicted to snatching hoods or bonnets from persons walking in the street: c. of ca. 1720–1846. A New Canning Dict., 1725; Grose, 1st ed

D.D.

silks and satins, support one's. To parade, or prank oneself out in, silk and satin r modistes' coll. (— 1887); slightly ob. Baumann.


silly. A silly person: coll.: 1858, K. H. Digby, 'Like great sills,' O.E.D.

silly, adv. Silly: C. 18–20: S.E. until mid-C. 19, then (low) coll. and dial.

silly, knock. To infatuate: coll.: from ca. 1890. (Lk., to stun, stupefy.)


silly season. In Great Britain, the months of August and September, when—owing to recess of Parliament and to other prominent persons' being on holiday—there is a shortage of important news, the lack being supplied by trivialities. (Such a periodical as The Times Literary Supplement, however, welcomes August–mid-September for the working-off of arrears: the authors and publishers concerned feel perhaps less enthusiastic.) 1871, Punch, Sept. 9, 'The present time of the year has been named 'the silly season', O.E.D. : coll. till ca. 1910, then S.E. Whereas, silly-season, -seasoning. A typical silly-season article or story (1893); the writing and publishing of such matter (1897). Still coll. O.E.D.


silver-beggar or -lurker. C. s-s. 1859, Sala; s.f. (H., 3rd ed.) from ca. 1860; both ob. 'A tramp with briefs (q.v.) or fakements (q.v.) concerning bogus losses by fire, shipwreck, accident, and the like; guaranteed by forged signatures or shams (q.v.) of clergymen, magistrates, &c., the false subscription-books being known as delicates (q.v.).' Also from ca. 1870—'sil = (1) a forged document, and (2) a note on "The Bank of Elegance" or "The Bank of Engraving", i.e. a counterfeit banknote; likewise ob. F. & H.

silver bullet. 'Money contributed to the war loans': journalistic coll. verging on: J. 1916–18. Collinson.


silver fork. A wooden skewer, used as a chopstick when forks were scarce: Winchester: J by 1870.

Silver Fork School, the. A school of novelists stressing the etiquette of the drawing-room and affecting gentility: litt. coll. of ca. 1834–90. The school flourished ca. 1825–50 and included Disraeli, Lytton, Theodore Hook, Lady Blessington, Mrs Trollope. Four-pronged silver or electro-
plated forks, though known long before, ousted the steel two-pronged only ca. 1800.

silver hall. A low or: col.: raising saloon or den; coll.: from ca. 1840; ob., Moncrieff, 1843, 'He's the principal partner of all 'the silver hells at the West End.' Only or mainly silver was riaked.

silver hook, catch fish with a. To buy a fish (or several fish) to 'conceal unskilful angling', as F. & H. delicately say: anglers: C. 19-20; ob. Perhaps on the proverbial ample with a silver (or gold) bonnet to things by bribery, or only through paying for them.


silver pheasant. A beautiful society woman; from ca. 1920; ob. Manchon. (See bird.) Cf. silver-tail, q.v.

silver spoons in one's month, born with a. Born rich: coll.: till ca. 1850, then S.E. Moteux, 1712; Buckstone, 1830, 'Born ... as we say in the vulgar tongue, with ...' Anticipated by John Clarke in 1639, born with a penny in one's mouth. (Apperson.)

silver-tail; silver-tailed, n. and adj. (A) "swell": Australian bushmen's coll. (1890); ob. Opp. copper-tailed, democratic. A. J. Vogan, The Black Police, 1860. (Morris.)

Silver-Tailed Dandies, the. The officers of the 61st Foot Regiment: a Peninsular War nickname, in allusion to the elaborate silver embroidery on the tails of their coats,' F. & Gibbons.


silvers or S. Shares in the India Rubber, Gutta Percha, and Telegraph Company; Stock Exchange; ca. 1860-1915. Ex the works at Silvertown.

silvoo play I. Please! G.W. +. (Gavin Holt, Drums Beat at Night, 1932.)

Sim. 'A follower of the late Rev. Charles Simpson,' H. (2nd ed.): ca. 1850-60. The Rev. Charles, d. 1836, was 54 years Vicar of Holy Trinity, Cambridge. Abbr. Simeonite (1823).—2. Hence, and far more widely at Cambridge University, a quiet, religious (esp. if evangelical) man: ca. 1851-70, then only historical. Brasted, 1851.


simon (or S.). A sixpence: c. late C. 17-19. B.E.; Grose, 1st ed.; H., 5th ed. Prob. by a fancy on the name: since tanner, ob., is unrecorded before 1811, simon cannot derive from 'the old joke ... about St. Peter's banking transaction, when he "lodged with one Simon a tanner'' (Howitt: Household Words, June 20, 1885), but tanner may well have come from Simon in this connexion.—2. A trained horse: circus: from ca. 1850; ob. Is this a pun? On what I?.—3. A cane: King Edward's School, Birmingham: ca. 1860-90. Ex Act ix, 43.

Simon Pure (ooc. Simon- or Simon-pure), the or the real. The real or authentic person or, from ca. 1860 (H. 1st ed.) to about 1910: coll.: the real S.P., 1815, Scott; the S.P., 1860, W. C. Prime (O.E.D.). Ex Simon Pure, a Quaker who, in Mrs Centlivre's A Bold Stroke for a Wife, 1717, is, for part of the play, impersonated by another character; see esp. Act V, scene I.—2. Its use as an adj. is mainly, as it certainly was original. (Howells, 1876), American.

Simon soon gone. In Aveling, Simon soone gone, 'He, that when his Majesty hath anything to do, he will hide him out of the way': c. of ca. 1630-90, simp. A, simpleton: coll.: U.S. (1916), partly anglicised—owing to the "talkies"—by 1931. (O.E.D. Sup.)

simper like a furmity-kettle. See furmity-kettle. simpkin. See simpkin.

simple infanticide. Masturbation: pedantic coll. or: late C. 19-20, simple-lifer. One who leads 'the simple life': 1913: coll. >, by 1930, S.E. Collinson; O.E.D. (Sup.).

* simpler. A simple or foolish man much given to lust: c. of late C. 16-early 17. Greene, 1692; Rowlands, 1602. O.E.D. I.e. simple + er.

simples, be cut for (in C. 17-early 18) of the. To be cured of one's folly: mid-C. 17-20; (not c.), until ca. 1820, then mainly, in C. 19-reasoning but, dial. Apperson records it for 1650; B.E.; Swift; Grose, 1st ed. In C. 18 often in semi-proverbial form, he must go to Battersea, to be cut for the simples, as in Grose, 1st ed., where also the corrupt variant, ... to have their simpes cut, for at Battersea simples (medicinal herbs) were formerly grown in large quantities. Cognate is the C. 18 semi-proverbial sick of the simpes, foolish: coll.

simpson; occ. incorrectly, simson. Also with capital. Water used in diluting milk: dairymen's: 1871, The Daily News, April 17, 'He had, he stated on inquiry, a liquid called Simpson on his establishment.' Ex the surname Simpson, that of a dairyma. who, in the late 1860's, was prosecuted for such adulteration.—2. Hence, inferior milk: 1871, The Standard, May 11, Police Report, 'If they annoyed him again he would christen them with Simpson, which he did by throwing a can of milk over the police.'—3. Almost co-extensive is the sense, 'That combined product of the cow natural and the "cow with the iron tail": The Standard, Dec. 25, 1872. See also Simpson, Mrs; cf. chalkers and sky-blue, and next entry.—4. A milkman: mostly London (1887); † by 1910. Baumann.

simpson or S.; incorrectly simson. To dilute (milk) with water: 1872, The Times, Dec. 24. Ex 1, q.v. Also Simpson's, Simpson's cow. Simpson, Mrs. The (village) pump: mostly among dairymen (1874). H., 5th ed. Also Simpson's cow and:


Simpson's cow. See Simpson, Mrs; dairymen's (1903).

simulate. See at dissolve.

Sims' circus. 'The American flotilla of destroyers sent over first on America coming into the War': naval: 1917-18. F. & Gibbons. Ex Admiral Sims, commanding the U.S. navy during the G.W. sin. (E.g. 'It's a sin that or to ...') A name; a pity: C. 14-20: S.E. until C. 19, then coll. (O.E.D.). Cf.

sin, like. Very vigorously; furiously: late C. 19-20. Here, sin = the devil.

sine leads often to a catastrophic use of tense. It is obviously incorrect to write: He is a notability since he has written that book; less obviously incorrect is 'He has been a notability since he has... the logical (and correct) form being, 'He has been a notability since he wrote...'

does Caesar was a pup. Since long a go (or before): Canadian (— 1932). John Beames.

since when I have used no other A c.p. applied to any (gen. domestic) article: from ca. 1910. Collinson. 'Ex the witty Pears' Soap advertisement of a trump (Twenty years ago I used your soap, since when I have not used no other'). Cf. good morning, have you...

sines. (Generic for) bread, whereas a sinea is a small loaf: Winchester: from ca. 1870; † by 1915. Perhaps a pun on natural sine(s) and sign(s).

sing like a bird called the swine. To sing exorably: coll.: ca. 1875–1905. Ray, 1878; Fuller, 1872. (Apperson.)

*single-ten. Cf. C. of ca. 1810–40. Scott, 1815, in a note to Guy Mannering, ch. xxviii, says, 'To sing out or whistle in the cage, is when a rogue, being apprehended, preaches against his comrades.' (N.B., the phrase is not sin out in the cage.) Cf.:

*single out beef. To call 'Stop thief': c. of ca. 1810–40. Lyr. Bal. (More gen. cry beef or give (hot) beef.) Possibly a rhyming synonym.

sing placebo (or P.). See placebo.

sing small. To make less extravagant or conceited claims or statements: coll.: 1753, Richardson. 'I must myself sing small in her company'; Grose, 1st ed.; Clement Scott, 1885. Perhaps suggested by S.E. sin{t}er another, or a different, tune, to speak, act, very differently, though it may follow naturally ex C. 17–early 18 sin{t} small, to sing in a small voice: cf. Shakespeare's 'Speaks small like a woman.'

[sing-song] Perhaps orig. coll., but prob. always S.E.]


deepest. A five-pound note: back s. on finnup (q.v.): from ca. 1850. Also, in C. 20 c., a £ note.

deepest. See senses 1, 2 of:

singleton. A very foolish, silly Fellow,' B.E., where spoken, sin{t}en: Late C. 17–early 19. Grose, 1st ed. Prob. ex S.E. single (of persons) simple, honest, on singleton, but possibly ex sin{t}len, the 10 in a card-suit, thus: the '10' is below and next to the knave and—by the age-old juxtaposition of fools and knaves—is therefore a fool. —2. 'A nail of that size,' says B.E. puzzlingly; Grose, who likewise has singleton, is no clearer with 'a particular kind of nails'. Late C. 17–early 19. Possibly an obscure rosalation to the single ten in cards: cf. sense 1. —3. 'A cork screw, made by a famous cutter of that name [Singleton], who lived in a place called Hell, in Dublin; his screws are remarkable for their excellent temper,' Grose, 1st ed.: coll. ca. 1780–1830.


sinister, bar. Incorrect for bend sinister (occ. baton sinister).


sink, v. To 'lower' or drink: from ca. 1926. Gavin Holt, Drums Beat at Night, 1932, 'Let's go out and sink a few beers. We can talk at the pub.' sink, fall down the. To take to drink: late C. 19-20: 7 rhyming s.

sink me! A coll. impression: 1772, Bridges, 'But sink me if I... understand'; very ob. Prob. orig. and mainly, nautical.


sip. A kiss: London's lower classes': ca. 1860–1865. Ware. Ex the bee sipping; cf. that popular early C. 20 song in which the male warbles, 'You are the honeysuckle, I am the bee.'

sip. To make water: back s. (— 1903) on pies, q.v.

sip, do a. See do a sip.


Sir Garnet; often all Sir Garnet. All right: whether as predicate or as answer to a question: from ca. 1885. 'Pomes' Marshall, 'And the start was all Sir Garnet,' Jenny went for Emma's Garnet.' In C. 20 often corrupted to (all) sirgarret. Both forms were slightly ob. by 1915, very ob. by 1935. Ex Sir Garnet (later Viscount) Wolfe's military fame. (Wolsey, 1833–1913, served actively and brilliantly from 1852 to 1885.)


Sir Jack Sauce. See Jack Sauce.

Sir John. See John, Sir. (By itself, sir, a parson, is † S.E.)—2. A close-stool: coll. (C. 19) and dial (C. 19–20; ob. Cf. Sir Harry, q.v.

Sir Oliver. See Oliver.—Sir Petronel Flash. See Petronel.—sir reverence. See sir reverence.

Sir Roger, (as) fast as. A real tall fair hair and weight; lower classes' coll. ca. 1875–1900. Bam- mann. Ex Sir Roger Tichborne of the famous law-suit.

Sir Sauce. See Jack Sauce.

Vaux. Why? unless Sydney, Australia, already had a notorious underworld.

Sir Thomas Gresham, sup with. To go hungry: C. 17 coll. Hayman, 1628, 'For often with duke Humphrey [q.v.] thou dost dine,' And often with sir Thomas Gresham sup.' Sir Thomas Gresham, 1591-79, founded the Royal Exchange and was a noted philanthropist.

Sir Timothy. One that Treats every Body, and pays the Rent, and is everywhere,' B.E. : col. late C. 17-18 early 19. Prob. a noted 'treator.'

' sir 'to you! A c.p. of mock dignity: C. 20.


Sir Walter Scott. A pot (of beer): rhyming s. 1857; ob. 'Dunceague Anglicous.'


sirname. Incorrect for surname.

sirrah may orig. (C. 16) have been coll.

sirtech. A cherry; more properly, cherries: back s. (1859). H. 1st ed., where spelt sirtech and defined as cherries. The 'logical' ‘sirtech’ is impossible, the former c is omitted, k reversed, and k interpolated to make the sound unequivocal.


sir; often siss. Sister: coll.: gen., term of address: orig. (1859), U.S.; anglicised before 1887 (Baumann). (The O.E.D. dismisses it as 'U.S.'). Cf. sister and sissie, sissy: occ. Clissy, clissy. An effeminate boy or man: hence a passive homosexual: late C. 19-20; ob. in latter sense (cf. paney, q.v.). Ware declares it to have originated in 1890 as a Society term for an effeminate man in Society; the O.E.D. (Sup.) that it was orig. U.S. s.,—but is this so? Ex sissy, sister, as form of address orig. (1859) U.S. but anglicised before 1887: coll.: cf. sis.


sitt. An engagement (for, in, work): printers: 1888. Jacobi (O.E.D.). Abbr. situation. But that it has always been also gen. is shown by Baumann (1887).

sitt. v. To hang (on a branch); lie, rest (on the ground); South African coll.: C. 20. Ex Cape Dutch, seItalian, to lie, to rest. Pettman.

*sit. v. to travel by buses and trains for the purpose of picking pockets,' G. R. Sims in The Referee, Feb. 17: 1907: c. (O.E.D.)

sit down. To land: aviators' coll: from the middle 1930's. O.E.D. (Sup.).
sivvy or sivy, upon my! On my word of honour! : low: mid-C. 19-20; slightly ob. H., 1st ed.; J. Greenwood, 1883. Not asseveration, but prob. dasy, corrupted, or, as Baumann implies, soul.
siawah, A mean and/or miserable seaman: Nova-Scottian (and U.S.) nautical: late C. 19-20. Bowen, 'The Siwash is described as the meanest type of Indian.'
six-and-eightpence, The usual Fee given, to carry back the Body of the Executed Malefactor, to give it Christian Burial,' B.E., who classes it as c.: more prob. coll.: late C. 17-18-18-2. A solicitor or attorney: coll.: 1756, Foote; Baumann, 1810. Because this was a usual fee. Cfr. green bag.
six-and-Two's, the. The 62nd Foot, now the Wiltshire Regiment: military: C. 19-20. F. & Gibbons. Ex the figures of the number.
six-by-four, 'Bum!' (q.v.): Army officers': 1916; slightly ob. B. & P., 'The dimensions in inches of the Army Article.'
six feet and inches. Over six feet: lower classes' (- 1900); ob. Ware. Ex inches written as iche.
Six Mile Bridge assassin. (Gen. pl.) A soldier: Tipperary: late C. 10-10-early 20. Ware, 'Once upon a time certain rievers were shot at this spot, not far from Mallow.'
six-monthers, A very severe stipendiary magistrate: police coll. (- 1900). Ware. I.e. one 'who always gives, where he can, the full term (six months) allowed him by law.'
six-o’six; gen. written 606'. Salvarsan, a remedy for syphilis: medical, hence military coll.: from ca. 1910. B. & P.
six of everything, with, Respectably married: work-people's coll. (- 1900). Ware. Applied only to the girl: her trousseau contains six of everything.
six-on-four, go, 'To be put on short rations': naval: late C. 19-20. Thus, a six-on-four is a supernumerary borne on a warship: Bowen, 'Supposed to have two-thirds rations.'
six pipes and all's well! Six o'clock and all's well!: c.p.: from 1833. Referring both to the radio time-signal and to the nautical six bells and all's well.
six-pounder, A servant maid, from the wages formerly given to maid servants, which was commonly six pounds [per annum, plus keep],' Grose, 1st ed.; coll.: ca. 1780-1860.
six-quarter, a three-quarter man, A superior—an inferior—employee: cloth-drapers' (- 1900). Ware, 'There are two widths of cloth—six quarter and three quarter.'
six upon four, Short rations: nautical coll.; 1838, Glasscock in Land Sharks and Sea Gulls; ob. Because the rations of four had to suffice for six. See also six-on-four, go.
sixer. Six months’ hard labour: c. or low s.: 1809, 'Pompe' Marshall, 'I see what the upshot will be, | Dear me! | A sixer with H.A.R.D.'—2. A sixth imprisonment: 1872 (O.E.D.): low s. rather than c.—3. The six-ounce loaf served with dinner: prison c. (- 1877)-4. A thin man, county; orig. (1870) and mainly in cricket: coll. H. A. Vachell, The Hill, 1905, 'Never before in an Eton and Harrow match have two `sixers' been hit in succession,' O.E.D. (This is that novel which did for Harrow what E. F. Benson's David Blasie did in 1916 for Winchester, which the author 'disguises as Manchester.')—6. A naval cadet at the beginning of his second year: naval: C. 20. Bowen. 'Because he has six terms ahead of him.'
sixes, Small hook-curls worn by men; composed of forehead hair, they are plastered to the forehead: military: ca. 1870-90. Ware. Ex shape. If Manchon has not erred, the term app. > number sizes and an underworld term, still extant though ob.
sixpences, spit. See spit sixpences.
sixpenny, adj, Inferior, cheap, worthless: coll.: ca. 1590-1630. Esp. sixpenny striker, a petty footpad (as in Shakespeare's 1st Henry IV).
sixth-forming, A caning by the prefects assembled in the sixth-form room: Public Schools' coll.: late C. 19-20. Desmond Coke, The School across the Road, 1910.
sixty per cent. A usher: coll.: 1853, Readie, ob.; slightly ob. Cf. Fletcher, 1816, 'There are few gallants . . . that would receive such favours from the devil, though he appeared like a broker, and demanded sixty i' th' hundred.'
sixty-pounder, A suet-dumpling: military: 1915-18. (Sidney Rogers, Twelve Days, 1933.)
size, gen, size up, To gauge, estimate; to regard carefully (in order to form an opinion of): coll.: orig. (1847), U.S.; anglicised ca. 1860. Marriott-Watson, 1891, size († by 1930); Newman Davis, 1899 (O.E.D.), size up. Cf. the rare S.E. size down, v.t., to comprehend.
size of (a thing), the, What it amounts to: coll.: from the middle 1880's. E.g. 'That's about the size of it.' O.E.D. (Sup.). Ex dial.: E.D.D.
skibanker, See snowbanker—skalawag. See scalawag.
skater, An N.C.O.'s chevron: Regular Army: late C. 19-20; ob. F. & Gibbons. Perhaps because its wearer `skates on thin ice'.
skates, put on (one's); get one's skates on. To hurry; evade duty; desert: military (from not later than 1816) >, by 1919, gen. F. & Gibbons.

*skate(der)-turb'. 'A begging impostor dressed as a sailor,' H., 1st ed.; c. & t. by 1903. Perhaps = skate's lurk, a fish's—hence a 'fishy'—trick! (Bowen has skate-lurker.)


skedaddle; skedaddling. One who 'skedaddles' (1864, O.E.D.); the act (<— 1893).

skewy. See skewer.

skedder. A mosquito; coll.: orig. (1852), U.S.; then, ca. 1870, Australian; then ca. 1880, English,—but it is still comparatively rare in Britain.

skeddington's daughter. See scavenger's daughter.


*skiler, v.i. To beg, esp. as a wounded or domiciled soldier: c. late C. 16-mid-17, later use (esp. in Scott) being archaic. Ben Jonson.—2. V.t., to cheat, defraud (a person; obtain (money) by begging: c.: late C. 16-mid-17. Ben Jonson. Perhaps Dutch bedelen perverted.

*skeliding, vbl.n. and ppl.adj. of skeler: late C. 16-mid-17 c. Ben Jonson, who, I surmise, introduced it from Holland; cf. skelum.

skeleton. 'A typical sentence, not to exceed sixty words; no word therein to be of more than two syllables; as: an old journalist defines it: journalists' coll. c.: C. 20.

skeleton army. Street-fighting or -brawling: London: late 1882-3. Ware. Ex the Skeleton Army 'formed to oppose the extreme vigour of the early Salvation Army' (Ware).


skell(lum); scellum. A rascal, villain: perhaps orig. c.: certainly very soon S.E. Coryat, D'Urfe. Ex Dutch or Ger. scluum.

skelter. A quick run, a rash, a scamper; dial. (<— 1900) >, by 1920, coll. O.E.D. (Sup.). Exeller-skelter.

skelter. A punch on the neck; boxing: from ca. 1890; ob. Ex scruff.

skerrick. A small fragment: 1931, I. L. Idries, 'Not a skerrick of meat on it' (O.E.D. Sup.). Ex scurr (c.f. scaldick). Also in dial.

*skell. A skeleton key: c.: from ca. 1870. By telescoping skeleton.

sketch. A person whose appearance offers a very odd sight (cf. sight, 3, q.v.): coll.: from ca. 1905. Eg. 'Lor', what a sketch she was!—2. A small amount; a drop (of liquor): 1864 (O.E.D.); very ob. Cf.:

sketchy. Unsubstantial (meal); slimy (building, furniture); imperfect: coll.: 1878, O.E.D.


skewington's daughter. See scavenger's daughter.

*skew; occ. skew. A cup or wooden dish: c. of ca. 1650-1830. Awdayl, Brome, B.E., Grosje. 


skew. v.t. To fall in an examination: gen. as be skewed: 1859. Farrar in Eric, or Little by Little; 1905, Vachell. O.E.D.—2. Also v.t., to do (very) badly, fail in (a lesson); likewise Harrow (<— 1869). Ooc. v.i.: late C. 19-20; Lunn, The Harrowers, 1813. Perhaps ex skew at, look at obliquely, esp. in a suspicious way.—3. App. only be skewed, to be caught or punished: schools' (<— 1923). Manchon. Ex sense 1.


skew. v.t., to cheat, defraud (a person; obtain (money) by begging: c.: late C. 16-mid-17. Ben Jonson. Perhaps Dutch bedelen perverted.

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skelter. A punch on the neck; boxing: from ca. 1890; ob. Ex scruff.
skiff. (Presumably) a leg; low s. of ca. 1890–1910. The Morning Advertiser, April 6, 1891. 'To drive an "old crook" with "skinny skiffs,"'† origin: perhaps cognate is dial. skiff, to move lightly, skim along; † cf. also † dial. skife, to kick up one's heels.

Skiff Skipton. Sir Lumley Skewffington (1771–1850), dandy and playwright. Dawson. skife. A great hurry: among sailors, a job to be done in a hurry; low coll. or a.: late C. 19–20. With this thinning of scuffle, cf. that of burn in bins (q.v.); the word exists also in West Yorkshire dial.

Skilledralink. Secret; 'shady': East London; late C. 19–20; ob. Ware, 1909, remarks: 'If not brought in by Robson, it was re-introduced by him at the Olympic Theatre, and in a burlesque.'

Skiffs. A goal kicked between posts: football: ca. 1890–1920. F. & H. This being the result of skill.

Skillet. A ship's cook: nautical: from ca. 1880; ob. Ex the cooking-utensil.


Skillingers, the. The 6th (Inniskilling) Dragoons: military: mid-C. 19–20; very ob. Also known as the Old Inniskillings.


Skin. C.: 1869, The Daily News, July 20, 'They thought it contained his skin (money)'; ob. Perhaps the 'skin' of milk, i.e. cream.


Skin, v.t. At cards, to win from a person all his money: 1812, Vaux.—2. Hence, to strip of (clothes, money); to fleece: 1851, Mayhew. In C. 20, almost coll. Cf. skin-game and skin the lamb, qv.—3. To steal from: c. or low s. : 1891, The Morning Advertiser, March 21, 'Sergeant Hiscock ... saw him skinning the sacks—that is, removing lamps of coal from the tops and placing them in an empty paper bag.'—4. To shadow, esp. just before arresting: c.: from ca. 1880; ob.—5. In gaming, to 'plant' (a deck of cards): from ca. 1880.—6. To lower (a price or value): 1859, H., 1st ed.; ob.—7. Also skin alive. To thrash: orig. (—1888), U.S.; anglicised ca. 1895. Headon Hill, 1902, 'I'd have skinned the 'usy if I'd caught her prying into my grounds.'


Skin, in his, her, etc. An evasive reply to a question as to a person's whereabouts: coll.: C. 18–20. Swift, Polite Conversation, Dialogue I. Cf. there and back.


Skin a razor. To drive a hard bargain: coll.: from ca. 1870; ob.


Skin-and-grief. A variant of skin-and-bones, (a) skinny (person): lower classes (—1897); ob. Baumann.

Skin and whipcord, all. Extremely fit: with not a superfluous ounce of fat: coll.: (U.S. and) Colonial: from ca. 1880; slightly ob.

Skin-coat. The female pudend. Esp. in shake a skin-coat, to sell: mid-C. 17–18.—2. Skin. Only in carry one's skin-coat, to thrash a person: C. 18–mid-19.


Skin off your nose, I, here's to you. Your good health! mostly military: from ca. 1910; virtually † F. & Gibbons.

Skin out. To desert (v.i.): naval: C. 20. Bowen.

Skin the cat. 'To grasp the bar with both hands, raise the feet, and so draw the body, between the arms, over the bar,' F. & H.: gymnastics: 1888 (U.S.).

Skin the lamb. Lansquenet (the game of cards): 1864, H., 3rd ed.; ob. A perversion of lansquenet.—2. V. When an outsider wins a race, the bookmakers are said to 'skin the lamb': 1864, H., 3rd ed. Lit., fleece the public. Also, from ca. 1870, have a skinner, ob. by 1930.—3. Hence, to concert and/or practise a swindle: from ca. 1865.—4. Also to mulct a person in, e.g. blackmail: from ca. 1870.

Skin the live rabbit. To retract the prepuce: low: late C. 19—early 20.

Skin-light. A sausage: (lower classes)’ coll: from ca. 1890; ob.


skinfuful, to have got a or one's. To be extremely drunk; low coll. (—1923). Manchon. Cf. tight and got all (or more than) one can carry.

skinned, keep one's eyes. See eyes skinned, keep one's. See also pealed.

skinned rabbit. A very thin person: coll.: from ca. 1870; slightly ob.

skinner. Mayhew, 1856, "'Skinner's", or women and boys who strip children of their clothes,' in order to eye lustfully their nakedness: low s. verging on c.; ob.—2. skinner, have a. See skin the lamb, 2. (Here, skinner may be a punning corruption of winner; the whole phrase, however, is prob. a light-hearted perversion of skin the lamb, as if, 5th ed. (1874) suggests. Hence, a skinner has by 1893 >= = a results very profitable to the 'bookies' (O.E.D.), as it had, in essence, been twenty years earlier.)—3. A driver of horses: Canadian: late C. 19-20. Cf. skin, n., 4. (John Beames.)—4. See.

skinneries. Mental torture; terrible anxiety: low urban (—1909); slightly ob. Ware. Because it 'flays' one.


skint. Very short of or wholly without money; jocular, lower classes' and military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. I.e., skinned.


*skipper; gen. skipper it. To sleep in a barn or hay-rick, hence under, e.g. a hedge: c.; mid-C. 19-20. 'No. 747', p. 413, valid for 1846: Mayhew, 1851, I skipper it—'turn in under a hedge or anywhere,' Ex skipper, n., 1. Cf. hedge squire and:

*skipper-bird. Mid-C. 19-20 c., as in: Mayhew, 1851, 'The best places in England for skipper-birds (parties that never go to lodging-houses, but to barns or outhouses, sometimes without a blanket)'.
or 'how much?' Vbl.n., skollering. (Applied esp. to illicit traffic in food and rum between our men and the natives.)

skoosh or skosh. A sweetheart; military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Possibly cognate with dial. scouse, scouse, etc., to frolic.

skoot. See scoot.—skowbanker. See scowbanker.—skower. See scour.

skran. See scan.


skreigh. See screech.

skrim. See scrim.—skrimmage. See scrimmage.

skrimp. See scrimp, scroop or scrump, v.i. and v.t. To steal apples: dial. and provincial s.: late C. 19–20.

In James Spenser, Limy Breaks In, 1934, it appears as Birmingham s. (C. 20) in the gen. sense: to rob orchards. Cognate with scrounge, q.v.—2. Hence, to 'scrounge': Regular Army: late C. 19–20.

skrimshank. See scrimshank.—er.—skrip. A c. spelling of scrip, q.v.

skrouge. See scrouge, scroudige. See scrouge, v.—skrum.


skuddick. See scuddick.—skug. See scug.

skulker. 'A soldier who by feigned sickness, or other pretences evades his duty, a sailor who keeps below in time of danger; in the civil line, one who keeps out of the way, when any work is to be done,' Grose, 1st ed.: 1785: coll. till ca. 1830, then S.E.

skull; skull-race, -thatcher. See scull, etc.

Skull and Crossbones, the. The 17th Lancers: military: mid-C. 19–20; ob. Ex the regimental badge. Also Bingham's Danseys, (the) Death or Glory Boys, (the) Gentlemen Dragoons, and (the) Horse Marines.

skrullbanker. See scowbanker.


skrub. See scoot.


sky, v. To throw up into the air: esp. sky a copper, as in the earliest record: 1805, Maria Edgeworth.—2. Hence, with pun on blue (v.), to spend freely till one's money is gone: from ca. 1885. 'Pompey Marshall, 'With the takings safely skyed.' Ob.—3. To throw away; at foot: 'ball, to charge or knock down: Harrow: from ca. 1890. F. & H. 1903; ob. Cf. if pugs had wings ... See esp. Apperson, who quotes Heywood (1546), Randolph (1638), Bailey (1721), Spurgeon (1869), G. B. Shaw (1914), and others.

*sky-farmer. A beggar who, equipped with false passes and other papers, wanders about the country as though in distress from losses caused by fire, hurricane, or flood, or by disease among his cattle: c.: 1763, John Foulter. > by 1850. As Grose, 1st ed., suggests, either because he pretended to come from the Isle of Skye or because his farm was 'in the skies'.


sky-high. Very high indeed: coll.: 1818 (Lady Morgan), adv.: 1840, adj. O.E.D.

sky-lantern. The moon: coll.: ca. 1840–70. Moncrieff, 1843.


sky ... limit. See limit, the sky is one's.

sky-line. The top row of pictures at an exhibition: artistic coll. (—1911). Webster. Suggested by skied, q.v.

sky-pariour. A garage: 1775, Grose: coll. >, ca. 1840, S.E. Also (in Baumann) sky-lodging: lower classes' coll. ( —1887); slightly ob.


sky the towel. To give in, yield;' boxes' (from ca. 1890) >, by 1910, soldiers' coll. F. & Gibbons.

sky the wip. A variant of rag, sky the, q.v. (Australian: C. J. Dennis.)

sky-topper. A very high person or thing (e.g. house): coll. ( —1923). Manchon. A variant of sky-scraper.
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slang. A special vocabulary (e.g. cant) of low, illiterate, or disreputable persons; a low, illiterate language: 1756, Toldery (O.E.D.): c. >, ca. 1780, s. >, ca. 1820, coll. >, ca. 1850, S.E. Likewise, the senses 'jargon' (1802), 'illegitimate colloquial speech', i.e. what now we ordinarily understand by 'slang' (1818), and 'impertinence' or 'abuse' (1825), began as s. and > S.E. only ca. 1860. (Earliest dates: O.E.D.) The etymology is a puzzle: the O.E.D. hazards none; Bradley, Weekley, Wyld consider that cognates are afforded by Norwegian slenja-keften, to sling the jaw, to abuse, and by several other Norwegian forms in -slen; that slang is ultimately from sling there can be little doubt,—cf. slang the mauleys, slang language and sling the bat, qq.v.; that it is an archaic perversion of Fr. langue is very improbable though not impossible. (See esp. the author's Slang To-Day and Yesterday, revised edition, 1935, at pp. 1–3.) All the following senses, except the last two, derive ultimately or sense 1-2: a Non-sense; humbug: ca. 1760–90. Foote, 1762. A line of work; a 'lay' or 'lurk': c. of ca. 1788–1800. G. Parker.—4. A warrant or a licence, esp. a hawkers': from ca. 1810: c. >, ca. 1850, s. Vaux; H., 3rd ed.—5. A travelling show: showmen's (–1869). H., 1st ed. Ob.—6. Hence, a performance or 'house' in a show, e.g. a circus: showmen's: 1861, Mayhew. Cf. slang-cove and -coll.—7. (Gen. in pl.) A short measure or weight: London, mostly coastermongers': 1861, Mayhew.—8. (Ex Ger. o. schlange, a watch-chain, or Dutch slang, a snake: O.E.D.) A watch-chain; any chain: c. of: from ca. 1810. Vaux.—9. See slangs, 1.

slang, adj. Slangy: 1768: c. >, ca. 1780, s. >, ca. 1830, coll. >, ca. 1850, S.E. Ex slang, n., 1.—2. (Of persons or tone.) Rakish, impertinent: ca. 1818–70: s. > coll. Ex sense 1.—3. (Of dress.) Loud; extravagant: coll.: ca. 1830–70. 4. (Of measures, weights.) Short, defective; coasters': 1812, Vaux.—5. Hence, adv.: as in Mayhew, 1851, 'He could always "work slang" with a true measure,' O.E.D.; ob.

slang, v.l. To remain in debt: University s. of ca. 1770–1800. See (?) Smeaton Oliphant (A propos...
SLANG, BOY OF THE

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*slang, boy of the.* A C.19 variant of slang-boy, q.v.

*slang, on or upon the.* At one’s own line of work: c. of ca. 1788–1850. G. Parker.


slang-cove, -cull. A showman: cull, c. or showmen’s s. of ca. 1788–1850 (G. Parker, 1879); cove, showmen’s s. of mid-C.19–20 (Mayhew, 1851).

*slang-dipper; -dropper. A slang-dipper is ‘one who gilds metal chains for the purpose of selling them as gold.’ A slang-dropper is the man ‘who dispenses of them, as he usually does by so pretending to pick [one] up in the street under the nose of his victim, [whom] he immediately asks to put a value on it’: o. (—1835). David Hume. See slang, n., 8.

slang it. To use false weights: low: mid-C.19–


slang the mauleys. To shake hands (lit., slang the mauleys): late C.18–20: low London. G. Parker, 1871. Of mauley (q.v.), the hand, the dial form is mauley: E.D.I.

slang-tree. A stage; a trapeze: resp. itinerant actors’ and showmen’s: mid-C.19–20. Ex slang, a travelling show. Cf. slang-cove and:

slang-tree, climb (up) the. To perform; make an exhibition of oneself: showmen’s: resp. mid-C.19–20 and late C.19–20.

[slang-whang, -er, -ery, -ing. Prob., as O.E.D. indicates, always S.E.]


slang-due concerned, there has or have been. A low London c.p. uttered by one who suspects that he has been curtailed of his just portion or right: ca. 1810–50. Vaux.


—2. the slangs. A collection of travelling shows; the travelling showman’s world or profession: showmen’s: prob. from ca. 1850, though spp. the first record occurs in T. Hood the Younger’s _Comic Annual_, 1888 (p. 52). Ex slang, a travelling show.

slangular. Belonging to, characteristic of, slang (highly colloquial speech): jocular S.E. verging on coll.: 1853, Dickens. On angular. (Likewise, slanguage, which, however, is definitely, S.E.: 1899. Cf. Slango-Saxon, from ca. 1820: a word condensatory of the slangy tendency of English.)

slangy, flashy or pretentious (ca. 1850–90), and (of dress) loud, vulgar (ca. 1890–1900), may orig. have been coll. Cf. slang, adj., 2, 3.

slant. A chance; an opportunity (e.g. of going somewhere): 1837, _Fraser’s Magazine_. ‘With the determination of playing them a slippery trick the very first slant I had,’ O.E.D. Ex nautical slant, a slight breeze, a favourable wind, a period of windiness.—2. A plan designed to ensure a particular and favourable result (or scene of operations for that result): Australian: 1897, F. Warang; slightly ob. (O.E.D.):—3. A sidelong (on) or a different or a truly characteristic opinion (on) or reaction: U.S., anglicised ca. 1930. Via angle (on).

*slant, v. To run away: o.: from ca. 1899. Ex dial. (Graham, 1896), to move away, itself ex slant, to move, travel, obliquely (O.E.D., § 3, a).

—2. (V.i.) to exaggerate: from ca. 1900; ob. Prob. ex slant, ‘to diverge from a direct course.’


—2. Make-up: theatrical: 1860, H., 2nd ed.; ob. ‘Pomme’s Marshall, 1897, ‘You could just distinguish faintly [That she favoured the individual of slap.’ Perhaps ex the dial. version of slap; perhaps, however, as Ware suggests, ex ‘its being literally and literally slapped on.’

slap, v. Gen. slap along. To move, walk, quickly: from ca. 1825: coll. and (in C.20, nothing but) dial. † ex slap, i.e. bang, a door.

slap, adj. Excellent; first-rate; in style: from ca. 1850; ob. Mayhew, 1861, ‘People’s got proud now . . . and must have everything slap.’ Abbr. slap-up.

SLAP AT, HAVE A

To engage in a fight with; to attempt; coll.: late C.19–20.

slap-bang, whether adj., adv., or n. (except in its c. sense), is almost certainly S.E.; but slap-bang shop, which 'lived' ca. 1780–1850, is prob.—until C.19, at least—coll., while its abbr., slap-bang (in 'Ducange Anglicus'), is c. In 1785, Grose, who gives a secondary sense that is indubitably coll. or even, e.g. defined it thus: 'Slap-bang shop, a petty cook's shop where there is no credit given, but what is had must be paid down with the ready'—i.e. with cash—slap-bang, i.e. immediately. This is a common appellation for a night cellar frequented by thieves, and sometimes for a stage coach or caravan:' with the latter, cf. the later, long ↑, slap-bang coach.

slap down and slap off: see slap, adv., i and (a. d. only) 2.

slap-up, adj. Excellent; superior, first-rate; grand: 1823, Bee, who says that it is Northern but does not distinguish between persons and things; 1827, The Sporting Magazine, 'That slap-up work, The Sporting Magazine' (O.E.D.); of persons, certainly in 1826, 'slap-up swell' (Thackeray, 1840, has 'slap-up acquaintances')—both, s. >, ca. 1860, coll.; in England, ob. since ca. 1905. Or bang-up, q.v.

*slap. An outside coat-pocket: c. (—1839). Brandon; H., 1st ed. Abbr. slap pocket. Ex slap, a vertical slit for the exposition of the lining or an undergarment of a contrasting or, at the least, different colour.

*slap, v.i. To cut a person across the face with a razor: c. (—1933). Esp. as vbl.n. Charles E. Leach, On Top of the Underworld.—2. V.t. To deprive (an accomplice) of his share: c. (—1933). Ibid. Cf. carve up, q.v.

slasher. Any person or thing exceptional, esp. if exceptionally severe: from ca. 1820: coll. Cf. ripper, q.v.—2. A man in charge of a 'flee' of steam or petrol locomotives: Public Works (—1856).

Slashing. The 28th Regiment of Foot (now the Gloucestershire Regiment); military: during and since the American War of Independence. James, Military Dict., 1802. Ex an attack delivered, at the Battle of White Plains in 1776, with their short swords: F. & Gibbons. Also the Old Broges and the Right-Abouts.


slashing, adv. Very; brilliantly: coll.: from 1890's; slightly ob. F. & H., 1903, 'A slashing fine woman; a slashing good race; and so forth.' Ex slashing, adj.


slate. To criticize severely: coll.: 1848, Alaric Watts; Blackmore; Saintbury; Kipling; Kernahan. Ex.—2. To abuse; reprimand or scold severely: 1840: s. (orig. political) >, ca. 1870, coll. Ex.—3. To thrust; beat severely: ca. 1825–70, then very rare: app. orig. Anglo-Irish. If this sense is earlier than the next but one, then it may well derive ex the Scottish and Northern slat, 'to bait, assail, or drive, with dogs,' esp. since this hunting term was used fig. at least as early as 1755.—4. Hence, as a military coll., to punish (the enemy) severely: 1854, in the Crimea; ob. by 1914,—for instance, never heard it used during the G.W.,—and by 1930 virtually ↑.—5. (Perhaps the originating sense; presumably ex covering a roof with slates.) To 'bonnet,' knock his hat over the eyes of (a person): 1825, Westmacott; H., 3rd ed. Ob. by 1890, ↑ by 1930. As v.i. in form, fly a tile.—6. (Perhaps ex the military sense.) To bet heavily against (a horse, a human competitor): sporting: from early 1870's; slightly ob. H., 5th ed. (1874) —7. In medical s., gen. in the passive, to prophyse the death of (a patient): late C.19–20. Ware. Ex putting his name on a slate: see the author's Slan'g. (For all except the last two senses, dates from O.E.D.)

slate, on the. 'Written up against you': lower classes' coll.: late C.19–20. Ware.

slate loose or off, have a. To be mentally deficient: s. >, ca. 1900, coll.: loose, 1860, H., 2nd ed.; off, 1897, Rhoda Broughton (O.E.D.). The latter, ob. Cf. shingle short and tile loose, q.v., and dial. have a slate slipped.

slated, p.p.l.adj. See slate, v., esp. in senses 1, 2. Cf. slating.—slated, be. To be expected to die. See slate, v., last sense.

[slater, a wood-house, is, in New South Wales, ess coll. than a survival ex English dial.]


slating, vbl.n. See slate, v., esp. in senses 1, 2, 4. —2. Adj. little used.

slats. The riles: U.S., whence Australian (—1918) and Canadian. C. J. Dennis; John Beams. Ex shape.

slaughter. A wholesale dismissal of employees: lower classes' (—1935). Also a work-out.

*slaughter-house. A gaming-house where men are employed to pretend to be playing for high stakes: sharpeners' c.: 1809 (O.E.D.); ob.—2. A shop where, at extremely low prices, goods are bought from small manufacturers (glad of a large turn-over even at a very small profit): 1861, Mayhew. One would, if it were not for the libel laws, name several firms that buy thus. Cf. slaughterer.—3. A factory paying miserable wages: operatives' (—1887). Baumann.—4. The Surrey Sessions House: c. (—1909). Ware.—5. 'A particularly hard sailing ship with a brutal afterguard': nautical: late C.19–20; slightly ob. Bowen.

slaughterer. A vendor buying very cheaply from small manufacturers: 1851, Mayhew. Cf. slaughter-house, 2.—2. 'A buyer for re-manufac-

ure for books, pulp, cloth for shoddy, &c; late C.19–20 commercial. F. & H.

slave-driver. A stern taskmaster or master: coll.: from ca. 1840.

slave one's life (coll.) or guts (low coll.). To work extremely hard: late C. 19—20. Manchon.

slaver. 'One engaged in the "white slave traffic"'; C. J. Dennis: Australian: C. 20.


slay. At Shrewsbury School, from ca. 1890, as in Desmond Coke, The Bending of a Twig, 1906; "Slays" are spreades [feast], ambitious beyond all imagining, ordered from the Shop.' Cf. the adj. killing.

*sleek-and-slum shop. 'A public house or tavern where single men and their wives resort,' Boe: o. of ca. 1820-90. See slum, a room.

*sleek wife. A silk handkerchief: o. (—1823); † by 1920. Egan's Grose.

[sleep, put to. To kill: a euphemism that is, rather, familiar S.E. than coll.]

sleep-drunk. Very drowsy; 'muzzy': coll.: from ca. 1870; ob. Ex heavy awaking.

sleep on bones. (Of children) to sleep in the nurse's lap: coll.: C. 19—20; ob.

*sleep with Mrs Green. To sleep in the open: New Zealand tramps': o. (—1932). I.e. on the ground grass. Cf. Star Hotel.


sleeping near a crack, (I, he, or you) must have been. A c.p. reply to an inquiry as to how a horse has caught a cold: lower and lower-middle classes': late C. 19—20. (Ernest Raymond, Mary Leith, 1931.) An innuendo in respect of the anatomical crack.


Grose, 2nd ed., has this punning c.p.: the cloth of your coat must be extremely sleepy; for it has not had a nap this long time: late C. 18—early 19. Whence sleepless hat, q.v.; cf. wide-awake.—2. Repaid, recompensed: low (—1923). Manchon.

Sleepy Queens, the. The 2nd Foot Regiment (ca. 1800-1801, the Queen's Royal Regiment): military: from ca. 1850; very ob.


slice. In the middle as a cow in the waist, as.

Very fat: C. 17—20 (ob.): coll. till C. 19, then dial. Burton, 1621; Fuller, 1732; Evans, Leicestershire Words, 1881. Apperson.

sleap. See sep.

slept in (he, she, etc.). A Glasgow c.p. (—1934) = too late; not quick enough.


Slice. The same as Silly Billy, 3—2. (slice.) A slice of bread and butter: coll.: C. 20. (Anon., 'Down and Out' in The Week-End Review, Nov. 18, 1933.)

slices, take a. 'To intrigue, particularly with a married woman, because a slice of [sic] a cut loaf is not missed,' Grove, 2nd ed.: coll.: mid-C. 18—mid-19. Ex the C. 17—20 proverbial it is safe taking a slice (in C. 18—19, occ. slice) of a cut loaf, as in Shakespear's Titus Andronicus. Apperson.


slice off. To settle part of (an old scorn): military (—1909); very ob. Ware.


*slick-a-dee. A pocket-book: Scots c. (—1839); ob. Brandon; H., 1st ed. On dee, the same.

*slid! Coll. abbr. God's lid, a late C. 16—17 petty oath. O.E.D.

slide. (Esp. in the imperative.) To desamp: coll.: U.S. (—1859) anglicised ca. 1800. Whiteing, 1899, 'Cheese it, an' slide.' Occ. slide out. Ex slide, to move silently, stealthily.

slide up the board or the straight, do a. (Of a man) tocott: low: from ca. 1870. Cf. rush up the straight.

slider. An ice-cream wafer: Glasgow (—1934).

Alastair Baxter.


*slife! God's life!: C. 17—18 coll. Preserved only in period plays and Wardour Street novels. By abbr. Cf. *slid, q.v., and:


*slight! God's light!: a late C. 16—17 oath: trivial coll. O.E.D.


sligo, tip (someone) the. To warn by winking; wink at: 1775, S. J. Pratt, 'I tips Slippam the eligo, and nudge the elbow of Truggie, as much as to say, ... I have him in view,' O.E.D. Prob. on sly: o is a common s. suffix.

slim. Rum (the drink): o.: 1769, G. Parker; † by 1850. † runs perverted.

and twug him.'—4. Hence, to make 'drops' at racquets: Harrow: from ca. 1900.

_slima, do a._ See _slime, 2._

_slimy._ Decoitful; treacherous: coll.: C. 20.

Ex _slimy._ vile.

_sling._ A draught of, 'pull at a drink, bottle: 1788 (O.E.D.); 't by 1803, prob. by 1800, perhaps (cf. W.) by 1830. Cf. goy.

_sling._ To utter a coll.: C. 15–20. (O.E.D.)

See _sling language_ and cf. sense 3. 2. To distribute or dispense: a. (—1860) >, ca. 1890, coll. H., 2nd ed., 'Sling, to pass from one person to another.'—3. Hence, to give (as in 'Sling us a tanner'): low (—1887) >, by 1910, low coll. Baumann.—4. To do easily: from ca. 1864: s. >, ca. 1900, coll. Mainly in _slang ink_, etc.—5. To use (e.g. _slang_); relate (a story): from ca. 1880: s. >, ca. 1910, coll. Mrs Lynn Linton, 'I am awfully sorry if I sling you any alang,' O.E.D. See _slang a yard_ and _sling_ _sling._—6. To abandon: C. 20: mostly Australian. H. Lawson, 1902, 'Just you sling it [liquor] for a year,' O.E.D.—7. For c. usage, see _sling one's hook, 2, and _sling the smash._


_sling I, let her._ See _sling yourself!_

_sling a book, poem, an article._ To write one: from ca. 1870: s. >, 1900, coll. Cf. _slang ink_, q.v.

_sling a cat._ To vomit: low: mid-C. 19–20; ob. Cf. cat, jerk the.

_sling a daddle._ To shake hands: low: from ca. 1870. Cf. _sling the maulseyes._

_sling a foot._ To dance: coll. from ca. 1860; ob. _sling a hat._ To wave one's hat in applause: coll. from 1830; ob.

_sling a nasty part._ To act a part so well that it would be hard to rival it: orig. and mainly theatrical: from ca. 1860. Ex:

_sling (or jerk) a part._ To undertake, to play, a role: theatrical: from ca. 1880.

_sling a pen._ See _slang ink._

_sling a pot._ To drink (liquor): from ca. 1870: coll. rather than s.

_sling a singer._ To give a kiss; hence, to kiss: low (—1900). Ware. Ex _sling_ v., 3 (q.v.) and _slobber_, which very low s. for a kiss, dates from late C. 19.

_sling a snot._ To blow one's nose with one's fingers: low: from ca. 1860. Also, from ca. 1870, simply _sling (v.i.)_ ob. H., 5th ed.

_sling a tinkler._ To ring a bell: from ca. 1870; ob.

_sling a yarn._ To relate a story: C. 20: s. >, ca. 1930, coll. Cf. _slang language_, q.v.—2. Hence, to tell a lie: 1904, _The Strand Magazine_, March, 'Maybe you think I am just slingling you a yarn,' O.E.D.

_sling about, v.i._ To idle; to loaf: from ca. 1870; in C. 20, coll.

_sling ink._ oc. _sling a pen._ To write: from ca. 1864: s >, ca. 1900, coll. Orig. U.S. and app. coined by Artemus Ward.

_sling words._ To talk: mid-C. 19–20; s., >, ca. 1900, coll. Cf. _sling, v.i., slang a yarn, 1, and _sling the bat._


_sling off, v.i._ To utter abuse or cheek or impertinence.—2. V.t. with at, to give cheek to, to jeer at, to taunt. Both: late C. 19–20. See _Slang_, 2–3.

_sling (a person) one in the eye._ To punch one in the eye, gen. with the implication of blackening it: 1898, Whitening.

_sling one's body._ To dance vigorously: London lower class(es) (—1909). Ware. To _sling_ it about.

_sling one's Daniel; _sling one's hook._ To make off; _decamp: Daniel, 1873, J. Greenwood: hook, 1873 or 1874 (H., 5th ed.). The origin of neither is clear; the latter may be nautical, though Ware derives it from mining-procedure. Cf. _sling yourself!_ _sling one's hammock._ To get used to a new ship: naval coll.: late C. 19–20. Bowen.

_sling one's hook._ See _sling one's Daniel._—2. In c., to pick pockets: from the 1870's. Anon., 1877, _Five Years' Penal Servitude_. O.E.D.

_sling one's jelly or juice._ To masturbate: low: from ca. 1870.

_sling one's service about._ To boast; military coll.: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Lit., to talk much of one's length of service.


_sling round on the loose._ To act recklessly: from ca. 1875; in C. 20, coll. Possibly an elaboration of _sling about, q.v._

_sling (a person) slang._ To abuse, scold violently: from ca. 1880: s. >, ca. 1910, coll. See _sling, v._, 5.

_sling the bat._ To speak the vernacular (esp. of the foreign country, orig. India, where one happens to be): military: late C. 19–20. Kipling, 1892. See bat.

_sling the boos._ To stand treat: low: from ca. 1860. Cf. _sling, v._, 2.

_sling the hatchet._ To talk pleasantly: military: late C. 19–20. F. & Gibbons.—2. See _hatchet, slang._

_sling the language._ To swear fluently: lower class(es) (—1903); ob.—2. To speak a foreign language: military: from 1915. Cf. _sling the bat._

_sling the lead._ See _lead, slang._

_sling the smash._ To smuggle tobacco to prisoners: c. from the 1870's. Anon., 1877, _Five Years' Penal Servitude_. O.E.D. Cf. _sling, v._, 2.

_sling type._ To set type: printers' a. (—1887) >, by 1910, coll.; ob. Baumann.

_sling words._ See _slang language_ and contrast _slang the language_, 2.

_sling yourself! or let her sling!_ Bestir yourself! get a move on! low: from ca. 1880; the former is very ob. Cf. _sling one's Daniel._


_slink._ A sneak, skulkier, cheat: dial (1824) >, ca. 1830, coll. _The Examiner, 1830, 'Such a d—d slink,' O.E.D._ Ex _slink_, an abortive calf, etc.


Same origin as the preceding.

slip, v.t.; gen. be slipping. To weaken, physically; go downhill, fig.; lose grip, ground, status, etc. ; coll. : C. 20. Ex one's foot slipping.

slip at, let. To rush violently at a person and then assault him vigorously: coll. (—1860). H., 2nd ed. Cf.:

slip into. To begin punching (a person) vigorously, gen. with the connotation that the person 'slipped into' receives a sound beating: low coll. (—1860). H., 2nd ed. Cf. preceding entry.—2. To set about a thing, a task, with a will, vigorously: low coll. (—1887). Baumann.

slip it across or over (a person) To hoodwink; to beseal: from ca. 1912. B. & P.

slip off the hooks. See hooks.

slip one's breath, cable, wind. To die: resp. 1810, Wolcot (O.E.D.); 1751, Smollett, 'I told him [a doctor] as how I could slip my cable without direction or assistance'; 1772, Bridges. Orig. nautical s.; by mid-C. 10. gen. coll. In post-G.W. days, slip one's breath and wind are never heard; they > † f. 1910.


slip up. To swindle; to disappoint: Australian; 1890, The Melbourne Argus, Aug. 9. 'I'd only be slipped up if I trusted to them,' O.E.D. Ex slip, to elude, evade, stealthily; give the slip to.—2. slip a girl up, to render her pregnant unexpectedly or by trickery: lower classes (—1923). Manchon.—3. v.i. To make a mistake, to fail: mid-C. 19–20; U.S. anglicised ca. 1910 as a coll. variant of make a slip. O.E.D.; Lyell.


*slippery. Soap: c. (—1839); slightly ob. Brandon.

slippery, adj. Quick: coll.: late C. 19–20. Prob ex:

slippery. Quick; spry, nimble: dial. (—1847) >, ca. 1890, coll. Esp. look slippery (Runciman, 1885) and be slippery (Rolf Boldrewood, 1889). Coulson Kermahan, 1902; 'We must look slippery about it . . . It's lucky I haven't far to go.' Ex slippery = slipperiness in its fig. as well as lit. senses. O.E.D.


slither, v.i. To hurry (away): low (—1889).

Barrière & Leland. Ex slither, to slide: cf. slide, q.v. Imm. ex dial. : E.D.D.

sloam. To hamper, obstruct, baulk; lower classes: 1890 only. Ex jockey Sloan's trick—learned from Archer—of slanting his horse across the track and thus obstructing the other riders. Ware.

slobber. Ink badly distributed; printers' coll. : ca. 1870.—2. Slobbering a slobber.

slof-feeder. A tea-spoon: low († orig. o.): from ca. 1810. Vaux. Ex slop(e)s. tea.

slof-made. Disjointed: Australian coll. (— 1906); very ob. Ware. Presumably ex slopily made.


slof trade. Trade that is 'no class': tailors' coll. (mid-C. 19–20).

*slop-tubs. Tea-things: o. >, ca. 1870, low: from ca. 1820; or. Egan's Grove. Cf. slop-feeder. slop. A running-away, make-off, escape: coll.: U.S. (— 1859) anglicised ca. 1880. Esp. do a slop: coll. and dial.: from ca. 1890. Ex: slop, v. To make off; run away, decamp: coll.: orig. (1890) U.S., anglicised ca. 1897 (see 'Ducange Anglicus'). Song-writer Vance; 'Pomes' Marshall. Either ex let's lope / As H. 1st ed., proposes, or ex slop, to move obliquely.—2. With adv., esp. off (1844, Haliburton) and coo. home(ward), the latter in Mayde Robin, 1851: coll.: orig. U.S., anglicised by 1860.—3. (Ex sense 1.) 'To go loiteringly or saunteringly,' 1851. S.O.D.—4. (Likewise ex sense 1.) V.t., to leave (lodgings) without paying (1808 (O.E.D.). Ex slop, 1, influenced by dial. slope, to trick, cheat. O.E.D.—5. In e. of early C. 17 (e.g., Bowland, 1610), to lie down to sleep; to sleep. (Cf. slof, v.t., to bend down.) It replaced couch a hog's head.

slof, do a. See slop, n.


sloping billet. A comfortable job for a married naval man: naval: C. 20. Bowen. I.e. with many opportunities to be ashore with one's family: † ex sloping roofs.


slopping-up. A drinking bout: low: from ca. 1870; ob.


slops, tea still in the chest, is to be considered either s. or low coll. (— 1859). H., 1st ed. Ex slops, (weak) tea as beverage.—2 A synonym of ales, q.v.—3. Subjects other than Classics or Mathematics: Cambridge University (— 1923). Manchon.


slosh, v.t., to hit, esp. resoundingly: from not later than 1915. E. M. Forster, in *Time and Tide*, June 16, 1934, 'Sir Oswald Mosley ... sends them [his followers] to slosh the Reds.' Prob. ex S.E. slosh, esp. last boot in mud.—influenced by dial. slowsh, v.t., to alnoe, via U.S. slosh around, explained by *Major Jack Downing* in 1882 as 'jes goin rite through a crowd, an movin your swath, hitten rite an left everybody you meet' (Thorton). — around. To strut about; take one's 'swanky' ease: lower classes' (— 1923). Manchon. Cf. preceding.

slother. A school boarding-house assistant: Cheltenham College: late C. 19–20; † ex U.S. slosh, to move aimlessly about.


sloshing. The vbln. of slosh, v.; esp. a thrashing: from ca. 1911, Lyell.


slour. To lock (up); fasten: o. (— 1812); ob. by 1890, virtually † by 1930. Vaux; Ainsworth; H., 3rd ed., classifies it as prison o. † origin unless perchance a perversion of lower.—2. Also, to button (up) a garment: esp. in slourred hester, an inside pocket buttoned up; 1812, Vaux; slour up; the simple v. is unrecorded before 1834 in Ainsworth's *Rookwood*.

slourred is a variant (— 1923) for slowed, q.v. Manchon.—2. See slour, 2.

slow. Old-fashioned; behind the times: 1827, *The Sporting Times*, 'Long courtships are ... voted slow, O.E.D. (The Winchester sense 'ignorant of Winchester notions,' dating from ca. 1850, is a variant.)—2. Hence, of things) tedious, dull, boring: coll. 1841, Lever (O.E.D.)—3. (Of persons) hundrum; dull, spiritless: 1841, Lever (O.E.D.)—4. Hence, sexually timid: late C. 19–20. 'If there's anything a woman hates, it's a slow man': heard by the author late in 1914, the apestor being a virtuous, lively and intelligent middle-aged woman, speaking en toute bien, tout honneur.

slow as molasses in winter. See molasses.

sloved. Imprisoned; in prison: o. (— 1859); ob. by 1890, † by 1920. H., 1st ed. Ex slow, retard, but perhaps influenced by slour, 1, q.v.: cf. late C. 19–20 slover, to check.

slowpoke. A dull or (e.g. socially or sexually) slow person: Australian: C. 20. Christina Stead, *Seven Poor Men of Sydney*, 1934. Perhaps a corruption of slowcoach.


slumberdegullion. A dirty and/or slobering fellow: a sloven ne'er-do-well: from ca. 1615; ob. Perhaps orig. coll., which (witness B.E. and Grose, who wrongly spells it slubber de gullion) it may have remained till C. 19. On sbber (later slober); of *lutteredamen*; W.

'snack.' See 'break.'

'swind.' A C. 17–18 oath: coll. variant of *blood* / Jonson, *Fielding*, O.E.D.

slewined. See slowed.

sloong. An unascertained kind of strong liquor: 1750, Tolderry, 'Tape, glim, rushlight, white port, rasher of bacon, gunpowder; sloog, wild-fire, knock
sluice. The female pudend; low coll. : late C. 17-20; ob. Prob. ex sluice, a channel, influenced by sluice, a gap; but perhaps imm. ex.: sluice-house. The mouth: low: 1840, Egan; very ob. Cf. sluice, 2.


slum. To talk nonsense; speak cant: c. of ca. 1820-80. Cf. slum, n. 2.—. 2. hence, v.t., to trick, cheat, swindle: c. (—1850). H., 1st ed., in variant form, to slum a porter, 'to cheat on the sky, to the eye, swindle.', which is probably since late C. 19—. 3. hence, v.t., to hide; to pass to a confederate: c. (—1874). Implied in H., 5th ed. though already implied in slumming, 1, q.v.—. V.t., to hide: c. (—1932). Manchen.—. 5. v.t., to do hurriedly and/or carelessly: coll. (1865) —, ca. 1900, S.E. (O.E.D.). Perhaps suggested by slum (a door), influenced by slum, a poverty-stricken neighbourhood.—. V.i., to enter, or haunt, slums for illegal or rather for illicit or immoral purposes: University s. : Oxford, ca. 1860; Cambridge, ca. 1864 (H., 3rd ed.) ; ob. by 1910, virtually — by 1935.—. 7. Hence, to keep to back streets in order to avoid observation, Barrere & Leland: University s. (—1897); ob.—. 2. hence, from ca. 1839, to keep in the background: gen. coll. : ob.—. 9. V.i., to act: low theatrical: from ca. 1870; ob. Cf. slumming, 2.


slum-fake. The coffin in a Punch and Judy show: showmen: from ca. 1860. Cf. slum, the call, and slumming, 2.

slum-scribbler. One who employs penmanship for illicit ends, e.g. for begging-letters: c. (—1861). Mayhew.

slum shop, sleek-and-. See sleek-and-slum shop. slumver in. Public Schools, s. of late C. 19-20, as in P. G. Wodehouse, Tales of St Austin's, 1903, 'To slumber in is to stay in the house during school on a pretence of illness.'

slum-suit. Pyjamas: derivative: from ca. 1924. Ex dраФers'.

slumgullion. 'Any cheap, nasty, wasty beverage,' H., 5th ed.: from ca. 1870; ob. Perhaps a fantasy on slab (= slob) and the gullion of slumber-degullion (cf. slobgullion, q.v.) certainly fanciful. (As a wasty stew or hush, it is U.S.)

slumguzzle, v.t. To deceive: anglicised ca. 1910. Ex U.S.

slumminy. Gibberish; 'ziph': ca. 1820-50; low a., perhaps orig. c. 'Jon Bee', 1823, 'Dutch Sam excoiled in slumminy—Willus youvus givibus glasses gibusus'.


slummock, improperly -ock (v.t. and i.). To clean carelessly, imperfectly; to dust: coll. (—1928). Manchen. A back-formation from S.E. slummocky, slovenly.


slung on hands and knees. Dismissed: tailors: from ca. 1870; ob.


slushy. A ship's cook: nautical coll. (—1859). H., 1st ed. Ex slush, refuse fat of boiled meat. Cf. slush, 1.—2. Hence, influenced by slusher (q.v.), a cook's assistant at a shaving: Australian coll.: 1890, A. B. Patterson, in The Man from Snowy River, 'The tarboy, the cook, and the slushy ... with the rest of the shearing hands,' Morris. In C. 20, slushy is much more gen. than slusher (sense 1).


sly. Illegal, illicit: earliest and mainly in sly grog, Australian a., 1844 (O.E.D.), —sly grog-selling, seller, shop. Mayhew, 1851, 'sly trade.' Ex sly, secret, stealthy. Cf. sly. on the, and sly. run, q.v. sly, on or upon the. (Private,ly, secretly,ly): 1812, Vaux: coll. >, ca. 1870, S.E. Mayhew, 1851, 'Ladies that liked a drop on the sly,' O.E.D.

sly, run. To escape: low s. (? c.): late C. 18–early 19. F. & H., whose quotation long anticipates the sporting sense: (of a dog) to run cunningly.

sly-bots; ca. 1730–1830, occ. sly-bott. A sly or crafty person: coll.: ca. 1880, Lord Guilford was thus nicknamed (North, Lives of the Norths, p. 169). Esp. —see S.E. and Grose—a person seemingly simple, actually subtle or shrewd. In C. 19–20, often jocular and hardily if at all pejorative. Cf. sly-cap, a sly or a cunning man (Otway, 1861), and the much more gen. smooth-bots, late C. 16–early 18. sly grog. See sly.—sma'am. A variant, mainly dial. of smarm, q.v.


smack. A liking or fancy: tailors' coll.: from ca. 1870. 'He had a real smack for the old 'un,' F. & H. Cf. C. 14–mid-17 S.E. smack, enjoyment, inclination (for a place).—2. A 'go': coll. : 1859, The Pall Mall Gazette, 'I am longing to have a smack at these Matabele,' O.E.D.—3. Hence, an attempt (at): coll. >. C. 19–20. (Extant in dial.)

smack, at. At the first attempt; (all) at the one time: coll.: late C. 19–20. Ex senses 3, 2 of the preceding.

smack at, have a. See smack, n. 2.


smacked up, be. To come off worst in a fight of any kind: New Zealanders': C. 20.—2. Hence, in G.W., to be wounded: id. Also be smacked.

smacker. A peso: South American English: late C. 19–20. C. W. Thurlow Craig, Paraguayam Interlude, 1935, "I will give you a thousand beautiful smackers for your church ... 'Mao took out a thousand peso bill and handed it to me,' —2. £1, note or coin: Australian: from ca. 1929. Christina Stead, Seven Poor Men of Sydney, 1934.

smacker, (go down) with a. (To fall) smack': lower classes' coll. (—1887). Baumann.


small, n. See smalls, 2.—small, sing. See sing small.

small and early: (or hyphenated). An evening party, few-personed and early-departing: 1880, Lord Beaconsfield (O.E.D.): coll. till C. 20, then S.E.; slightly ob. Aduninated in Dickens, 1865, 'Mrs Podemap added a small and early evening to the dinner.'


small beer of, think. (Gen. with no.) To have a low opinion of (persons, mostly oneself): coll.: 1825, Westmacott (O.E.D.); Thackeray; Lytton. Ex small, i.e. weak or inferior, beer. Also small coals and small things, q.v.; cf. potatoes, small, q.v.

small cap O. A second-in-command: an under overseer: printers: from ca. 1870; ob. Lit., a small capital letter O, i.e. a capital in a word all of equal-sized capitals, as OVERSEER.

small cheque. A dram; a (small) drink: nautical: from ca. 1880; ob. Cf. knock down a cheque, spend all in drink: see knock down ... small coals ... A ca. 1860–90 variant of small beer ... , q.v. H. 2nd ed.


small fry. See fry.


small-parter. A player of small parts: theatrical coll. : C. 20. (The Passing Show, June 24, 1933.)


small potatoes. See potatoes.

small things of, think. A variant of small beer ... , q.v.; coll. : 1902, The Pall Mall Gazette, Sept. 19, 'Vogler'—the South African cricketer (googly bowler)— had reason to think no small things of himself.' Cf. small coals.

small. The Responsions examination: Oxford
University coll.: ca. 1841, as E. A. Freeman (1823–92) shows in his article in The Contemporary Review, vol. li, p. 821; Bristol, 1852; 'Cuthbert Bede', 1853; Hughes, Tom Brown at Oxford, 1881. Perhaps, as the O.E.D. points out, ex in parviso (or -sis). At Cambridge, the corresponding term is little-go, q.v.—2. 'Towns not boasting a regularly built and properly appointed theatre,' The Aristocratic Herald, Nov. 24, 1851: theatrical coll. : from ca. 1890. F. & H.: however, in 1903 defines thus, implying a singular: 'A one-night performance in a small town or village by a minor company carrying its own "fit-up".' Hence do the smalts, to tour the small towns: theatrical coll.: C. 20.

smarm; occ. smalm, v.i. To behave with fulsome flattery or insincere politeness: coll. : from not later than 1915. Ex:—2. smalm, smarm, coll. (late C. 18–20), to smooth down, as hair with pomade. S.O.D. The word prob. represents a blend: 'smarten with cream.'

smarmy. Apt to flatter fulsomely, speak toadyingly or over-politely or with courteous insincerity: coll. : from ca. 1915. Ex.—2. smarmy, (of hair) sleek, plastered down: coll. : C. 20.—3. Also as adv. in both senses, esp. 1.


smart as a carrot, (as). Gaily dressed: 1780: coll. until mid-C. 19, then dial.—which it had been since 1791 at least. Grose, 2nd ed., as smart as a carrot now scraped. (Apperson.)

smart as be damned, (as). Extremely smart in appearance: coll. : C. 20. (F. Brett Young, Jim Redlake, 1930.) See also the like paragraph and the be damned entry.

smart as threepence. Smartly dressed: lower classes' coll. (—1887); ob. Baumann.


a brandy-peg, to drink one: military: from ca. 1880. Ware cites The Daily-News, May 7, 1884.—7. To break burglariously into (a house, etc.): o.: from ca. 1920. E.g. in Edgar Wallace, We Shall See I, 1926.


*mash-feeder. A silver or a Britannia-metal spoon: c.: resp. ca. 1838–59 and ca. 1858–1910. The best imitation shillings were made from Britannia metal. Ex smash, n. 3.

smash me!; smash my eyes! See smash! smash the teapot. To break one's pledge of abstinence: urban lower classes' (—1909); ob. Ware.

smashed, adj. Reduced in rank: naval (—1909). Ware.

smasher. Anything very large or unusually excellent; (post-G.W. a., often it = an extremely pretty girl): 1794 (S.T.D.).—2. Hence, a crushing reply, a very severe article or review: coll. : 1828, Blackwood's Magazine, 'His reply... was a complete smasher,' O.E.D. Slightly ob.—3. Hence, a heavy fall (1875) or a damaging or settling blow (1897); coll. O.E.D.—4. A passer (1795, Potter) or, less gen., an utterer (1796, O.E.D.) of false money, whether coin or note: o.: late C. 18–20. Ex smash, n., 3, or it may argue an existence for smash, v., 2, at least sixteen years before the app. earliest record.—5. Hence, a base coin or, says F. & H., forged note: o.: mid-C. 19–20; very ob. Mayhew, 1851.—6. A North Country seaman: nautical (—1833). Clark Russell. Prob. ex smash, i.e., —7. 'A soft felt hat with a broad brim,' Pettman: South African coll.: from ca. 1885. Pettman.—8. A receiver of stolen goods: c. (—1920). O.E.D. (Sup.); Charles E. Leach, On Top of the Underworld, 1933. Prob. influenced by senses 4 and 5.


smatteract. As a matter of fact: shorthand typists' : C. 20.

smawm. A variant, mainly dial., of smarm, q.v.


smear. An incorrect spelling of smear, q.v.

smell. To miss; miscul, ill with offensive odour: coll. : 1887. O.E.D.—2. (Gen. with negative.) To approach at all, be even compared with, in ability: from ca. 1915. E.g. 'Fleetwood-Smith can't—rarely 'doesn't' — smell Grimmnett as a batman': 'Are you as good as he is at
from late Grose, boxing c. coll., ca. a not ob. o. Shadwell confusion (O.E.D. late "ney prison of inaccessible.

Nostrils 1887).Dickens (1850—1887).

A smell a hat. Ca. 1780—1830, it was, to judge from Grose (all edd.), c.: not however, that one lexicographer connotes irreproachable certainty.

smell at, get a. (Only in interrogative or negative.) To get a chance at; to approach; (low) cast. (—1837). Baumann. Cf. smell, 2, q.v. Ex olfactory inaccessibility.

smell one's hat. To pry into one's hat on reaching one's pew in church: jocular coll. (—1887). Baumann.

smell—powder. A duellist: coll. ca. 1820—60. Ed. of the fine-eater.


*smeller, come a. To have a heavy fall (lit. or fig.): low late C. 19—20. Manchon. Cf. smeller, 3 and 4.

smellers. Nostrils: 1678, Cotton, 'For he on smell ers, you must know, I receiv'd a sad unlucky blow.' Prob. ex. smeller, a feeler, e.g. of a fly:—2. As a cat's whiskers', it may origin (1738) have been coll.—Cf. 1st ed. clearly classifies it as coll. or s. —but from ca. 1850, at latest, it has certainly been S.E.

*smelling cheat or chete. A garden: an orchard: c.: 1667, Harman: B.E.; Grose, 1st ed. till by 1830; ob. as early, prob., as 1700. Lit., a smelling, i.e. from:—3. Hence, a blow on the nose: boxing: from C. 17—18; 1790: o. ob. by 1750: c. B.E.; Grose, 1st ed. It seems likely that after C. 18, the predominating sense of smelling cheat is nosegay; for in 1610 Rowlands writes, "Smellar, a garden; not smelling cheat a Nosegay."—3. An noser, s. 1st ed.: 1813, F. & H.: but this I believe to be an error caused by confusion between smeller and smelling cheat.


*smelt. A half-guinea: c. of ca. 1690—1830, but ob. as early, prob., as 1725. Lit. a smelt: (O.E.D.):—3. Shadowed; Grose, 1st ed. Not impossibly an a perversion—s-perversions are fairly common in English c. and a. (cf. the prefix-use of s in Italian)—of mell (v. a. n.) the 'melt' or melting-down of a guinea. Cf. smish for mis, q.v.

smells, westward for. (Exp. go westward ...). On the spore: semi-proverbial coll.: early C. 17. Dekker & Webster. Lit. in search of 'conies', male or female, a smell being a simpleton.


*smigmas. A barley soup, a (cold) meat hash: prison c.: ca. 1800—50. Knapp & Baldwin, The

Nezectomy Calendar, vol. 11, 1825 (O.E.D.). Brandon. A nickname, perhaps ex a worder named Higgins. (C. eymologies are heart-breaking.)


smile like a brewer's horse. To smile delightedly or broadly: coll. C. 17. Howell, 1859. A brewer's horse brings on its food and the circumambient odour of hops.

smilence! Silence: non-aristocratic (—1900); ob. by 1920, till by 1930. Cf. smock (Ware).


*smish. A shirt: o. ca. 1810; ob. Vaux. Perversion of mish, q.v., or via e(e)micch = chemise (Baumann).


*smiler. The arm: o. ca. 1670—1815. Coles, 1676; B.E.; Grose, 1st ed.

Smith. See Dulcysp.

Smith, Mr. Muscolini: from ca. 1924 among British residents on the Italian Riviera, esp. at Bordighera. By euphemism.

Smith ! what an O. What a grim laugh ! non-aristocratic: ca. 1835—50. Ware. Lit., 'what an O. Smith!' ex the cavernous laugh of one O. Smith, a popular actor of villains' parts.

smithereens; smithers. Small pieces or fragments: coll. and dial, orig. Anglo-Irish: from ca. 1840; the latter, only dial. after ca. 1890. S. C. Hall, 1841, 'Harmes ... broke into smithereens'; Halliwell, 1847, 'Smithers, fragments, atoma.' Actually, smithers, of obscure etymology but perhaps cognate with smile, is the earlier, -een being (as in colleges) an Irish diminutive suffix. Exp. go, and blow, to smithers, and blow, break, knock, splint or into smithereens. The nose, s. ca. 1820 (20) go to smitherens, cf. all to smitherens, all to smash. O.E.D.—E.D.D.

Smithfield bargain. A bargain or deal in which the purchaser is taken in: coll. ca. 1660—1830. 'Cheats' Wilson, 1662; Richardson, 1763. Adumbrated in Shakespeare's 2nd Henry IV, Act 1, Sc. 2. Ex the horse and cattle (now the great meat) market.—2. Hence, ca. 1770—1840, a marriage of convenience, with money the dominant factor: coll. Grose, 2nd ed. Cf. Breton, 1605, 'Fin de ces marche matches, where marriages are made without affection.

smoke, -y. C. 17—18 spelling of smoke, smoky, q.v.

smock. Of all the numerous phrases in F. & H. and O.E.D.—usually suggestive of loose conduct or immorality in, or in relation to women, O.E.D.—only two are to be considered; these may possibly be coll. and certainly the latter is not s. —smock—alley (Ned Ward), the female pudenda; smock—pensioner, a male keep. Cf. skirt, q.v.

smoke, v. To ridicule, make fun of: late C. 17-mid-19; coll. >, ca. 1860. S.E. Ned Ward, in The London Spy, "We smook'd the Beaus ... till they smoke'd off one by one"; Miss Burney: Keats. Perhaps ex smoke, to suspect (a person).—2. As a specific noun of this: 'to affront a Stranger at his coming in,' B.E.: late C. 17-18.—3. To coil with (a woman): C. 17-19.—4. v., to blush: Public Schools: from ca. 1860. Farrar in St Winifred's, 1862 (O.E.D.). Cf. the C. 16 smoke, to fume, be very angry.—5. To Decamp: low Australian: from ca. 1890. Morris. Ex smoke along, to ride at great speed.

smoke. See Cape Smoke.—smoke, in. See in smoke.

smoke, like. Rapidly: ca. 1806, an Irish lady's-maid writes of the Russian potholites that 'they drive like smoke up the hills' (The Russian Journals of Maria and Katherine Wilmot, 1803-1808, edited by J. H. M. Hide; 1833, M. Scott: coll. till ca. 1870, then S.E. Ex the manner in which smoke disperses in a high wind.

smoke, the great. See great smoke and smoke, n. 2.


smoke, gammon, and spinach.—all. See all smoke . . .

smoke-ho; -oh; smoke. A cessation from work in order nominally to smoke, certainly to rest: coll.; 1897, Frank Bullen; H. Lawson, 1900. O.E.D.


smoke-on. See smoke, n. 4.

smoke-stack. A steamer: sailing-ship seamen's pejorative coll., as is their steamboat man for a sailor therein: from not later than 1885.


smokes, the (great). An occ. variant (—1923) of smoke, n. 2. Manchon.

smoking. Vbl.n. of smoke, v., esp. 1, 4.—

smoke. See smoke-ho.


smoke, n. and v. Smile; esp. in (he) smola a smile (or smoke): jocular >, by 1900, non-aristocratic (—1909); slightly ob. 'Invented' by F. C. Durnand, ca. 1877, in Punch, says Ware. Cf. smile.

smoodge, v.i. To flatter, wheedle, speak with deliberate amiability: Australian: late C. 19-20. Ex to smooche.—2. Hence, to make love, pay court: Australian: C. 20. C. J. Dennis (smooe). Hence, smoodger, the agent, and smoodging, the action. Prob. ex ob. S.E. smudge, v.t., to caress, and dial. smudge, to kiss, to yearn for, smudge after, to begin to pay court to: on dial. smouch, to kiss.

smoot, n. and v. See smoot.


smorning. This morning: coll.: late C. 19-20. Dorothy Sayers, Murder is in the Air, 1933, "When's he coming?" "Smorning!" .

smother. A hiding-place for stolen goods; an overcoat folded over a pick-pocket's arm to mask his movements: c. (—1933). Charles E. Leach.—2. Trade s., mid-C. 19-20, as in Mayhew, 1851, 'a lick-up' is a boot or shoe re-lasted, and the bot tom covered with a "smother" . . . obtained from the dust of the room.' O.E.D.—3. 'A fur coat or overcoat': grafters': C. 20. (P. Allingham, Cheapjack, 1834.) Prob. ex the warmth it gives.

*smother, v.t. To cover up; to hide: New Zealand c. (—1932). Cf. n., 1, q.v.

smother (or sm'mother) evening! A c.p. of cynical refusal: music-halls: 1884-5. Ware. Ex one of the great Arthur Roberta's songs; it was thus titled and themed.

smother a parrot. To drink, nest, a glass of absinthe: Anglo-French: ca. 1850-1914. Ware. Like so many parrots, absinthe is—or was—green.

smouch. 'Dried leaves of the ash tree, used by the smugglers for adulterating the black, or bohea teas,' Grose, 1st ed.; ca. 1780-1840: perhaps orig. c. or s., despite the O.E.D.'s assumption that it is S.E.—2. See:

Smous, Smouse; Smouch, Smouthch. A Jew: Smouse, 1705 (Booman); Smous, 1785 (Grose, who restricts it to a German Jew); smouch, 1705 (C. Johnston); Smouthch, 1780 (Cumberland). The -s.-e., forms are rare in C. 19; both -e() and -oh forms are by 1800, except as archaisms. Why the O.E.D. should treat smou(oh) as an alteration of smou(e) as S.E., and smou(e) as s., I cannot see: both, I believe, are s., smou(e) coming direct ex the Dutch smous (identical with German-Jewish schmuze), padder, profit, Hebrew schmuotes, news, tales (O.E.D.; W.); Sewol, 1708, proposed derivation ex Mase: -e().—2. Hence, in South Africa, an itinerant (esp. of Jewish) trader: coll.: smou(oh)ch, 1849; smous, 1850, but anticipated fifty years before. Also Smouer: 1887 (Petman); smousung, itinerant trading, from mid 1850's, is another South African coll. O.E.D.; Petman.—smowing. See Smous, 2.

smoue, v.i., corresponding to Smouse(e), n., 2. Petman. Smousing. See Smous, 2.

smout; smoot. A compositor seeking occasional work at various houses: printers (—1888). Jacob. While smout is, in C. 20, more gen., smout is recorded the earlier. Ex:

smout; smoot, v.i. To work on occasional jobs at various houses or even at one if it is not one's regular place of employment: printing: from ca. 1680: in C. 20, smoot (app. unrecorded before 1892) is the more gen. Moxon. In C. 17-18, v.t. as smout on (a firm). O.E.D. Perhaps ex Dutch smou(e), to smooch, to creep, and smoue after, to court (a girl) furtively (E.D.D.).

smoutch. See Smous.


smuggy, v. To steal; run away with: 1825, T. Hook (O.E.D.) or rapidly > low s. Perhaps ex smuggle: cf. smuggl-boot and smuggling, 2, qv.—2. To hush up: 1857, The Morning Chronicle, Oct. 3. 'She wanted a guarantee the case should be smuggled'; prob. orig. o.; by 1900, s. ™ ex sense 1 or ex smugg, to smarten up.—3. ™ hence to arrest, imprison: o.: from mid-1840's. J. W. Horsley, Jottings from Jail, 1887. 'Then two or three more convicts came up and we got smuggled, and got a sixer each.' —4. V., to copy; to crib: from ca. 1800; ob. Perhaps ex sense 2—5. To work hard: university: from ca. 1890. Ex smugg, n., 1, qv.

smuggler. A boat carrying contraband; esp. an opium boat off the Chinese coast: nautical coll. (—1867) Smyth. Ex smuggle; cf. smuggler, v., 1, and:

smugg-lay. The 'dodge' of selling (almost) worthless goods on the ground that they are valuable contraband; c. of ca. 1810–60. Lex. Bal. Ex smuggling.

smuggler. See smuggle, v.—2. (In pl.) Smugglers 1 Mine: schoolboys' s. (—1897), shouted at the conclusion of a game, when (e.g. at top-spinning or marbles) it was lawful to purlin the plaything. H., 1st ed.: in 1825, Hone notes that this practice is called smuggling. Ex smuggle, v., 1.

smuggle. To steal; to sharpen (a pencil) at both ends; to sell: late C. 18–20; ob. Cf. the late C. 17–18 smuggling, to caress.

smuggle the coal (or coal). 'To make people believe one has no Money when the Reckoning is to be paid,' Miége, 1867; ™ by 1750. See col.

smuggler. A pencil sharpened at both ends: schools: see smuggle. Eep. at Winchester.

smuggling-kken. A brother: c. of ca. 1720–1830. A New Cantiing Dict., 1729; Grosz, 1st ed. Funning smuggling, to caress, and smuggle, to 'contraband'.


smut 1, ditto, brother. See brother Smut.

smumver. See -ver.

smug. See Smut.


smack. A racquets ball: Winchester: from ca. 1850; ob. (—2. It is possible that smack, a share, esp. in go smacks, be partners,—cf. go smicks,—may orig. have been o.: see B.E.)

smaffle. 'A Highwayman that has got Bonty,' B.E.: c.: late C. 17–18. Perhaps ex smaffle, a bridle-bit; but prob. allied with snatch, v., 1, qv.—2. Talk uninteresting or unintelligible to the others present: coll. from ca. 1860: almost ™. H., 3rd ed. Perhaps because such conversation acts as a smoke; more prob. ex East Anglian snaffle, to talk foolishly.—3. Hence, (a) secret talk: o. (—1923). Manchon.


smangling lay. Highway robbery as a trade: o.: mid-C. 18–early 19. Fielding, 1752, 'A clever fellow, and upon the smuggling lay at least.' Ex snaffle, v., 1; cf. snaffle, n., 1, and snagger, 2.


smaggy, v.i. and t. To angle for geese as a means of stealing them: either c. or low s.: from late 1830's; ob. Often as snagging, bbln. Brandon; H., 1st ed. Prob. a corruption of smangle (as in eel-fishing) and perhaps cognate with enable and snaffle, 1, qv.

smag-tooth. A proletarian woman, esp. if she shrew, with an irregular set of teeth: urban lower classes' coll. (—1909). Ware.

smail(e)y. A bullock with horn slightly curved, like a snail's: Australian coll. from ca. 1880. 'Rolf Boldrewood,' 1884. Morris.

snails! God's nails! a coll. petty oath: late C. 16–early 19. O.E.D.

snail's gallop, go a. To go very slowly indeed: semi-proverbial coll. >, ca. 1850, dial. >, from ca. 1545. 'Proverbs' Heywood; Ray, 1670; N. Bailey, 1725; Colman, Jr., 1803; Combe, 1821; Brodgen's Lincolnshire Words, 1866. Apperson.

smailly. See smailly.

smail(e). A skein of silk: tailors' from ca. 1870; ob. Ex shape.

smake. To steal (something) warily: o.: from ca. 1865. Ex dial.

smake, give (a person) s. To vex, annoy: low (—1887); ob. Baumann.


snake-headed, "Annoyed; vindictive," C. J. Dennis; Australian: c. 20. (Australia abounds in snakes.)

snake-juice. Whiskey; Australian: from ca. 1890. C. J. Dennis. Ex see snakes.


snake the pool. To take the pool; billiards; from ca. 1980.

*snakes. A prison-warder's felt-shod shoes or slippers; c. (— 1923). Manchoon. So he snakes along silently.

snakes, a caution to. (Something) very surprising, odd, eccentric, or unusual: 1897, "Fomes" Mare. To have a dolirum tremens; U.S.; anglicized as coll. ca. 1900. Earlier form, have or have got snakes in one, remained U.S.


*to steal; esp. to snatch (from the person); c. : from ca. 1835. Brandon. Origin?

*snam, (up)on the. Thus engaged; c.: mid C. 19-20. Cf. snam.

*map. A share; c. : from ca. 1500; ob. Awikley, 1601. Also snaps, as in go snaps, to go shares (cf. snaffle, q.v.); late C. 16-20; Pegge, ca. 1800; H., 1st ed., spells it snappas, q.v. Cf. snick, n., q.v.—2. (A synonym of cloyer, cloy.) A sharpener, chest, pilferer; esp. a thief claiming a share in booty (cf. sense 1); c. : late C. 16-early 17 for 'cloyer' nuance; ca. 1620-1720 for 'sharper' sense; esp. a sharer; a thief in Fletcher snay l'Estrange. In Ned Ward, 1731, brother snap is a sharpening lawyer: C. 18 s.—3. Affair, business; easy job; see snap, soft, and snap away, give the.—4. Energy; U.S. (1872), anglicized ca. 1890; c. : ca. 1810. S.E. Doyle, 1894, 'A young man with plenty of snap about him,' O.E.D. Cf. go, pep, vim, q.v.—5. An engagement (for work); theatrical: from ca. 1890. Cf. snapshots, q.v.

*map, v.i. To go shares with sharers or thieves; early C. 17 c. Field, 1609. O.E.D. Cf. snap, n., 1 and 2; and also snack, nick (n.).

*map, on the. On the look-out for something to steal; c. : mid-C. 19-20. Cf. snapper-up of unconsidered trifles and snap, 2, q.v.—2. Hence, looking out for occasional work; from ca. 1890: s. >, ca. 1910, coll.

snap. An easy matter, business, project; a profitable affair; an easy job; accord a pleasant time: s. >, ca. 1910, coll. from ca. 1885; orig. U.S. (1846). In C. 20, often simply snap, esp. in it's a snap.

snap away, give the. To blab; 'blow the gaff': low s. : from ca. 1780.


*map the glass. To break shop-windows or show-case glasses: c. : ca. 1780-1840. Grose, 1st ed.


snapped, ppl. adj. Abruft, sudden, unexpected; coll.: 1893, Leland. O.E.D.


Snappers, the. The 16th Foot, now the East Yorkshire, Regiment: military; 1777 in the American War. F. & Gibbons: owing to lack of ammunition, the men snapped their musket locks in order to besoil the enemy. Also known as the Poona Guards, ob.


snappy. Smartly intelligent; energetic; lively; pointed (story) coll.: 1873—2. Whence, smart (of dress); neatly elegant: coll.: 1881; ob. O.E.D.


snare. To acquire; to seize; to win: C. J. Dennis: Australian: late C. 19-20. ex snaring animals.


snarl. An ill-tempered discussion; a quarrel: tailors': C. 20. (The Tailor and Cutter, Nov. 29, 1928.)

snarls, bunch of. A disagreeable man; id.: id. (Ibid.)

snatch. A hasty or illicit or mercenary copulation: coll.: C. 17-20. 'Melancholy' Burton, 'I could not abide marriage, but as a rambler I took a snatch when I could get it.'—2. Hence, ultimately, though imm. ex Yorkshire dial.: the female pudend: late C. 19-20. Cf. the next term.—3. Hence, girls viewed collectively as 'fun': from ca. 1930. Peter Chamberlain, 'Yet another couple of 'snatch'...'.


snatcher. One who, when hire-purchasers fail to pay instalments, seizes (part of) the furniture: trade: from ca. 1920. (The Daily Telegraph, Oct. 19, 1934.) Abbr. of an assumed furniture-snatcher.

snivel, u. See running snable and cf. running smoolble.—2. V. to steal, esp. by snatching or by pocket-picking: c. : from ca. 1850. 'Jon Bee.' A corruption of snable or of snaffle (v, 1), or perhaps a fusion of both.

snaffles! A C. 16—17 variant of 'Snaffle', q.v.

*snack; in late C. 18—19, gbn. the snack. The practice, or a specific act, of creeping in stealthily with a view to robbery; a theft thus effected: c. : late C. 17-20; ob. Esp. in sneak, (upon the, q.v.—2. Partly hence, a stealthy departure or flight: c. : from ca. 1810. Vaux.—3. A pilferer, a stealthy enterer with a view to theft: from ca. 1760: s. >, ca. 1830, coll. >, ca. 1880, S.E. Grose, 1st ed.—4. See sneaks.

*snack, v.t. To steal from (a place) after stealthy entry: c. : from ca. 1810; ob. Vaux. Prob. ex
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sneak, go upon the, q.v. Cf. sense 4 and sneak, n. 1. —2. To escape from (a person) by stealth: c. from ca. 1810; Ex. sneak, n. 2.—3. To walk about looking for something to steal or pilfer: c. from ca. 1820; ob. Bee, —4. To flitch; steal furtively, stealthily: coll. 1883 (O.E.D.). Ex sense 1.—5. To tell tales (v.t.): schools: 1897, The Daily News, June 5, "Sneaking, in the ethics of the public school boys, is the unpardonable sin," O.E.D.; by 1930, coll. Ex sneak, to be servile.

sneak, area. See area sneak.—sneak, evening. See sneak, evening.

*sneak, give it to (a person) upon the. See sneak, v. 2. Vaux.

*sneak, go upon the. To slip into houses whose doors are left open and there steal: c. late C. 18—20; ob. Ex sneak, upon the, q.v.

*sneak, morning. The practice of going out early to rob private houses or shops by slipping in at the door unperceivd," Vaux: c. from ca. 1810; ob. Ex: —2. In late C. 18—20, the person doing this: c. Grose, 1st ed., where also evening sneak, one given to pilfering in the evening, also (in C. 19—20) the doing of this.

*sneak, upon or (in C. 19—20) on the. Stealthily: c.: late C. 17—20. B.E., Mainly in reference to robbery (see sneak, n. 1), but see also sneak, give it ... the.—2. Proving for booty: c. from ca. 1820. Cf. sneak, v. 3.

*sneak, upright. A thief preying on potboys, he who robs the pots as they are engaged in collecting them: c.: late C. 18—20; ob. Grose, 1st ed.

sneak-up. Erroneous for sneak-up, a sneak or skulker: late C. 16—17. O.E.D.

*sneak on the lurk. To prowl about for booty: c.: from ca. 1820; ob. An elaboration of sneak, v. 3. q.v. See lurk.

sneaker. A large cup (or small basin) with a saucer and cover, esp. for drink; e.g. a sneaker of punch: from ca. 1710: perhaps orig. a., soon > coll.; by 1830, S.E. Yule & Burnell.—2. (Gen. pl.) A variant of sneak (at sneaker): coll. orig. (—1891) U.S.; anglicised by 1920. Manchon.

*sneaking-budge. A lone-hand thief or robber: c.: late C. 17—early 19. B.E.; Grose, 1st ed. Cf. sneak, n. 1, and v. 1, and see budge.—2. Fielding incorrectly uses it to mean pilfering or stealing, n. and adj.

*sneaks. C. from ca. 1870 as in James Greenway, A Strange Company, 1873, "Sneaks ... are shoes with canvas tops and india-rubber soles." Ex sneak, n. 2.

Sneaks! God’s sneaks! a. coll. petty oath: early C. 17. Marston. Properly, sneaks should be sneaks or Sneakes = snipes. A variant of the oath occurs in Fletcher, 1619, "I’ll goe up and downe drinking small beere and swearing ’odds neagues." O.E.D. Cf. 'Snigs', q.v.


sneak up; sneak up! Go bang!: late C. 16—17 coll.; extinct in dial. Women of Abingdon Porter, 1698: Shakespeare: dramatist Heywood. Lit. Cf. ex sneak, n. 1, and in the Delblicom put a sneak before one’s snout, to watch one’s speech, to say little or nothing.


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sneak up! See sneak up!


**smirk,** n. 1. A surreptitious obtaining: c. or low a.: ca. 1670–1750.


**smie,** n. See sneak, n.

**smidkog,** v.t. To go shares: c.: late C. 19–20; ob. Perversion of smick, n. C. sneak (esp. as go snacks), smap, n., I, and v., snick (esp. as go smixc), and smicking, q.v.

**smid,** a sixpence: mainly Scots c. (—1839); ob. by 1900, virtually † by 1930. Brandon.

**smidy,** See smidg, adj.


For shine, cf. sheney.

**smide lurk,** v.t. The passing of counterfeit money: c.: from ca. 1845. *No. 747,*


**smide-pitcher,** v.t. The passing of counterfeit money: c.: 1808, Temple Bar, *Smyde-pitching is . . . a capital racket.* See smide, n., 2; cf. smide-pitcher.

**smide shop,** n. An agency for the selling of counterfeit notes: c.: from ca. 1920. E.g. in Edgar Wallace, *Mr. Reed*.


**smideman,** n. A smide-pitcher (q.v.): c.: 1897, Arthur Morrison. O.E.D.

**smid,** See smid, adj.—2. Snapplish, irritable: Glasgow (—1934).


**smifer,** n. will you have a. Will you take a drink?: Anglo-Irish o.p. (—1935). Perhaps influenced by snifer, 1.

**sniffy,** adj. Scornful, disdainful; occ. ill-tempered: coll. and dial.: from ca. 1870. Litt., apt to sniff in contempt. Cf. sneeze at, q.v.


**sniffer,** adj. (Very) good or satisfactory: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Ex sense 2 of the n.


**snig,** v.t. To steal; pilfer: 1892, Kipling (E.D.D.). Ex dial.

**sniggered if** (e.g. you will), I'm. A mild asseveration (—1865). Very ob. H., 2nd ed., *Another form of this is jiggered.* Cf.:


**sniggle,** v.t. To wriggle; creep stealthily: dial. (—1837) > ca. 1900, col. Ex snuggle.—2. Whence, to get (something) in surreptitiously: dial. (—1881) > ca. 1900, col. O.E.D.


**smich,** v.t.; rarely v.t. To see; to eye: c. of ca. 1670–1850. Colos, Grose (1st ed.). † origin.—2. Hence, to examine closely, to feel suspiciously: c. mid-C. 19–20; ob. Manchen.


**snip-cabbage** or -louse. A tailor: resp. C. 18–early 19 (E. Ward, 1708); from ca. 1820 (Bee, 1823). Both are very ob. For former, cf. trade sense of cabbage.


**snipe,** n. F. & H.'s "to fire at random into a camp" is prob. an error.—2. To pilfer: low (—1923). Manchen. Prob. ex shooting.

**snipe,** n. The Madame de Laveon, prominent in English society of the 1820's. The Gressey Papers.

**snipes,** A pair of scissors: c.: from ca. 1810; ob. Vaux.—2. Second-mortgage bonds in the New York, Lake Erie, and Western Railway:
**SNIPPY**


**snippy.** Snappy; captious; coll.: C. 20. Ex dial. Lit., cutting. (E.D.D.)

**snips.** Handcuffs: low: from ca. 1890. Ex *snip*, adv. denoting sound. O.E.D.


*snitch, turn.* To turn King’s evidence: o.: from ca. 1760. Grose, 1st ed. Cf. nose, n.

*snitchel, n.* See snitch, n., 1.—2. V.t. To fillip on the nose: o. : late C. 17–early 18. B.E.


**snitches.** Handcuffs: o.: from ca. 1870. A corruption of *snitcher, 3.*

**snitching.* The art and practice of teaching; turning King’s evidence: C. 19–20: o.

**snitching-rascal.* A variant of *snitcher, 2.* Vaux. († by 1890.)

*snidely.* 'Wipe his Nose, or give him a good Flap on the Face': resp. late C. 17–20 (o. > in C. 19. lows. B.E.) and late C. 17–early 19 (c. : Grose, 1875). By itself *snide* is B.E. > dial.


**snivel.** To fornicate; lower classes (— 1923). Manchevin. († by 1829.) Possibly cognate with dial. *sniggle* (see E.D.D., at sniggle, v., 2).


**snob, v.i. and t.* ‘To sloven one’s work,’ F. & H.: ‘tailors’: from ca. 1870; ob.


**snoober.** A shoemaker, cobbler: coll.: 1900 (O.E.D.). Ex *snob, n., 1.*

**snoobbery.** Slovenly work; slack trade; tailors: from ca. 1870; ob. Cf. *snob, v.* Whence, *hide the snoobery, to conceal bad workmanship, inferior material.*

**snoob’s cat.** A sixpence: tailors: from ca. 1870; ob. Cf. *snob’s duck*

**snoob’s duck.** ‘A leg of mutton, stuffed with sage and onions,’ F. & H.: tailors: from ca. 1870; ob. See *snob, n., 1, and of *snob’s boot.*

**snoobstick.** A non-striker, a ’soab‘: workmen’s coll. (— 1860); ob. H., 2nd ed. Prob. a corruption of *snobstick, q.v., as H., 2nd ed., suggests.


**snoody.** A soldier: low: ca. 1890–1914. A corruption of *snoaddy, q.v.*

**snoode.** See *snooze.* *snook. See *snooks, cock.*


**snooks.** ‘The imaginary name of a practical joker; also a derisive retort on an idle question— *Snooks!*, F. & H.: from ca. 1860; ob. H., 2nd ed.

**snooks, cock.** occ. *cock a snook: also cut a snook, cut snooks. To make the derisive gesture described at *snooch, 5*: coll. (resp.—1903; 1944; 1879.—1903. F. & H.; O.E.D. Origin obscure. ‘Cf. Fr. faire un pied de nez, Ger. eine lange nose machen. Perhaps name *Snook-s* felt as phonetically appropriate (cf. *Walker*), W.*

**snoorums.** A trivial endearment; esp. applied to a lap-dog: coll.: 1928. O.E.D. (Sup.) Cf. *didums.*


**snooze.** See *snooze.*

**snoozy.** (Of persons) unpleasant; cross, irritable; supercilious: Society and near-Society: from ca. 1930. (Denis Mackail, *Summer Leaves*, 1934.) Perhaps on *snoopy* (see preceding entry) but ex *enory*: cf. Lancashire *snool*, v.i. to sneak, hang round. Adopted ex the U.S.A.; used in Canada from ca. 1920.


**snooze.** v.i. occ. *snooze* († in C. 20) and *snoozes* (late C. 18–20: Grose, 2nd ed.: since ca. 1850, illiterate). To asleep: 1769, George Parker: o. >, ca. 1810, s. >, ca. 1840, coll. Grose, 1788.

SNOW-DROPPER

Hence (in late C. 19-20, the prevailing sense), to doze, take a nap: from ca. 1840: coll. Thackeray.

'Snooze-gently in thy armchair, thou easy baldhead.' Etymology problematic: the word may have been suggested by 'sleep', 'nap', and 'doze'.


*snaroo-kenn. A variant of snoring-kenn, q.v.


Snoozer. One who 'snooze': coll. O.E.D., 1878; prob. half a century earlier.—2. 'One of those thieves who take up their quarters at hotels for the purpose of robbery' : c. mid-C. 19-20. Mayhew.


Snoozle, v.t. To nestle and then sleep; to nuzzle: resp. ca. 1830, 1850: coll. and dial. Perhaps, as W. suggests, ex snooze + smuggle + nuzzle. Hence, v.t. to thrust affectionately, nuzzle: coll. and dial.: 1847, Emily Brontë. O.E.D.


Snorting. The ppl.adj. corresponding to snorter 2; esp., excellent: late C. 19-20.

Snorty. Irritable, irritated; peevish; captious: 1893, Kate Douglas Wiggins, 'She found Mr Gooch very snorty, very snorty indeed,' O.E.D. Ex snort contemplatively. Cf. snotty, adj. 2.


Snout, v.t., v.t., and v.red. To blow the nose: late C. 16-20; mostly dial.; in C. 19-20, also (though very ob.) a vulgarism. Ex sect, n. 1, snout-box. The nose: low coll.: mid-C. 19-20; ob. Ex snot, n. 1.


.Snotted, ppl.adj. Reprimanded: c. late C. 19-20; ob. Prob. a perversion of snouted, rooted up as with the snout; perhaps on snotty, adj. 2.


Snotter. A C. 20 Glasgow variant of snotty, adj. 2.

Snottie. See snotty, n.—snotties' nurse. See snotty, n.—snottily. Adv. of snotty, adj. 2. q.v.


Snotty; occ. snottie. A midshipman; nautical (— 1903). F. & H.; Kipling, 1904 (O.E.D.). Prob. ex snotty, adj. 2, not snotty, adj. 1; 'Taffrail', however, derives it ex the buttons worn by midshipmen on their sleeves, whence arose the jest that the buttons were there to prevent them from wiping their noses on their sleeves (cited by F. & Gibbons). Hence, snotties' nurse, a naval officer detailed to look after the midshipmen.


Snotty. Overbearing; haughty; insolent: coll.: 1893 (O.E.D.); somewhat ob. Cf. snatty.

Snow. See snowy, 2.


*Snow-dropper or -gatherer. A linen-thief: a.
from ca. 1810, though snow-dropping is unrecorded before 1864, *-gather before 1859. Ex snow, 1.

**snow-dropping.** Linen-thieving: c.: from ca. 1810; recorded, 1839. Cf. snow-gatherer.


**snowball.** A Negro: from ca. 1780; ob. Grose, 1st ed. Ironic nickname.

**Snow.** Trivial oath: late C. 16–earliest 17; coll. abbr. Odd's n. O.E.D.

**snowy.** Linen: esp. that hung out to dry: c. (—1877). Ex snow, 1. 2. (Snowy') An inevitable nickname of men with flaxen or bleached hair: lower classes': late C. 19–20. Also, in Australia, for men surnamed Baker: C. 20. (Cf. Dusty Miller.) Also, there, of Aboriginals: late C. 19–20. In the second and third nuances, often Snow.

**snowder.** Any person or thing remarkable for excellence, skill, strength, etc.: New Zealand (—1935). Prob. suggested by such terms as snifter and bobby-dazzler, of which pair it may be a blend.


**snower.** A reprimand: Public Schools' (—1800). Ware. Prob. by 'the Oxford -er':

**snow.** One who, to steal later, hides himself in a house, esp. under a bed: c. (—1767); † by 1840. Colles: B.E.; Grose, 1st ed. A special development ex snow, to remain snuggly quiet. *Snow.* Charles Stanhope (1780-1851), Lord Petersham, who concocted the Petersham snuff-mixture. Dawson.

**snow, v.i.** To blind (esp. a shopkeeper) with snow and then, all being well, steal his goods: c.: from ca. 1810; ob. Vaux. —2. See snow it, snow out.

**snow, best to.** To defeat utterly: coll. :1819 (O.E.D.); ob.

**snow, give a person.** To rebuke, reprimand, scold: coll. : 1890, Anon., Harry Fludd, 'He rather gave me snow about my extravagance, but I was prepared for that.' —2. Hence, to punish: coll. : 1896, Baden-Powell (O.E.D.).

**snow, high.** In 'great form': elated: coll. : 1840, Dana; slightly ob. O.E.D.

**snow, up to.** Alert; not easily tricked; shrewd: coll. : 1811, Poole, 'He knew well enough! The game we're after: zooks, he's up to snow.' Lit. of one who knows to what dangerous uses snow can be put. Egan's Grose adds: 'Often rendered more emphatic by such adjects as 'Up to snow and twopenny,' 'Up to snow, and a pinch above it.'

**snow-box.** The nose: 1853, 'Cuthbert Bede': ob. O.E.D.

**snow it.** To die: a: (—1874) >, ca. 1900, H., 5th ed., 'Term very common among the lower orders of London... Always to die from disease or accident.' Ex snow out, q.v.

**snow-lurker.** See sneeze-lurker.


**snow-racket.** See sneeze-racket and cf. sneeze-lurker.

**snowflakes.** The nostrils: ca. 1850-1750: a. and dial. Cleveland. O.E.D.

**snowy.** Drunk: low: from ca. 1820; ob. Bee, 1823; H., 3rd ed. Perhaps ex snowy, apt to take offence, displeased, angry.

**snow.** A bar-parlour at inn or 'public': from ca. 1860: a. (ob.) and dial. Ex snug, comfortable; cf. S.E. snuggery.

**snow, v.** To codd with: C. 19–20; ob. Ex snug, to make comfortable; cf. euphemistic ease. 2.—Also v.i.: C. 19–20; ob. Prob. ex snug down, to nestle.

**snow, adj.** Drunk: low: late C. 19–20; very ob. Cf. euphemistic comfortable.

**snow as a bug in a rug.** Very snug, cosy, comfortable: coll. : from ca. 1780. See quotation at mumps, 3. Apperson.

**snow, all's.** All's quiet: c. of ca. 1720-1840. A New Canting Dict., 1725; Grose, 1st ed. Cf. the ↑ S.E. snug, secret, concealed, private. Cf.:


**snow's the word!** Say nothing of this! : coll. : C. 18-19; ob. by 1860. Congreve, Maria Edgeworth, Lover. O.E.D. Cf. snug, all's, q.v.


**snow.** See snudge. —snow. See snide.


**snips.** coll. : from ca. 1820. Ex so-so, i. —2. Menstruating: women's euphemistic coll. of mid-C. 19–20—3. Homosexual: from ca. 1890. Thus 'a so man' is a homosexual, 'a so book' a Uaranian novel, poem, etc. Cf. The Venetian cost. so, adv. Very: as a mere counter of vague emphasis, it is admittedly S.E.; yet it has a coll. kine. —2. Tautologically in intensifications, it is a proletarian coll. : (?) mid-C. 19–20. 'It gets on my nerves, so it does!'; 'A well-doing young man, so he is' (both in MacArthur & Long, *No Mean City*, 1935).

**so, ever.** See ever so.

**so and so; So and So.** Senior Ordnance Store Officer: military: ca. 1890-1914. Ware. so as; so's. So that; in order that: cata- chrestio: late C. 19-20.

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**So Brien or S'O'Brien (or -an).** The Australian steamship *Sobraon*: nautical: late C. 19–early 20. Ware.

**so glad!** A c.p. of ca. 1847 (introduced by the French King) and of 1867–68 (from a song in W. Brough's *Field of the Cloth of Gold*): mostly London. Ware.

**so is your old man!** A c.p. of ca. 1900; ob; often so's... (John G. Branden, 1931; *Slang*, p. 280.)

**so long!** Au revoir!: coll. : 1865, F. R. Nixon. Cf. Ger. *so lange* (O.E.D.), but more prob., as W. suggests, the term is a corruption of *salama*, though Ware's suggested derivation ex the Hebrew *Seelah* (God be with you) is not to be wholly ignored.

**so say so.** Say so. Esp. you don't so say: c.p. : C. 20. Cf. shay so.

so sudden 1, this is. A jocular c.p. applied to an unexpected statement or offer: from ca. 1910. Ex the reputedly usual reply of a girl to a proposal of marriage. (Collin.)

so very human was, ca. 1880–84, applied in so many ways that The Daily News, Oct. 27, 1884, could speak of it thus: ‘In the slang of the day, “so very human.”’ (Ware.) Rather a c.p. than a soaker. To play with liquor: coll. — 1822, Barnard (O.E.D.). In C. 20, gen. in passive. As soak, to saturate. (N.b., soak, v.i. to drink heavily, is S.E.)

— 2. Hence, to spend in drink: coll.: C. 20.— 3. To pawn: 1882, G. A. Sala, ‘Soak my gems.’ O.E.D.—4. V.i. gen. as soak it, to be lavish of bait: anglers’ coll.: late C. 19–20.— 5. To charge (a person) an extortionate price; to tax heavily: orig. (late 1890’s) U.S.; anglicised by 1914. O.E.D. (Sup.)— 6. Hence, to catch (a person) out, ‘have him set’; give (him) unpleasant work; military: from 1915. F. & Gibbons. Esp. in passive, as ‘I was soaked for a fatigue.”— 7. To borrow money from: from ca. 1925. Dorothy Sayers, Have His Carcase, 1932, ‘Poor, but not mercenary or dishonest, since he refused to soak Mrs W.’ Ex senses 5 and 6.


soaked. Tipsy: very drunk: see soak, 1. Cf. saturated.


soap-enemy. ‘Gin and water, hot, with lemon and lump sugar,’ Bee: low: ca. 1820–70.


soapy Isaac. Seeuetty Isaac.

Soapy Sam. Bishop Wilberforce: ca. 1860–73. Ex his unctuous manner. Samuel Wilberforce, 1805–73, became Bishop of Oxford in 1845, about which time diarist Greville described him as ‘a very quick, lively, and agreeable man.

sober-stuff. Intentional and, gen., excessive sentimentalities (to appeal to the emotions—and often the pocket): orig. (ca. 1919) U.S.; anglicised, by 1921, as a coll., now vorging on S.E. (O.E.D. Sup.; Lyell.)

sober as a judge on Friday (as). Very—oh, so very slightly—tipsy: coll. (— 1923). Manchon. His work for the week ends on Friday. Elaboration of the dial. sober as a judge (1864; E.D.D.).


sober-water. Soda-water: punning coll.: from ca. 1873; ob. H., 5th ed.


society. See sock, 2.

social E. A middle-class evasion of social evil (prostitution): coll.: ca. 1870–1905. Ware.


[Society Clown, the. George Griswold, the actor: rather a sobriquet than a nickname. Ex his book, A Society Clown. (Dawson.]


society-maddist. A person that, not born in Society, spends much time and money to get there: Society: ca. 1881–95. Ware.

socius. A companion, a chum: Winchester: C. 19–20; ob. Ex the school precept, socii/im omnes incidunt. Cf. the occ., cultured use, since mid-C. 19, of socius as a comrade, itself perhaps ex the ecclesiastical term.— 2. Whonce, v.t., to accompany; ibid.: mid-C. 19–20; ob.


*sock. To hit; strike hard: drub, thrash: late C. 17–20: c. >, ca. 1850, s. B.E.: Kipling, 1890, ‘We socks him with a stretcher-pole.’ Origin obscure.— 2. Hence, to ‘give it’ to a person: 1890, Kipling. ‘Strewth, but it soaked them hard them!’— 3. V.i. to deliver blows: 1856 (O.E.D.). Ex. Sock him one on the jaw’ Ex sense 1. Cf. sock into, q.v.— 4. To treat one to ‘sock’ (see the n. 4): Eton (— 1880) O.E.D.— 5. Hence, to give (one something): Eton (— 1889). A mere extension of this occurs in the upper and upper-middle classes’ sock, to offer, as in Evelyn Waugh, A Handful of Dust, 1934, ‘I’ll sock you to a

sock. *On tick: see sock, n., 5. (Bam.)

sock a boot into. To take advantage of the misfortunes of (a person); lower classes: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. See sock, v., 1 and 2; prob. imm. an elaboration of sock into, q.v.

sock in (or into) it! 1. & put a. Be quiet! stop talking, it being the offender’s mouth: from ca. 1919; military (esp. in G.W.) >, by 1920, gen. &. Cf. sock in it, put a bit (or piece) of.

sock into. To hit vigorously; pitch it into: 1864, H., 3rd ed. Ex sock, v., 3. Australia, in C. 20, has the variant sock it into: C. J. Dennis.—2. See sock in it.

sock (a person) one. To hit him hard: from not later than 1915. Ex sock, v., 1 and 2.


sockastic. Sarcastic; sol. mid-C. 19-20.

sockdoler (1830). —sager (—1848), rarely —iger (1842); occ. sog-(—1869) or stock- (1838) or slog- (1862); also stock- (1864, H., 3rd ed.). Occ. Il. A very heavy blow; a ‘finisher’; U.S., anglicised, to some extent, ca. 1870; ob. A fanciful, assonantal elaboration of sock, a blow (see sock, n., 3, and cf. v. 1), influenced by doxology, ‘regarded as final’ (W.)—2. Hence, anything exceptional: U.S. (1869), partly anglicised ca. 1890; slightly ob. Blackwood’s Magazine, Feb. 1894, ‘The pleasant remembrance of the capture of a real sockdoler’ (large fish), O.E.D.


socking. A variant (ca. 1810-50) of burning shame, 2. ‘Jon Bee’. & sockhead; sockie. See socker, 1.

socks, hot. See hot socks.

socks, old. See old socks.

socks, pull up one’s. To brace oneself for, to make an effort: from early 1920’s. R. Blaker, 1922. Ex that significant preparation for action.


socker. See sager and soldier, n., 1.

Sockeries, the. The Military Exhibition, Chelsea Barracks, in: 1860: London. Ex socker on Colinderies, Fisheries, etc. Ware.


socks, odds and. See odds and sods.


soft, do. To utter counterfeit notes: o.: from ca. 1870. See soft, n., 2.

soft, hard (arse) or. Third class or first?: low coll.: late C. 18-20.


soft down on. In love with: low coll.: from ca. 1870. Elaboration of soft on.

soft-flimsey. See soft, n., 2.

soft horn. A donkey, lit. or fig.: coll.: from ca. 1860; ob. H., 3rd ed. Because an ass’s ears, unlike horns, are soft.


soft on or upon. In love with; sentimentally amorous for: 1840: S.E. >, ca. 1880, coll
Rolf Boldrewood,' 1888, 'I... thought she was rather soft on Jim.' O.E.D.


soft soap. Flattery; 'blarney': U.S. (1830), anglicised ca. 1860. T. Hughes, 1861, 'He and I are great chums, and a little soft soap will go a long way with him.' Ex soft soap, potash soap, on soft sawder.

soft soap, v. To flatter: U.S. (1840), anglicised ca. 1870. Ex the n.

soft tack. See soft tommy.


soft to, do the. To flatter, to 'blarney' (a person): coll. (-1920). Manchon.

soft tommy. Bread, as opp. to biscuits: nautical coll. (-1864). H., 3rd ed.; 1878, W. S. Gilbert, 'I've treacle and toffee, and excellent coffee, Soft tommy and succulent chops.' Also soft tack (H., 1859), which has its corresponding hard tack. See tommy.

softie; properly softy. A silly, very simple, or weak-minded person: coll. and dial.: 1863, Mrs Gaskell, 'Nancy' were but a softy after all.'

sog. A sovereign (coin): schools': late C. 19-20; very ob. Ex soon, q.v.


soger; ooe. sojer or sojer. To shirk and/or malinger; to pretend to work; mainly nautical (-1840); in C. 20, coll. Dana. Also soldier.


solay, v. Error for splay (a fish): C. 18-20; ob. O.E.D.


sold out. Bankrupt: coll. (-1859); ob. H., 1st ed. Ex sold, v. Cf.: sold out, be. To have sold all one's stock (of some article): coll.: late C. 19-20. Perhaps on the analogy of S.E. be sold up, to have had part or all of one's goods sold to pay one's creditors. Cf. preceding entry.


soldier, v. See sofer, v.; but this form began by being coll., and in C. 20 is S.E.-2. V.i., to clean one's equipment; doing routine work or fatigues: military: 1885 (O.E.D.): s., >, ca. 1915, coll. -3. V.t., to use temporarily (another man's horse) t Australian (-1891); ob. Century Dict.


soldier on. To persevere against peril and/or hardship: military coll.: esp. 1916-18. Often as a c.p. in form soldier on, chum (B. & P.).


Soldiers, the. Aldershot Football Club ('soccer'); sporting coll.: C. 20.

soldiers, oh. A proletarian exclamation: from ca. 1880; ob. by 1906, ft by 1918. Ware.


soldier's breeze. A variant, dating from the early 1890's, of soldier's wind, q.v.: coll., >, by 1910, S.E.

soldier's farewell, a. 'Go to bed!', with ribald additions and/or elaborations: military (-1909). Ware. Cf. sailor's farewell, q.v. -2. Also (in W.G., and after) = Good-bye and b****r (or f**k) you!' M. Lincoln, Oh! Definitely, 1933, 'Good-bye! . . . !' he yelled . . . 'Soldier's farewell', he said amiably.


soldiers?, I've sh*t 'em! A c.p. 'expression of contempt for another unit (especially if slovenly)'; military: from ca. 1912. B. & F. Contrast scraped 'em off me pitties.


soldier's mawud. A sham sore or wound in the left arm: c.: late C. 17-18. B.E. Cf. mason's mawud, q.v. -2. Hence, 'a pretended soldier, begging with a counterfeit wound, which he pretends to have received at some famous siege or battle,' Grose, 1st ed.: c.: mid-C. 18-early 19.

soldier's mast. A pole mast without sails, during the transition period from sail to steam in the Navy, Frank C. Bowen. Ex cattle mast, n., q.v. Mid-C. 19.


soldier's privilege. Complaining: G.W. military coll. See grousse; see sailor's pleasure.
solder's supper. A drink of water and a smoke; coll.: 1893 (O.E.D.). 'Wot're, 'Nothing at—all—tea being the final meal of the day.' Cf. subaltern's lunchroom.—2. As a c.p. (e.g. a solder's supper to you) 1833, Marryat (O.E.D.); nautical coll. >, ca. 1890. J. Kingsley, Clark Russell.
soldier's wind. A fair wind either way, a beam wind; 1833, Marryat (O.E.D.); nautical coll. >, ca. 1890. J. Kingsley, Clark Russell.
soldier's thig. An empty pocket: dial. and a.; mid-C. 19–20; ob. E.D.D.
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soldier's thig. An empty pocket; dial. and a.; mid-C. 19–20; ob. E.D.D.

**solecism** or **solemncoly.** Excessive seriousness; coll.: from ca. 1860. This blend of solemn + melancholy is an extension of the jocular S.E. adj. coined in America in 1772 (O.E.D. Sup.). A ludicrous perversion is lemoncholy, q.v.
sold. (Of time) complete, entire; C. 18–20; S.E. until ca. 1890, then coll. 'Rolf Boldrewood' 1890, 'I walked him up and down ... for a solid hour.' (O.E.D.)—2. Severe; difficult: Australian (—1916) and gen. coll. C. J. Dennis. 3. Adv., solidly; low coll.: mid-C. 19–20. As severely: C. 20.
solitary. Solitary confinement; 1854, Dickens (O.E.D.); prison s., by 1900, coll.—2. 'A whale cruising by himself, generally an outcast and savage bull'; nautical coll.: late C. 19–20. Bowen.

**solid.** See solidon. Solly. The Marquess of Salisbury; comio papas; ca. 1880–1900. Baumann.
solo. A solitary walk (without a 'socius', q.v.): Winchester: from ca. 1870.
solo player. A miserably performing any instrument, who always plays alone, because no one will stay in the room to hear him,' Grose, 1st ed.: jocular coll. of ca. 1780–1850 punning the lit. sense.

**solidon.** A late C. 17–early 19 variant of salmon, q.v.
salts and obs. See Ob and sol.
salts. An advertisement on a page containing no other advertisements: advertising coll. (from ca. 1920) verging on j.
salum. Both as averb of quantity and as an intensive adjective—equivalent respectively to much, or very, and great, lovely, etc.—some was originally, and still is, an Americanism that has contributed laudably to the gaiety of nations and enabled the English to take their pleasures less sadlier. As an adjective, e.g. some girl; it is a 20th century importation (rare before the G.W.) into England, but as an adverb, e.g. going some, it was known at least as early as 1890 in Britain. In America, the earliest examples are 'I hunt some and snakes a little', 1826, or in a slightly different
gense, 'He stammers some in his speech', 1786; and 'She's some woman now, that is a fact', 1848. Nevertheless, the Americans prob. adopted both the adj. and the adv. from English dial.; see E.D.D. Cf. the French, *Ca, c'est quelque chose* and the next entry. (O.E.D. and Supplement; Ware; Thornton; Weekley; Fowler.)
some and then. And many, or much, in addition; U.S. (ca. 1913), anglicised by 1919. O.E.D. (Sup.). Prob. a more elaboration of the Scots and some, and much more so, as in 'Roses pastoral poem, Helenore, 1768, and as in the 'She's as bonny as you, and some of this lexicographer Jamieson (E.D.D.).'
some hopes! It is most unlikely; a c.p. dating from ca. 1890. B. & P. Cf. what hopes?
same say 'Good old sergeant!' A c.p. spoken or shouted by privates within the sergeant's hearing; gen. one added (often affectionately), others say 'F*ck the (old) sergeant!': military; from ca. 1890. B. & P.
same when, adv. Some time; Society c.p.: ca. 1890–70. Ware: something, adv. with adj. An intensive, esp. with cruel (e. cruel = cruel or cruelly); dial. and low, in C. 20 sol., coll.: mid-C. 19–20. E.g. 'E suffered something cruel—or, frequently, 'something cruel'; 'the heat was something frightful'.—2. As in 'the something something' ('the bloody bastard'), 'the something horse' ('the bloody horse'); a coll. euphemism: mid-C. 19–20; in C. 20 use, gen. considered S.E.—3. Hence v. in the past ppl., somethinged = damned, etc.; 1899 (O.E.D.).
something damp. See damp. something good. A good racing tip: s. (from ca. 1890) >, ca. 1920, coll.—2. Hence, a profitable affair, a safe but not generally known investment, venture, etc.: coll.: C. 20. E.g. 'I'm on something good.'
something in the City. See City, something in the.
something short. See short, something, something the cat's brought in. See like something.
something to hang things on. An infantryman's jocular coll. description of himself: G.W. F. & Gibbons, 'In allusion to the paraphernalia of his heavy marching order kit.'
somewhere in France was, in 1914–18, often put to jocular uses or to senseless variations and thus > a c.p. B. & P., 'The heading of most Western- Front soldiers' letters home.'
son. In such phases as son of Apollo, a scholar (late C. 17–mid-19), son of Mars, a soldier (C. 18–19), son of Mercury, a wit (id.), son of patriarch (id.: B.E., by a slip, has patriarch), son of gratification, a barrister (C. 18–mid-19), and son of Venus, a wench (late C. 17–mid-19) are—except for son of Mars, perhaps always S.E.—coll. verging on, and in C. 19 being, S.E.: *gratification* is in A New Gothic Dict., 1755; the first, third, fourth, and sixth is T.E.—S.
son of wax, a cobbler, C. 19, is coll.—3. See son of a .

son, every mother's. See mother's son, every.


son of a bitch or whore. (Lit., a bastard, hence) a pejorative for a man, a fellow: coll.: C. 18–20: the former in The Triumph of W'd, 1712, the latter, ca. 1705, in Satires." (Tebb Brown.)

son of a dunghill and son of a shoemaker, pejorative: S.E., not coll.

son of a gun. 'A soldier's bastard', Bee, 1823; but, as gen. pejorative (increasingly less offensive), it dates from early C. 18: see gun, son of a.

son of a sea-cook. See sea-cook.


song do not agree, his morning and evening. He soon took it for one told even recently: late C. 18–19: coll. >, ca. 1830, S.E. Gros. 2nd ed. An elaboration of change of one's, or sing another, song.

songkey. A loath: c. or perhaps only low (–1887). Baumann. Cf. saunkey and sukey for both form and sense.

sonnie; properly sonny. A coll. term of address to a boy or to a man younger than oneself; though not if the addressee is old or middle-aged: O.E.D. records at 1870, but prob. existing a decade earlier. In Australia, the -ois is opp. pronounced as in the preposition, as Morris remarked, citing A. B. Paterson's rhyme of sonny with Johnnie.

'sonny.' To catch sight of, to sec, to notice: c.: 1845, in 'No. 747': app. by 1900. Cf. granny, to understand.

so or so. See so or so or so. See sukey, 4.

so. To set (a dog) on: Australian col.: from ca. 1800. Morris. Also sool on C. 20. Prob. ex dial. soul, to handle roughly, or soul into, to attack fiercely (E.D.D.).—2. Hence (as of a dog a cat), to worry: id.: 1896, Mrs Parker, 'Soil 'em, soul 'em " the signal for the dogs to come out.

soon run dry. An occ. military c.p. (1915–18) on rum-jars, on which were stamped the initials S.R.B. (service rum diluted). B. & P.

sooner. A shirker: naval (= 1935). Ex sooner dog, one that would sooner feed than fight: from before 1914.

sooner, adv. Better, as in 'You had sooner go,' you had better go, you would do well to go: lower classes' coll. (=1923). Mancheon. Ex S.E. sooner, 'more readily as a matter of choice' (O.E.D.).

sooner dog. See sooner, 2.


soop. An occ. variant (from ca. 1910; e.g. in John G. Brandon, The One-Minute Murder, 1934) of:


soor. See soor. See sukey, 4.

soor. An abusive term: Anglo-Indian (= 1884) and Regular Army's. Ex Hindustani for a pig. H. 3rd ed.

soor dook. See suor dook.
1830, coll. *a sort of, ob. by 1890, † by 1930; sort of, app. not before ca. 1830. Thackeray, 1859, "You were hurt by the betting just now?" "Well", replied the lad, "I am sort of hurt!" Orig. and mainly U.S. is sorter (1846), orig. a sorter (as in Marryatt's *American Dictionary*, 1839); cf. Thornton, *passim*. See also kind of, kinder.—2. Hence, merely modifcatory, deprecated, or tautological: C. 20. E.g. Denis Mackail, *Summer Leaves*, 1934, "Engelfield's our sort of village", i.e. (simply) our village.

**sort of, these.** E.g. 'These sort of cases' for 'this sort of case', i.e. 'such cases': mid-C. 16–20: S.E., by 1887, somewhat catachrestic, by 1920, coll. Baumann. In 'These sort of things are done by conjurers' (well-known novelist) there is a confusion between 'This sort of thing is done ...' and 'These sorts of things are done ...'.

**sort-out.** A fight, a mellay: workers' (—1935). Ex what the combatants do after the fight.


**sorts, all.** Coll. >, in late C. 19, idiomatic S.E. is the phrase as used in these two examples from the O.E.D.: 1794, Mrs Radcliffe, 'There they were, all drinking Tuscan wine and all sorts'; 1839, Hood, 'There's a shop of all sorts, that sells everything.'

**sorts, of.** Inferior; unsatisfactory: coll.: C. 20. E.g. 'He's certainly a writer—of sorts.' Ex the ob. of sorts, of various kinds.

**sorts, out of.** Dispiritied; slightly unwell: from ca. 1620: S.E. until mid-C. 19, then coll. In C. 19, it received an unconventional impetus from printers.

**sorty.** Similar: coll.: 1885; ob.—2. Mixed: coll.: 1889, A 'sorty 'team.' (Both O.E.D.)

**so's.** See so is.


**soosed, soossil; soossed.** See soossed.

**soosedge** is frequent but unnecessary, for *sausage* should, in ordinary dialogue anyway, be pronounced precisely thus. Ware has *soosedge-stump*, doctrine in popularity of Germans consequent on the Kaiser's telegram to Kruger in 1896: political: 1896–7.


**soul or soure, not a.** Not a penny; penniless: coll.: *not a sou* from ca. 1820 (Byron); *not a souse*, ca. 1675–1820, as in *D'Urféy*, 1767. Ex the French coin, orig. of considerably higher value than 6 centimes. In C. 19 and ooc. (though ob.) in C. 20, not a *sou; see: soues.**

**sou, or soul.** To wound oneself deliberately: military: 1917–18. Ex *s.i.w.* (self-inflicted wound) pronounced as one word.

**soul-moni.** 'Any cleansing composition' (Merchant Service coll., C. 20); even canvas and sand used for cleansing (naval coll., C. 20). Properly 'one special preparation'—a trade name. Bowen. —2. Hence, fig., from ca. 1905, as in 'There are no sailors to-day!', says [Conrad], "only Suji-Maji ... More washer of paint. Deck-hands on masts, they ship's wash and other paint, morning, noon and night," James Hanley in *The Spectator*, Jan. 26, 1934.

**soul, be a.** To be a drunkard, esp. on brandy: coll. or a: late C. 17–mid-18. B.E. 'He is a soul, or loves Brandy' Ex *soul, a person, + Fr. soiff, tipsy* (as in Mathurin Régnier, d. 1913). Cf. *soul in soul, q.v.*

**soul, bless my; 'pon my, etc.** A mild assurance: coll. and dial.: the former, C. 19–20; the latter, C. 15–20, but S.E. till C. 19.

**soul, have no.** To lack sensibility or gen. decency or emotional force: coll.: 1704, Swift (O.E.D. Sup.).

**soul above, have a.** To care not about, be indifferent or indifferently superior to (something): coll.: 1899, G. B. Burgin (O.E.D. Sup.).

**soul-and-body lashing.** 'Under sail, a piece of spun yarn tied round the waist and between the legs to prevent a man's oikins blowing over his head when aloft': nautical: late C. 19–20. Bowen. Because a matter of life and death.

**soul-case.** The body: late C. 18–20; ob. by 1900. Grose, 3rd ed.


**soul-faker.** A member of the Salvation Army: lower classes: 1883–ca. 85. Ware, 'Before their value was recognised.'


**soul-smiler.** A sensational novel (of the sentimental sort): book-world coll. (—1923); ob. Manchon. The 1930's prefer to speak of 'a sloppy thriller'.

**souldier's mawnd.** B.E.'s spelling of soldier's mound, q.v.


**sound as a bell, roach, trout.** Perfectly sound or healthy: coll. bordering on S.E.: reep. 1576 (1598, Shakespeare); 1655, T. Muffett, but in late C. 19–20, † except in dial.; from late C. 13, also in Skelton, but in C. 19 mainly, and in C. 20 only, dial. (Dial., by the way, has also, from mid-C. 19, sound as an arch.) Apperson

**sound egg.** A very 'decent' fellows: C. 20. Denis Mackail, in *The Strand Magazine*, April, 1934, 'Another and infinitely superior sex still remained, full of stout fellows, sound eggs, and great guys.'

**sound on, be.** To have orthodox or well-grounded views concerning: coll.: orig. (1868) U.S., anglicised ca. 1890.—2. Hence, to be both intelligent on and reliable in (a given subject): coll.: from ca. 1860. E.g. 'He's very sound on the little-known subject of psychopaedica.'

**sounder.** Catachrestic when, in C. 18, used of a wild boar's lair and when, in C. 19–20, applied to a boar one or two years old, or when, as by Grose in 1785, it is used in the pl. form l, for a herd of any swine. Properly, *sounder* is a noun of assembly for a herd of wild swine.

**soup.** (Collective from 1856, simple from ca. 1890.) Briefs, a brief; for prosecutions given to junior members of the Bar (esp. at Quarter Sessions) by the Clerk of the Peace or Arrears, to defend such poor prisoners as have no choice, at two guineas a time: legal s. >, ca. 1910, coll. *The Law Times*, 1856. 'But will soup so ladled out ... support s.
soup, in the

barrier in the criminal courts? —2. Hence (both collective and simple), the fee paid for such briefs or such a brief; 1889, B. C. Robinson: a., ca. 1910, coll. O.E.D.—3. Bad ink: printers: from ca. 1870. Ex its thickness or inauspicious clote.—4. A fog: coll.: C. 20; ob. except in pea-soaper.—5. Melted plate: c.: late C. 19–20; ob. If of silver, also white soup.—6. Nitro-glycerin: c. (1865). Prob. orig. U.S. in New Zealand c. (1832), gelignite. 'Any material injected into a horse, with a view to changing its speed or temperament,' Webster, 1911: low s., orig. and mainly U.S. (8. Rare, though prob. to be considered coll., is soup, a picnic at which 'a great pot of soup is the principal feature,' Century Dict.: from ca. 1890; ob.):—9. See 'Moving-Picture Slang,' § 6.


*soup-shop. A house (see fence, n.) for the disposal of stolen plate: c. 1854 (O.E.D.). Punning the S.E. sense. F. & H., 'Melting-pots are kept going, no money passing from fence to thief until identification is impossible.'

*souper. A 'super,' i.e. a watch: c.: mid-C. 19–20; ob. 'Jucange Anglius'; H., 1st ed. See soup, 6.—2. A cadger of soup-tickets: coll.: from ca. 1875. Ex souper, a Roman Catholic converted to Protestantism by free soup or other charity.—3. See pea-soaper.


sour ale (dial. only, milk) in summer, mend like. To get worse: (dial. and) coll.: late C. 17–early 19; extant in dial. E.D.D.

sour apple-tree, be tied to the. To be married to a bad-tempered husband; semi-proverbial coll.: late C. 17–18. Ray; Bailey. (Apperson.) Via crab-apple.


sour on. To form a distaste or dislike to: U.S. (1862), anglicised as a coll. ca. 1895. The Daily News, Nov. 13, 1900, 'Dan soured on Castlereagh boys ... forwith,' O.E.D. Ex be sour towards.

*sour-planter. An utterer of base silver coin: c.: from ca. 1886. Ex sour, plant the. Cf. shover, q.v., and see snide, n. and adj.

*sour, swallow the. To conceal counterfeit money: c. (1887). Baumann.

sous. As a sou in not a sous, it is a C. 19–20 coll. that, though ob. by 1880, is not quite ü by 1937. W. quotes Barham, 'Not a sou had he got, not a guinea or note' and The Daily Chronicle, May 15, 1918, 'He had not given a sous since the war began.'

sous. A getting drunk: from late 1920's. (O.E.D. Sup.) Ex sous. To drink to intoxication: from ca. 1920. (O.E.D. Sup.) Ex souze, to drench.

sous, not a. See sous, not a, and cf. sous.

sous, sell. To be sulky, surly; to frown: C. 17 coll. Cotgrave.


south, put down. Lit., to put into one’s pocket; hence, to put away safely, to bank, not to spend: late C. 19–20. Cf. trouser, q.v., and:

south, slip. To put one’s hand in one’s pocket for money, e.g. if it is running low: New Zealanders: C. 20.

[South-Easter. Itself S.E., it has three coll. synonyms: see table-cloth.]

south jeopardy. The terrors of insolvenoy; Oxford University: ca. 1820–40. Egan’s Grose, 1823. Ex jeopardy, danger,—some topical allusion.

south-paw; ooe. south-paw. A left-handed boxer: puğilistic; U.S., anglicised in; 1934, The Daily Telegraph, Sept. 21, concerning Freddie Miller, 'He is, in boxing parlance, a “southpaw.”' Ex U.S. baseball s. (1918).

south sea or S—S—. Any strong distilled liquor: c. of ca. 1720–50. A New Canting Dict. (1725), where also south-sea mountain, gin: c. of ca. 1721–1830 (also Grose, 1st ed., where confusingly printed as 'SOUTH SEA, mountain, gin'). Prob. ex the South Sea Bubble (1720).


souptherly buster. See buster, 6.—south-paw.

see south-paw.

Souths. Shares in the London & South-Western Railway: Stock Exchange coll. (—1860); ü by 1930. (A. J. Wilson’s glossary.)

souvenir. (Gen. pl.) A shell: military: 1916; ob. (G. H. McKnight, English Words, 1923.)

souvenir, v. To take illicitly: military: 1918; ob. B. & P. Ex s., to pick up as a souvenir. (Cf. the jocular S.E. senses in the O.E.D. Sup.)

sov. A sovereign: coll.: 1850, The New Monthly Magazine, 'As to the purse, there weren’t above three or four sovs in it.' Also half-sov. (O.E.D.)

sovereign, for a. Assuredly; 'I’d bet on it': coll. (1923). Manchon.

sovereign’s not in it, a. A nautical c.p. (1909) applied to a person with jaundice. Ex the sufferer’s dark yellow. Ware.


sow, as drunk as a. A C. 19–20 (ob.) variant of David’s sow ..., q.v.


sow by the ear, get the right, wrong. See ear, get the . .

sow in or on the arse, grease a fat. See grease a fat . .

sow potatoes (or scarlet-runners, etc.) on his neck, you could or might. A lower classes’ c.p. (1887; ob.) applied to a man with a dirty neck. Baumann.


sow's ear, come sailing in a. A coll. of ca. 1670-1770 (R ay, Fuller). Apperson does not explain the phrase; † = to prosper.


spaces, the wide open; ooc. the vast open spaces. This once serious phrase has, since ca. 1925, †, for the irreverent, something of a derisory c.p. (Cf. Collinson, p. 80).


spalm. An † incorrect form of psalm, as spalter of psalter. O.E.D.

spalpeen. A low fellow; a mean one; a scamp or rascal: Anglo-Irish coll. †: ca. 1905, S.E.: 1816, Maria Edgeworth. *The spalpeen! turned into a buckeen, that would be a squireen,—but can't,* neatly illustrative of the Celtic diminutive suffix -een (properly, in); the radical is of uncertain meaning. The imm. source is S.E. spalpeen, a casual farm labourer.—2. Hence, a youngster, esp. a boy: coll.: 1891. Bram Stoker (O.E.D.); by 1920, virtually S.E.

spandau or 8. Generic for the latrines at Ruhleben internment camp, 1914-18. Ex the *mushroom* munition-town of Spandau.

spang. Entirely, exactly; fair (e.g. in the centre); straight and with impetus: coll. C. 20, mostly Col. dial. Ex U.S. right spang (1843); wholly, exactly, fair (e.g. in the centre), ex spang, irresistibly or with an impetus, a spring, a smack, itself ex Scotch and Northern spang, to leap, bound. (Thornton; E.D.D.)


spangle-guts, shaker. A harlequin; theatrical: from ca. 1870. Ex spangled costume.

Spaniard. Gen. pl. *Brighton fishing boats, from a colony of Spanish fishermen in that town* (leaven); native C. 18.

Spanish (or s.); gen. the s. Money; esp. ready money, and again esp., in coin: from ca. 1789; ob. Grose, 2nd ed.; Barham, 1837, *Bar its synonyms Spanish, blunt, stumpy and rowdy.* Elliptical for Spanish coin or gold.

Spanish, adj. As a pejorative, common in coll. and s. ca. 1570-1750 and by no means rare until well on into C. 19. Ex commercial and naval rivalry (of. Dutch, q.v.). See ensuing terms and, esp., "Offensive Nationality in My Words!"

Spanish, walk. See chocolates, walk one's.


Spanish fan(s). The sun: 1785, Grose; † by 1850. Ex heretic-burnings.


Spanish mare, ride the. To sit astride a beam, guys loosed, sea rough, as a punishment; nautical: ca. 1840-80. F. & H.


Spanish padlock. *A kind of girdle contrived by jealous husbands of that nation, to secure the chastity of their wives,* Grose, 2nd ed.: ca. 1780-1850.


Spanish pox. See Spanish gout.

Spanish trumpeter; also King of Spain's trumpeter. An ass braying: ca. 1780-1850. Grose, 1st ed. The clue is Don Key.

Spanish worm. A nail met in a board while sawing: carpenters' coll. (—1785); † by 1850. Grose, 1st ed. Ex shape.


spank v. To smack, slap, with the open hand: coll. (—1727, N. Bailey) and dial. Echoic (cf. spank)—2. Hence, to crack (a whip): coll. (rare and ob.): 1854, M. Scott (O.E.D.—).3. To bring down, insert, slappingly, coll. and dial. Only the latter: 1880, Tennyson. *'An 'en spanks is 'is and into mine.'—4. To rob (a place) by breaking a window-pane (spanking a place is the c. term): c. (—1812). Vaux. Cf. spank, n. 3.—V.i., to fall, drop, with a smack: coll.: 1800, Hurdis, *The sullen shower ... on the ... pavement spanks,* O.E.D.; slightly ob.—V.i., of a boat bounding the water as it sails along: coll. (—1891).—[The next group derives ultimately ex spang, to slap, to make a spanking sound, etc., influenced by dial. spang (see spang above).—7. To move quickly and briskly; to ride, drive, smartly or stylishly at a smart trot or a graceful canter: dial. (—1897) >, by 1811, coll. Lex. Bal; Thackeray, 1880, *A gentleman in a natty gig, with a high-trotting horse, came spanking towards us.* Frequently with along (first, 1825, in dial.); and esp. of a ship bowling along.—S. Hence, v. t., to drive (horses) with stylish speed: coll.: 1823, Westmacott (O.E.D.—); 1840, Thackeray, *How knowingly did he spank the horses along.* Slightly ob.

**spank, upon the.** By employing *spank* (n., 3): o.: C. 19. Vaux.

**spank a (or the) glaze.** See *glaze, spank a, and of *spank, v., 4.

**spanker. A gold coin;** gen. in pl. as = ready money, coin: prob. c. (1663, Cowley) >, ca. 1730, a.; † by 1830. Grose, 1st ed. Prob. ext dial. *spank, to sparkle. Cf. *spanks, q.v.—2. Any thing or person unusually fine, large, or excellent: coll. and dial.: 1761, Smollett (concerning 'a buxom wench'). 'Blood... to turn me adrift in the dark with such a spanker.' Ex *spanking, adj., I. q.v.—3. Hence, a resounding blow or slap: coll.: 1772, Bridges; Meredith, 1894, 'A spanker on the nob,' O.E.D.; in cricket, 1877 (Lewis).—4. A horse that travels with stylish speed: coll. and dial.: 1814, Scott (E.D.D.). *Ex spank, to trot (etc.) smartly.


**spanking, pln. adj.** Very large, fine, smart, showy; excellent; coll. and dial.: from early Restoration days. Fanshawe, ca. 1666; Bridges, 1772, 'A table... a spanking dish.' Esp. of girls (—1707): cf. *spanker, 2, q.v.—2. Hence, though influenced by the v. of motion, (of a horse) rapidly and smartly moving: coll. and dial.: 1738 (O.E.D.).—3. Hence, (of persons) dashing: coll.: C. 19–20; ob.—4. (Of a breeze) brisk: coll.: mid-C. 19–20.—5. (Of pace) rapid; esp. smartly and vigorously rapid: coll.: 1857, T. Hughes, 'The wheelers in a spanking trot, and leaders cantering,' O.E.D.

**spanking, adv. Very:** coll. (—1887). Baumann, 'A spanking fine dinner.' Ex dial.


**spanky. Smart; showily smart: from ca. 1870; slightly ob. Ex *spanking, adj., 1.**

**spar. A dispute:** coll.: 1836 (O.E.D.). Ex *spar, a boxing-match.

**sparagrass. See *sparrow-(*)grass.**

**Sparagras, the.** That express freight train which 'takes Asparagus during the Season from Worcester to Crewe'; railwaymen's: from ca. 1905. The *Daily Telegraph,* Aug. 19, 1936. Cf. the *Spud.*

**spar, adj. Idle; loafling; low: from ca. 1919.** James Curtis, *The Gill Kid,* 1936. Ex:

**spare, look.** 'To be idle; not engaged on any particular job': military coll.: from 1915. F. & Gibbons. Cf. dial. *spare, dilatory.

**spare general.** An overbearing or conceited superior below the rank of general: sarcastic military coll.: from 1915. F. & Gibbons. Cf. *spare parts, q.v.*

**spare me days! 'A pious ejaculation,' C. J. Dennis: Australian coll.: C. 20.

**spare parts.** A person either incompetent or unsuitable: military: from 1915. F. & Gibbons. I. e. not actually in use.


**spark, v. To watch closely:** Australian c. (—1901).

**spark, bright.** Ironic for a dull fellow: coll. verging on S.E.: late C. 19–20. Cf. S.E. *gallant spark; ex spark, a beau, via gay spark.*

**spark, have a. To be a youth, or man, of spirits:** Conway cadet': from before 1890. John Massfield, *The Conway,* 1933. Ex the eliché, *have no spark of courage.

**spark in one's throat, have a. To have a constant thirst:** 1785, Grose; but acumbrated in Scots ca. 1720. Ex the proverbial *the smith had always a spark in his throat* (Ray, 1785); cf. Spurgeon, 1860. 'He is not a blacksmith but he has a spark in his throat.'


**spark prop. A diamond breast-pin:** c.: from the middle or late 1870's. Ex *spark n., 2.*

**sparkle. A diamond:** low (—1923). Manchon. Prob. ex a confusion of *spark, n., 2, and *sparker, 2; for there is no connexion with the S.E. *sparkle (a diamond) of late C. 15–early 18 (O.E.D.).—2. Hence (†), generic for jewellery; c.: (—1935). David Hume.


**sparks, get the.** To set the aim of a machine-gun on an enemy trench after dark 'by firing into the wire-entanglement and noting where the sparks fly off as the bullets cut the wire': machine-gunners' coll.: 1916–18. F. & Gibbons.

**sparm-fish.** A sperm-whale: nautical coll. (—1887). Baumann.


**sparrow-catch, n. Walking the streets in search of men: low from ca. 1880.

**sparrow-fart, n. At daybreak: dial. >, ca 1910, coll. popularised by G.W.

**sparrow-(*)grass; sparagrass. Asparagus: mid-C. 17–20: S.E. until early C. 19, then dial. and coll.; by 1870, low coll. or, rather, sol. 'Cuthbert Bede', in 1895, 'I have heard the word sparrowgrass from the lips of a real lady—but then she was in her seventies,' O.E.D.

**sparrow-mouthed. (Of a person) having a large mouth: lower-class coll. (—1923). Manchon.

**sparrow-starver. A collector of dung from off the streets: lower classes' (—1923). Ibid.

spasiba! Thanks; military coll. in North Russia in 1918–19. F. & Gibbons. Direct ex Russian.

spat, a quarrel, a smart blow, a smacking sound,—all C. 19–20,—is, when not U.S., rather dial. than coll.—2. See spat.


spats. Those stream-lined covers over landing-wheels which are in aircraft designed to reduce air-resistance: aviators': from 1934. The Daily Telegraph, Feb. 9, 1935.

spay, v. See speak at the mouth, to, with.—2. To pay court: lower classes' (—1909). Waro.

*peak, make a (gen. good or rum). To make a (gen. good) haul, get a (good) 'swag': c. (—1811); † by 1860. Lex. Bal. Ex speak to, q.v.

speech, make a cat. See cat speak.

speech, at the mouth. To say one's say: ca. 1870–1910. Ex North Country dial.


speak easy. A shop or café where liquor is illicitly sold: U.S. (late 1890's), anglicised by 1925. (O.E.D. Sup.). One speaks softly in ordering it. Cf. speak-softly shop.

speak French. See French, speak.

speak like a mouse in a cheese. See mouse in a cheese.

speak to. To rob (person, place); to steal: c. 1780 (O.E.D.); 1812, Vaux; † by 1860. A variant of speak with, q.v.—2. See speak, or spoken, to.

speak to, not to. Not to see or know at close quarters: jocular coll. : from ca. 1925. Richard Blaker, Night-Shift, 1934, of a motor-car, 'I've never seen one like this before—not to speak to.'

speak with. C. of ca. 1720–1810, as in A New Canning Dict, 1725, 'I will never speak with any thing but Wolfe', or, 'Cloy, I'll never steal, or — the basic sense—have to do with — a nuance † by 1785—'any thing but Plate, or Money'; Grose, 1st ed. (to rob, steal). Cf. speak to, I.

speak-softly shop. A smuggler's house: c. or low (—1823); † by 1890. Bee.

speaks. A 'talkie': coll. : 1928–9. O.E.D. (Sup.). (In the sense of a stage-play, the word did not catch on at all.)

speaks the parrot! See parrot, speaks the.

speaking. Booty: capture of booty: c. (—1887). Bn. Ex speak, make a, q.v.

Spearmen, the Delhi. The 9th Lancers: military: from middle 1850's (ob.). Coll. verging on journalistic S.E. Ex Indian Mutiny.


spec. on. On chance; as, or at, a risk; esp. on the chance of getting something or of making a profit: 1832, Marryat (O.E.D.): s. >, ca. 1890, coll. See spec. 1.—2. At Winchester, on a pleasant occasion or outing: from before 1891. Wrench.

spec. Abbr. specimens: s. (—1823) rather than coll., for it is infelicitous. Manehon.

special, adv. In a special way; especially, particularly: C. 14–20: S.E. until early C. 19, then coll. (in C. 20, almost sol.). Helps, 1851, 'A case came on rather unexpectedly ... and I was sent for 'special' as we say.' O.E.D.

specimen. A person: from middle 1850's: derogatory, coll. if with bright, poor, etc., s. if alone. Thorow, 1854, There were some curious specimens among my visitors, O.E.D. Ex such phrases as specimens of the new spirit abroad, via such as strange specimen of the human race (Dickens, 1837). Cf. spec, q.v.

specific, v. To exult; to show oneself confident of a victory: at certain Public Schools, esp. at Shrewsbury: late C. 19–20. Desmond Coke, The Flower Prefect, 1908, 'Look at the joy of the beastly County [players]!' 'They're specking horribly,' the watchers say.' Ex expect.

Spec., the. Tasmania: Australian Continentals: C. 20. Because Tasmania is so small compared with Australia.


speckle-belly (or S.). A Nonconformist, a Dissenter: provincial a. (—1874); slightly ob. H., 6th ed., 'A term used in Worcester and the North, though the etymology seems unknown in either place.' Perhaps ex the tendency of the lower middle class to wear coloured waistcoats: cf. specked wiper, q.v.

speckled. Of a mixed nature, appearance, character, merit; motley: coll.: 1845, S. Judd, 'It was a singularly ... speckled group' (of persons). O.E.D.


speck's. (App. never in singular.) Damaged oranges: costers' coll.: 1851, Mayhew: H., 1st ed. Ex the markings caused by mildew, etc.—2. See spec.


specked; also specks. Spectacles for the sight: dial. (orig. and mainly specks: 1807, Hogg) >, ca. 1830, coll. (mainly spec). Barham, 1837, 'He wore green specs with a tortoise-shell rim'; R. D. Blackmore, 1882, 'Must have my thick specs,' O.E.D.—2. Since 1900 (when used by P. F
Warne), and also as pair of speck, an occ. abbr. of spectacles. Lewis.
spectable. Respectable: id. Ibid.
spectacles. (Cf. space, 2, q.v.) Two scores of 0 by a batsman in the one match: cricket coll. >, ca. 1910. S.E. : 1856. Wanstroth, "The ominous "spectacles", have been worn by the best sighted men", 1855, P. M. Thornton; 1888, Giffen; W. J. Lewis, 1934. Abbr. pair of spectacles, same meaning: 1862. Lewis records the rare v., be
spectacled, as early as 1854. Ex '0—0' in statistics.
spectacles-seat. The nose: 1895, Meredith, in
The Amazing Marriage (O.E.D.); ob.
speech. 'A tip or wrinkle on any subject. On
the turf a man will wait ... until he "gets the
speech", as to whether [a horse] ... has a good
chance. To "give the speech" is to communicate
any special information of a private nature," H., 6th ed.: mainly racing: ca. 1872. Since ca. 1920,
largely superseded by dope, q.v.

Speecher (or s.). The speech-room: Harrow:
Vachell, 1905.
speechless. Extremely drunk: coll.: 1881,
Besant & Rice (O.E.D.).
speed-cop. A policeman observing the speed of
motorists: coll. orig. (ca. 1924) U.S., anglicised by
1929. (O.E.D. Sup.)
speed-merchant. One who cycles or, esp., motors
at high speed: U.S.; anglicised ca. 1920. Cf. road-
hog, q.v. (The forms speed-bug and speed-hog are
hardly eligible, for they have not 'caught on'.)—
2. Whence, from ca. 1926, a very fast bowls: 'cricketers'. In this compound, merchant = chap, follow.
speedo. A speedometer: motorists: from ca.
1920. (The Passing Show, July 21, 1934.)
speedy. Living a loose life: apt to be amorous:

*spee. To decamp: Northern c. (— 1839); ob.
by 1910, virtually † by 1930. Brandon: H., 1st ed.
Ex speel (Scottish and Northern dial), v.i., to
clamber, (of the sun) to mount. Cf. speed the drum,
q.v.— 2. See speel.
speeken. See speel. See speel-kn.
spee the drum. To make off for, or to, the high-
way, esp. with stolen property: c. (— 1859); very
speeler. See speeler. —spelicate. See spilicate
—speller. See speller.
spegl. adj. Smart: Wincheste; † by 1903.
F. & H. Perhaps ex spick and span.
— Hence, a mode of spelling a word: coll.: C. 19—
20. The Monthly Magazine, 1801, "Why should this
spell (as school children say ...) be author-
(— 1812); ob. Also as adj. Both in Vaux, 1812.
Abbr. spell-kn, q.v.

*spell. To advertise; put in print: c. (— 1664)
H., 3rd ed. Esp. spell in the leer, advertised-for in
the newspaper, hence 'wanted'. Ob.— 2. To be
spelt: coll. esp. children's (— 1877). Baumann,
'How does it spell?''

spell-binder; spellbinder. A 'spiller of rhetorical
dope' (Alastair H. M. Laing): journalistic coll. (from
ca. 1920) verging on rank J.

*spell-kn or spellknoll; occ. spell-kn — 1860.
A theatre: c. of ca. 1800—90. Jackson, 1800, as
quoted by Byron in Don Juan, note to XI, 19;
Vaux. Ex Dutch speel (Ger. spiel), play; of
spieler, q.v., and F. E. spil-house, a gaming house.

spell-oh; occ. spell-ho or (in C. 20) spell-o. A
rest: Conway training-ship, and Australian, coll.: late C. 19—20. Henry Lawson, 1900, 'Bill ...
was having a spell-oh under the caek when the white
rooster crowed, 'O.E.D. Ex spell-oh, a call to cease
work or to rest.— 2. Allotted work: on the: Conway
from before 1891. (John Masfield, The Conway.
1933.)

*spelt in the leer. See spell, v.
spencer. A small glass of gin: low London:
1804 (O.E.D.); † by 1880.

spend, (up) on the. Spending: late C. 17—20:
S.E. until late C. 19 then coll. (rarely upon). The
is "on the spend ", O.E.D.

spending departments, the. War Office and
Admiralty: Parliamentary jocular coll. (— 1887); †
by 1920. Baumann.

spendalicious(s) is a low perversion (— 1923) of
spendalicious, q.v. Manchon.

spirrib. A wife: London lower-middle classes' (—
1909); slightly ob. Ware. Corruption of
spare rib.

speshul if pronounced with accent on first syllable
is unnecessary, for that is precisely how speck is
pronounced; if, however, with accent on the second,
it is sol.— 2. As n., it meant, in 1884—5—the time of
the Soudan War—a lie. Ex the news-vendors' cry.
(Waro.) Cf. British official, q.v.

spess. A specimen: Felsted School: 1890, The
Felstedian, July, 'Others ... calling out —
"rightful spesses", which word is specimens.'
Cf. spec, q.v.

spew-alley. The female pudend: low: C. 19—
2. The throat: low coll.: mid-C. 19—20; ob. Cf.
gutter lane and red lane.

spew her caulking or spew (the) oaken. 'A ship
spews oaken when the seams start,' F. & H.:
nautical coll. (from ca. 1860) >, ca. 1890, J.
Young's Nautical Dict, 1883.

*spice. C. of ca. 1800—50, thus: a spice, a foot-
pad; the spice, footprint robbery. Vaux. † ex
spice of adventure or danger. See spice, high toby.

spice, v.t. To rob; c. (— 1811); † by 1839.
Lex. Bal. Cf. the n.—: Gen., full, spice the soot,
to mix ashes and earth in with soot: chimney-
 sweepers' s.; 1798, O.E.D.; ob.

spice, high toby. Highway robbery: c.: late
C. 18—mid-19. Jackson, ca. 1800, as quoted by
Byron in his notes to Don Juan, xi, 'On the high
toby spice flash the muzzel.' See spice, n.

spike-glock. A footprint: c. of ca. 1810—60.
Vaux. Ex spic, n.

1810—60. Lex. Bal.— 2. Whence, applied to: any
filthy, stinking viscinity: low coll: ca. 1810—70.
Ibid. Punning the Spice Islands.

spicer. A footpad: c.: ca. 1820—60. F. & H.
Ex spic, v., 1.

spicry. Spiritied; energetically lively: 1828, 'A
remarkably spiky team,' O.E.D.; Puck, 1844, 'The
milliners' hearts he did trepan,' My spice, swell
small-college man.' Ob. Perhaps ex — Scottish
spiky, proud, conceited.— 2. Hence, smart-looking;
nest: 1846, T. H. Huxley, 'The spiky oilcloth ...
looks most respectable,' O.E.D. Cf. spicry, adv.—
3. Hence, handsome: 1868, Whyte-Melville, (of a
horse) 'What a spiky chestnut it is. — 4. Sexually
'Jucious ' or attractive: low coll.: from ca. 1870. Ex epicly, highly flavoured.

spicy, adv. Smartly: low: 1859, Meredith, 'He 've come to town dressed that spicy.' O.E.D. Ex epicly, adj. 2, q.v.

spicy, cut it. To act the beau, the dandy: lower classes: from ca. 1880. Manchon. Ex epicly, adj. 2.


spider, swallow a. To go bankrupt: coll.: mid-C. 17–18. Howell, 1669; Ray; Berthelison, 1754. Gen. he has, you have, etc., swallowed a spider. Apperson. —2. See 'Moving-Picture Slang', § 3.

spider-brother. A domestic servant: 1833, T. Hook (O.E.D.); ob. by 1880, † by 1930.


spider-claw, v.t. To grasp and stroke (the testes): low: late C. 19–early 20. (As F. & H. gives no date, this is a mere guess.)

spider-web. (Gen. pl.) Wire-entanglement: military, but not very gen.: † by 1929. G. H. McKnight, English Words, 1923.


spiel, v. See spel.—2. To talk glibly, plausibly; to patter: mostly Australian: from ca. 1870. Perhaps a back-formation ex spiker.—3. Hence, to 'tell the tale': tramps c. (—1932). 'Stuart Wood.'


spired, be. To have one's hair cut and shampoosed: Oxford University: ca. 1870–1910. 6th ed. Ex Spiers. A barber in 'the High'.


spit. See spif, adj. 2.


spiff, v.t. Only in past pln. passive: see spiffed. —2. V. a. To pay, or allow, commission as to (say) half-a-crown on (a named article): trade: from ca. 1890. The Ironmonger, Sept. 19, 1891, 'A "job" chandelier... may be "spiffed", say 1s., but a more unanswerable one should bear a higher sum,' i.e.
carry a higher commission. O.E.D. Ex spiffs, q.v. Cf. spiff, adj.

spiff, adj. Esp. s. stores, one where 'spiffs' are in force, and spiff system (recorded by O.E.D. at 1890), the procedure of paying commission to the assistants: from ca. 1889. Ex spiffs, q.v.—2. (The form epif is almost wholly dial.) Smartly dressed; dandified; in good spirits or health; excellent, superior: dial. (—1822) >, ca. 1870, s. >, ca. 1890, coll. ob. F. & H. has: 'Awpfully epif, "How spiff you look,' "How are you?" 'Pretty spiff': † abbr. spiffy, q.v.; cf. spiffing, q.v.

spiffed, ppI. adj. Smartly dressed; tricked out; very neat; spruce: 1877, W. S. Gilbert (O.E.D.); ob. See spiff, v., 1, and cf. spiffing and spiffy, q.v. —2. Tipsey: mainly Scottish (—1860); ob. H., 2nd ed. Perhaps ex skew-whiff, or even ex spiffed (q.v.) influenced by skew-whiff. Cf. screwed and spiffy.

[spiffin is by Baumann wrongly distinguished from:]

spiffing; occ. though rarely in C. 20, spiffin. (In dial., spiving.) First-rate, excellent; (of, or as to, dress) fine, smart, dandified, spruce: dial. and s. > ca. 1900, coll.: 1872, 'The vulgar Pupkins said... "It was spiffing!"'; G. Moore, 1884. Perhaps ex dial. (—1860) spifym, n., work well done. O.E.D., which relates raffling, ripping, topping, Cf. spiff, adj. 2, and spiffy, q.v., and the dial. spiff (1832), anything exceptional or very large, fine, good.—2. Hence, adv.; ob.

spifficate, etc. See spifficate, etc.

spiffs; occ., esp. in C. 20, in the singular. Trade (esp. drapery) s. as in H., 1859: 'The percentage allowed... to [assistants] when they effect sale of old fashioned or undesirable stock.' (Cf. spiff, v., 2, and adj. 1.) Prob. cognate with dial. spifym, see spiffing.

spiffy. Smart, in the fashion; fine (in appearance): spruce; first-rate, excellent; coll. and dial.: 1860, H., 2nd ed. Recorded before spiff, adj. 2, but prob. ex this adj., which may have existed in dial. (where earliest in print) some years earlier than 1860. Cf. also spiflying, for it is certain that spiff, n., 2, spiff, v., 1, spiffy, adj., 2, spiffed, 1, and spiffy form a semantic and presumably a phonetic group, and I suspect that the trade group,—spiff, n., 1, spiff, v., 2, spiffy, adj., 1, spiffed, and dial. spiff (spiflying etymology),—is cognate and ultimately ex the same radical; that root, prob., is either an echoic v.—cf. biff—with some such sense as to hit (hard), hence to startle or astonish, or an adv. of the spanghai kind—cf. its use in dial spiff and spack bran new, quite new (E.D.D.).

spifficate (—1785); often spifficate (1841,—in dial.) and, mainly Cornish dial., spifficate (1871); s. that, ca. 1870, >, coll. 'To confound, screw or dumbfound,' Grose, 1st ed., 1785; hence, to handle roughly, treat severely, to thrash, O.E.D., 1796; hence, to crush, destroy, kill, as in Moore, 1818, 'Alas, alas, our ruin's fated; All done up, and spifficated!' (O.E.D.); hence, as in 'Jon Bee', 1823, to betray (a thief to the intended victim or to the police)—a very ob. sense; and, ex the first or the third nuance, to do something mysterious (and unpleasant) to, often as a vague threat to children,—a sense dating from ca. 1890 or at latest 1890, the author hearing it first, as a child, ca. 1900. In C. 20, the last is the prevailing signification, the first nuance being very ob. In C. 20, it is often fig.: to ruin, to destroy, as in D. Sayres. Have His
Carcase, 'It completely busts up and spificates the medical formation.' Etymology: O.E.D., 'Prob. a purely fanciful formation. Cf. smitigate, v.; W., 'Fanciful formation on sulficate.' Cf. dia. smitigate (from W.), which word blends, or perhaps, confuses smoter to sulficate; H., 3rd ed., 'A corruption of ["stiffe"], or of "sulficate"'; E.P., very diffidently, 'Ex spill, to spoil by injury or damage, to render useless, to destroy the value of a thing,'—as in O.E.D., 600, § 5, c.—on the analogy of either castigate, the f being perhaps due to the influence of stiffe or even of smother (in both of which the vowels are obviously implicative on a problematical spificate) or, more prob., merely arbitrarily intrusive as are so many elements of unconventional vocabes; or, preferably, ex spill, as above, + stiffe, the dia. form of stiffe, +, or with ending on the analogy of castigate, or ex spill + stiffe + ending as in justigate, to ougdel. Cf. the later smitigate, q.v., and the (app. much later) dia. tussicated, intoxicated.

spificating, ppl.adj. Castigatory; crushing; to fill:—coll.: 1883, Meredith, 'You've got a spificating style of talk about you,' O.E.D. Rare and ob. Cf.:  
spification. The being 'spificated', the action of 'spificating', severe punishment; complete destruction: (mostly jocular) coll.: mid-C. 19-20; slightly ob. Sir Richard Burton, 1855, 'Whose blood he vowed to drink—The Oriental form of threatening spification.' Ex spificate, q.v. Ronald Knox, in The Body in the Silo, 1933, uses it (p. 296) for 'suffocation'.


[spigot, brother, knight, man, son of the S.E. cliches verging on coll.: from ca. 1820; Scott has the second and third. A tapster; an alehouse-keeper. O.E.D.]


spike. A casual ward: trampe: c.: 1866, Temple Bar, xvi, 184. Ex the hardness of beds, faro, and treatment.—2. Hence, the workhouse: (low) s.: 1894, D. C. Murray, 'To sleep in the workhouse is to go on the spike!', O.E.D. Cf. spiskenes (-knes), q.v.—3. An Anglican High Church clergyman: ecclesiastical: late C. 19-20. (The O.E.D. records it at 1902, but Mr R. Ellis Roberts clearly remembers it in the middle and late 1890's.) Ex spiky, 1, q.v.—4. A bayonet: military: late C. 19-20.—5. A needle: lower classes (—1923). Manchon.—6. Spike. The inevitable nickname of all (male) Sullivans: naval and military: late C. 19-20. Bowen. In areas where Irish potahoeers were working, there was used frequently to assume the name on entering the spike (sense 1).

spike, v. (Of an editor to reject (a news-item, etc.): journalistic: 1908, A. S. M. Hutchinson, Once Abroad the Nugger.

spike, get the. To become annoyed or angry: low: 1896 (E.D.D.). Cf. get the needle in the same sense. Ex spike, n. 5. Also, in C. 20, have the spike (E.D.D.).

spike-buzzle. To demolish: Air Force (orig. Naval): 1915; ob: Ex to spiate (a gun) + a fanciful ending.—2. Hence, to do away with, supersede: Air Force and military: from ca. 1918. O.E.D. (Sup.)

Spike(-)Park. The grounds of a prison; hence, from ca. 1890, the Queen's Bench Prison: 1837, Dickens (O.E.D.); H., 3rd ed. (secondary sense): both t by 1890.

spike-ranger. A continual trumper from casual ward to casual ward: c.: from ca. 1897.

spiky. Extreme and uncompromising in Anglo-Catholic belief or practice: orig. and mainly Church: 1881 (S.O.D.). Ex the stiffness and sharpness of opinions and attitude. Cf. spike, 3.—2. Spiky. A variant of spike, 6. F. & Gibbons, 'From the celebrated prize fighter.'

spill. A small fee, gift or reward, of money: 1875, Crowne (O.E.D.); B.E.; Grove, 1st ed. t by ca. 1840. Constructed with of (e.g. a spill of money) C. 18-early 19. Prob. ex to spill; cf. a splash, a small quantity, of liquid.—2. A fall; a tumble, esp. from a horse: from ca. 1840: coll.: >, ca. 1890, S.E. Barham. Ex spill, v., 1.—3. A drink: ca. 1890-1914. Ware.


spill and pelt. 'The practical fun at the end of each scene in the comic portion of a pantomime': theatrical: from ca. 1830. Ware. Ex things deliberately spilt and hilariously thrown.

spill milk against posts. A phrase, says Ware used in 'extreme condemnation of the habits of the man spoken of': lowest class (—1909).

spill the beans. To blab; to divulge, whether unintentionally or not, important facts; to confess; to lay information: U.S., anglicized by: 1928, D. Sayers, The Ballona Club, 1928; J. Brophy, English Prose, 1932. Orig., to 'make a mess' of things. Cf. mouthful and shoot off one's mouth, q.v.

*spill the works. A c. variant, from ca. 1929, of the preceding. E.g. in John G. Brandon, The One-Minute Murder, 1934.

Spillbury, come home by. To have a 'spill', lit. or fig.: coll.: late C. 17-18. Hacket's Life of Williams, 1832. Cf. Clapham, Peckham, q.v. [spilt in Lex. Bot., Egan's Grose, Baumann, Manchon, is a misprint for spilt, n. 1.]

spill milk, cry over. To indulge vain regrets: 1836, Haliburton; 1860, Trollope; 1900, Dowling: coll. >, ca. 1900, S.E. In mid-C. 19, spilt water offered a feeble rivalry. (O.E.D.)

spiller. Incorrect for spilleri (branchlet on deer's horn): mid-C. 17-20. O.E.D.

spin. A brisk run or canter; a spurt: coll.: >, by 1890, S.E.: 1856 (O.E.D.); 1884, The Field, Dec. 6, 'After a short undecided spin, Athos took a good lead.' Ex to spin (along).—2. A spiner: Anglo-Indian coll.: 1872, 'A most unhappy spin,' O.E.D. Ware dates it from 70 years earlier.—3. A chance, esp. a fair chance, as in 'Give a chap a spin, can't you!': C. 20 Australian. Ex to spin a coin, to decide (e.g. a bet) by spinning a coin. spin, v.t. To fail in an examination; mostly military colleges (—1900) and esp. the R.M.A., Woolwich, H. 1st ed.; mostly in passive, as in Whyte-Melville, 1868, 'Don't you funk being spun?' Ex spin, to cause to whirl.—2. Hence, v.i., to be failed in an 'exam': 1890 (O.E.D.); rare. Cf.
spin, get a. The same as spin, v., 2: same period; ob.—2. To be given a (fair) chance: C. 20 Australian. See spin, n., 3.

spin, go for a. To go for a drive in a motor-car; occ. on a motor-cycle or in its side-car: coll.: from ca. 1905. Cf. spin, n., 1.

spin, go into a flat. Сee go into a flat spin.


spin a cuff. To 'bore a mess with a long, pointless story': naval (— 1909). Ware. Cf.: spin a cuff; spin a dippy. To tell an improbable story; a probable one: naval: late O. 19-20.

Bowen. See suffer; the dippy, used only in this phrase, may possibly derive ex dippy, crazy.


spin the bat. To speak vigorously, very elangently; the Army in India: mid-C. 19-early 20. Ware. Perhaps ex spin a yarn + sting the bat, q.v.

spinach (occ. speltn spin'nage), gammon and. Nonsense; humbug: coll.: 1850, Dickens, 'What a world of gammon and spinach it is, though, ain't it!'; ob. 'The words gammon and spinach are part of the refrain to the song, 'A frog he would be wooing go'.' O.E.D. Cf. gammon.


spindles, make or spin crooked. (Of a woman) so to act as to make her husband a cuckold: coll.: late C. 16-17. Florio.

*spinikin. -kin. See spinniken.

spinik. Milk: R.M.A., Woolwich: from ca. 1890; slightly ob. 1 origin if not a perversion of drink or ex spined cattle or ex Fifeshire spinike.

spin-house. Incorrect for spin-house (see spinning-house);—spinnage. See spinach.

*spinikinen, loosely -kin. A workhouse: o. (— 1859). H., 1st ed.—2. Spinikken, the. St Giles's Workhouse: o. (— 1864). H., 3rd ed. Cf. the Lump, that of Marylebone, and the Pan, that of St Pancras, both in H., 3rd ed.; note, however, that by 1874, these two terms were 'applied to all workhouses by tramps and costers', H., 6th ed. Ex: to be a place, on spin-house (see spinning-house).


spinning-house; spin-house. Both ex spin-house, a house of correction for women, on the Continent (ex Dutch spinnhuis, cf. Ger. spinnehauz) the former, a house of labour and correction, esp. for harlots under jurisdiction of justice of peace and constables: Cambridge: C. 19: perhaps always S.E., but prob. orig. coll.: the latter, a workhouse: C. 18-mid-19 coll., as in Brand's History of Newcastle (1702), where spelt spinhouse. Cf. spinikken. O.E.D. and F. & H.


spinster. A harlot: coll.: ca. 1620-1720. Flitsher, 1622; Fuller, 1662, 'Many would never be wretched spinsters were they spinsters in deed, nor come to so public and shameful punishment.' Cf. spindles, make or spin crooked, q.v.

spirit; spin-text. A clergyman: late C. 17-20: coll. (in earliest examples, a nickname or an innuendo-surname) >, ca. 1830, S.E.; very ob. Congreve, 1693, 'SpinTEXT! Oh, the fanatikk one-eyed parson! ' Because he spin a long sermon from the text; cf. the spider-spinning luxubrations of medieval (and a few modern) philosophers. — 2. Esp. a proxy one: C. 18-20; ob. Vicosinus Knox, 1788, 'The race of formal spin-texts, and solemn saygroes is nearly extinct.'


[spirit, to kidnap (for export to the American plantations), ca. 1660-1800, may orig.—to judge by B.E. and Grose—have been coll. See Grose, F.]

spirit of the troops is excellent t, the. A military c.p. (late 1616-18) 'taken from newspaper blather and used in jocular, and often in bitterly derisive irony', B. & P.


spiritual case. 'The lower-deck term, probably unintentional at first [i.e. orig. a sol.], for spherical case shot': naval: ca. 1840-1900. Bowen.


spiritual whore. A woman infirm of faith; esp. as a C. 16 ecclesiastical c.p., she is a spiritual whore (Tyndale, 1528). Cf. S.E. go lusting or worhoring after strange gods.


spitter. See sputter.

spiry. Very distinguished: 1825, T. Hooke (O.E.D.); ob. by 1890, t by 1930. Ex height.

spit; gen. the very or, in C. 20, the dead spit of. A speaking likeness (of): 1825 (O.E.D.); coll. >, ca. 1890, S.E.—but still rather familiar. Mayhew, 1851, 'the very spit of the one I had for years; it's a real portrait'. Ex such forms as 'As like an urchin, as if they had been spit out of the mouths of them,' Breton, 1602, and 'He's e'en as like thee as th' had'st spit him,' Cotton. Cf. Fr. c'est son père tout craché.—2. A (distinguished or remarkable or attractive) manner of spitting: coll.: C. 20. (Henry Wade, Constable Guard Thyself, 1934.)


spit, put four quarters on the. To have sexual intercourse: low: C. 19. Cf. make the beast with two backs and spit, v., 1.


spit and a draw. A Protestant variant (— 1935) of the preceding.

spit and a stride, a. A very short distance: Fletcher, 1621 (Apperson); 1767, Cotton, 'You are now . . . within a spit, and a stride of the peak.'
SPIT AND POLISH

O.E.D.; Scott, 1824. Coll. until early C. 19, then dial.

spit and polish. Furishing; meticulous cleaning: naval and, esp., military: from ca. 1860 or perhaps even earlier, though unrecorded before 1895 (O.E.D.): coll. >, ca. 1920, S.E. Cf. elbow-grease. Hence, the Spit-and-Polish Navy is the C. 20 coll. (naval) term for the Victorian Navy: Bowen.—2. In C. 19, an officer exigent of the pick-and-span was likely to be dubbed ‘(Old) Spit-and-Polish or Shine’ by the (gen. rightly) exasperated soldierly.

spit and polish; no wonder... See clean and polish.


spit and shine. See spit and polish, 2.


spit button-sticks. (Gen. as vb.l.n. spitting... ) To use forcible language: Regular Army: C. 20. B. & P. A button-stick was a ‘gadget’ used in button-polishing.

spit-curl. A curl lying flat on the temple: U.S. (— 1869); anglicised ca. 1875 as a coll., chiefly among costers: cf. appr( )ravators.

spit one’s guts. To tell or confess everything: low s. verging on c.: from not later than 1931.

spit out. To confess; gen. as spit it out: coll.: C. 20. Lyell. Ex S.E. spit out, to utter plainly, bravely, or proudly.

spit sixpences or white broth. To expectorate from a dry, though healthy, mouth: resp. coll. (1772, Graves, ‘Beginning to spit six-pences (as his saying is)’ and s. (late C. 19—early 20).

spitfield(s) breakfast. ‘A tight necktie and a short pipe’; i.e. no breakfast at all: East End (—1884). H., 3rd ed. Ex the poor district in East London. Cf. Irishman’s dinner and soldier’s supper, q.v., as well as dine with Duke Humphrey, q.v., and the q.p. (—1874; or.): I’ll go out and count the railings, ‘the park or area railings, mental instead of maxillary exercise,’ H., 5th ed.


spite Gabell. To cut off one’s nose to spite one’s face: Winchester: from ca. 1820. Mansfield; Wrench. Ex the inadvisability of trying to get a rise out of him. Dr. Henry Gabell (1764-1831) was head master of the College from 1810 to 1823.

Spithead nightingale. A boatswain or his mate: nautical coll.: late C. 19—20; ob.

splam. To smear: Dulwich College: C. 20. Collinson. App. a blend of Scottish splet(s)plage, to bedaub, + smarrry.


splash-up, adj. and adv. (In) splendid (manner); ‘tip-top’; lower classes’ (—1887); ob. Baumann. Cf. bang-up.


Splashers, the. The 62nd Foot Regiment, in late C. 19—20 the Wiltshires: military: from ca. 1860; ob. Ex their dashing manner.


splashers! hold your. Be silent!: tailors: from ca. 1870; ob. Prob. ex Yorkshire splashler, noisy talk (E.D.D.). Whence:

splashler. A loquacious person; a braggart: tailors: from ca. 1875; ob.

splashterdash. A bustle; an uproar: late C. 19—20; ob. ’ex splashter- + dash.

splendacious, splendidious, splendidous, splendidous, splendidous. Very splendid, remarkably fine, magnificent: excellent: resp. 1843, Blackwood’s, ‘Some splendiduous pattern in blue and gold,’ O.E.D., which notes forms in -accous (Thackeray, 1848) and -ious, all slightly ob. and all coll.: C. 15—20, being S.E. until C. 19 (rare before 1880; now ob.), then coll.; splendidious, S.E. in C. 17, is rare in coll. and now extremely ob.; splendidious, —loosely -ous, S.E. in C. 15—16 for ‘abounding in splendour’, was in C. 17—early 19, like splendidous, ‘subterranean in usage, and, like splendidious, it arose again in 1843 (Hailburton’s ’Splendiferous white hose,’ O.E.D.), to be more gen. in U.S. than in Britain. All four are, in mid-C. 19—20, jocular in tendency.

splice. A wife: ca. 1820—1930. Ex splice, to marry.—2. Marriage; a wedding: 1830, Galt; 1876, Holland, ‘I’m going to pay for the splice,’ O.E.D.

splice, v. To join in matrimony: gen. in passive, as in the earliest instance: 1751, Smollett, ‘Trumpion & Trunion! turn over the wedding, splice, or lie still and be damned.’ Ex lit. nautical sense.—2. Hence, to coll.; low: C. 19—20.—3. At Winchester College (—1903), to throw or fling.

splice, sit on or (upon) the. To play a strictly defensive bat: crickets s. >, by 1935, coll.: from ca. 1905. Lewis. As if to sit on the shoulder of the bat.

splice the main-brace. See main-brace, splice the. splice(d), get. (To get) married: late C. 18—20. Ainsworth, 1859. Ex splice, v., 1.

splicened, with main-brace well. Drunk: orig. nautical. See main-brace.

splicer. A sailor: lower classes’ coll.: late C. 19—20. Manchon. Ex the S.E. sense, one (gen. a sailor) who splices, or specialises in splicing, ropes.

same semantic group as sense 3-6: a split bun or roll; col.: 1905; and a split vote, 1894. O.E.D.


—10. 'A division of profits': low (—1910). O.E.D. (Sup.)—11. A ten-shilling currency-note:

low; C. 20. (The half of a £ note.)

split, v.i. To copulate: low C. 18-20. To turn from, give evidence to the police: c. (—1795) >, ca. 1850, low s.—. Hence, to betray confidence, give evidence to others: 1840, Dickena, but prob. a decade earlier. See also split about and split on.— Hence, v.t., to disclose, let out: 1860, Thackeray, 'Did I split upon her', O.E.D.; ob.—5. V.i., to act vigorously: coll.: U.S. (ca. 1846), anglicised ca. 1870; ob. Prob. ex—6. V.I., to move, esp. to run, walk, gallop, etc.: coll.: 1790, R. Tyler, 'I was glad to take to my heels and split straight off.' O.E.D. (—1888, Adam Lindsay Gordon, Poems, 'We had run him for seven miles or more, As hard as our nag could split.' Also split along and go like split.—7. V.I., to divide, or share in, profits: low (—1919). O.E.D. (Sup.). Cf. split, n. 10.

split, (at) full. At full speed: coll.: U.S. (middle 1830's), anglicised ca. 1865. 'Rolf Boldrewood, 1890, 'In saddle and off full-split,' O.E.D.

Cf. split, like; esp. go like split. (To go) at full speed: coll.: U.S. (ca. 1848), partly anglicised ca. 1870, but never so gen. as full split.

split, make all. To cause, make, a commotion: coll.: late C. 16–17. Shakespeare.

split about. To divulge; esp. to the police: 1836, The Annual Register. O.E.D.


split-arse, adj. A low variant (—1923) of (at) full split, full speed. Mancheon.


split-arse turn. A flat turn, without banking; it is caused by using the rudder instead of rudder and ailerons. Royal Air Force's (—1935).

split-arising. 'Stunting low and flying near the roofs of billets or huts': Air Force: from 1915. B. & P. See also split-hairing and splitting.

split assurer. A costermonger: rhyming s. (—1859); ob. H., 1st ed.


Split Crow, the. The Spread Eagle, tavern and sign: from ca. 1780; ob. Grose, 1st ed., '...Two heads on one neck, gives it somewhat [this] appearance.'


split-hairing. A euphemism for split-arising. (B. & P.)

[Split infinitives: see Fowler.]


'split on or upon. To inform the police about (a person): c. (—1812) >, ca. 1840, low s.; ca. 1870, gen. v. A. Vaux: (upon; on app. unrecorded before 1875, O.E.D.). See split, v., 2, and cf. split about and split fair.

'split out. V.i., to part company, to separate: c. from ca. 1875; ob.

split pea. Tea: rhyming s. (—1857). 'Dulance Anglica.' Rare; f. by 1900.

split pilot. A variant of split-arse merchant; from 1922.


'split-up. A lanky person: from ca. 1875. Ex (voll) split-up, long-limbed, itself (Baumann) s. from ca. 1870, prob. suggested by splits, q.v.

'split soda. A bottle of soda water divided between two guests. The "baby" soda is for one client: tavern coll.: from ca. 1860. Ware.

'split upon. See split on.

'split with. To break off acquaintance with; to quarrel with: 1835, G. P. R. James (O.E.D.); s. >, ca. 1910, coll. In C. 20, occ. absolutely, split, as in 'For good reasons, we don't wish to split.'


splitting. A euphemism of split-arsing, q.v. (B. & P.)

'splits. The. In dancing or acrobatics, the act of separating one's legs and lowering oneself until, right-angled to the body, they extend flat along the ground: 1851, Mayhew (ii, 569): coll. >, ca. 1890, S.E. Also, though rare and ob., in the singular, as in Mayhew, iii, 1861,—2. The police: grafter's: late C. 19–20. Philip Allingham, Cheapsjack, 1934. Ex: split, n. 1.


'splough. Money: low: ca. 1893, Gus Elen, 'Since Jack Jones came into that little bit o' splough'; ob. t ex splash; prob. cognate with splash, adv. (q.v.).

2. An abrupt, resounding fall into water; a 'quantity of water suddenly dashed or dropped' dial. (1895) >, by 1910 at latest, coll. E. M. Stooke (E.D.D.); Collins, Echoic.

'splash. adv. Plump: coll. >, ca. 1920, S.E.: Anon., Harry Pludger, 'Such larks when you heard the ball go splash on a man's hat.' Echoic.


'Spoft. Spofforth, the great Australian bowler: cricketers' nickname: 1896, Giffen. (Lewis.)

'spooffish. Fussy, 'bulldog.' Giffen, 1896, Dickens: 1935, Ivor Browne in The Observer, Aug. 11. Very ob. Perhaps suggested by officious or fussy; obviously, however, derived ex or cognate with spooff, q.v.; cf. spooffy.

'spoffy, v.i. To fuss or bustle: from ca. 1880;
SPOFFSKINS
very ob. Ex East Anglian dial. spoffle, to fuss, hustle; be in a flurry or great haste (Forby's glossary, ca. 1828). Cf. spoffish, spoff
spoghi. v.t., to show off, make a display'. South African coll.: 1871, Dugmore, Reminiscences of an Albany Settler. Ex Dutch pochen, to boast.
spoil. *Stolen in New Zealand c. (— 1932) has the specific sense: stolen property.
spoil, v. In boxing, to damage, injure, seriously: sporting: 1811 (O.E.D.); very ob. Egan, 1821, has spoil one's mouth, to damage the face.—2. To prevent (a person) from succeeding, to render (a building, etc.) unsuitable for robbery: o. (— 1812); ob. Vaux.—3. Hence, in seashore-nautical s., as in R. C. Leslie, 1884, 'Spoil a gent' is used . . . in the sense of disgusting him with the sea and so losing a good customer,' O.E.D.
spoil-bread. A baker: coll.: from ca. 1860; ob. Cf.:
spoil the shape of. See shape, spoil one's.
spoke. Spoken: in C. 19—20, coll. (latterly, low coll.) when neither dial. nor jocular (e.g. 'English as she is spoke ').—2. See spoken to.
spoke-box. The mouth: jocular coll.: 1774, Anon., The Siliad; ob.
*spoke to. See speak to.
*spoken, illiterately spoken to. Robbed; stolen: see speak to.—2. In a bad way (gen. physically;) dying: o. (— 1812); ob. Vaux. Lit., warned.
*spoke(n) to the crack, hoist, screw, sneak, etc. Robbed or stained in the manner indicated by the noun: coll., v.t.; o. C. 19.
spoke[y]. A wheelwright: military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Ex the spokes of a wheel.—2. (Spokey) An 'inexorable' nickname of men named Wheelor or Wheelwright: id.; id. Ibid.
spoonable(s)n, -ix; spoonable(s); spoonickles (the most gen.), -ics, -ix. Money; cash: U.S. (1857), anglicised ca. 1885: resp. — 1903, 1902; — 1893: 1863, ca. 1870, and 1857. G. A. Sala, Dec. 8, 1885, gives it, by 'armid vulgarisation' (or perversion and elaboration), from greenbacks, its orig. signification: 'Pomes' Marshall. Thornton.
spoon, v.t. To throw up the sponge on behalf of (a defeated person or animal): gen. to be sponged, to have this happen to one: 1851, Mayhew (O.E.D.); ob. Cf.: sponge, chuck or throw up the give. To give in; submi: coll.; resp. from ca. 1875 and 1800 (H., 2nd ed.); Rolf Boldrewood, 1889 (chuck); 'Captain Keate' H. V. Byrne, 1889. Ex boxing, where this action signifies defeat.
spoon. A nonsensically hoaxing game: 1889 (O.E.D.). The name and the game were invented by Arthur Roberts the comedian (1852-1933);—2.
O.E.D. Ex *spoon*, v., 1.—4. Hence, one thus in love or thus amorous: 1857, 'C. Bede.' (O.E.D.).

spoons, fill the mouth with empty. To go hungry: coll.: late C. 17—18. Ray.

spoons on (1863) or with (— 1860; & by 1910), be. To be sentimentally, esp. if silliily, in love with (a girl; very rarely the converse). H., 2nd ed. Prob. ex *spoon*, n., 1—2. Also (of a couple) it's (a case—) spooning away from, they are sentimentally in love; from ca. 1863; ob. sponly. See spoonery. —2. Adv., foolishly or sentimentally, esp. in *spoon* drunk, sentimentally drunk, as in the Lex. Bk., 1811; ob.

spoony stuff. 'Weak, sentimental work, below contempt': London theatrical: ca. 1882—1915. Ware.

sporan. The pubic hair: late C. 19—20 low. Ex S.E. *sporran*.

sport. A 'good sport', either one who underestimates his or her own personality or abilities to the gen. enjoyment; or, of women only, one really accords the sexual favour; coll.: C. 20. Hence, *be a sport = don't be a spoil-sport!* Abbr. a good sport, ex sport, a sportman: cf. sporty, q.v.

sport, v. (Thanks mainly to O.E.D., but by no means negligible to F. & H.). To read (a book, an author) for sport; ca. 1800—1910. T. Brown, 'To divert the time with sporting an author.'—2. To stake (money), invest (it) riskily: ca. 1705—1860; a. >, ca. 1760, coll.—3. Hence, to lay (a bet): ca. 1805—60.—4. Prob. ex sense 2, 3: to treat (a person) with food, etc.; to offer (a person) the hospitality of (wine, etc.): I elsewhere than, 1828—30, in Lytton, as e.g. 'I doesn't care if I sports you a glass of port.' Cognate, however, is: to provide as in *sport a dinner, a lunch*, etc.: from ca. 1830.—5. Ex sense 2: v.t., to speculate or bet: ca. 1790—1820. 'Chrysal' Johnston. —6. V.t. To spend (money) extravagantly or very freely or ostentatiously: 1859, H. Kingsley, 'I took him for a flash海外, sporting his salary.'—7. To exhibit, display, in company, in public, gen. showily or ostentatiously: from ca. 1710 (esp. common ca. 1770—1830); a. >, ca. 1830, coll. Steele, 1712; J. H. Newman, 'A man ... must sport an opinion when he really had none to give.'—8. Hence, to display on one's person: esp. to wear; a. (1778) >, ca. 1840, coll. 'Pompe' Marshall, 'She sported her number one gloss on her hair | And her very best blush on her cheek.'—9. To go in for (smoking, riding, billiards, etc., etc.); to maintain (e.g., a house, a carriage): from ca. 1850; a. >, ca. 1900, coll.—10. To shut (a door, esp. to signify 'Engaged' : orig. and mainly university. Ex *sport oak* or timmer; see oak, sport. Cf. sport in, q.v.—11. To laugh by means of (a laugh) to open (a door) violently, to force (it): ca. 1805—20.—12. See vbl. phrases here ensuing.

sport, old. See old sport.

sport a baulk. See baulk.

sport a report. To publish it far and wide: mid-C. 19—20; ob.

sport a right line, be unable to or cannot. To be drunk: ca. 1770—1800. Oxford University. Because of inability, to walk straight.


sport in. To shut (ones) in by closing the door: 1825, Hone, 'Shutting my room door, as if I was "sported in"; ' ob. Cf. oak, sport.

sport ivory or one's ivory. To grin: from ca. 1785; ob. Grose, 2nd ed.

sport literature. To write a book: 1853, Mrs Gaskell; ob.—very ob.!

sport oak. See oak, sport.

sport off. To do easily, as if for sport: late C. 19—20; ob. Cf. sport, v., 1.

sport silk. To ride a race; the turf (coll.) : 1885, The Daily Chronicle, Dec. 28. Ex the silk jacket worn by jockeys.

*sport the brown*. C., from ca. 1875; as in Anon's Five Years' Penal Servitude, 1877, 'If a man wishes to see the governor, the doctor, or the chaplain, he is to "sport the brown", lay his little hair-broom on the floor at the door, directly the cell is opened in the morning,' O.E.D.

sport timber. The limes of Court variation of *sport oak*: from ca. 1875; ob. Grose, 2nd ed.

sported oak or door. Same as sporting door, q.v.: from ca. 1870.


sporting. Adj. Like, natural to, a 'sport', q.v.: C. 20.—2. See:—

sporting action. At Winchester College, 'an affected manner, gesture or gait, or a betrayal of emotion,' F. & H.: from ca. 1870. Cf. sport, v., 7.

sporting chance. A slight or a problematic chance; coll.: from mid-1890's: sporting >, almost imm., gen.: by 1935, virtually S.E. Mary Kingsley, 1897, 'One must diminish dead certainties to the level of sporting chances among here,' O.E.D.


Sports ship, the. The S.S. Borodine: naval coll.: G.W. (F. & Gibbons), It was supply-ship and entertainment ship to the Grand Fleet at Scapa Flow.

sportsman for liquor. 'A fine toper' (Ware): sporting: ca. 1890—1910.


sportsman's prayer-book, the. See prayer-book, 3. sportsman's toast. For this allusive coll., see poet and stubble.

sporty. Sportmanlike; sporting; generous: 1899 (O.E.D.); a. >, ca. 1920, coll.

spo's, the. The School Sports meeting: Charterhouse: C. 20. For the form cf. *spo* and *squo*.


spoosh. Excellent; mainly theatrical: from ca. 1929; ob. A.A. Milne, Two People, 1931, 'Sposh spoosh spoosh; I should adore to.' Perhaps a blend of *spiffing* + *pooch*.

spot. A drop of liquor: coll.: 1885, D. C. Murray, 'A little spot of rum, William, with a squeeze of lemon in it.' In C. 20 Anglo-Irish coll., it has a specific sense: a half-glass of whiskey. Ex
spot, a small piece or quantity. Cf. Fr. larme.—2. Hence, a small amount of. Gen. a spot of... e.g. lunch, hence of rest, work, pleasure, music, etc. C. 20, but common only since ca. 1915: a., ca. 1930, coll. Dorothy Sayers, Have His Carcase, 1933. 3. A cake; low; from ca. 1890; ob. See quotation at scaldor, 2. 4. A person—usually a man—employed by an omnibus company to watch, secretly, its employees; 1894 (O.E.D.); coll. >, ca. 1919. j. Ex spot, to detect. *Hence, any detective; low (<—1923). Manchon.—6. See spots on burnt.—7. A worn patch on the pitch: cricketers' coll.: C. 20. Neville Cardus, Good Days, 1934, concerning the third test match, 'It is the duty of all loyal subjects to talk about a "spot" in loud voices so that the Australians will hear.'

*spot, v. To note (a person) as criminal or suspect: o.: 1718 (O.E.D.); 1851, Mayhew. 'At length he became spotted. The police got to know him, and he was apprehended, tried, and convicted.' Perhaps ex f. spot, 'to stain with some accusation or reproach.'—2. Hence, to inform against (a person): o.: 1865, Dickens (O.E.D.); rare in C. 20.—3. (Prob. ex sense 1.) to guess (a horse) beforehand as the winner in a race: orig. turf >, ca. 1890, gen. coll.: 1887, The Morning Chronicle, June 22, 'Having met with tolerable success in spotting the winners.'—4. Hence, to esp'y; mark, note: recognise, discover, detect; coll.: 1890, O. W. Holmes.—5. Whence, prob.: to hit (a mark) in shooting: coll.: 1882, Bret Harte (O.E.D.). Although the earliest record of this, of as the of the preceding sense, is U.S., there is perhaps no need to postulate an American origin for either; cf., however, H., 1894, 'Orig. an Americanism, but now gen.'—6. (Ex spotting winners.) To gamble, v.k. and v.l.: low; from ca. 1890; ob. F. & H.—7. To pick out the best of (the land) for one's farm or station: New Zealand (<—1898). Morris. Cf. the Australian peacock and pick the eyes out.—8. Hence, to look for (a building) to break into; o.: (—1932). Charles E. Leach, On Top of the Underworld.—9. (Gen. spot at.) To jeer (at); make fun of: South African coll. (—1906). Ex Dutch spotten, to mock or jeer. Pettman.

*spot, be in a. To be in a very difficult or dangerous position or condition: o.: from ca. 1930. James Laurin, The Gift Kid, 1936. Perhaps ex be put on the spot.

*spot, on the. Alert; quite certain: 1887, Henley, 'Palm and be always on the spot': low, if not orig. c. Hence, off the spot: uncertain, not alert (in S.E., inexact, irrelevant).—2. A C. 20 U.S. c. sense, Anglicised ca. 1930 as s. rather than as o.: in the place (and position) pre-arranged for one's murder. The rapidity of the Anglicising, once it started, was owing to the popularity of Edgar Wallace's play (On the Spot), an excellent 'thriller', and of the ensuing novel (1931). Merely a special application of the S.E. sense, 'at the very place or locality in question.' See esp. Irwin.

spot, put on the. To determine and arrange the murder of: U.S., Anglicised by 1930. Ex spot, on the, 2.

spot, soft. 'An easy, comfortable, or desirable house, thing, or circumstance: F. & H., late C. 19–20; slightly ob. Ex Northern dial. spot (<—1877), a place of employment, a job (E.D.D.).

spot, vacant; gen. have a vacant spot. To be half-witted: from ca. 1890; slightly ob. Cf. shingle short, tile loose.

spot at. See spot, v., 9.


spots off or out of, knock. See knock spots.— spots, see. See see stars.

spots on burnt, e.g. two. (E.g. two) poached eggs on toast: low (<—1920). Manchon.


*spotted coverey. A c. variant (<—1923), noted by Manchon, of:

spotted Dick. A suet pudding made with currants or raisins: 1849, Soyer, The Modern Housewife (O.E.D.); coll. >, ca. 1890. S.E. Ex the raisins that, on the surface, give the pudding a spotty appearance. Cf. the next three entries.

spotted dog. The same: from ca. 1865: coll. that had by 1920 > S.E. Prob. dog puns dough, as Ware suggests.—2. Among soldiers, a sausage or a saveloy: from ca. 1885: very ob. Ex the legend. Cf. spotted mystery.

spotted donkey; spotted leopard. The same as spotted Dick: resp. schools' (<—1897), ob. (Bauermann); low urban, from ca. 1880 (Ware).

spotted dun. A coll. variant (from ca. 1870) of spotted Dick. Ware.

spotted mystery. Tinned beef: military; from ca. 1880; ob. An elaboration on mystery, a sausage, and on potted (mystery). Cf. spotted dog, 2.

spotter. A variant of spot, n., 3; an informer (see spot, v., 2); a detective whose job it is to unmask beggars: all in Manchon and therefore from before 1923: the first, a.; the second, c.; the third, police.—4. He who 'spots' a likely victim for a 'mob' to rob: police a.; C. 20. Charles E. Leach.


spout ink. To write books, etc.: coll.: from ca. 1880; ob. Cf. slig ink.
sprag. 'To accost trunculently,' C. J. Dennis: Australian (—1916). Possibly ex *snag + rog. (v.t.); prob. ox dial. *sprag, to put the brake on.

sprained one's ankle, to have. See ankle.


sprang, spranc(e). A sixpence: gravers': C. 20. Philip Allingham, Cheapside, 1834. Perhaps ex *spranc, 1, on *Susie (Susi). A variant is *sprunge.


sprat-weather. A dark winter's day: fisher- men's coll: (—1887); ob. Baumann; Bowen. Such weather is suitable for the catching of sprats.

spratfish. Personal effects; furniture; low: from ca. 1880; ob. Cf. *sticks.


spread, do a. See do a spread.


spread oneself. To make every effort, esp. monetarily; to do one's very best, 'damn the expense!': orig. (1832) U.S., in sense of making a display; anglicised ca. 1890 as a col.: by 1920, S.E.

*spread the royal. (Gen. as vb.l.n.) To give evidence against confederates: c. (—1935). David Hume. Ex *turn King's evidence.


Cf. *spread: 3.

[spacemen. An error (? a nonce-error) for *spresia: C. 18. O.E.D.]


greep, v.i. To carouse; have, take part in; a *spree: coll.: mid-C. 19-20. Mrs Gaskell, 1850 (O.E.D.) Ex n., 1. Whence *spreening, vb.l.n. and, occ., adj.

greep, adj. Beditting a Wykehamist; smart: Winchester: from ca. 1860; ob. Perhaps ex *spree-mess, q.v.—2. Conceited: ibid.: from ca. 1870. This sense is applied only to juniors; used of acts, it = " permissible only to prefects, or those of senior standing", Wrench. Ex dial.: cognate with S.E. *spry and *spree.

greep, on a. Enjoying oneself: coll.: 1847 (O.E.D.). Ex spre, n., 1. Cf. *spree, on or upon the. E.g. go on the *spree.

Having a riotous time, esp.—and in C. 20 almost solely—on a drinking bout: coll: 1851, Mayhew, who has the *get up on the *spree; H., 1st ed., "Going on the *spree", starting out with intent to have a frolic.' Ex spre, n., 1, 2, and cf. sprey, on a.

*spree-mess. A feast, esp. in the form of a *spread at tea-time, raised by subscription or given by departing boys and always held at the end of the half-year: Winchester Coll.: ca. 1840-90. Mansfield. Ex spre, n., 1, 2, 3.


*sprey or *spress. Express; express train: sol.; or rather, low coll. (—1887). Baumann.

spring. V.i. To offer a higher price: 1851, Mayhew (O.E.D.); ob. by 1890, by 1930. Whence spring to, q.v.—2. To give; to disturb; to buy (a certain amount): coll: 1851, Mayhew, "It's a feast at a poor country labourer's place when he springs six- penn'orth of fresh herrings"; 1878, J. F. Sullivan, The British Working Man, 'Wot's *spring t?' (how much money has he given it). Ex *spring, to cause to appear. Contrast *rush, to charge extortionately.—3. Hence, to afford to buy: late C. 19-20. Cf. spring to, q.v.

*spring a partridge. To entice a person and then rob or swindle him: c.: late C. 17-mid-18. B.E. In A New Canting Dicht, 1725, collectively as spring partridges. Ex spring partridges, to cause them to rise.

*spring-ankle warehouse. 'Newgate, or any other gaol;' Grose, 1st ed.: c. of ca. 1750-1840: Anglo-Irish. A sprained ankle = disablement = imprisonment.

spring at one's elbow, have a. To be a gamester: coll: latish C. 17-mid-18. Ray, 1876. (Apperson.) Cf. the to raise one's elbow of drinking.

spring fleet. N.E. coast collier brigs going into the Baltic trade in the slack coal season; nautical coll.: late C. 19—early 20. Bowen.


spring like a ha'penny knife, with a. Floppy; with no resilience; low: coll: 1833—1900. Ex *deadness of such a knife. Ware.

*spring the plant. See plant, spring the.

spring to. To be able to pay or give; to afford: coll: 1901, Anon., Troddles and Us, 'It's seven pound fifteen, and we can spring to that between us.'
SPRING TO IT!

Ex spring, 1, q.v.—2. Hence, to be able to accomplish: coll.: 1903, F. & H.

spring to it! Look lively!: coll.: from 1918 or 1919, esp. among ex-service men. Ex the military order. Cf. wait for it /, q.v.

[*Springboks*, South Africans, is journalese.]

*springer. A 'dark' horse so much an outsider that no odds are quoted until just before the race: turf c. (— 1932). Ex springing a surprise.


Springers, the. The 10th Foot, from ca. 1881 the Lincolnshire Regiment: military: mid-C. 19—20. —2. Also, from 1777, the 62nd Foot (the Splashes), now the Wiltshire Regiment. F. & Gibbons. Ex a compliment passed by General Burgoyne in the American War.


sprook; sprooker. See spruik.

sproot wings. To become angelic, extremely upright, chaste, etc.: C. 20 jocular coll.


spruce, v.i. To tell lies or ' tall stories': v.t., to deceive thus: military: from 1916. F. & Gibbons. Prob. a corruption of spruik, q.v.—2. Hence, sprucher, one who does any, or all, of these things: of 1916. Cf. spruiker in:


sprung. Tipsy: low s. >, in C. 20. coll.: from ca. 1825; ob. Often as in Judd, 1870, 'Ex-Corporeal Whiston with his friends sailled from the store well-sprung.' Either ex spring, to moisten (in C. 19—20, only in dial.), or, as the O.E.D.'s earliest quotation tends to show, ex sprung, split or cracked, masts.

sprung-up, adj. See springer-up.

spud. A potato: dial (— 1860) >, by 1868, s. Possibly ex spuddy, the nickname for a seller of bad potatoes (Mayhew, 1851), but prob. spud is the earlier. Perhaps an Anglo-Irish corruption of potato via murphy, q.v.: cf. Spud, the inevitable nickname of any male Murphy and of any person with an Irish name (F. & Gibbons). W., however, proposes a s. 'application of spud, weeding instrument', and pertinently compares the etymology of parenip. Possible also is the spud added in the etymology of:—2. A baby's hand: dial. and nursery: mid-C. 19—20; ob. Halliwell. > a corruption of pudsey, pudgy, or simply a special application of spud, a stumpy person or thing.


spun. See spin, v., 1.—2. Exhausted, tired out: 1924 (S.O.D.).—3. Checkmated; at a loss: C. 20. E.g. Miles Burton, To Catch a Thief, 1934, policeman liquantir, 'We know our way about . . . the underworld . . . But when it's a case . . . of the overworld, as one might say, then we're spun.'

spun from the winch. (Of a story that has been) invented: nautical: C. 20. Bowen. Punning yarn.


spun-yarn trick. (Gen. pl.) An unfair trick: naval coll.: late C. 19—20. Ibid. Ex the unfair use of spun yarn in competitive evolutions.


spunky. Spirited; plucky: dial: (Burns, 1786) >, ca. 1800, coll. Lamb, 1805, 'Vittoria Corombona, a spunky Italian lady,' O.E.D.; 1819, Moore, 'His spunkiest backers were forced to sing small.'

*spur. To annoy: c. from ca. 1875; ob. Whence:

* spur get the. To be annoyed: c. from ca. 1880. Cf. needle, q.v.

spur in one's head, have got a. To be (slightly) drunk: ca. 1770—1800: orig. and mainly jocose's. The Gentleman's Magazine, 1770. O.E.D.


spurs, dish up the. To cause guests to feel that it is time for them to depart: coll. (— 1923). Manchon. I.e. spurs to speed them on their way.

spurt. A small quantity: s. (— 1859) and dial. >, ca. 1890, dial. only. H., 1st ed. Prob. ex spurt, a brief effort, a short run, etc.


*spy in c. of C. 20 is thus mentioned in Edgar Wallace, Angel Enquire, 1908, 'It may mean policeman, detective, school-board official, rent collector,
or the gentleman appointed by the gas company to extract pennies from the gas meters.

Spy, Black: b.s. See black spy.

“Spying. A vbl. corresponding to epy, q.v.

squab, v.i. To squeeze by: King Edward’s School, Birmingham: late C. 19–20. Prob. ex squab, to squeeze flat, influenced by sense of squash.

—2. (Gen. as squab.) v.i. and v.t., to treat thus: ‘With foot on wall or desk, and back against the victim who is similarly treated on the other side, or pressed against the opposite wall,’ F. & H.: ibid.: id.

squash up, v.i. and v.t. To push: ibid.: id.

squash, n. A soldier: cf. as caption.


squasha, squash, squash, squasha, squasha. (Of type) to be or get mixed: printers’ (— 1837). Baumann.

squaddie, squaddie, squaddie, squaddie, squaddie. A man’s or woman’s name in the army: ca. 1870–80. O.E.D.

quadrant, n. See the adj., which it merely substantivates.—2. Here, however, it may be noted that, in the underworld, all just and honest practices and actions are called the square, as opp. to the crook: from ca. 1810. Lex. Bal. Cf. fig. straight.—3. A square dance: ball-room coll.: ca. 1890–1914. Ware.

squaddie, v. To settle (a matter) satisfactorily: coll.: 1863, Dickens: ‘I have squar’d it with the lad . . . and it’s all right,’ O.E.D. Ex square, to equate, to balance (accounts).—2. Hence, to satisfy or win over, esp. by bribery or compensation; to get rid of thus: a. >, ca. 1910, coll.: 1859, Lever: ‘The horses he had “nobbled”’, the jockeys squarded, the owners “housed”’; 1879, T. H. Huxley. Specifically, square his nose is to give a policeman money; L., 1st ed.—3. Hence, to get rid of by buying: 1888 (O.E.D.). Cf. square, get.—4. See square at, square it, square round, square up, square up to.

square, adj. Only in (upon) the square. (Predictively.) Free from duplicity; just; straightforward, upright: from ca. 1680: S.E. until ca. 1830, then coll.; by 1860, a. Cf.


squaddie, adj. Originally, or the habit of, ‘walking out with’ a girl or young woman: military: from ca. 1880. Ex the military practice of strolling with nursemaids and other maids round the square, or perhaps by back-formation ex the preceding. See also pusher. B. & P. Frank Richards considers (wrongly, I think) that the phrase originated ‘in the care that men took to get their kempaseck to look properly square before parading in full order on deck.’—1st ed.

square, round. To make room: Wincsor coll.: mid-C. 19–20. Wrench. Ex dial, sense, ‘to sit so as to widen the circle and make room for others’ (E.D.D.).

square, adj. To be a Mason: mid-C. 19–20. To be pushed off the. To be excused, or dismissed from, recruit’s preliminary drill: Regular Army coll.: mid-C. 20. F. & Gibbons. The square is the barracks-square.

square, or on the. See square, n., 2.—2. On the tramp: beggars’ and tramps’ c. (— 1928). F. Jennings, In London’s Shadows.—3. Engaged in
square-toe. See old square-toes.
square up. To pay (a debt): coll.: 1862, Mrs Henry Wood, 'I can square up some of my liabilities here,' O.E.D. Ex *square*, v., 1.
square up to. See square at.
Baumann.
squash. A scrimmage or rough scrum: school football s.: from middle 1860's.
squash, v. To silence or snub (a person) cruelly: coll.: from ca. 1890. 
squash ballad. A ballad 'promising war and personal devotion': pacifists': 1896—1910. Ware. 
† ex sentiment.
Ware. Also do a squat.
squatterous! Sit down!: from late 1890's.
Kipling's *Stakel*, 'Be quick, you ass! . . . Squatterous on the floor, then!' Cf. twiggevous.

*squaw*. A variant of squall.


*squak* beef. To cry 'Stop thief!' o.: late C. 17—early 19. B.E.; Grove, 1st ed.

*squak on*. The v.t. form of *squak*, v., 2, q.v.
squak than wool, more. See wool, more squak than.

Bowen, who notes that in the training-ship Conwy it designates a mizen-top cader (late C. 19—20).
Bowen.
Squeaker, the. The Speaker: journalists' 1890's. Ware. It was the Radical mouthpiece.

*squeakers*. Or pigs: o.: late C. 18—20; ob. Grove, 2nd ed.


squealer, v.i.: To behave as a noisy lower-form boy: Wellington College: C. 20. O.C.D., 1834 Sup.
squege. Squeezed (n. and v.): in (C. 20, low) coll.: late C. 18—20.
squegge hand. 'An improvised ship's hand': nautical: C. 20. Bowen. Ex the sound made by the squegee when vigorously used.
squeek. Squeeker. B.E.'s spelling of *squeak*, *squealer*, q.v.

*squeeeze*. The neck: o.: (—1812); ob. Vaux. Also *squeezee*. Ex squeezing by the gallowes-roe.—2. Hence, the rope itself: o.: from ca. 1830; ob.—3. Silk: o.: (—1839). Brandon. Also as adj. from ca. 1870. Ex squeezability into very small space.—4. Hence, a silk tie: o.: C. 1877 (O.E.D.).—5. Work, esp. in a crowd, e.g. stealing at a theatre: o.: (—1894); ob. H., 3rd ed. Perhaps ex.—6. A crowded assembly or (social) gathering: coll.: 1799, Mrs Barbanil, 'There is a squeze, a fuss, a drum, a rout, and lastly a hurricane, when the whole house is full from top to bottom,' O.E.D.—7. An escape, esp. if a narrow one: coll.: 1875 (O.E.D.); ob. Ex *squeezee* by or post.—8. A strong commercial demand or money-market pressure: coll.: 1890 (O.E.D.): trade and Stock Exchange.—9. An illegal exaction: Anglo-Chinese coll.: from ca. 1850. Yule & Burrell.—10—12. Without due quotation, F. & H. gives the following three a. senses: a hard bargain (from ca. 1870); hence, a Hobson's choice (ca. 1890—1920); a rise in salary (ca. 1890—1910), this last because of the difficulty of obtaining it.—13. An impression: police coll.: C. 20; G. D. H. and M. Cole, *Burglars in Bucks*, 1930; Richard Kevers, *Menace*, 1933, 'Parry's "squeze" of the key to the Bruges warehouse.'
squeezee. To bring into trouble: 1804 (O.E.D.); ob. by 1890, † by 1920.
squeezee, st of (1897) or upon (1892; ob.) a. At a pinch: coll. O.E.D.
squeezee-box. A ship's harmonium: naval (—1909). Ware, 'From the action of the feet.'


squeamishness. The hangman's noose: c.: from ca. 1830; ob. 'Father Prout' Mahoney.—2. Hence, the neck: c. of ca. 1840–90. Cf. squeamsy, n. 1.

squelch. A heavy blow, crushing leading article, etc.: coll.: 1854, 'Cuthbert Bede', 'There's a squeal in the bread-basket'; 1876, Besant & Rice (editorial). O.E.D.


squeifier. A concertina; rather low: 1911, George Bernard Shaw (O.E.D. Sup.), but prob. dating from ca. 1890, for it was orig. a nautical term (Bown). Perhaps a perversion of squezer: cf. dial. squidge for squeeze.—2. 'By a process of excusable exaggeration, an organ-bellows, or even the organ itself. By a characteristic confusion of ideas, a person who blows an organ', Ian Hay (in David and Destiny, 1934) Public Schools'.

squeify. Slightly drunk: from ca. 1873. H., 6th ed.—2. Hence, drunk in any degree: from ca. 1880. Kipling, 1900, 'I never got squify but once ... an' it made me horrid sick'. Prob. ex skew-whiff, perhaps on spoony, q.v. [squeigly, squirmly and wriggly, is rather S.E. than coll.]

squill. A 'term of street chat': London proletarian: 1890–96. A blend of a Christian and a surname. (Ware.)


squiny. See hempen squiny.

squint. A man who hangs about the market with a palmist order and who will not deal fairly': Stock Exchange (— 1909). Ware. Cf. Fr. louche.

squint, v. To lack (anything material): tailors': from ca. 1870; ob.

squint-a-pipes. A squinting person: from ca. 1786; † by 1870. Grose, 2nd ed.

squint is better than two fine eyes, one. A c.p. addressed, in bridge, to one's partner, to warn him that the opponents are trying to see his hand: from ca. 1920, and mostly Anglo-Irish.

squinters. The eyes: boxers' and low: from ca. 1860; ob. Baumann.


squire. A title prefixed to a country gentleman's surname and thus forming, very often, part of his appellation: mid-C. 17–20: S.E. until C. 19, then coll. (O.E.D.) Cf. squire, the, q.v.


Squire Gawk(e)y. Richard Grenville (1711–79), 1st Earl Temple, the statesman. 'Ridiculously awkward' (Horace Walpole). Dawson.

squire of Alatia. See Alatia.—squire of the company. See squire, the, 1.


squire of the pad. See pad.


squish. Of 'One that pretends to Pay all Reckonings, and is not strong enough in the Pocket,' B.E.: late C. 17–mid-18. Ex squire, the, 1, q.v.—2. Foolish: same period. B.E. See squire, the, 2.

squirt. A flourish in writing: dial. (ca. 1840) >, before 1900, coll. (O.E.D. Sup.) Prob. ex squeugle and twirl.

squirm. A small objectionable boy: Public Schools: from ca. 1880; ob. Cf. squirt.


squirt, do a squeeze and a. (Of the male) to coit: low: C. 19–20. Also squirt one's juice.

squirt a moudly. See moudly, 2.


squishy. Soft and wet, or squish: v.i. to squirt out splashily or gushingly.—2. At Winchester, from ca. 1880, also and mainly, it = weak tea.—3. Nonsense: 1912 (O.E.D. Sup.); ob. Ex sense 1, 2—cep. 1. Of stush.

squat. In same sense as, and prob. cognate with, squirt, n., 1, q.v.: dial. (— 1829), partly coloquialised ca. 1890 (cf. Anstey, 1889, 'He's not half a bad little squirt,' O.E.D.) and squirt(q.v.) > s. Esp. a small cadet (Conway s.: late C. 19–20,—witness John Masefield's history of the Conway, 1933), and used, in gen., esp. of a small man, as in G. D. H. and M. Cole, The Great Southern Mystery, 1931, 'Little squirt of a chap.'
quizz. 'A brief glance,' C. J. Dennis; a sly glance: (low) Australian. Ex squint + quiz. (G. swiz.)
squob; squob up. See squab, squab up. [squooch in Manchon is dial.—more gen. squo(j)ch.]
sres-wort; sreswort. Trouser: back a. (—1859). E., 1st ed. See: sres-sio; sresitio. Oysters: back a. (—1874). H., 5th ed., where, of spinaraps, sres-sio, sres-wort, starps, stools, storac, stun, and stowlaw, qv., it is said that 'all these will take the s, which is now [i.e. there] initial, after them, if desired, and, as may be seen, some take it doubly.'
stab, 'stab. Establishment, as in on (the) stab, in regular work at a fixed wage, as opp. to occasional piece-work: printers: (—1854). \( \text{H.}, 3\text{rd ed.} \)
stab, v.i. S. or coll. (? orig. c.), ca. 1670–1780, as in Cotton's Complete Gamanter: 'Stabbing, . . . having a smooth box and small in the bottom, you drop in both your dice in such a manner as you would have them sticking therein . . . the dice lying one upon another; so that, turning up the box, the dice never tumble . . . by which means you have bottoms according to the tops you put in.'
stab at, have or make a. To attempt, endeavour, have a shot at, coll., orig. (ca. 1907) U.S., anglicised ca. 1929. O.E.D. (Sup.).
stab yourself and pass the bottle I Help yourself and pass the bottle: a theatrical o.p. (—1864); very ob. H., 3rd ed. Exaggeration-and-poison melodrama.
stabbed with a Bridport dagger. See Bridport dagger.
stable-companion. A member of the same club, clipping. Coll.: coll.: C. 20. Ex lit. sense, a horse from the same stable.
stable Jack. A cavalryman: infantrymen's (—1909); ob. Ware.
stable-mind. Devotion to horses: Society (—1909); ob. Ware. By a pun.
stable-my-naggle, play at. To cotl: C. 19–20; ob.

—2. Hence, stacks = much, as in stacks of fun (cf. heaps of fun): C. 20. O.E.D. (Sup.).
staff. (Gen. the.) Staff-sergeant: Regular Army coll.: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Cf. major, the.
staff, the worse end of the. (Gen. preceded by have.) The disadvantage: coll.: ca. 1630–1890. One of the Coventry Plays, 1634; J. Wilson, The Cheats, 1664; North, 1740. (Apperson.) Whence wrong end of the stick.
staff naked. Gin: low (—1857); ♩ by 1920. 'Ducange Anglicus.' Perhaps a mere misprint for staff-naked, q.v.
Stafford court, to be tried or have a trial in. To be (severely) beaten, greatly ill-used: coll.: early C.17. Cotgrave. (Cf. the late C.14–early 15 cd in Stafford blue, blue-bruised by beating: either coll. or merely jocular S.E.) Prob. ex:
Staffordshire Knots, the. The 80th Foot—now the South Staffordshire—Regiment. Military: C. 19–20. Their badge, adopted in 1783, is a knotted cable; prob. suggested by Stafford(‘s) knot, a knot resembling that used heraldically in the badge of the Stafford family. (F. & Gibbons.)
stag, v.t. To observe, watch, detect: late C. 18–20: c. >, ca. 1850, low s. (Also, from ca. 1820, as v.i. 'Jon Bee.' Grose, 3rd ed.; H. Kingsley, 1859. Ex stag, n., 1.—2. Hence, v.i., to turn informer (against): c.: from late 1830's. W. Carleton, 1839 (O.E.D.). Cf. stag, turn, q.v.—3. To be severe towards (a person); to cripple (him) financially; refuse a loan to; from ca. 1810. The Daily News, July 13, 1870, 'A man refusing . . . his line was . . . ‘staged', and when he went for an advance it was resolutely refused,' O.E.D. Ex sense 1.—4. V.i. and v.t., to beg (money); dun (a person): low s., perhaps orig. c. (—1880); ob. H., 2nd ed.—5. V.i., to deal in shares as a 'stag,' (see stag, n., 3 and 4): commercial: mid-C.19–20. Often stag it, as in Thackeray, 1845.—6. To cut; mostly in stay off: Canadian, esp. lumbermen's (—1938). John Beamans, St. John's Manual. stag, to cut a hedge level at the top (‘E.D.D.)
stag, turn. To imprecate one's accomplices: c. (—1785) >, ca. 1840, low s. Grose, 1st ed., 'From
STAG-BOOK

a herd of deer who are said to turn— their horns against any of their number who is hunted.


stag-dance. A dance with only men present: U.S. (— 1848), partly anglicised ca. 1870. Cf. bull-dance and see stag-party.

stag-mag. A stage-manager; to stage-manage: theatrical: from ca. 1880.

stag-month. The month of a woman's lying-in: from ca. 1870; ob. Cf. the C. 18 gander-month, q.v.; cf. also the next two entries.


stag-widow. A man whose wife is lying in: from ca. 1870. Cf. stag-month.

*stage; always the s. The privilege-period of a convict's imprisonment; gained by a certain number of good-conduct (or remission) marks: ca. (— 1932). Anon., Dartmoor from Within. I.e. the final stage.

stage, v. To do or accomplish, esp. if unexpectedly or very effectively or effectually: mainly spon. — from ca. 1920. E.g., Crawford was, in the Wimbledon semi-finals 1954, said to have staged a come-back against Shields after being two, and very nearly three, sets down. Cf. s. use of show.

*stager, old. A veteran; a person (occ. an animal) of experience: late C.16-20: either coll. > S.E. or always S.E. Cf. Old Fr. estager, an inhabitant or resident.


stagger, v. To go: among young men-about-town: from ca. 1908. P. G. Wodehouse; Dorothy Sayer's Lord Peter Wimsey novels. Hence, stagger off (e.g. to bed), to depart.

stagger out, to depart: 1900, P. G. Wodehouse, Mike.

stagger-juice. Strong liquor: Australian: 1907 (O.E.D.); slightly ob. Also, in gen. low s., staggering juice (Manchon).

stagger, get the. To lose one's touch, temporarily lose one's skill; to be making mistakes; sporting: 1933, The Passing Show, July 15. Ex the next.

stagger, the. A drunken fit: coll. : C. 19-20. Ex have the staggerers, to be unable to walk straight.

stagery. (Of an animal) affected with staggerers (1778); (of a person) apt to stagger; unsteady (1837, Dickens). Coll. O.E.D.

staggery, vb.n., ppl.adj. See stag, v., the fifth sense. Kingsley, 1849; both.

stag-runt is incorrect for Stag-runt: C. 18-20. (O.E.D.)

Stahlhelm. A member of the Stahlhelm (the Ger. organisation of Steel Helme): coll.: 1928 (O.E.D. Sup.).

Staines, be at. To be in pecuniary difficulties: ca. 1810-90. Vaux. Also, be at the Bush, in reference to the Bush Inn at Staines.

stag-runt, stag-runters. Children at regular intervals, as one sees by (e.g.) their height: coll.: both in C. R. Cooper, Lions 'n' Tigers, 1925. O.E.D. (Sup.).

STALL, PUT UP A

*stair without a landing, the. A treadmill: c., ca. 1880-1910. J. Greenwood, 1884, 'He's lodging now at Coldbath's Fields— getting up the stairs without a landing,' Cf. everlasting staircases.


*stake. A booty acquired by robbery, a 'swag'; if large, a prime or a heavy stake: c. (— 1812) > ca. 1850, low s.; ob. Vaux.— 2. Hence, same period, a valuable or desirable acquisition of any kind is a stake. Vaux.

stake one's lot. To gamble all: Glasgow coll. (1834).

stakes, the. The [specified] 'line', way of life; coll.: C. 20. As in James Curtis, The Oil Kid, 1938, 'Both men looked as if they might be on the Jo Ronco staking' (q.v. at Joe Ronco). Prob. ex racing j.

stalling is incorrect for scolding: C. 16-17. Holinshed. O.E.D.

*stall. A thief's or sharper's accomplice, gen. acting as a decoy: ca. 1520-1650: S.E. >, ca. 1590, c., as in Greene and 'Water-Poet' Taylor. Ex stale, a decoy-bird. An early form of stall.

stall bear or bull. A 'bear' having long been short of, a 'bull' regarding held, stock: Stock Exchange coll.: from ca. 1890.

stall, the. The gallows in Punch and Judy: showmen's: mid-C. 19-20.


stall the streets. (Of either sex) to look for sexual satisfaction: late C. 19-20; ob.


*stall. A pickpocket's helper, who distracts the victim's attention: c. from ca. 1890. Greene, 1891; Dekker. (Also stallman.) Ex stall, a decoy-bird. Cf. stale, q.v.— 2. Hence, the practice, or an act, of 'stalling'; i.e. thus helping a pick-pocket: c. from ca. 1810. Vaux. 'A violent pressure in a crowd, made by pickpockets.'— 3. Hence, a pretext—or its means—for theft or imposition: from ca. 1850: c. >, ca. 1910, low a. Mayhew.— 4. Hence, any pretext or excuse; esp. a playing for time: from ca. 1855. H., 1st ed. Cf. stall-off, n.

*stall, v. To screen a pickpocket or his thieving: c. from ca. 1850. Greene, 1852; Head, 'Ducange Anglicus.' Ex stall, n. 1, q.v. Also stall off, q.v., and cf. stall up.— 2. V.i., to make excuses, allege pretext, play for time: from ca. 1870. Ex stall, n. 3.— 3. V.i., to play a role: theatrical: from ca. 1860. H., 2nd ed. Perhaps suggested by preceding sense.— 4. V.i., to lodge, or to stay the night at, a public house: from ca. 1855; slightly ob. H., 1st ed. Prob. ex dial. (in Shakespeare, S.E.) stall, to dwell.— 5. V.i., to travel about: c. from ca. 1840-90. 'No. 747.' Perhaps the imm. origin of sense 4.— 6. See stall one's mug and stall to the rouge.— 7. V.i., to hang about; grafters': late C. 19-20. (P. Allingham, 1934.) Ex senses 2 and 4.


*stall, make a. To effect a robbery as in stall up, q.v.: c. (— 1812). Vaux.

stall, put up a, v.t. To mislead, to deceive, to

*stall-off. An act of 'stall off': an evasive trick or story; a pretence, excuse, or prevarication: o. (—1812). Vaux. Mayhew. (O.E.D.) Cf.: *stall off, v. See stall, v., 1.: c. from 1810. Vaux.—2. Hence, to avoid or get rid of evasively or plausibly: o. (—1812) >, ca. 1850. s. Vaux; H., 1st ed.; Sale (O.E.D.—3. Hence, to extricate, get off (a person) by trickery or other artifice: o. (—1812) >, ca. 1850. s. Vaux.—4. Hence, or ex sense 2, to keep the mastery, maintain superiority, over (a competitor, be it horse, as orig., or man): sporting: 1883 (O.E.D.). Frequently *stall off the challenge of (another horse in a race).


stall-pet. (Gen. pl.) The occupant of a stall.

*stall to the rogue, or to the order of rogues. To instil (a beggar) in roguary, appoint him a member of the underworld: o.: ca. 1855-1840, but archaic after C. 17. Harman, B.E.; By itself, *stall is rare; Fletcher, 1622, has 'I...stall thee by the Salmon'—'by the beggar's oath'— 'To mand on the pad.'

*stall up. To hustle, after surrounding, a person being robbed: o. (—1812). Vaux, who specifies the method whereby the victim's arms are forced up and kept in the air. Cf. *stall, v., 1.

*stall-whipmer. A bastard: o. (—1670); v. by 1840. Coles, Grose.

staller. A person constantly, or very good at, making excuses or playing for time: ca. from 1870. Ex *stall, n., 3, via v., 2.

*stalker-up. One who acts as in *stall up, q.v.: o.: ca. from 1810. Vaux.—2. Hence, any accomplice of a pickpocket: o.; ca. from 1820.

*stalling. The 'ordination' and/or actual 'ordaining' of a beggar: o. (—1688); v. by 1850. Randle Holme. See *stall to the rogue.


*stalman: incorrectly, *stalman. See *stall, n., 1.: o. (—1830); ob. Brandon; H., 1st ed.

stalume. Incorrect for *stalion: C. 16, O.E.D.


stam, unrecorded except in this phrase and ignored by the O.E.D., is prob. cognate with A.-S. stemn, a voice, via the defie (steven) of ME., which has occ. examples in -m- or -mn-; its imm. source is prob. either Ger. stemmen, to make one's voice heard, to sing (cf. the lit. meaning of to cant, particularly significant for our phrase), or the corresponding Dutch v., stemmen.

*stammel. 'A brawny, lusty, strapping Wench': B.E.: late C. 18—early 19. Deloney, 1597 (O.E.D.); Grose, 1st ed. Perhaps == 'weaver of a stammel or coarse woolen'—petticoat.' O.E.D. The form *stammel does not occur before C. 18 and is gen. applied to an animal.

*stammer. An indiction: o. of ca. 1850-60. Egan's Grose. Ex its effect.

*stamp. See stamps.—2. 'A particular manner

of throwing the dices out of the box, by striking it with violence against the table,' Grose, 2nd ed.: from ca. 1770: diceing coll. >, by 1830. o. 


† by 1860. Hence, in late C. 17—18, deucesweile stammers, county or country carriers: B.E.


*stand. v. To make a present of; to pay for: coll.: 1835. Dickens, 'He...stood...considerable quantities of spirits-and-water', O.E.D.—2. Hence, to pay for the drinks of a (person, or persons): coll.: 1894 (O.E.D.—3. To make stand; set upright, leave standing; set firmly in a specified place, or position: 1837, Dickens: coll. >, ca. 1870, familiar S.E. E.g. 'stand a child in the corner.'—4. See stand in and stand up; also see pad, patter, racket, rum, treat, and volley. 'stand always!'; as the girl said. A c.p., mid-C. 19—20 (ob.), with a punning reference to priapism. Ex the physiological S.E. sense of stand.


*stand bluff or buff. To swear it is so; to stand firm; to take the consequences: late C. 17—20; bluff, v. by 1800; buff, ob. 'Hudibras' Butler; Fielding; Sheridan, 1777 (buff; v. earliest record) Scott. See buff.

*stand for. To endure, tolerate; agree to: U.S. (middle 1890's), anglicised as a coll. in early 1920's. O.E.D. (Sup.)

*stand (one) in. To oost (a person) so much, the sum gen. being stated: C. 15—20: S.E. until ca. 1850, then coll.; in C. 20, fashionable s. when not dial. Thackeray, 1849. It stands me in eight shillings a bottle.' O.E.D.


*stand on me for that! You can take my word for it: sporting o.p.: from before 1832. Stang, p. 242.
stand on one's hind legs. To show temper: coll.: late C. 19–20.

stand on the stones. See stones, stand on the.

stand one's hand. To meet the bill (esp. for the company's refreshment or entertainment): coll.: from ca. 1880. H. Nisbet, 1892, "I used to see her . . . standing her hand" literally to all . . . in the bar," O.E.D. Cf. stand shot, q.v.

*stand pad or (derisively) Paddy. (Of a pedlar) to sell from a stationary position: tramps' c.: resp. C. 18–20 and late C. 19–20. Ex pad, a road.

stand ready at the door. To be handy for use: coll.: mid-C. 19–20; ob. Ex spade, axe, saddle and bridle, whip, gen. standing there.

stand right under! Clear out!: nautical coll. (—1887). Baumann. Ex nautical j. stand from under.

stand sam. See sam, stand.

stand shot; rarely stand the shot. Same as stand one's hand, q.v.: coll.: from ca. 1820. V.t. with to. Cf. stand sam and S.E. stand treat.

*stand the patter. See patter, stand the.

stand to, boys, the Jocks are going over. A c.p. jocularly directed at 'kitties': 1916–18. B. & P. The 'Jocks' were extremely popular with women, Australians, journalists.

stand to sense. See sense, stand to.


stand up, v.t. To shelter from the rain: coll. and dial.: 1887, 'Mark Rutherford' 1908, G. K. Chesterton. 'Hoping . . . that the snow-shower might be slight, he . . ., stood up under the door-way,' O.E.D.—2. V.t., to keep waiting; to desist: c.: from ca. 1925. J. Curtis, The Girl Kid, 1930, 'He didn't want Maisie to think that he was standing her up.'

stand up in. To be wearing at that moment: coll.: C. 20. 'I can't very well stay the night, I've only the things I stand up in.'


stand-up seat, have a. To (be obliged to) stand: e.g. in a train: jocular coll.: C. 20.

stand up with. To dance with: coll.: 1812, Jane Austen. 'If you want to dance, Fanny, I will stand up with you'; ob.—2. To act as bridesmaid or groomsman for: mid-C. 19–20; ob. by 1910, † by 1935.


*stander. A criminal's, esp. a thief's; sentinel: early C. 17 c. Rowlands, 1610.

*standing. A thieves' station: c.: 1548, Latimer; † by 1890.

standing, take. To accept comically, endure patiently or without fuss: coll.: 1901, The Free Lance, April 27, 'Like a philosophical American, he took it standing, merely remarking . . .' Ex taking a high run, without a run-up.

*standing bridge. A thief's or thieves' sentinel: c.: late C. 17—early 19. B.E., 'The Thieves Scout or Perdu'; Grose. Cf. sneaking bridge; see bridge.

standing part. 'The original structure of anything that has since been embellished, even down to a much-patched pair of trousers' (Bowen): nautical coll.: late C. 19–20. Ex the nautical j. sense.

standing patterer. One of those men 'who take a stand on the curb of a public thoroughfare, and deliver prepared speeches to effect a sale of any articles they have to vend' (esp. broadsides), H., 1st ed.: London s. (from ca. 1850), ob. by 1890, † by 1910; The Metropolitan Streets' Act, 1867, made it very difficult for them. Contrast flying patterer and cf. paper-seller.

standing prick has no conscience, a. A low c.p. (mid-C. 19–20) that, from its verity and force, has >, virtually, a proverb.


stang(e)y. A tailor: low: late C. 18–20; ob. Grose. 1st ed. (also twangey); H., 2nd ed. (Cf. prick-louse.) Ex the needle: cf. stang, an Oslo-spear.


[stangs, says Manchon, is c. for 'chains': but is not this an error for slangs? See slangs, l.]

stap my vitals! A coll. exclamation or asseveration: late C. 17–20; ob. Ex Lord Foplington's pronunciation, in Vanbrugh's The Relapse, 1698, of stop. In late C. 19–20, occ. affectedly, stap me! (O.E.D.)


*star. A 'starring the glaze'; the star, this practice: c. (—1812); ob. Vaux, 'A person convicted of this offence, is . . . done for a star.' See star the glaze.—2. One who 'shines' in society; a very distinguished person: mid-C. 19–20: mostly coll.—3. Hence, in late C. 19–20, a famous actor or actress, esp. the most prominent one in any given play or film: coll. Ex to star, 2, q.v.—4. An article introduced into a sale after the catalogue has been printed: marked in the official copy by a star, 'F. & H.: auctioners': from ca. 1860.—5. In reference to the badge worn by first offenders: prison s.: 1882 (O.E.D.). E.g. star-class prisoners.—6. Hence, a prisoner of the 'star' class: coll. 1903, Lord W. Neville (O.E.D.).

star, v. See star the glaze.—2. V.t., to act the leading part in a play: 1824 (O.E.D.): coll. >, by 1860, S.E. Also, from 1825, star it: same status.—3. Hence v.t., as in star the provinces, to tour there as the 'star' of a dramatic company: 1850, Thackeray. 'She . . . had starred the provinces with great éclat,' O.E.D.: coll. till ca. 1870, then S.E.

star and garter, my; gen. my ss. and gg. A coll. expression of astonishment: 1850, R. G. Cumming. 'My stars and garters! what sort of man is this? '(O.E.D.) Cf. stars i., my, q.v.

star-back. An expensive seat: circus s. (—1933). Edward Seago, Circus Company. I.e. a seat with a back, not a mere plank.

star company. A company with one star, and the rest mere nobodies: theatrical coll.: ca. 1894–1914. Ware.

*star-gazer. A penis in erection: C. 18–20; ob.—2. A hedge whore: from ca. 1750; ob. Grose, 1st
STAR-GAZING ON ONE'S BACK


*star-gazing* on one's back, go. (Of a woman) to coit: low: mid-C. 19–20. Ex *star-gazer*, 2, q.v.

*Star Hotel, sleep in the.* To sleep in the open: New Zealand tramps’ c. (— 1932). Cf. sleep with Mr Green.

*star it.* See star, v. 2.

*star-lay.* Robbery by breaking windows: c.: from ca. 1810; ob. Lex. Balm., Egan’s Grose, Baumann, misprint it as *star lag*. Ex *star the glaze*.

*star man.* A prisoner on first conviction: c. and police s. (— 1953). Charles E. Leach. Ex the official mark against his name.

*Star of the Line, the.* The 29th Foot—in late C. 19–20, the Worcestershire Regiment—military: C. 19–20; ob. F. & Gifforns. Ex the ‘eight-pointed “Garter Star”, worn as a special distinction on the greatcoat straps.’

*star of the movies, the.* The No. 0 pill: military: 1917; ob. B. & P. It caused one to move briskly to the latrine.

*star-pitch.* A sleeping: in the open: tramps’ c.: from ca. 1870. Cf. Hedge Square and do a *star* (see as *starry*) and *Star Hotel* . . .

*star the glaze.* ‘To break and rob a jeweller’s show glass,’ Grose, 2nd ed.: c.: from ca. 1786; ob.—2. Hence, to smash any window (or show-case) and steal the contents: c.: C. 19–20; ob. Ex *star*, to mark or adorn with a star. Cf. star, n., and *star-lay*, q.v.


*Starch Johnny.* John Crowne (d. 1703), the dramatist. Dawson.

*starch out of, take the.* (Of a woman) to receive sexually: low: mid-C. 19–20. Ex the S.E. sense, to abuse or humiliate.


*starchy.* Drunk: from ca. 1870; ob. (Not under-class c.)

*stare, as like as one can* (or could). Very like in appearance: coll.: 1714, Gay, ‘A fine child, as like his dad as he could stare’; Jane Austen. Ob. O.E.D.


*stare like a dead (1694, Motteux) or a struck (1720, O.E.D.) pig.* Scape and stare in utter astonishment or dismay: coll.: the former, rare and ♀ by 1800; the latter (G. Parker, 1759; Joseph Thomas, 1895), actively extant, but considered, in C. 20, as slightly vulgar. Apperson, who cites the Cheshire *stare like a choked throttle* and *like a throttled cat or earing*.

*starkers.* Long-handled eye-glasses; a lorgnette: coll. (society > by 1900, gen.): 1894, Anthony Hope, *The Daily Dialogues*.


*stark-naked.* (Neal or raw) gin: low: 1820, J. H. Reynolds (O.E.D.); almost ♀. Cf. strip-me-naked, q.v.—2. Occ. any unadulterated spirit:

from late 1850’s. H., 2nd ed.—3. Hence, adj.: unadulterated: mid-C. 19–20. All senses derive ex the notion of resultant poverty.

*starkers; starko.* Stark-naked: from ca. 1910: resp. Oxford University s. and low coll. Manchon. I.e. *stark* + ‘the Oxford-er’ with ‘familiar pluralisation’, and *stark* + the lower-class suffix o (as in *wido*).

*starling.* See brother *starling.*—2. A marked man: police: from ca. 1890. Because ‘spotted’ or starred, marked with an asterisk for future reference.


*starrer.* See angler.


*stars.* See. See see stars.


*start.* The brewer’s procedure whereby he empties several barrels of liquor into a tub and thence conveys it through a leather pipe, down to the butts in the collar: late C. 17–mid-18. B.E.—2. A prison: from ca. 1820; ob. C. >, ca. 1860, low s. Ex *Start*, the, 1, q.v.—3. A surprising incident or procedure: 1837, Dickens (*queer start*). Often *rum(my) start*: mid-C. 19–20: cf. *rum go*. O.E.D. Ex the start of surprise.—4. See *Start*, the, 2 and 3.

*start, v.t., as in the *Gentleman’s Magazine*, 1825, “I started him.” To start is to apply a smart word to an idle or forgetful person, O.E.D. In short, to make him jump by startling him.

*Start, the.* Newgate prison: c.: mid-C. 18–19. Also, in late C. 18–19, the *Old Start*, as in Grose, 2nd ed. Perhaps because Newgate represented the beginning of a personal *epoch*; but cf. Romany *start*, imprisoned, ‘it is therefore ultimately cognate with stir, a prison.—2. Hence, the Old Bailey: c.: mid-C. 19–20. Mayhew. Likewise, the *Old Start.—3. London: tramps’ c. >, ca. 1870, low s. *No. 747*, reference valid for 1845; Mayhew, 1851; H., 6th ed. (status). Also without article: mid-C. 19–20 (ob.), as in ’Gypsy’ Carew’s *Autobiography* and *Ducange Anglicus*. The great starting point for beggars and tramps’, H., 2nd ed.

*start in, v.t.; v.t. with on.* To begin work, one’s job (on or at): coll. U.S. (— 1892), anglicised ca. 1900. ‘I started in, Monday.’

*start on.* To tease, jest at, bully: coll.: late C. 19–20.

*start tack or sheet.* See tack or sheet.


*Starvation*; *Starvation Dundas.* Henry Dundas, first Viscount Melville (1742–1811). On March 6, 1775, Dundas, in a famous speech on American affairs, introduced *starvation*; which word > thenceforward a nickname that survived until some years.
Starvation

after his death. H. Walpole, April 25, 1781, 'Starvation Dundas, whose pious policy suggested that the devil of rebellion could be expelled only by fasting'; W. Mason, in 1782, was app. the first to use the shorter name.

starvation, adv. Gen. starvation cheap, as in Kipling, 1882 (the adv.'s first appearance in print): coll. Lit., as to cause starvation; hence, excessively, extremely.

Starve, to a. To be starving: (mostly lower classes) coll.: from ca. 1910 at the latest.


*Tash. To stop, desist from: o. (– 1811) >, ca. 1840, low a. >, ca. 1870, s. Lex. Bal., 1811, 'The cove tipped the prosecutor fifty quid to shut the business'; Vaux; 1841, Leman Redo, 'Stash your pater—shut up!—and come along.' Prob., as W. suggests, ex stow + squash: cf. Vaux at stash. Perhaps, however, it blends stop + squash: Chignell. —2. Hence, to quit (a place): 1880, Rolf Boldwood. 'The rest of us...stashed the camp and cleared out,' O.E.D.—3. See next three entries.

stash it. Specifically, 'to give over a lewd or intemperate course of life,' H., 1859; ob.—2. stash it! Specifically, be quiet! ibid. See stash, 1.

*stash the limp. To cease using the light; to extinguish it: o. (– 1823) >, ca. 1840, low a.; † by 1890. 'Jon Bee,' 1823. Cf. douse the gum. Ex stash, 1.

stash up. To terminate abruptly, as in the earliest record (H. G. Wells' Tono Bungay, 1909), 'She brought her [piano]–playing to an end by— as schoolboys say—'stashing it up',' O.E.D. Ex stash, 1. Among dockers, from ca. 1920, to have stashed the game up is to have stopped the job: The Daily Herald, late July or early Aug., 1936.

state, coll. 1. State substantive, esp. of unkindness, confusion, dirtiness, etc.: coll. 1879, F. W. Robinson, 'Just look what a [dirty] state I am in!' O.E.D.; C. 20, 'The house is in a state!—2. Agitation, anxiety, state of excitement: coll.: 1837, Maryat (O.E.D.); W. E. Richards, in The Humorist, Aug. 18, 1834, 'When I reached the station, my wife was in what is known in domestic circles as a "state":

*state, lie in. To be 'in bed with three regular harlots': Grose, lst ed.: ca. 1780–1850.

State frightens. 'Those who foolishly fear any infringement of their own State–rights': Australian (— 1935).

(State nicknames, U.S.A., are very little known in the British Empire. The best lists are those in F. & H., vol. 6, 1903, at State Nicknames; Thornton's American Glossary, 1912, passim; and Harvey's Oxford Companion to English Literature in the latest editions.)

state of elevation, in a. A coll. >, in late C. 19, S.E.; very ob. As in Smollett, 1749, 'We drank hard, and went home in a state of elevation, that is half-seas over.'

state tea. A 'tea at which every atom of the family plate is exhibited': Society; ca. 1870–1914. Ware, 'Probably suggested by State ball.'

*state-the-case man. 'A pressed seaman whose protests were strong enough to bring an Admiralty order that he should be given a chance to state his case': naval coll.: ca. 1770–1840. Bowen.


 states can be saved without it. A political, hence cultured, c.p. expressive of ironic condemnation: ca. 1880–90. Ware.

state of independence. The 'frontiers of extravagance,' Egan's Grose: Oxford University, ca. 1820–40.

station—see 'Westminster School slang'—is on the border-line between coll. and j.

station-jack. A meat pudding used on stations: Australian coll.: 1863. (Morris.)


stationmaster's hat. 'The cap with gilt peak worn by commanders and above': from ca. 1916: naval officers.' Bowen.

statoise. Incorrect (C. 20) for statooscope; statory (C. 17), for statary. O.E.D.

*staulingso-, stawling(e)-ken. See stalling-ken.


stay. To lodge or reside regularly or permanently: standard Scots (C. 18–20) >, in late C. 19, Colonial, esp. South African, Australian, and New Zealand. (O.E.D.)

*stay, come to. To become permanent, established, recognised, regularly used; coll.: orig. (1833, Abraham Lincoln), U.S.; anglicised in late 1890's. The Athenaeum, April 13, 1901, 'Lord Byron as a letter-writer has come to stay.'—2. Hence, (of merchandise, etc.) to secure a position in public favour as fulfilling a general need: coll.: 1903, The Referee, Feb. 8, 'No one with half a grain of sense could...question the autoeurs' many merits, nor their having come to stay and become a great power in the land.'

stay and be hanged! A lower-middle class c.p. of C. 19–early 20: 'Oh, all right!' Ware.


stay put. See put, stay.

*stay-tape. A tailor: coll.: ca. 1780–1850. Grose, lst ed. Ex the frequency with which that article figured in tailors' bills. Cf.: 

*stay-tape is scorched, one's. One is in bad health: tailors': late C. 19–20. E.g. in The Tailor and Cutter, Nov. 22, 1928.

stay with. To keep up with (a competitor, a rival, in any contest): U.S. (1887); anglicised, as a coll., ca. 1920.

staying. For a day, a week, etc., as in 'They have staying visitors': non-aristocratic coll. (— 1887). Baumann.

Staymaker, the (old). Sir Alex Thomson, Chief Baron of the Exchequer in 1815–17. Dawson, 'From his habit of checking witnesses.'


*steady for instead is coll. in late C. 19–20. O.E.D.; Baumann.

steady. A steady admirer, wooer, of a girl (rarely
vice versa); U.S. (ca. 1860); anglicised by 1907; by 1930, coll. O.E.D. (Sup.).


steal. A theiving; a theft; a thing stolen: Scots (— 1829) >, ca. 1890, coll.; since ca. 1920, rare except in U.S. The Saturday Review, July 29, 1890. 'This is an audacious steal from "In a Good Night!":' O.E.D.

steal a manchet or a roll out of the brewer’s basket: gen. have stolen ... To be tipsy: coll.: ca. 1870–1820. Ray, 1678, manchet; Fuller, 1732, roll.

steal the show. See show, steal the.

stealers, the ten. The fingers: first half of C. 17. Davenport, 1639 (O.E.D.). Ex Shakespeare’s pickers and stealers, q.v.

steam. A trip or excursion by steamer: coll.: 1854. Kid, 1890 (O.E.D.). Ex nautical usage as in a few hours’ steam away.—2. A dish cooked by steaming: coll. (orig. military): 1900 (O.E.D.); by 1930, > rare. Cf. steaming.3. The phrases get (one’s) steam up, to start, and put the steam on, to try or begin to work hard, are S.E. Vernon on coll. Baumann, 1887.—4. Cheap, fiery liquor (esp. plonk—Australian brand): Australian, esp. Sydney, q. c. from ca. 1930.


steam, keep up the. See steamer.

steam ahead, away. To put on speed: coll.: 1857, T. Hughes, ‘Young Brooke ... then steams away for the run in,’ O.E.D.; ahead not before late C. 19. Ex the motion of a railway engine or of a steamer.—2. Hence, to progress rapidly, to work vigorously: coll. (— 1911). C.O.D.

steam antics. See antics.


steam-engine. A potato-pie: Lancashire s. (— 1864); ob. H., 3rd ed. Prob. ex the steam it emits when properly served at table.


steam on the table, have. To have ‘a boiled joint—generally steaming, on Sunday’: workmen’s: late C. 18–20. Ware.


steam-pot. See steam-kettle.

steam-roller. A man that is ‘sure—but very slow and usually too late’: military: 1915; ob. B. & P. Ex the Russian steam-roller, a journalistic term applied to the Russian Army in 1914–15.


steamer in one a. To be the worse for drink: naval: from ca. 1910. F. & Gibbons. Ex the stertorous breathing.


steam, the. Coldbath Fields prison, London: c. from ca. 1810. Lex. Bal., 1811; J. Greenwood. Dick Temple, 1888. Virtually † by 1910. Abb. Bastille.—2. Hence (gen. the steam) any prison or lock-up: o. >, ca. 1900, low s.: 1845, 'No. 747', p. 413 (steam); 1889, Thor Fredur, ‘He pitched into the policeman, was lugged off to the steam, ... and got a month’; but adulterated in Lex. Bal., 1811. Cf. choky, quod, limbo, stir.—3. A rare c. sense, viable only ca. 1835–50, is that given by Brandon and ‘Ducange Anglicus’; the treadmill.

steandon. See promo.

steel-bar driver or ringer. A tailor; esp. a journeyman tailor; resp. ca. 1850–90 (‘Ducange Anglicus’); ca. 1780–1890 (Grose, 1st ed.). Prob. steel bar, a needle, is also s. of same period; Grose, ibid.

steel jug. A shrapnel-helmet: military, but not very gen.: 1916; ob. B. & P. Cf. tin hat. (First used on Aug. 12, 1915.)

steel-nose. Some kind of strong liquor: mid-C. 17. Whitlock’s Zootomia, 1654. O.E.D.

steel-pen cost. A dress coat: coll.: 1873 (O.E.D.); ob. Ex the resemblance between the split nib and the divided coat-tail.

steelbacks, the. The 48th Foot (in late C. 19–20, the 1st Battalion of the Northamptonshire Regiment: the 57th Foot, in late C. 19, become the 1st Battalion of the Middlesex Regiment: military: resp. mid-C. 18–20 and C. 19–20. Either ex the weighty packs they carried or with reference to steelback, Alicant wine, in some connexion with the Peninsular War; or, best of all, ex adj. phrase steel to the (very) back, very robust, trustworthy, or brave, as in Tius Andronicus, IV, iii.

steene. George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham (1621–1628). ‘Given by James I ... from his fancied resemblance to the head of S. Stephen at Whitehall’ (Dawson). For a brilliant character-sketch, see Evan John, Charles I, 1933.

steep. Excessive, resp. of price, fine or damages, taxes, and figures; hard to believe, exaggerated, esp. of stories: U.S. (1860), anglicised ca. 1880. Baumann, ‘This sounds very steep’; The Westminster Gazette, April 22, 1885, ‘This is rather a steep statement,’ O.E.D. Cf. stiff (price) and tail (story).

steer. A piece of information; mostly give a steer: nautical: from ca. 1870. F. & H.

steer a trick. To take a turn at the wheel: nautical; mid-C. 19–20.

steer small. To exercise care: from ca. 1860: nautical coll. >, by 1900, j. Ex S.E. sense, ‘to steer well and within small compass’ (Smyth).


stems. Legs: low: from ca. 1860; ob. H., 2nd ed. (Despite F. & H., not coll.)


step. Gen. a good step (Sterne, 1768) or a tidy step (Blackmore, 1894); occ. a goodish step (— 1888).

A walking distance: dial, and coll.: mid-C. 18-20.


step on, mind the. A c.p. ‘look after yourself!’ to a paying visitor: from ca. 1880. Ware. Ex lit. admonition, perhaps orig. to a drunkard.

step off. To die: 1926, Edgar Wallace (O.E.D. Sup.). Cf. step out.

step on it. To hurry: from ca. 1929. (O.E.D. Sup.) Ex:

step on the gas. See gas, step on the.


step up. To pay court to (a girl): lower classes’ coll. (— 1823). Manchon.

*stephen; gen. steven. Money: esp. ready money: c. and low s.: ca. 1810—60. Lex. Bot., ‘Stephen’s at home; i.e. he has money’; Ainsworth, ‘Persons suggested by stever — slav(‘)er’—2. Esp. in Stephen’s at home, the money’s there or ready.


*stepping-ken. A dance-hall: late C. 19—20: orig. c. and mostly U.S.

steps. ‘Thick slices of bread and butter, over-laying each other on a plate’: London lower classes’ mid-C. 19—20; ob. Ware. Cf. doorstep.

*steps, up the. Committed for trial: c. (— 1833). Charles E. Leach. Ex going into the dock.

stereo. Stale news: printers’ coll.: from late 1880’s. Ex stereotype.

stereo, adj. Stereoscopic: from ca. 1875: coll.; now verging on S.E. (O.E.D.)

stories, the. Hysteria: a low coll. abbr. of hysterica: 1705, Footes, O.E.D.


stern. The buttocks, esp. of persons: late C. 16—20: mostly jocular, and since ca. 1820 gen. considered a vulgarism. Furnivall, 1889. ‘We don’t want to . . . fancy them cherubs without sterns.’

stern, bring (a ship) down by the. To over-officer (a ship): nautical coll.: from ca. 1835. Dana. Officers slept towards the stern.


Steve. A gen. term of address, esp. in letters, to me, Steve !: C. 20, and mostly Australian. Cf. the generic use of George and Jack. For terms of address, see my essay in Words !

Steve !, come on. See come on, Steve !—Steve?, got me. See got me, (Steve) ? Also I’ve got you, Steve !

*steven. See stephen—stever. See stiver.

stew. (Great) alarm, anxiety, excitement: 1806, J. Bereford (O.E.D.): coll., ca. 1906, S.E. In late C. 19—20, esp. be in an awful stew.—2. A state of perplexation or overheating: coll.: from ca. 1890. Ex stew, to remain in a heated room (etc.). Cf.:

stew, v. I. To study hard: orig. and mainly school s.: 1866, Every Boy’s Annual, ‘Cooper was stewing over his books,’ O.E.D. See stewn., 2; cf.:

stew-pot. A hard-working student: gen. desirous: from ca. 1880. Ex stew, v.; the pun on the kitchen utensil was perhaps suggested by stew.


stick, v. a. (Of the man) to coil with: low. C. 19—20.—2. V.t. (Mostly of persons) to continue long, remain persistently, in one place: C. 19—20: coll. until late C. 19, then S.E. Of a cricketer, as early as 1832 (see stickier, 4).—3. V.t., to put up with (things), tolerate (persons): 1899. ‘He could not ‘stick’ his mother-in-law, The Daily News, Oct. 26 (O.E.D.). Also stick it, to continue without finching, to do something: the phrase was used by soldiers in the Boer War (1899–1901), as J. Milne, The Epistles of Atkins, 1902, makes clear. In the G.W., one often heard ‘Stick it, lad!’ ‘Appears to be a . . . variation on to stand it, W.—4. To bring to a standstill; incapacitate from advance or retirement: coll.: 1829, Scott, Waverley, as in gen.; The Westminster Gazette, July 14, 1902. ‘The climber may easily find himself stuck on the face of a precipice,’ O.E.D.—5. Hence, to nonplus; puzzle greatly; coll.: 1884, The Literary Era, ‘You could not stick me on the hardest of them,’ O.E.D.—6. To cheat (a person) out of money or in dealing; impose illicitly upon: 1869; slightly ob. Blackwood’s Magazine, 1843, ‘They
stick to.  A persevering, conscientious person:  
coll.: 1909, H. G. Wells (O.E.D. Sup.).
Hicks, The Cape as I Found It, 1900. Pettman.  
Cf. S.E. stick (a thing) out of the way.

B.E., Grose, Baumann. Perhaps a corruption of stick-on-the-flams (lit., stick-on-the-hands).

stick for drinks. To win the toss to decide who shall pay for them: late C. 19–20.  
An elaboration of stick, v., 5, q.v.: cf. ibid., 8.

stick, frozen on the.  See frozen on the stick.


stick in it, with a. (Of a drink, esp. tea or coffee) 
In late C. 19–20, only Colonial and U.S.  Cf. Fr. du café avec.

stick-in-the-ribs.  Thick soup (like glue): from ca. 1870: not upper-class.

stick it.  See sticks, 2, and cf. stick it out.

stick it in or on, v.i. To charge exorbitantly.  
V.t. stick it into or, occ., on to: a. >, ca. 1880, coll.: 1844, Dickens, 'We stick it into B. . . . 
and make a devilish comfortable little property out of him,' O.E.D.  See stick, v., 5, and cf. rush.—2. stick it into (a person) is also, in Australia, to ask, esp. if surprisingly or abruptly, a person for a loan: C. 20, stick it out.  
To endure and go on enduring: coll.: 1901, 'Lucas Malek . . . It would be ridiculous to fly, 
since she must stick it out,' O.E.D.  A variant of stick it: see stick, v., 3.

stick it up.  To cause a charge to be placed 
against one's name, orig. (1864) in a tavern-score, 
hence (also in 1864) in gen.—i.e. to obtain credit—
as in stick it up to me!, put it on my account!  

stick-jaw.  A pudding or, as predominantly in 
C. 20, a sweetmeat that is very difficult to chew:  
coll.: 1829, Caroline Southey (O.E.D.).  Occ. as 
adj.: late C. 19–20: coll.—2.  Something extremely 
obscene: lower classes' (—1923).  
Mackenzie.  Cf. sticking-plaster, q.v.

*stick man; stickman.  The accomplice of a pair 
of women engaged in robbing drunken men; to him 
they entrust their booty: c. (—1861); slightly ob. 
Mayhew.

stick on.  See stick it in—stick on the price, to 
'stick on, to overcharge, or defraud.'

stick one's spoon in the wall.  See spoon in the 
wall.—stick oneself up. See stick up to be.

stick out. V.i., to be conspicuous; esp. too 
conspicuous: mid C. 17–20: S.E. until mid C. 19, then 
s. (mainly U.S.). The Daily Chronicle, Dec. 3, 1902, 
'Of her 'is all very well . . . , but when it occurs 
too often it's "sticks out," as Mr. James would 
say,' O.E.D.  Spec. it sticks out a mile, it's obvious: 
used absolutely or with that.—2. See 
stick it out.—3.  To persist in demanding (e.g. 
money) : coll.: v.i., 1906; v.t. with for, 1902.  
O.E.D.—4. Hence, (v.t. with that) to persist in 
thinking: coll.: 1904, R. Hichens, 'Do you stick 
out that Corey didn't love you?'  Also stick (a 
person) out, to maintain an opinion despite all his 
arguments: coll.: from 1905.  V.t.

*stick-slinger.  One who, gen. in company with 
harlots, robbers or plunders with violence: c. (—1856). 
Mayhew.  Cf. bludgeon, q.v.

stick to. To remain resolutely faithful to; or, 
despite all odds, attached to (a person or a party):
C. 16–20: S.E. until ca. 1860; thereafter, coll.: ca. 1800–60, however, it was familiar S.E. H., 2nd ed., 1860; 'Mrs Alexander', 1885, 'But I should have stuck to him through thick and thin,' O.E.D.

stick-up. A stand-up collar: from ca. 1855 (ob.): coll. >, by 1890, S.E. 'Ducange Anglico', 1857.

stick up. See stick up for—to be—and stick up in—3. (L.C. and Br.E. argument: coll. 1888, Darwin: 'I admired the way you stuck up about deduction and induction,' O.E.D.—3. (V.t.) In Australia, to stop and rob (a person) on the road: 1846, J. L. Stokes: coll. >, by 1890, S.E. Ex making the victim stick up his hands. Morris.—3a. Hence, to rob (a bank, etc.): 1888, Boldrewood: coll. >, by 1890, S.E. Morris.—4. Hence, to demand money from (a person): 1890, Hornung: Australian coll. >, by 1910, S.E.—5. To stop: 1893: Australian coll. >, by 1890, 'standard'. Morris.—6. To pose or puzzle: 1896: Australian coll. Morris.—7. To increase (the prize or, in games, the score): ca. 1875–1920. C. Shepard, in his song, I'm a Millionaire, ca. 1880, 'Though some stick it up, now I'll pay money down'; F. & H., 1903, 'To stick up tricks (points, rules, goals, &c.) = to score.'—8. In cricket, to cause (a batsman) to lay strictly on the defensive: coll.: 1894, yore ('Lewis'). Cf. stick v. 4, q.v. stick up for. To champion (a person); defend the character or cause of: coll.: U.S. (1837) >, almost imm., British H., 1850; Thackeray, 1862; Anstey, 1882, 'Why, you are sticking up for him now!' said Tom... astonished at this apparent change of front.' Cf. stand up for.

stick up to. To oppose; esp. to continue offering resistance to: coll.: from ca. 1840: dial. till ca. 1860, then coll. H., 2nd ed.; Baumann; The Contemporary Review, Feb., 1889,'If there is no one who dare stick up to [the head boy], he so soon becomes intolerable,' O.E.D.

stick up to be; (occ.) stick oneself up to be. To claim to be; coll.: 1881, Blackmore, 'I never knew any good come of those fellows who stick up to be everything wonderful,' O.E.D.

stick wallah. A man scheming 'get the stick' (see stick, get the), esp. one who habitually aims at this: Regular Army; late C. 19–20. F. & Gibbons. Perhaps ex S. Indian dodger-stick.

stick with. See stick v. 6.

stickability. The ability to preserve and/or endure: coll.: from ca. 1920. O.E.D. (Sup.).

sticked (be). (To be) caned: Wembley County School: from ca. 1925.


stickiness. The n. ex all senses of sticky adj.: q.v. (Compton Mackenzie, 1933, 'The stickiness of the Treasury.') sticking-parade. See stick, be.


stickling-up. The action of stopping (person or vehicle) on the road and robbing him or it: 1855, The Melbourne Argus, Jan. 18: coll. >, by 1890, S.E. Ex Australian stick up (v.). Cf. sticker-up, last sense.

sticker. Erroneous for sticker, a gatherer of sticks for firewood: mainly lexicographical, Cowell (1907) having misread a passage in a Roll of 1422 and Todd (1819) and others following him. O.E.D.-stickman. See stick man.


sticks, (as) cross as two. Very angry: coll.: mid-C. 19–20; ob. H., 1st ed.

sticks, beat (1820)—rarely knock (Thackeray, 1840; † by 1930)—all to. Utterly to overcome, clearly or completely to surpass; coll. Barham, 'They were beat all to sticks by the lovely Odille.' (O.E.D.) Cf. S.E. in bite.

sticks, cut one's. To make off: see cut... sticks; cf. stick, cut one's.

sticks, go to. To be ruined: coll. : ca. 1842, Carlyle. Emphatically, go to sticks and slaves, as in Susan Ferrier, 1824. Kingsley, 1855, has the variant go to noopsy-staves, † by 1920. Lit., be smashed.

sticks, in quick. Immediately; very quickly or rapidly: 1872, Besant & Rice, 'You won't pay her any more attentions, for you shall come out of this place in quick sticks'; ob. by 1915, virtually † by 1935. Prob. a fusion of sticks, legs, and cut one's sticks.
stick(s), up

stick(s), up. To set up a boat's main : nautical a.: stick, 1845, rare in C. 20; sticks, from not later than 1888 (Clark Russell). Occ. fig. Ex stick, a mast.

stick's end, keep (a person) at the. To treat with reserve: coll.: 1886, Stevenson (O.E.D.); ob. Cf. wouldn't touch (him, it) with a barge-pole.

sticks to, hold the; hold sticks with. 'To compete on equal terms with': resp. dial. (ca. 1817) >, ca. 1860, coll.; and coll. (1833, Read). O.E.D. Both are, as coll., rare in C. 20. Perhaps ex single-stick.

sticky. (Not to be confused with S.E. stické, a game that, fusing racquets and lawn tennis, had a vogue ca. 1903–13.) Lawn tennis in its first decade or perhaps its first three lustres: sporting and social. Ex sapheiristiké, the game's original designation: invented, like its object, in 1874 by Major Wingfield. The Saturday Review, June 30, 1934; E.P., Christmas card, 1934.—2. Sealing-wax: from late 1860's. H., 1st ed.—3. Stickling-plaster: lower and lower-middle class coll.: late C. 19–20.

sticky, v. To render sticky: coll.: 1885, Mrs Gaskell, I was sadly afraid of stickying my glove's,' O.E.D. Not a common word.

sticky, adj. (Of persons) wooden, dull; awkward: 1881, Mrs Lynn Linton (O.E.D.). Ex stick, a dull person.—2. (Of stock) not easy to sell: Stock Exchange, 1901, The Times, Oct. 24 (O.E.D.): s. >, by 1920, coll. Cf. stickier, 1, q.v.—3. (Of persons) not easy to interview; unpleasant and/or obstinate; difficult to placate: from ca. 1919. Ex.—4. Of situation, incident, work, duty: unpleasant; very difficult: 1915 ('A sticky time in the trenches': O.E.D. Sup.); T. S. Eliot, in Time and Tide, Jan. 5, 1935, '[St Thomas of Canterbury] came to a sticky end.' This sense derives prob. ex senses 1 and 2 + S.E. (? orig.—1889—coll.) stickly, (applied to troops) apt to hesitate in obeying commands (O.E.D., ad. 2, 949, § 2, b).—5. See: sticky at or on, be. To be 'potty' on (a member of the opposite sex): lower classes (—1923). Manchon. Ex stuck on, q.v.


sticky dog. A sticky wicket: cricketers': from ca. 1830. (P. G. H. Fender, in The Evening News, June 19, 1934.)


stiff. Greatly. Only in bore (one) stiff: coll.: from ca. 1910. (Cf. the U.S. scared stiff.) Lit., to death.

stiff, bit of. See stiff, n., 1.


stiff, cut up. See cut up nasty. Thackeray, ca. 1855.

stiff and stout, the. A penæ erectus: low: mid-C. 17–20; ob. Urquhart.


stiff as a poker. (Gen. of posture) very stiff coll.: 1797, Colman, Jr.

*stiff-dealer. A dealer in stiff, n., 1, q.v.: c. from ca. 1820. 'Jon Bee.'


stiff in the back. Resolute; firm of character: coll.: late C. 19–20. 'Anthony Hope'; 1897. 'Are you going to let him off? . . . You never can be stiff in the back,' O.E.D.


stiff one. See stiff 'un.

stiff or hard? By promissory note or in hard cash?: commercial: from ca. 1860.

stiff-rump. A person haughty or supercilious; an obstinate one; C. 18–early 19. Addison & Steele, 1709 (O.E.D). Cf. stiff-arsed and stiff in the back.

stiff 'un; occ. stiff one. A corpse: 1823, Egan's Groce (one); 1831, The Annual Register (O.E.D.). Also stiffy, q.v.—2. A horse certain not to win: the turf: 1871, 'Hawk's-Eye', 'Safe uns, or stiff uns.' Also stiff, n., 6; cf. dead 'uns and stumper, q.v.

stiff upper lip, carry or have or keep a. To be firm, resolute; to show no, or only slight, signs of the distress one must be feeling: coll.: resp. 1837, ob.; 1887, very ob.; and 1852. App. orig. U.S., for the earliest examples of carry and keep are American.

stiffen. To kill: 1888.—2. Hence to prevent (a horse) from doing its best: the turf: 1900, The
**STIFFEN IT!, GOD**


**stiffen it, God.** A low oath: late C. 19-20.

Eden Phillpotts, Some of the Morning, 1900 (E.D.D.). Lit., render it useless, destroy it; but gen. as a vague and violent expletive. Cf. stiffen, I.

**stiffener.** A pick-me-up drink: 1828, Dorothy Sayers (O.E.D. Sup.). In Glasgow, it is used of any heavy drink. Now col.

**stiffy.** A corpse: late C. 19-20. See stiff, n, 5, and stiff 'un, 1.-2. A horse that is losing: Glasgow sporting (-1934). Cf. stiff 'un, 2.

**stiffer.** Always the s.: the gallows: c. 1818, Scott; ob. Hence, nab the stiffer, to be hanged; queer the stiffer, to escape hanging. —2. A camouflet: military: 1836: a. >, ca. 1915, coll.


**stilled and all.** Nevertheless: coll. : C. 20. K. G. R. Browne, 1934, in The Humorist, 'Still and all . . . the average politician does no great harm to anybody.'

**stilting.** See Johnny Walker.

**still he is not happy!** A c.p. applied to one whom nothing pleases, nothing satisfies: ca. 1870-75. Ware quotes The Daily Telegraph, July 28, 1894, as attributing it to a phrase often spoken in a Galloway burlesque of 1870.

**still sowl.** 'A close, sly lurking knave,' Florio; coll.: late C. 16-mid-17. Ex the proverb, the still sowl eats up all the draft (Apperson).

**stilting.** 'First-class pocket-picking,' J. Greenwood, 1884: c. ob. by 1930. † a perversion of stilting, or a pun on stilting, the action of stiff-walking.

**Stillon, the.** The correct thing: 1859, Hotten; virtually †. A polite variation of choice.

**stim.** A stimulant, gen. of liquor: Society: 1882; ob. by 1910, † by 1930.

**stimulate, v.i.** To drink alcoholic stimulants: C. 19-20: S.E. until mid-1830's, then coll. (mostly U.S.); except in U.S., † by 1930.

**sting.** To rob: to cheat: c. (-1812); † by 1903. Vaux.—2. Hence, to demand or beg something, esp. money, from a person; to get it thus: late C. 19. Cf. put the spits in.—3. (Also ex sense 1.) To swindle, often in a very mild way and gen. in the passive voice: late C. 19-20. Lyell.—4. sting oneself, to get stung, is coll. and surprisingly old: 1663, Tuke, 'I've touch'd a nettle, and have stung my self,' O.E.D.—5. (Gen. in passive.) To snub: Charterhouse: C. 20.

**sting-hum.** A niggard: late C. 17-early 19. B.E.; Grose. The O.E.D. gives sting-hum; there is no such term: R.B. E.'s is irrefutable.

**stinging.** The sport of catching Stingrays, or Stingarees': New Zealand coll.: 1872, Hutton & Hector, The Fishes of New Zealand. (Morris.)

**stinger.** Anything that stings or smartes: late C. 18-20: S.E. until C. 19, then coll., in such senses as a sharp, heavy blow (1923, Bee) or the hand that deals it (1855, Browning),—something distressing, such as a very sharp frost (1853, Surtees),—a trenchant speech or a pungent (or crushing) argument: late C. 19-20. O.E.D. and F. & H. —2. A bowspirit: Canadian (and U.S.) nautical: C. 20. Bowen. Perhaps because it is bitterly cold work on it in the winter.

**stinger, fetch a.** See fetch a stinger.

**stingo.** Strong ale or beer: from ca. 1630; ob. except in the trade name, Watney's stingo nips. Randolph, ca. 1635; Ned Ward, 1703; Bridges, 1774; ca. 1840, Barham (styngo); 1891, Nat Gould, 'Horace Barnes had tapped a barrel of double stingo for the occasion,' O.E.D. Ex its ' bite' + Italianate c. Cf. binge.—2. Hence, as adj. (C. 19-20) and 3, fig. energy, vigour (late C. 19-20): coll.

**stingly.** (Of, esp. nettles) having a stinger: coll.: late C. 19-20. (O.E.D.)

**stink.** A disagreeable exposure; considerable alarm: c. (-1812) >, ca. 1850, low s. >, ca. 1910, gen. s. Vaux; Mayhew.—2. Hence, a 'row': late C. 19-20.—3. big or little stink, a high- or low-powered boat: Conway cades': C. 20. J. Masefield, The Conway, 1933.

**stink, v.t.** To smell the stink of or from: Public Schools: C. 20. (E. F. Benson, David Blaize, 1916.)

**stink, kick up a.** See pen and ink, 3; cf. stink, 2.

**stink, like.** A variant of like stinking hell, desperately hard or fast or much: from not later than 1915. Ex stinking hell, C. 20 asseveration. (D. Sayers & R. Eustace, The Documents in the Case, 1930, 'Toiling away like stink.')

**stink-bomb.** A mustard-gas shell: military coll.: 1917; ob. F. & Gibbons.

**stink-car.** A motor-car: ca. 1900-10. The Sporting Times, April 27, 1901. Prob. ex stinker, 4, on the analogy of stinkard.

**stink-finger, play at.** To grope a woman: low: mid-C. 19-20.

**stink for a nosegay, take a.** To err egregiously, be very gullible: coll.: late C. 18-mid-19. Malkin, Gil Blas, 1809.


**stink of money.** To be 'louzily' or 'filthly' rich; middle and upper classes' (1929), The C.O.D., 2nd ed. (With thanks to O.E.D. Sup.)


**stinker, come a.** To come a 'cropper', lit. or fig.: from before 1923. Manchon. Cf. stinker, n., 5.

**stinkeries.** A set of cages for a (silver-)fox farm: middle-class rural: from ca. 1920. (Evelyn Waugh, A Handful of Dust, 1934.)

**stinkibus.** Bad liquor; esp. rank, adulterated spirits; C. 18, Ned Ward, 1706; Smollett, 1771 (stinkulbus). Spurious-Latin suffix on stink; or stingo.

**stinking.** Disgusting; contemptible: C. 13-20: S.E. until C. 19, then a vulgarism. Cf. stinker, 1.—2. (Of a blow, criticism, repartee, etc.) sharp: C. 20.
stocking. A store of money: gen. a fat or a long stocking: dial. (— 1873) >, ca. 1875, coll., >, ca. 1905, S.E. S. R. Whitehead, 1876, 'She had a "stocking" gathered to meet the wants of an evil day,' O.E.D. Ex a stocking used in preference to a bank.—2. See stock, v.


studding, vb.l.n. and p.p.l. adj. Gormandising: coll.: late C. 19—20. Ex stodge, v.t., to gorge (oneself or another) with food; often in passive: dial. (— 1854) >, by 1860, coll.; the O.E.D., which considers it to have been always E., records stodge as v.t. only in 1911,—but it occurs in Baumann (sich statt essen) in 1887. Cf. stodgy.

stock(e), a. or coll.: late C. 19—20. Ex stogy, a stoker, or a stow. See note in (stone-brig.) —1. Stow, a stonewall. Also, orig. in England (ca. 1890) have been coll. Ex Constable, U.S.A.

stock: gen. stokes up. V.i., to eat; nourish oneself: coll.: C. 20. Ex stoking an engine.

staking. 'Smute and cinders flying from a ship's funnels at high speed': nautical: C. 20. Bowen.


*stoll. To understand (e.g. stoll the garter): N. England with country: from ca. 1860. H., 3rd ed. † a corruption of stroll, to place, used fig.—2. V.i., to tittle; low a.: from ca. 1880; ob. Whence stolled, tipsey. † origin: perhaps cognate with rare Norfolk stole, to drink, swallow (E.D.D.).

Stolyn's rescktie. 'The final halter': political: 1897-ca. 1914. Ware. Ex a formerly well-known Russian functionary.

stomach, hot. See hot a stomach.

stomach on one's chest, (have got) a. (To have) something weighing heavily on one's stomach: jocular coll. (— 1887). Baumann.

stomach thinks my throat is cut, my. See throat is cut.

(bolly-timber) than an eligible coll. Heedried, by F. & H. for 1820; certainly † by 1900.)

stomach-worm gnaws, the. I'm hungry: ca. 1785-1850. Gros, 2nd ed.

stomjack, or stom Jack. Stomach (n.): nursery sol. (— 1887). Baumann.


stone and a beating, give a. To beat easily: racing a. (— 1885) >, by 1900, sporting coll. Ex racing and athletics j., stone being a stone-weight. (Wane.)

stone-brig. See stone-doublet.

stone-broked, stone(e)y-broked. (Almost) penniless; ruined: resp. from before 1887 (Baumann) and now rare; 1894, Astley. The link between the two forms is provided by R. C. Lehmann's Harry Fludger, 1890, 'Pat said he was stoney or broke or something but he gave me a sov.'

stone cold, have (a person). An intensive of cold, hase, q.v. (Lycell.)

stone-(Doublet), jug, pitcher, tavern; brig, frigate. A prison: orig. and esp. Newgate —doublet,—the exemplar,—B.E.; Motteux, 1694; † by 1850; ↓ jug,—in C. 19, the commonest, whence jug, q.v.—late C. 18—19, Gros, 3rd ed., and Reade, 1856; ↓-pitcher, ca. 1810—60; ↓-tavern, late C. 18—mid 19, Gros, 3rd ed.; ↓ brig and ↓frigate are both nautical (mainly naval), C. 19, the latter recorded by Frank C. Bowen. Dial. has stone-house and, in 1790, U.S. has stone jacket.


stone-ginger, a. A certainty: Aucklandites' (N.Z.): from ca. 1910; ob. By 1930, however, it was gen. James Curtis, 1936. Ex a horse that won virtually every hurdle-race for which it was entered.


stone ship. A War-time ferro-concrete ship (mostly they were tugs and barges): nautical coll. of G.W. (Bowen.)


stone under weight or wanting, two. Castrated: punning coll.: 1785, Gros (under weight, the wanting form not before C. 19); ob.


stone-wall; stonewall. Parliamentary obstruction: a body of Parliamentary obstructionists: 1876: Australian, the by 1866, New Zealand political a. Morris. Cf. the C. 16—17 proverb, it is evil running against a stone wall (Apperson) and:

stone-wall: gen. stonewall. To play solidly on the defensive: cricket a. (1889) >, by 1920, coll. Lit., to block every thing as though one were a
STONE WALL, ABLE TO SEE THROUGH 835

stone-wall; but immoral: St. E. stone-wall, a cricketer doing this (1887; Lewis) ->. In politics, v.t. and v.i., to obstruct (business) by lengthy speeches and other retarding tactics: Australian s. (from ca. 1880) -> ca. 1900, fairly gen. Ex the n. Morris. stone-wall as anyone, able to see as far through a. See through a stone wall.

stone-waller: stone-walling, n. and adj. One who stone-walls (in sport, ca. 1890; in politics, ca. 1880): the act or practice of doing this and the corresponding adj.: (in cricket, ca. 1886; in politics, ca. 1880) ->. Ex the stone-waller. A certainty: Glasgow sporting (1934).

stone wanting, two. See stone under weight.


stones, on the. On the street, i.e. destitute: coll. (1923). Manchon.

stones, stand on the. Gen. standing on the stones, omitted from the list of those 'wanted' (for work): dockers' -> from ca. 1930. (The Daily Herald, late July or early Aug., 1936.)

stone-wall. See stone-wall — stoney. See stony.

'stoney-broke. See stone-broke.

'stounish. To astonish: in C. 19-20, gen. coll. and mostly nursery.

stonketed, be. To be put out of action: military: 1914 or 1915; ob. F. & Gibbons. Perhaps ex dial. stonk(e), the game of marbles, on scuppered.


stony; less correctly, stoney. (Almost) penniless, ruined: from ca. 1890. For earliest record, see stone-broke. For semantics, cf. hard-up. Cf.: stony- (occ. stoney-broke). The same: see stone-broke.


stool's foot in water, lay the. To prepare to receive a guest or guests: coll.: 'C. 18-20-th. F. & H.

*stoo. Always the stoo. The pillory: a. of ca. 1780-1840. George Parker; Grose, 1st ed. (at nab). Whence nab (nap) the stoo, to be pilloried; stoo-napper, one in the pillory: both a.: same period as the position therein enforced ->. Catachrestio when used of a porch or a veranda: late C. 18-20. Canada (and U.S.). O.E.D.

*stoo, v.i. To become a victim to crook or criminal: a.: late C. 18-early 17. Greene. (1987; Lewis) ->. 


stop, v. To receive (a wound); only in stop (a nasty or a Blightly) one, stop a packet: military: from 1915. Ex familiar S.E. stop a bullet. (B. & P.) Cf. cop a packet.

stop a pot. 'To quaff ale,' C. J. Dennis: (low) Australian: C. 20.


stop and look at you (them, etc.). An oce. variant of get up and look at you, q.v.: 1926. J. B. Hobbs (Lewis).


Stop-Hole Alley. The chief rendezvous of the underworld: a.: late C. 17-early 19. B.E. It was at some ruinous building in London.

stop me and buy one! A c.p. of 1934-6; (?) ob. Ex the Wall's Ice Cream slogan.


stop one. See stop, v.

'stop one's blubber. A New Canting Dict., 1728. 'I've stop his Blubber ... I've done his Business. He'll tell no Tales, &c.': a. C. 18.

stop out, v.t. To cover (one's teeth) with black wax to render them invisible to the audience: theatrical coll.: from ca. 1870. Ex etching.


stop ticking. To cease being of importance; to die: from ca. 1930. Ex a watch.

stop up. To sit up instead of going to bed: coll.: 1857, Mrs Gaskell. (O.E.D.)

stopper. Something that brings to a standstill or that terminates: s. (1828, Egan in Bosiana ->, in late C. 19, coll. Esp. in clasp a stopper on ('that jaw of yours'), Marryat, 1830, ? by 1910, and in put a or the stopper on, to cause to cease (Dickens, 1841): both s. >, ca. 1890, coll. O.E.D. ->. Hence, a brake: motor-racers': from ca. 1925. (Peter Chamberlain.)

stopper, v.t. To stop: 1821, Scott, 'Stop your jaw, Dick, will you?': O.E.D. Cf. stopper, n., 1830 quotation. Ex lit. nautical sense.

stopping, hot. See hot-stopping.

stopping oyster. See oyster.

stops! mind your. Be careful: coll.: 1830, Marryat, 'Mind your step here . . . or I shall say a biscuit at your head.' Ex an injunction to a child reading aloud. O.E.D.

stock. 'A bullock, cow, or sheep bought to be fattened for the market': 1874: Australian coll. ->, by 1900, 'standard'. Morris. Also (but S.E.): store-cattle.

storey, upper. See upper storey.


story, for the storey of a building, is not incorrect, though slightly frowned on in England; but storey is preferable, if only to differentiate the sense.

story. A lie: a coll. euphemism: ca. 1697,

*story-teller. A liar: euphemistic; O.E.D.

*stoat. A variant of stast.

*stoter; occ. stoab; also stoker and stotter. A sharp, quick blow: late C. 18—early 19; c. >, ca. 1800, low s.: Motteux, 1694, stoter; B.E., stoter; stotter, 1769. Only H. and F. & H. record stoter. O.E.D. Ex:

*stoter, v. To fell heavily; hit hard; c. 1690, D'Urfey; B.E., 'Stoter him, or tip him a Stoter, settle him, give him a swinging Blow'; † by 1760. Ex Dutch stoten, to push or knock. (O.E.D.)

stouh. An occ. variant of stoush, q.v.

stoupe. To give up (v.i.): c. 15—early 19. Halliwell. Ex to stoop.

stounh, n. A fight; v.t., to fight, esp. to best in a fight (anything from fistfights to a great battle): Australian: C. 20. C. J. Dennis. Prob. cognate with stastah, q.v.; cf. dial. stachie, stachie, an uproot, a quarrel (E.D.D.).

stowah-up. A variant of the preceding n.: Australian: from ca. 1910.

stow, ca. 1670—1770, was for a strong beer.

Swift: Johnson.


*stoater. See stoter.


stove, v. 'Incorrect nautical use of incorrect past of stave as present': C. 19—20. W.


stove-pipes. Trousers: 1803 (O.E.D.); ob. by 1920, † by 1935.

*stow, v.i. To cease talking, to 'shut up': c. (− 1857); ob. by 1820, † by 1850. Harman, 'Stow you, hold your peace'; B.E., 'Stow you have said enough'; Grose, 3rd ed., 'Stow you, be silent.'—2. Hence, v.t., to desist from: (− 1670) >, ca. 1800, low s. >, ca. 1850, gen. s. Coles, 1876, 'Stow your whippets, ... speak wary'; stow (one's) jaber, 1806; stow (one's) mag, 1857; 'Ouida', 1882, '"Stow that, sir," cried Rake, vehemently.' Ob. Prob. ex S.E. stow, 'to place in a receptacle to be stored or kept in reserve', O.E.D. (whence several of the dates). Cf. stach, q.v., and: *stow taking!; stow it! Stop doing that, t. gen. as a warning in the underworld: c. resp. ca. 1810—1900; C. 19—20, ob. Vaux. See stow. Cf.: *stow madding and manging! Be silent! lit., stop talking! c. of resp. ca. 1810—80, ca. 1820—80. Vaux; Bee (... madding). See mag, v., and mang. Bee, 1823, has the variant stowmarked! stow on their ears. To save money: Merchant Service, C. 20. Bowen.


In 1812, the Regiment formed the Main Guard of the Governor's residence in the Strada Reale, Valetta.

straddle is the C. 20 Stock Exchange a. (from ca. 1920, coll.) for the operation in which, 'when a broker executes an order to buy grain deliverable in a certain specified month, executing at the same time an order to sell the same quantity and description deliverable in another specified month, he shall be at liberty to carry out both transactions for one brokerage,' 1902; quoted by the O.E.D. (F. & H. confuses the English with the U.S. term, of which spread-eagle is a synonym.) Occ. as v.i.

straddle, v.i. 'In Sports and Gaming to play that whom shall pay the Reckoning', Dyche & Pardon, 1735; † by 1820.—2. See end of sense 1 in the preceding entry.


stramash is a mainly dial. variant of stramash, q.v.


strafe; strafing. The agential and the vbl.n. of the preceding.

stragger. A stranger: Oxford University undergraduates: late C. 19—20. (O.E.D. Sup.) By the 'Oxford-er'.

straggling money. A sailor that overstays his furlough: nautical (− 1887). Baumann. Because he has money left.

straight, adv. See the adj. and in the straight, on the straight.—2. (Also straighter.) A cigarette of Virginia tobacco: from ca. 1920. Manchon. Ex straight-cut.

straight, adj. (Of an utterance) outspoken; (of a statement) unreserved, certain: coll. (− 1887). Baumann. Hence, straight talk, plain speaking: 1800.—2. Of persons or their conduct: honest, honourable; frank: coll. 1804 (O.E.D.). In C. 16—mid-17, this sense was S.E. but the present use >, is unconnected.—3. Hence, of any person) steady, of a woman) chaste: coll.: 1888, Lindsay Gordon, keep (one) straight, the chief usage.—4. (Of accounts) settled: coll.: C. 17—20.—5. See straight face.—6. ‘Often absent-mindedly confused with strait’, W.

straight! Honestly it; it's a fact!: low coll.: 1890, Albert Chevalier; 1897. 'Tommy's Marshall, "If that isn't a good hus," the bookie cried, 'I'll forfeit a fiver, straight.'

straight, in. The rather form of straight, on the, behaving reputedly or like a good citizen: from late 1890s. Edgar Wallace, 1900, 'O the garden it is lovely—That's when Jerry's on the straight!'

STRAIGHT, IN THE
STRAIGHT, LAY

O.E.D. Ex lit. sense, along a straight line.—2. (Only in the straight.) Near the end: racing coll. > gen.: 1903, T.P.'s Weekly, Jan. 2. ‘Good, I'm in the straight now... Thank Heaven that's done.' Ex coming up the straight of a race-course and making the final effort.

straight, lay (a person). To operate on: medical students' (1923). Manchon.

straight, out of the. Dishonest; illicit, illegal: late C. 19–20. straight arm. See make a straight arm.


straight as a pound of candles. Very straight: coll.: 1748, Smollett, 'My hair hung down... as... straight as a pound of candles': ob. Cf. (the C. 19) Cheshire straight as a yard of pump water, applied to a tall, thin man, and Ray's (C. 17–18) straight as the backbone of a herring, which may have been coll. before being proverbial S.E. (Apperson).—2. Hence, very honest: coll.: C. 19–20; extremely ob.;


straight face; also keep one's face straight. (To do) this as a restraint from laughing: coll.: 1897, The Spectator, Sept. 25. 'An expressive vulgarity... with a straight face': O.E.D.

straight griff or griffin. See griff, griffin.

straight line, get on the. To get on the right scent or track: c. (1887). Baumann.

straight off the turnips. See turnips, straight off the.


straight screw. A wanderer that traffics with the prisoners: c. C. 20. George Ingram, Stir, 1933.

straight-set, v.t. To defeat in the minimum number of sets (i.e. in straight sets): lawn-tennis coll.: 1935, The Daily Telegraph, April 4. Hence, such a match is called a straight-setter: lawn-tennis a.: June, 1935.

straight tip. See tip, straight.

straight-up, adj. Correct; the truth: low: from ca. 1825. James Curtis, The Gilt Kid, 1936. 'Maisie was the only girl he had ever loved. That was straight-up.'

straight up and down the mast. (Of weather) calm: Irish nautical (1909). Ware.

straight wire, the. The genuine thing; esp., authentic news: Australian: from ca. 1910.

straighten. To bribe, try to bribe (a police officer): c.: from ca. 1920. Edgar Wallace, passion; Charles E. Lasch. 1.o. straighten him out.

straighten up. To get one honest or honourable: s. (ca. 1906) >, ca. 1920, coll. Ex lit. sense, to assume an upright posture.

straighter. See straight, n. 2.

straight (occ. Straights), the. Jonson, 1614: ↑ by 1700: prob. o Perhaps ex strait, adj., or strait, n. Gifford, 1816. 'These Straits consisted of a nest of obscure courts, alleys, and avenues, running between the bottom of St Martin's Lane, Half Moon, and Chandos Street'; they were 'frequented by bullies, knights of the post, and fencing masters'. Cf. the Bermudas.

strain hard. To tell a great or hearty lie: coll.: late C. 17–18. B.E.

strain one's talents. To make water: low: from ca. 1890: ob. Ex the sour of water in which potatoes have been washed or strained.

Strait, the. The Mediterranean: nautical: C. 20. Bowen. Ex the S.E. sense, the Straits of Gibraltar.

'tram, the. (Harlota) street-walking: c. >, ca. 1900, low s.; ob. 1887, Henley, 'You jades that clobber for the stram'. ↑ ex U.S. U.S., to walk some distance (1869), influenced by strum, v. (q.v.), or strumpet.

stramash; also straemash, very rare outside of dial. A disturbance; a rough-and-tumble: dial. (1821) >, ca. 1835, colloq. Barham, ca. 1840, former sense; Henry Kingsley, 1855, 'I and three other... men... had a noble stramash on Folly Bridge. That is the last fighting I have seen.' Ex Northern and Scottish stramash, to break, crush, destroy, itself perhaps ex stour (a disturbance) + smaish: W. Of stram(m)el. See stammel and strommel.

strammer. Anything exceptional, esp. in size or intensity, and strumming, huge, great, are dial., ca. 1850, coll., but, after ca. 1910, very ob. as coll. Ex dial. strum, to bang or strike: it is therefore one of the numerous 'perusive' intensives.


stranger!, quite a; often preceded by well! A coll. o.p. addressed to a person not seen for some time: C. 20. (R. Blaker, Night-Shift, 1934.)


strangulation. Sol. or captare for strangury: Palgrave, 1830; Phillips, 1878. Whence, via strangury, the confusion worse confounded of stranguration: mid-C. 16–early 17. O.E.D.


'strap, v.i. To lie with a woman, esp. as vbl.n. strapping: c.: late C. 17–19. B.E. Grose. Prob. ex strapping (vouch, youth, etc.).—2. To work, esp. if energetically, v.t. with at: from ca. 1810; ob. Lex. Bal. Also with away (1849), and to (both v.i. and v.t.: mid-C. 19–20).—3. V.t., to allow credit for (goods) dial. (1862) >, ca. 1890, s. Ex strap, n., 2.—4. Hence, strap it (gen. as vbl.n.), to get goods on credit: Glasgow: C. 20.

strap-em, oil of; strap-oil. Often preceded by a dose of. A thrashing with a strap: C. 19–20. Halliwell, 1847, 'It is a common joke on April 1st to send a lad for a pennyworth of strap-oil, which is generally ministered on his own person.' On strirup-oil, q.v.
strap-hang, v.t. From ca. 1910. By back-formation ex:
strap-hanger. A passenger compelled, or occ. choosing, to hold on to a strap in omnibus, train, etc.: from ca. 1904: s. >, ca. 1930, coll. Punch, Nov., 8, 1905; in 1934, Norah James published a novel entitled Strap-hangers. Cf. the S.E. portmanteau word, strapese or strapese.
strap-off. See strap-em.
strap-up. To wash up the saloon table gear. A steward is said to be "on the Crockery Strap-up": Bowen: nautical: C. 20. Prob. because so many articles have then to be firmly secured.
*straping. See strapping. B.E.'s spelling (? a mere misprint).
strapado. Catastrophic when = a punishment by blows, as in mid-C. 17-18, as also it is when = to beat with a strap (mid-C. 17), O.E.D.
straped, adj. (Of goods, etc., bad) on credit: Glasgow: C. 20. See strap, v., 3 and 4.
strapper. A very energetic or an unremitting worker: 1851, Mayhew, 'They are all picked men ... regular "strappers," and no mistake,' O.E.D. Ex strap, v., 2.
strapping, adj. See strap, v., 4.
straps, strap. Sprats: a modified rhyming (or, perhaps, back) a. that is low urban (— 1909). Ware.
Strata Smith. Wm. Smith (1709-1839), the geologist and engineer. Dawson.
strap, v.t. To do as in strayer, 1, q.v. : London: mid-C. 19-20; ob.
strap, one's eyes draw. Grose's variation of straws, 2, v.q.: straw is rare.
strap, pad in. The. See pad in the. —strawball. See ball.
strap and t'other serves the Thatcher, one eye draws. He (she, etc.) is half asleep: coll.: late C. 18-mid-19. Grose, 2nd ed. An elaboration of straws, 2, q.v.
Straw House. The Sailors' Home, Dock Street, London: nautical: mid-C. 19-20. Bowen, 1929, mentions that 'a century ago seamen were there' given a sack of straw for their bed.'
strap in her ear, wear a. To seek re-marriage: C. 20. Manchon.
strap-yard. See strawyards.
strawberry. A "brandy-blossom" or liquor-caused drupe: low (— 1857), Baumann.
Strawboots; Old Strawboots. The 7th Dragoon Guards; also the 7th Hussars: military: resp. from ca. 1830 and from ca. 1760; ob. Also the Straw: as well as the Black Horse and the Virgin Mary's Guard (both — 1879), applied only to the Dragoons. ' Tradition says from these regiments having been employed to quell agricultural riots', F. & E.: this is correct only of the Guards; the Hussars prob. got their name from straw used as foot-protection in the Seven Years War (F. & Gibbons).
strawer. London s. > coll (now almost t) of mid-C. 19-20, as in Mayhew, 1851, 'The strawer offers to sell any passer by . . . a straw and to give to the purchaser a paper which he dares not sell . . . political, libellous, irreverent, or indecent.' Ex straw, v.—2. A straw hat: schools' (— 1903). Cf. strawyard, 2.
strawing, vbl.n. See straw, v., and strawer, 1.
straw. Straws: see Strawboats.—2. straw, draw, gather, or pick. (Of the eyes, not the person) to show signs of sleep: late C. 17-20 (ob.): coll. >, by 1850, S.E. Motteux (draw), Swift (draw), Grose (druse straw), Woleot (pick), J. Wilson (gather). (O.E.D.) Both gather and pick are virtually t. Cf. straw and . . . q.v.
strawyard. See strawyards.—2. A (man's) straw hat: coll.: late C. 19-20; ob. (By 1929, † in the Navy; Bowen.)
strawyard bull, like a. A jocose reply (often amplified by full of f**k and half starved) to 'How do you feel or How are you? ': low c.p.: from ca. 1870; ob.
strawyarder. A longshoreman acting as a sailor: nautical: mid-C. 19-20; slightly ob.—2. Esp. (— 1903), a 'scab' on shipboard duty during a strike.
strawyards, the. Night shelters (refuges, homes) for the destitute: the London poor: mid-C. 19-20; ob. Mayhew, 1851.
strand; occ. streak. 'To go very fast': 1768, 'Helenore Ross, ' [She] forward on did streak': H., 1st ed. Gen. streak off (like increased lightning: 1843, Carleton): occ. streak away, as in The Field, Sept. 25, 1886. S. >, in late C. 19, coll. Prob. ex flashes of lightning. The form to streak it is U.S.
strand, like a. With exceeding swiftness: late C. 19-20. I.e. like a streak of lightning. Also like streaks: C. 20. See streak; cf.: 
strand away. See streak.
strand down. To slip or slide down; to descend: s. (— 1889) >, by 1920, coll. App. mostly South African. (Pottman.) Cf. streak, v., q.v.
streak of lightning. A glass, gen. of gin, occ. of other potent spirit: mid-C. 19-20; very ob. Ex its sudden effect.
streaks, like. See streak, like a.
Stream's Town; or s.t. The female pudend: low: ca. 1820-90.
street. See streak, v.
street, down or up. Towards or in the lower or the upper end of the street: low coll.: 1878, Miss Bradford. O.E.D.
Street, Easy. See Easy Street.—Street, Grub. See Grub Street.—street, key to the. See kay.—street, man in the. See man in the street.
street, not in or not up my (his, etc.). That's not my concern; not my strong point; not my method:

street, not in the same (constructed with be and either as or with). (To be) far behind (lit. or fig.); much inferior to: a. >, ca. 1910, coll.: 1883, Mrs Kennard, comparing two race-horses.

street, not the length of a. A small interval: s. (1893, O.E.D.) that, like preceding entry, was originally sporting: cf. streets ahead, q.v.

Street. Queen. See live in Queen Street.—Street, Queen. See Queen Street.

Street, the. Wall Street as money-market: from ca. 1860: coll. >, ca. 1910, S.E.: U.S., anglicised ca. 1890. Cf. Change, on, q.v.—2. The money-market held outside the Stock Exchange after 4 p.m.: Stock Exchange coll.: C. 20.—3. See G.P. street, up one's. One's concern: see street, not in my.


street-pitcher. A vendor or a mendicant taking a station (or 'pitch') in the street: from late 1850's; slightly ob. H., 1st ed., who adds the specific sense († by 1890) of the 'orator' advertising various activities (e.g. ballad-singing) and where relevant, selling illustrative broadsheets or booklets.

street-yarn, spin. To walk about idly, gossiping from house to house: coll.: mid-C. 19—20; U.S., anglicised ca. 1870; ob.

street-yelp. A c.p. of the streets: lower classes': 1894; ob. Ware.

streets, be in the. A lower-class' variation (—1857) of walk the streets, to be a prostitute. Baumann.

streets ahead (of) or better (than), be. To be far ahead (of) in a race: from ca. 1895.—2. Hence, to be much superior (to): 1898 (O.E.D.). Both a. >, ca. 1920, coll. Also absolutely. Occ. streets better off.

Street, the. See Straights.

Streets (C. 17) and Strlets (C. 17—20) incorrect as pl. O.E.D.

strengthen, if this or this or that or the other, the. The 'real'—i.e. the hidden or ulterior or most important—meaning or significance (of any act or thing specified or implied), as in 'What's the strength of him (or his) coming here ?': coll., perhaps first in Australia, where it is much used: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Cf. C. 15—early 17 S.E. strength, the tenor or import (of a document).

strenuous. Excited; angry; upper classes': from ca. 1930. See the quotation at crashing bore. Is the S.E. sense.


streperous. Abbr. obstreperous, q.v. Cf. † S.E. streperous, noisy.

strelati, streltule. Iliterate forms of triste:

C. 16. O.E.D.

*stretch. A yard (length): o. (—1811); † by 1920. Lex. Bal.: Vaux, Five . . . stretch signifies six . . . years.'—2. A year's imprisonment, esp. with hard labour: o.: from ca. 1810. Vaux; Haggart, Horsey, Edgar Wallace. Ex sense 1 + a long stretch. Thus one, two, three (four, etc.) stretch = two (etc.) years' imprisonment, as in Haggart, 1821, and J. Greenwood, 1888. See also quarter stretch.

stretch, gen. v.i.: occ. in late C. 19—20, stretch it. To exaggerate; tell lies: coll. : from ca. 1870. D'Urfey, Gross. Cf. strain, q.v.—2. V.i. and t., to outstay (one's furlough): naval coll.: C. 20. Ware; Bowen.

stretch leather, v. See leather, n., 2, and cf. leather-stretcher.


stretch one's legs according to the coverlet. To adapt oneself to (esp. one's financial) circumstances: late C. 17—18; coll. >, by 1750, S.E. Bailey, 1736. Ex the very old proverb, whoso stretches his foot beyond the blanket shall stretch it in the straw. Apperson.

stretched, has had his breeches. (The boy) has received a thrashing: lower-class coll.: mid-C. 19—20. Ware.

stretched of one's mess. See mess, lose the number of one's.


stretcher, hang over the. To eat too much; put on weight: low (—1923). Manchon.


stretching, 'Helping oneself at table without the help of servants': coll. : from ca. 1898. Ware.


'Strewth! God's truth!': low coll. when not deliberately jocular: 1892, Kipling. 'Strewth! but I socked it them 'ard.'

strict Q.T., on the. See Q.T.


*strike, v.t. and v.i. To steal: to rob: o. of ca. 1655—1760. HARMAN, Green, B.E.—2. Hence, v.i. to borrow money: c. : C. 17—early 19 (perhaps until late C. 19). Mynshul, 1618 (O.E.D.). B.E. Esp. as vb.n., striking.—3. Hence, v.t. and v.i., to ask (a person) suddenly and/or pressingly for (a loan, etc.): low: mid-C. 18—20; slightly ob. Fielding,
strike, make a. To be successful; lucky: coll.: from ca. 1800. Ex *strike, 'the horizontal course of a stratum' (of gold, etc.).

strike a *bright. To have a bright idea: tailors' and lower classes' (1809); ob. Ware. Cf. brain-storm.


*strike a jigger. See strike, v. 5.


strike all of a heap. See heap.

strike-fire. Gin: 1725, G. Smith on distilling (O.E.D.); Ajob. strike-me-blind. Rice: nautical (1894); slightly ob. Bowern, 'From the old superstition that its eating affected the eyesight'.

strike me blind! A (gen. proletarian) expletive: coll.: 1704, Gibber. Also strike me dumb! (1696, Vanbrugh; ↑ by 1890); ... lucky! (1849, Cupples); ... silly! (1860; very ob.); ... pink! mid-C. 19-20; ... ugly (C. 20: Manchon); and strike me! late C. 19-20. (O.E.D.) These imprecations may be constructed with if or but. Cf. strike a light, 2, and the Australian strike me up a gum-tree! (from ca. 1870: H., 5th ed., occ. in C. 20 varied by strike me up a blue-gum! Strike-me-dead. Small beer: naval: from early 1820's; ob. Cf. strike-fire.—3. Bread: military rhyming s.: from ca. 1899. F. & Gibbons.—3. Head: rhyming s.: C. 20. B. & F.

strike me lucky!—pink!—silly!—up a gum-tree! See strike me blind! For the first, see also lucky not strike me. strike oil. See oil, strike.

strike—or give me the bill! Mind what you're about: coll.: ca. 1860-1750. Walker, 1672. Ex injunction to man clumsy with this weapon. (Apperson.)

*striking, vb.n. See strike, v., 1 and 2.


string, v. See string on.

string, n. The. See string on.

string feel like going to heaven in a. To feel utterly and confusedly happy: coll.: C. (?) 18-119. Lit., so happy that one would willingly die a martyr; in late C. 18-19, go to heaven in string (applied orig. to Jesus hanged temp. Elizabeth) meant, simply, to be hanged, as in Greene and Ned Ward (O.E.D.).

string, go to heaven in a. See preceding entry.

string on a. Esp. have or have got (one) on a string, to hoax, befool: coll.: from ca. 1810. Bee; 'Pomme 'Marshall, 'You can't kid me ... they've been having you on a string.' Ex lead in, or have in on, a string, to have completely under control. Cf. string on.—2. Hence, have (or keep) on a string, to keep a person in suspense for a long time: coll.: late C. 19-20. Lyell.—3. Get (one) on a string or line. See line, get one on a. Vaux.


string on. To befoul, to 'lead up the garden path', as, e.g., 'You can't string him on!': from ca. 1810. Vaux. (Whence U.S. string, to humbug.)

stringer. A ball difficult to play: cricket (1904); ↑ by 1930. F. & H. Perhaps ex string on, q.v.—2. In pl., hand cuffs: 1893, Kipling (O.E.D.); ob.

stringing up. A strong admonition, severe reprimand: 1925, F. Lonsdale (O.E.D. Sup.).


stringy-bark. Australian (ob. by 1915) as in A. J. Vogan, Black Police, 1890, 'Stringy-bark, a curious combination of fusil [sic] oil and turpentine, labelled "whisky".' Ex the:—2. Adj. Rough or uncultured; also (and orig.) rustic, belonging to the 'bush': Australian coll. >, ca. 1800, S.E. (slightly ob.): 1833, The New South Wales Magazine, Oct. 1, concerning inferior craftsmanship, 'I am but, to use a colonial expression, "a stringy-bark carpenter".' Morrin.

strip. To rob (a house or a person); esp. to steal everything in (a house); to swindle (a person) out of his money: late C. 17-mid-18: e. B.E., whose phrases are of the 'strip the ken,' to gut the house 'order, i.e. with direct object and no further construction. Ex strip ... of, to plunder ... of. Strip a peg. To buy ready-made, or second-hand clothes: 1908 (O.E.D. Sup.); slightly ob.

strip-bush. A fellow who steals clothes put out to dry after washing': either c. or low s. (—1864); ob. H., 3rd ed. Strip-me-naked. Gin: from ca. 1760. Toldervy, 1756; Grose, 3rd ed. Cf. stark-naked, q.v.

*stripe. 'One who is no longer a first offender': c. (—1933). George Ingram, Stir.

stripier, two—two and a half—three. A lieutenant; lieutenant-commander; commander, R.N.; naval coll.: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Ex the indications of rank. Cf. one-piper, q.v.


striped. (Of spirits) unadulterated: neat; mid-C. 19-20.; ob.

strippers. 'High cards cut wedge-shape, a little wider than the rest, so as to be easily drawn in a crooked game', F. & H.: gambling coll.: from mid-1860's. See esp. Maskelyne, Sharpes and Plate, 1894. Ex the manner of stacking, with a pun on impoverishment.


strike. To write with care: Christ's Hospital;
from ca. 1870. Ex L. scribere, to write, via to strive, q.v., on to strive, to try very hard.

strone a pot, as good as ever. See pissed, as good as ever.

stroke, take a. (Of the male). To coit: low coll. (- 1780); ob. Grose, 1st ed.

*strone mort. A pretended-widow beggar roaming the country (often with a ‘ruffler’), making loans, be, etc., and stealing as chance favours her: c. (- 1873); † by 1880. Head; B.E.; Grose, 1st ed. In C. 17, often stroning m.

*strommel (ca. 1655-1840); also strimmel (C. 16-19), very common; stramel (C. 18) and strammel (C. 18-19); strommel (C. 17-18) and stromell (C. 17); and strumil (C. 18, rare). Straw: c. of ca. 1655-1830. Harman, B.E., Grose (1st ed.), Scott. Perhaps via Anglo-Fr. ex Old Fr. estramer: cf. strangene, rushes strewn on the floor. O.E.D.—2. Hence, hair (prob. orig. of straw-coloured hair): c. (- 1725); † by 1850, except in Norfolk (H., 1st ed.). A New Canting Dict., 1725; Vaux; Ainsworth. ‘With his strummel faked in the newest twig’, done in the newest fashion. Cf. strum, n., 1, and:

*strommel- or strummel-faker. A barber: c. of ca. 1810-40. Ex strimmel, 2. (Implied in Vaux.)


strong. (Of a charge or payment) heavy: coll.: 1690 (O.E.D.); ob.

**strong, be going.** To be vigorous or prosperous: coll.: 1698, Punch, Oct. 22. ‘And though, just now, we’re going strong. | The brandy cannot last for long,’ O.E.D. Ex horse-racing.

strong, come it. See come it strong; cf. go it strong, below.

strong, come out. To speak or act vigorously or impressively; to ‘launch out’: coll.: 1844, Dickens (O.E.D.). Cf. be going strong, above, and:

strong, go it. To act recklessly or energetically: coll.: from ca. 1840. Cf.: strong, pitch it. To exaggerate; tell a ‘tall’ story: coll.: 1841, Hood (O.E.D.).

strong man, play the part of the. To be whipped at the ‘cart tail’: low: ca. 1730-1840. Grose, 1st ed., ‘I.e. to push the cart and horses too.”

strong on. Laying great stress on: coll.: 1838, ‘Strong on the proprieties’, O.E.D.

strong on, go. To uphold or advocate energetically and/or emphatically: coll.: 1844, Diaristi. ‘“We go strong on the Church?” said Mr. Taper,’ O.E.D.; ob.

strong silent man. This cliché has, since the early 1920’s, > a virtual c.p. to the sarcastic. (Cf. Collinson, Etc. popular fiction.

stronger house than ever your father built, you’ll be sent to a. You’ll go to prison (someday): C. 17 semi-proverbial coll. Apperson.

strongers. Any powerful cleanser such as spirits of salts: naval officers’ C. 20. Bowen. Ex strong by ‘the Oxford -er’.

strongie. A strongyle (strön-djil): iliterate pronunciation: from mid-1890’s. (Thread-worm.) O.E.D.

strook is, in mid-C. 19-20, sol. for stroock. Baumann.

Strop Bill, the. South African coll. (- 1913) for ‘a bill introduced into the Cape Parliament, which had it passed would have allowed a farmer to punish his servants for misconduct by flogging’, Pettman. By 1930, virtually †.

straw. Incorrect for † from, frough, adj. O.E.D.

*strow mort. See strolling mort.


Cf. struck so.

*struck comical, be. To be very astonished: low coll. (- 1891). Cf. struck on; (Low) coll. form of struck with, charmed by (orig. a person—of the opposite—gen. female—sex): from early 1800’s. (O.E.D.)

struck so. Struck motionless in a particular posture or grimace: from ca. 1850: low coll. Mayhew. Ex struck, bewitched. (O.E.D.)

struck with. See struck.

strude. A stock of mares: incorrect for *stud: J. Kersey, 1702, and later. O.E.D.

stud. To construe or translate: schools’ coll.: late C. 19-20. — Hence, a ‘construct’: Shrewsbury School coll.: from ca. 1890. (Desmond Coke, The Bending of a Twig, 1906.)


struggle-for-lifer. A struggle for life: a. or coll. (- 1886). Ex biological struggle for life, though imm. ex Daudet’s struggle-for-lfeur (1899).—2. Hence, one who, thus struggling, is none too scrupulous in seeking success: 1890; ob. O.E.D.

struggle with, I (etc.) could. I could do with, I’d gladly take (e.g. a drink): lower classes’ coll. (- 1887); ob. Baumann.


strum, v.i. and v.t. To have intercourse (with a woman): low: from ca. 1780; ob. Grose, 1st ed. Semantically, to play a rough tune (on her). Possibly suggested by a pun on strum, n., 2, q.v.

*strumel, s-faker, s-patch. See strimmel, etc.

strunt. The male member: C. 17. Middleton, in Epigrams and Satyres, 1608. Ex S.E. and dial. strunt, the fatty part of an animal’s tail.

strut like a crow in a gutter. See crow in a gutter.

‘Struth! ’ An emaciated oath, ‘C. J. Dennis; low: ca. 19-20. (God’s truth!) Also ’Struth, v.q.

stub (or stubb). See stubbe. —2. ‘The lower part of a rainbow’ (Bowen): nautical coll.: mid-C. 19-20; ob. An extension of the S.E. sense.

stubb. To kick (a football) about: Pelston: late C. 19-20. Ex stub one’s toe.

stubb-faced. Pitted with small-pox: late C. 18-19. Grose, 2nd ed., where the phrase the devil run over his face with horse stubs (horsehoe nails) in his shoes.

stubb. See stub, n.

stubbie. The female public banter: low: C. 18-20. Whence, shoot over the stubble (or in the bush), to ejaculate before intimation, and take a turn in the stubble, to cott (both, C. 19-20), and pointer and stubbly, v.q.

*stubble it!; stubble your white! Hold your tongue: c.: resp. late C. 17-19 (B.E. and Lytton) and ca. 1810-60 (Lytton). Prob. ex stubble, v.t., to clear of stubble.

Stubborns, the (Old). The 45th Foot Regiment,
now the Sherwood Foresters: military nickname; from ca. 1840. F. & Gibbons. Ex a passage in Napier's *Peninsular War*, bk. viii, ch. 2, referring to them at the battle of Talavera as a 'stubborn regiment'.

*stubb*. Nothing: c. of ca. 1810–1900. Vaux; Baumann. Ex *stubs*, the end (of, e.g., a cigar).

**stubs in his shoes.** See **stub-faced**.


**stuck, be.** To be confirmed; **sticking-parade.** Confirmation: Charterhouse: C. 20. I.e., fixed in one's Faith.

**stuck, dead.** Utterly ruined or flabbergasted; wholly disappointed: low: from ca. 1870.


**stuck by.** Deserted or grossly deceived or imposed on by (esp. one's pal): low: from ca. 1880.

**stuck for.** Lacking; at a loss how to obtain: from ca. 1870. Esp. stuck for the ready, penniless. Cf. *stuck and stuck, dead, q.v.*

**stuck in.** (e.g. one's calculations). Mistaken; also, at a loss concerning: from ca. 1870. Prob. an elaboration of *stuck*, q.v.

**stuck in the mud.** Cornered, baffled, nonplussed, stalemaled: from ca. 1890.

**stuck into it, I get.** Work hard! don't dally! military: from 1918. B. & P., 'The metaphor is from digging' (a clayey trench).

**stuck on.** Enamoured of (gen. a man of a woman); late C. 19–20; rare among upper classes. Ex U.S. sense, capitalized with (things).

**stuck one's lines.** To forget one's speech(es): theatrical coll.: mid-C. 19–20. Mayhew, iii. 2.

**stuck pig.** See *stare like a stuck pig*.

**stuck-up.** Unjustifably 'superior'; offensively conceited or pretentious: coll.: 1829 (O.E.D.).—

2. See **stick up**, v., 8.

**stick-up marm.** See lady marm.

**stickuppinashness.** The n. of **stick-up**: coll.: 1853 (O.E.D.).


**studdesel, stunsail or -sel.** Nautical coll. (— 1887) for **studding-sail.** Baumann.

**study.** To take care and thought for the convenience, desires, feelings of a person (esp., to humour him): coll.: mid-C. 19–20. Dickens, 1852; Mrs Carlyle, 1858, 'With no husband to study, housekeeping is mere play.' *Ex study* the advantage, convenience, feelings, wishes, of (a person). O.E.D.

**study up, v.t.** To study for a special purpose: coll.: from ca. 1890.

**stuff.** Medicine: C. 17–20; S.E. until mid-C. 18, then coll. Moore, 1819, 'It isn't the stuff, but the patient that's shaken.' Also (ob, by 1890) *doctor's* stuff, recorded in 1779 (O.E.D.). *Ex stuff*, 'matter of an unspecified kind'—2. Money, esp. cash: adumbrated by Bruges, 1772; definite in Sheridan, 1772. *Ex stuff, Mr Pig*? 'Is she rich, hey?' — N. G. G. 1893. Slightly ob. Perhaps except *stuff, household goods, hence personal effects.—*

3. Whiskey, always the stuff (Croker, 1825) or good stuff (1861, Meredith): coll. O.E.D. Prob. ex 1.—4. Stolen goods (*stuff* or the *stuff*): e. and low w.: 1865, The *Daily Telegraph*, Nov. 5. O.E.D.—5. *one's* 'contraband' smuggled into gaol: c.: C. 20. Esp. tobacco (— 1904).—6. Hence (1), drugs; esp. cocaine (*the* stuff): c.: C. 20.—7. Men as fighting material: coll.: 1883, *The Manchester Examiner*, Nov. 24, 'The army of Ibrahim included a good deal of tougher stuff than the ordinary fellah of Egypt,' O.E.D.; by 1930, virtually S.E.—8. 'Copy' one's MS.: coll., journalistic and authorial: 1898 (U.S.): certainly anglicised by 1915, at the very latest. (O.E.D.)—9. Shell-fire; gen. with adj., as *heavy stuff, heavy shells* or shell-fire: military coll.: from 1914. B. & P.—10. An anesthetic; *give stuff* is to anesthetize at an operation; *do stuff* is to take a course in the administration of anesthetics; medical (— 1933). Slang, p. 193.—11. Often employed as a coll. (mid-C. 19–20) to connote vagueness in the speaker's mind or intention, or to imply ignorance of the precise term or name, as, e.g., in Christopher Bush, *The Case of the April Fools*, 1933, 'Made his escape down the creeper stuff'.—12. See 'Moving-Picture Slang', §6.—13. See **stuff to give the troops.**

**stuff, v.t.; stuff up.** To hoax, humbug, befool (cf. *cram* in same sense): ? orig. (1844) U.S., in form stuff up; English by 1859 as stuff, as in H., 1st ed. Slightly ob. Prob. *ex stuff* (a person) with. —2. Hence, v.t., 'to make believe, to chaff, to tell false stories' H., 1st ed. ob. by 1890, † by 1900. —3. V.i., to be or to live in a stuffy atmosphere or place; to be inside when one could be in the open air: late C. 19–20. E. Raymond, *Child of Norman's End*, 1934, 'Here's that boy stuffing indoors again,' when he was reading a book.

**stuff,—and.** And such dull or useless matters: coll.: late C. 17–20. J. Lewis, ca. 1697, 'You pretend to give the Duke notions of the mathematics, and stuff'; 1774, Goldsmith, 'Their Raphaels, Corregios [*sic*], and stuff'; 1852, Thackeray. Slightly ob. O.E.D.

**stuff, bit of.** See *bit of stuff,—stuff, do one's.** See do one's stuff,—stuff, give. See *stuff, n.*, 10.—

**stuff, good.** See *stuff, n.*, 3.


**stuff, hot.** See *hot stuff,—stuff, know one's.** See *do one's stuff.*

**stuff on the ball, put.** To make the ball break: *cricketers*: ca. 1880–1906. For *stuff* we now say *work* and for *put* we prefer get: S.E.

**stuff to give the troops, I, that's the.** That's the idea; that's what we want: coll. (orig. (1916) military >, by 1919, gen. coll. Since 1917, often *that's the stuff to give 'em*; since ca. 1920, often *that's the stuff!*, which may have been the original (for it is recorded in U.S. in 1896: O.E.D.Sup.), the others merely elaborations of was, soldier, etc. Since ca. 1917, occ. that's the *give* to *stuff* 'em! B. & P.

**stuffata.** Incorrect for *stufata*: mid-C. 18—early 19. O.E.D.

**stuffed monkey.** 'A very pleasant close almond biscuit': Jews' coll., mostly London: from ca. 1890. Zangwill. ([Wares.)

**stuffed shirt.** A pompous fool; upper and middle classes': from ca. 1920.

**stufing.** Superfluous matter included to fill the required space: journalistic coll. (— 1904) >, ca. 1920. S.E. *Cf. stuff, n.*

**stuffed out of.** See knock the stuffing out of. But there are variants: *beat . . .* (1887, very ob.) and take . . . (1906, Lucas Malet): coll. O.E.D.
stuffs, do. See stuff, n., 10.
stung, past: base, late C. 19-20 (R. H. Monckton, Humphrey's, 1934.) 
"*stuling-ken. See stalling-ken."

stumble. See truckle-bed.
stumer; occ., in C. 20. stumor; rarely stumour (Manchon). A horse against which money may be laid without risk; vt., 6th ed., where spelt stumer: racing n.: from ca. 1873. This sense and this spelling were both ob. by 1904 (F. & H., vol. vii, indirectly) and by 1935 virtually †. In Glasgow sporting a, however, it is still applied to a horse that is losing. The word perhaps derives from Yiddish; but cf. Swedish stum, dumb or mute.—2. Hence, a forged cheque or a worthless one (an 'R.D.'): 1890, Blackwood's (stumer). O.E.D.—3. Hence, or direct ex sense 1, a counterfeit banknote or a base coin: e.g. 'Pompe's Marshall (see quotation in next sense).—4. Hence (often as adj.), a sham; anything bogus or worthless: 1897, 'Pompe's Marshall, in a poem entitled The Merry Stumer, 'Stumer tricks ... stumer stake ... stumer note ... stumer cheque'; 1902, The Sporting Times, Feb. 1, 'He ... had given her as security a stumer in the shape of an unfinished history of Corsica.'—5. Hence, a 'dud' shell: military: from 1914. F. & Gibbons.—6. A 'dud' person: from not later than 1813, Manchon. Perhaps orig. at Harrow School, for it appears in Arnold Lunn's The Harrovians.

stump. A leg: S.E. except in the pl., when (in C. 19-20, at least) coll., esp. in stir one's stumps, to walk or dance briskly: C. 17-mid-18, bestir, ... , as in Jonson and B.B.: mid-C. 17-20, stir, ... , as in Anon., Two Lancashire Lovers, 1640; 1774, Bridges, 'Then cease your canting sobs and groans, And spur our stumps with hope to save your bones'; 1809, Malkin; 1837, Lytton.—2. Money: low s.: ca. 1820–60. Egan's Groce. Ex stump, a small piece. Cf. stumpy, v.-q.—3. See stump with (us).

stump, v. To walk: from late 1850's. H., 1st ed. Gen. stump it, which in Lytton, 1841, means to decamp, a sense very ob. and rare. Ex stump, to walk clumsily.—2. To beggar, run: dial. (— 1828) >, by 1830, s. Esp. in passive, to be penniless, as in T. Hook, 1836; and 'Pompe's Marshall, 1837, 'In a clump of the absolutely stumped.' Ex stump, to truncate, or perhaps (H., 1860) ex cricket. —3. To challenge, esp. to a fight. Canadian (— 1932). John Beames. Perhaps ex sense 2. —4. See stump up.

stump, pay on the. To disburse readily and/or promptly: coll.: late C. 19-20.

stump up a. In a difficulty: U.S. (late 1820's), anglicised by 1918. O.E.D. Sup. I.e. 'up a tree.'

stump, v. To dispay, to pay off, to discharge: 1821, Egan (see quotation at rubbish); 1881, Blackmore. Rare. Ex stump up, to dig up by the roots. Cf. plank down.—2. Hence, v.i., to pay up; to disburse money, 'fork out': 1835, 'Nicoll, Why don't you ask your old governor to stump up? —3. To exhaust (a horse) by strain: 1876, Reynardson (O.E.D.): coll. >, by 1900, S.E.

stump with (e.g. us), it's a case of. A variant (— 1923) of be stumped (see stump, v., 2). Manchon.

stumped, adj. See stump, v., 2.

stumper. Small cricket: Tonbridge School (— 1904). At Harrow, stumps: coll. By 1819, it was gen. and S.E. Ex stump-cricket.

stumps. See stump, n., 1.—2. See stumper.—3. It's (a case of) stumps with (us). (We) are lost, ruined: low (— 1887). Baumann. Ex stump, v., 2.—4. See 'Body' n Addenda.


*stum, v. To cheat, swindle, as in stum out of the regular, to defraud or deceive (a man) of his 'rightful' share of booty: c.: late C. 19-20; ob. Ex lit. sense of stum and perhaps influenced by sting, 1, q.v.

stung, be. See sting.
stunlaw(s). Walnut(s): back s. (— 1859). H., 1st ed. See sret-sio.


*stumned on skilly, be. To be sent to prison and compelled to eat skilly: c. (— 1859); † by 1900. H., 1st ed. Cf. stum, v.

stuner. An exceedingly attractive woman (Albert Smith, 1848) or thing (1848, Thackeray, of the performance of a play); a person excellent at doing something (Thackeray, 1855, of a cook) or a thing excellent in quality or remarkable in size (from ca. 1875): coll. O.E.D. and F. & H. Cf. stunning.

stunners or the. To astonish; confound: low (— 1859). H., 1st ed. Ex stumer.

stunning. Excellent, first-rate; delightful; extremely attractive or handsome: coll.: 1849, Dickens (of ale); 1851, Mayhew ('of a ring); of a girl, from not later than 1866, F. E. Paget, 'The most stunning girl I ever set my eyes on'. (O.E.D.) Ex stun, to astound; cf. stunner and stunners on, q.q.v.—2. Hence, clever, knowing: low coll. (— 1857); † by 1900. 'Ducange Anglicaux.'

stunning Joe Banks. 'Stunning' per excellence: low London: ca. 1850–80. Ex stunning, v., 9. Joe Banks, a noted public-house keeper and 'fence' (fl. 1830–50), who, despite the lowness of his customers, was notoriously fair in his dealings with them. H., 2nd ed.


stunsail, stunsel. See stunsail.

stunt. An item in an entertainment: coll.: 1901, The Westminster Gazette, Jan. 31. 'There will be many new "stunts" of a vaudeville nature,' O.E.D. Ob. Ex U.S. stunt, an athletic performance, any (daring) feat, 1895, itself perhaps ex Ger. stunde, an hour (O.E.D.), or, more prob., ex Dutch stond, a lesson (W.):—2. Hence, an enterprise under—
SULTRY


sue(t)ty Isaac. Suet pudding: c. (— 1904); ob. Also soppy Isaac. Ex sallowness.
suffering cats! An agonised c.p. directed at bad, or very shrill, singing: from ca. 1870. Ex cater-wauling.


suffisticate. A C. 17 incorrectness for sophisticated. O.E.D.

suff, a Mohammedan mystic, is often confused with sooph, a Persian monarch. O.E.D.
sugar. Money: low: 1862, The Cornhill Magazine. Nov., 'We have just touched for a rattling stake of sugar at Brun.' Ex sugar and honey, q.v. —2. A grocer: lower classes' (— 1009). Ware. Ex a principal commodity.—3. North(wards): Wood Wharf (West India Dock, London) dockers (— 1895); E.g. 'a little more sugar, Tom (or Bill or Jack)'; called by the driver to the electric cable. Ex the fact that the North Quay of the West India Dock is regarded as 'the natural home for sugar storage.' (Very local, this: but included for the light it throws on the origin of s.)—4. Gen. a sugar. A cube or lump of sugar: coll. C. 20.—5. A term of address to a girl: from ca. 1930. Ex U.S. (J. Curtis, The Gilt Kid, 1936).
sugar, v.t. To shirk while pretending to row: Cambridge University rowing (— 1890). Barham Island. —2. To tamper with (food) to fake (accounts); to give a speckulous appearance of prosperity to: from ca. 1890. (O.E.D. Sup.) Prob. suggested by 'cooking' accounts and 'santee' mines.—3. Hence, to dupe (a person): low (— 1923). Manchon. Cf.—4. sugar (a person's)
milk for him. To harm a person under the pretext of doing his work: workman's (— 1928). Manchon.
sugar-bean; sugar-stick. The female, the male, pudend: low: resp., mid-C. 19–20; late C. 18–20 (Grose, 2nd ed.). Ob. Whence suck the sugar-stick, sexually to take a man.
sugar-boat. See captured . . .
sugar candy. Brandy: rhyming s. (— 1859); ob. H., 1st ed.
sugar (for the bird), little bit of. A premium, a bonus; an unexpected benefit or acquisition: low: 1897–ca. 1910. Ware.
sugar (a person's) milk for him. See sugar, v., 4.
sugar on, be. To be much in love with (a person): non-aristocratic (— 1887); † by 1930. Baumann. Punning be sweet on.
sugar-shop. 'A head centre of bribery', electioneering (— 1909); ob. Ware. Ex sugar, n., 1.
sugar-stick. See sugar-bean.
sugar-Stick Brigade, the. The Army Service Corps: military (— 1904); † by 1915.
sugared, I'm or I'll be. I'm damned!; it connotes (profound) astonishment or (great) perplexity: from ca. 1890. Anon., Troddles, 1901. Euphemistic for f* *** red.
sugarer. A funker; a shirker, esp. at rowing: C. 20. O.E.D. (Sup.). Ex sugar, v.i.
suicide club (or S.C.), the. Machine-gunnors, battalion stretcher-bearers, or, esp., bombers: military coll.: late 1916; ob. F. & Gibbons. Because theirs was dangerous work.
suicide club, join the. 'To undertake any dangerous duty': naval coll.: 1915 or 1916; ob. Bowen. Cf. the preceding.

suit, birthday. See birthday suit.
suit, upon the. In the (specified) manner: see suit, 1. Vaux.


suite. See suit, 1—sujI-mujI. See soumouI.
sultry. Indelicate: 1887, Kipling. 'Sultry

sum. An arithmetical problem to solve which one must apply a rule; such a problem solved: coll.: C. 19–20. Dickens, 1838, has 'sums in simple interest', O.E.D. (I think that its use in New Zealand and Australia has never been classifiable as other than standard.)


sumfin(g); sumpin(g). Something: sol.: C. 19–20. Cf. summat.


summer. As 'somewhat', it is low coll. (prob., ex the dial. use); as 'something', it is sol.: both, C. 19–20. Baumann.


summerhead. A sun-umbrella: Anglo-Indian coll.: 1797 (O.E.D.); Corrupted sombrero; summin. Something: sol.: C. 19–20. (Ernest Raymond, A Family That Was, 1929.) Cf. sumfin(g) and sup'n, q.v.

summons. To summon legally: late C. 18–20: S.E. till C. 20, then a sol.

sumfin(g). See sumfin(g).


sun. Have been in the; have, or have got, the sun in one's eyes. To be drunk: resp. 1770 (O.E.D.) and 1840. Dickens, have; have got not before ca. 1860. Also have been standing too long in the sun (—1874). Cf. sunshine. Ex sun-dazzle or -drowsiness.

sun, taste the. See taste the sun.

sun-arc. A cinema coll.: from ca. 1927. See 'Moving-Picture Slang', § 3.


sun is scorching your eyes out, the. See scorching your eyes out.

sun over the foreyard, get the. To drink before noon: nautical (—1904). Bowen defines sun over the foreyard as 'the time by which a drink is permissible'; gen. the sun is over the foreyard. Cf. sun, have been in the.


Sunday. To spend Sunday (with a person): Society coll. (—1909); ob. Ware.

Sunday, look both or nine or two ways for. See look... 


Sunday clothes on, the old man has got his. A low c.p. indicating an erectio penis. In allusion to starched.

Sunday face. The posteriors: low: from ca. 1860; ob.

Sunday flash togs. (Of men) best clothes: low (—1880). Ware.


Sunday man. 'One who goes abroad on that day only, for fear of arrest', Grose, 1st ed.: from ca. 1780; ob.: coll. >, ca. 1850, S.E.—2. A prostitute's bully: low: from ca. 1880. Because he walks out with her on that day.

Sunday-mopper. An employee that, to increase his earnings, does others' Sunday work: workmen's (—1923). Manchon.

Sunday out, one's. A domestic servant's monthly or alternate Sunday free: from late 1850's: coll. till ca. 1920, then S.E. (Orig. a servants' term.)

Sunday Pic, the. The Sunday Pictorial: journalist's coll.: C. 20.

Sunday promenader. See once-a-week man.

Sunday saint. One who, having been dissolute all the week, turns respectable and sanctimonious on Sunday: coll.: from ca. 1870. Cf. Scottish Sunday face.


Sundayish. Rather like, or as on, Sunday: 1797: coll. >, by C. 20, S.E. (O.E.D.)

Sundays. See month of Sundays.—Sundays come together or meet, when two. Never: semi-proverbal coll.: from ca. 1810; ob. except in dial.: Haughton, 1816; Ray. Cf. Shropshire the first Sunday in the middle of the week and Tibb's Eve, St. q.v. (Apperson.)


sundowner. A tramp habitually arriving at a station too late for work but in time to get a night's shelter and a ration: Australian coll. >, by 1910, S.E.; 1875, Miss Bird; 1826, Jiee Doone, 'The word is now almost obsolete, swagge being the term almost universally in use.' (See esp. Morris.) Hence:

sundowning. This practice: Australian coll.: from ca. 1890. Kinglake.


sunny bank. A good fire in winter: coll.: late C. 17–early 19. B.E.; Grose, 1st ed. Ex the warmth, with pun on banking a fire.

sunny south. The mouth: rhyming s. : 1887, The Referee, Nov. 7.


sunshine. Have been in the. To be drunk: 1857, George Eliot. As early as 1816 in Dial.: E.D.D. See sun, have been in the.


SURE AND...

sup(a). A variant of super, 1 (H., 1st cd.), 3 (1824, O.E.D.), 4 (— 1904, F. & H.), and 6 (— 1904, F. & H., esp. supa and slang, watch and chain), q.v. v. To be a 'super,' sense 1; often as vbl. n., superning (1889, O.E.D.).—See super list.

super. A superluminary; 1853, 'Cuthbert Becte' (O.E.D.): theatrical s., >, ca. 1880, coll.—A superluminary on a ship, i.e. a supercargo: nautical s. (1866) >, ca. 1890, coll.—3. Ex sensa 1 and 2, a superluminary in gen.: coll. : from ca. 1880.—4. A superintendent of a station: Australian s. (1870, Lindsay Gordon) >, ca. 1900, coll. Morris. —5. A police superintendent, esp. in address: coll.: mid-C. 19–20.—6 (Also soper.) A watch: o. : from late 1850's. Ware derives it from sopus-plate, hence supper, hence super. Cf. super, bang a, and super-screwing.

super, v. To be a 'super,' sense 1; often as vbl. n., supering (1889, O.E.D.).—See super list.


super—super bastard. A mean, bullying, tyrannical fellow; c., and low s.: from ca. 1910. James Spenser, Linney Breaks In, 1934, 'This varlet was another of the variety known amongst prison populations as super-super-bastards.'


supered, be. See super list.


supermacul. (Of liquor) excellent: 1848, Thackeray (O.E.D.); ob. Ex: supermaculum. A liquor to be drained to the last drop; excellent liquor; excellent anything: C. 18–20; ob. W. King, 1704, 'Their jests were Supermaculum': Grove, 1st ed. ('Good liquor'). Ob. Ex the adv., q.v. Cf. supermacul.—2. Hence, a draught that utterly emptied cup or glass: 1827, Diasalei (O.E.D.).—3. A full glass: mid-C. 19–20; like sense 2, ob.

supermaculum, adv.: occ., C. 16, -nagulum, -neg-, and, C. 17, -maculum, -nagulum. To the last drop: C. 16; ob. Ex: 'Enduring super-nagulum, a devise of drinking new come out of France.' B.E.: The Edinburgh Review, 1835. Ob. Ex the practice of placing one's upturned glass on the left thumb-nail, to show that not a drop has been left: a mock-L. translation of the Ger. auf den nagel (trinken). Cf. Fr. boire rubis sur poing (W.).—2. Often elliptically, as 'in Cotton, 1694, and fig., as in Jonson, 1598, '[Cupid] places super nagulum with my liquor of life.'

supermagazine. First-rate; 'splendid'; excellent: Australians' and New Zealanders': from ca. 1890; ob. Perhaps ex superfine on supermacul, q.v., but prob. fanciful on superlative.


sup'n; supp'm, supp'n. Something; illiterate uttering, esp. in New Zealand (— 1935). Ex dial. "sup'on. An inn-hostess; a landlady: o.: late C. 17–18. B.E., Gros. I q.v. unless ex supp, n. + (to) pouc.

supped all one's porridge, have. No longer to suffer with one's teeth: lower classes' coll. (— 1925). Manchon.

supper, give the old man his; supper, warm the old man's. To confer the act of kind; to sit, skirts raised, before the fire. Low: late C. 19–20.


supple is often, by the illiterate, confused with subtle. (Desmond Coke, The School across the Road, 1910.)

supple both ends of it. To abate a priapism: low Scots: late C. 18–20.

Supple Twelfth, the. The 12th Lancers: military: from the Peninsular War; slightly ob. F. & Gibbons.

supp'm, supp'n. See supp'n.

suppose or I suppose. Nose: rhyming a. See I suppose. (Manchon has the abbr.)

suppose or supposing, introductory of a proposal or a suggestion, is coll.: resp. 1779 and late C. 19–20. R. Bagot, 1908, 'By the way, supposing you were to drop "uncle-ing" me?' O.E.D.

Surat. An adulterated or an inferior article: coll. (mostly Lancashire): 1863, The Times, May 8; ob. Surat cotton is inferior to American.

surbeaten, surboated, surfurbuting. Incorrect for surfurbated, id., surfurated: C. 17. O.E.D.


sure!, be; I am sure!; you may be sure! At end of sentence, these phrases whenasseverative are coll.: 1830, N. Wheaton, 'To all my inquiries ... I only received for answer—"I don't know, I'm sure's', O.E.D.

sure, for. As certain; for certain; indubitably: late C. 16–20: S.E. until late C. 19, then coll. Stevenson, 1883, 'Desperate blades, for sure', O.E.D.


sure, well, Pm; well, to be sure! I am surprised: coll. '1830, Manchon, 'Well, I'm sure I said Beckey; and that was all she said,' O.E.D.; well, to be sure', app. not before late C. 19.

sure and ... be. (Only in infinitive or imperative.) To be careful to; not to fall to: coll.: from ca. 1890. 'Be sure and look!'
SURE AS . . ., AS

SURE as . . . AS. Very sure. Of these phrases, prob. only those are coll. of which the criterion-member or the gen. tone is familiar S.E. or coll. Thus, (as) sure as the Creed or one's creed is S.E., as is (as) sure as fate or death; but (as) sure as a gun (B. & Fletcher, 1622; Steele, 1703; Meredith, 1869) is coll., as are sure as eggs (Bridge, 1772), sure as eggs is eggs (Goldsmith), sure as God made little apples (ca. 1820; orig. dial.), sure as the devil is in London (mid-C. 18), and the following in Ray, 1670, as sure as check, or Exchequer pay (ca. 1570–1820), as sure as a juggler's box (ca. 1650–1740), and as sure as a louse in bosom (late C. 17–18), or late C. 17–mid-18, in Pomfret. (Apperson.)

sure card. See card, sure.

sure find. One who is sure to be found: coll. (—1933), S.O.D.
sure-fire. Certain; inassailable; coll.: U.S. anglicised ca. 1918. (D. Sayers, Murder Must Advertise, 1933, 'He thought it was a sure-fire mascot."

sure I don't know I'm. As assessorive tag, it is coll.: mid-C. 19–20.
sure thing! The same as sure /, q.v.: coll., orig. (1806) U.S.; anglicised not later than 1910. (O.E.D.)
surely, with second syllable stressed, either — 'is it not so?' or as a vague intensive, is a sol. when not dial. Dickens, 'And so it is, sure-ly,' O.E.D.
surely me. A proletarian variation of to be sure I, sense 1: from ca. 1880. Ware (at cupboard).
surf. An actor or musician or scene-shifter, who combines night-work at the theatre with some daily work outside: theatrical: from late 1850's. H., 1st ed., p. 235, on serf. —2. Hence, a parasite, toady, sponger: low (—1887); ob. Baumann.
suru as a butcher's dog, as. Extremely surly: coll.: late C. 17–20; ob. Ray; Spurgeon, 1869. Because the animal gets so much meat to eat. Apperson, who gives also the Cheshire surly as a cow's husband.

[Burlly Sam. Dr Johnson: rather sobriquet than nickname; Urea Major is likewise sobriquet. Dawson.]

successors, the. The 46th Foot Regiment, now the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry: military: 'dating from the American War, with special reference to the surprise of the enemy at White Plains in September, 1777,' F. & Gibbons. Cf. Rich Feathers, the.
surmacry, sairy. Excess or surfeit: catachrestic: late C. 16–17. O.E.D.
surmount. See wooden surmount.
surveyor of the pavement. A person in the pillory: late C. 18–mid-19. Ibid.
surveyor's friend, the. Whitewash: naval: C. 20. Bowen. Ex 'the amount used for marking pennants on shore'.
sus. 'The remains of the Praefecta's tea, passed on to their valets in college': Winchester College; late C. 18–19. Wrench. Ex dial. sus(s) or sess, hog-wash.—2. (N. and adj.) A being suspected; suspected; (on) suspicion: e.: from ca. 1920. James Curtis, The Gift Kid, 1936, 'What you nick me for? Sus?' Cf. suspect, below.


Susie. See sister Susie.

suspicion. A very small quantity; a minute trace: 1809. Malkin (O.E.D.): coll. >, ca. 1880. S. E. Trollope, 1867, 'He was engaged in brushing a suspension of dust from his black gaiters.' Ex Fr. soupcion; cf. Fr. larme and spot, n., 1.
suspir. Esp. under suspish, under suspicion (by the police): Australian: from ca. 1925. Cf. ambish for ambition.

sut. Satisfactory; fortunate: tailors': from ca. 1870. ↑ corruption of sat(s)factory. —2. As an exclamation, it = 'good!' or 'serve you right!' late C. 19–20. E.g. in The Tailor and Cutter, Nov. 29, 1928.
sutler. 'He that Pockets up, Gloves, Knives, Handkerchiefs, Snuff and Tobacco-boxes, and all the lesser Moveables', B.E.: e. of late C. 17–early 19. Ex military sense.
susi. A variant of susie.
s'velp me. A Cockney variation (↑ by 1920) of s'velp, q.v. (Baumann).

swab. A naval officer's epaulette: nautical joosce or pejorative: 1798. The Sporting Magazine (O.E.D.); Marryat. Ob. Ex the shape of a swab, anything for mopping up.—2. A spill; a spilling: Bootham School (—1925). Ex:


swab-betty. A woman who washes floors, etc.: Bootham School (—1925). Ibid. Ex the proceeding.

swabber, swobber. (Gen. pl.) In whist, the Ace of Hearts, Knave of Clubs, and the Ace and Deuce (2) of Trumps: late C. 17–early 19: coll. >>, by 1750, S.E. First recorded in B.E. Prob. ex S.E. sense.

swack. A deception, whereas swack-up (E., 3rd ed.) is a falsehood: mid-C. 19–20.—2. Also n., swack up, to deceive. All: Christ's Hospital: from ca. 1860. Perhaps cognate with Scottish swack, supple, smart, or swax, a whack.


**swadkin.** See *swaddy*. **swaddy.** To beat soundly; to cudgel: coll.: ca. 1857–1840. Ca. 1870, Anon., 'Thy bones will I swadde, so have I blissè'; Dryden; B.E., 'I'll Swaddle your Hide'; Scott. Ex *swadde*, to bandage.


**swadder.** A shop: o. (—1876) ; ob. Coles, B.E.; Grose. † origin. (Cf. *swag-shop*, q.v.) Hence, a *rum swag* is a shop full of rich goods (B.E.): † by 1850.—2. Imm. ex *swag-shop*, q.v.: one who keeps a *swag-shop*; s. († low) by 1851, Mayhew.—3. Any quantity of goods, esp. a pedlar's wares or a thief's booty, esp. as recently or prospectively obtained: o. (—1811) >, ca. 1850, low s. >, by 1890, gen. s. in the wider sense, any unlawful gains or acquisition. LEX. B.A.; Vaux, who, like the preceding glossarist, notes the nuance, 'wearing-apparel, linen, piece-goods, &c.' as, in a robbery, distinguished from 'plate, jewellery, or more portable articles'—† by 1900; Dickens, 1838, "It's all arranged about bringing off the swag, is it?" asked the Jew. Sikes nodded; 'Pompey' Marshall. (In *The Railway Library*.) Implied *swag* ex mol. *swag* is a large quantity; prob. ex the *swag* or bag in which the booty is carried.—4. Imm. ex *swag-shop*, or the origin of *swag-shop* and therefore ex *swag*, 1: trade in small, trivial, or inferior articles: from ca.

1860. Mostly in combination (see, e.g., *swag-shop*); when by itself, it is gen. attributive, as in Mayhew, 1851, "The 'penny spice' or 'swag trade', "O.E.D.—5. A tramp's (herself, miners' and others', bundle of personal effects: 1852, Samuel Sidney, *The Three Colonies of Australia*, 'His leathern overalls, his fancy stick, and his swag done up in a mackintosh'; 1861, McCombie, *Australian Sketches*; 1902, *The Pall Mall Gazette*, July 2, 'The unmarried shearer, roaming, swag on back, from station to station'. Coll. >, ca. 1890, S.E. Ex sense 3, which Cunningham notes as established in Australia before 1827. See esp. Morris. Whence:

**swag,** v.l. Gen. as *swag* is, q.v.—2. V.b., to rob, plunder: c. (*—1887*). Baumann. Ex n., 3.

**swag-barrow.** A coster's cart, esp. one carrying small or trashy articles (see *swag*, 4): low s.: from ca. 1850. Also, *swag-barrowman*, a coster, or another, carrying on such trade. Both in Mayhew, 1851; ob.

**swag-chovey bloke.** A marine store dealer: c. (*—1839*) >, ca. 1870, low s.: late C. 19–20; ob. Brandon. See *swag*, 4; *chovey* is a shop.

**swag in.** To cause to enter secretly: c. (*—1923*). Manchon.

**swag it.** To carry one's *swag* (5): 1861, McCombie: coll. >, ca. 1890, S.E. Morris.


**swag of.** a. 'Emphatically a great deal', Vaux: o. of ca. 1800–50. Ex *swag*, n., 3.


**swagger,** adj. Smart, fashionable; *swell*; rather showy or ostentatious: (orig. Society) s. >, ca. 1930, coll.: 1879, *The Cambridge Review* (O.E.D.); 1897, 'Ouida', 'Lord, ma'am, they'll ... take the matches away from their bedrooms, but, then, you see, ma'am, them as are swagger can do things.' Ex S.E. *swagger*, superior and/or insolent behaviour. (The v. is likewise S.E. Note, however, that from ca. 1920 the n. has had a coll. tinge.)

**swagger-can or stick.** An officer's cane or stick for parade-ground appearance; a private's or non-com's walking-out stick or short cane: military coll.: resp. 1880, 1887 (O.E.D.). Ex *swagger*, adj., q.v.; cf., however, *swagger*, n., 1.


**swagger-pole.** A variant, from ca. 1920, of *swagger-can*. Suggested by: *swagger-stick*. See *swagger-can*.

**swaggery.** A non-aristocratic variant (—1887; slightly ob.) of *swagger*, adj. Baumann.

**swaggie, swaggy.** A man carrying a 'swag' (5) as
a habit: Australian (gen. humorous) coll.: 1892, E. W. Hornung (Morris); 1902, Henry Lawson (O.E.D.). Ex swag-man, 2, q.v.

swagman. See swag-man.


swain. A theatrical term of contempt: 1912, A. Neil Lyons, Clara, 'They're a silly set o' swain, the General Public ('Manchon); ob. Ex the sense of yokel. Or ex affected pron. of swine.

swak. A supercription of S.W.A.K., 'sealed with a kiss,' often found on sailors' and soldiers' letters to sweethearts; occ. S.W.A.N.K. (... nice kiss); military and naval: C. 20. F. & Gibbons.

swaller. An illiterate form of i.e. a sol. for, swallow.

swallow. Capacity (for food): late C. 16-20: S.E. until ca. 1850, then coll.—2. Esp. as a mouth-ful: from ca. 1820: S.E. until ca. 1890, then coll. These two senses are sometimes indistinguishable, as in the o.p. 'What a swallow!' which may refer to one act of swallowing or to anticipate. Ex swallow, the throat or gullet.

swallow, v. To prepare (a part) hastily: theatri- cal: 1898 (O.E.D.). Ex swallow the cackle.

swallow, have a spiral. To have a taste for liquor: from ca. 1920. Manchon.

swallow a gudgeon. To be gulled: coll.: 1579, Lyly; Dekker & Webster, 1607; Fuller, 1732; Halliwell. † by 1900. Ex fig. gudgeon. Apperson.

swallow a sailor. 'To get drunk upon rum': 'ports and harbours' (— 1890). Ware.

swallow a spider. See spider, 3, and spider, swallow a.

swallow a stake. See swallowed a stake; the earlier to have eaten a stake is recorded by Palgrave in 1530 but, app., was † by 1700.

swallow a tavern-token. To get drunk: coll.: late C. 16-18. Jonson, Every Man in His Humour, 'Drunk, sir! you hear not me say so: perhaps he swallowed a tavern token or some such device.' Cf. tavern-foz.

swallow my knife—you say true, will you. I doubt it: i.e. a c.p. applied esp. to an impossible story; from ca. 1890 (ob.): not aristocratic.


swallow the anchor. See anchor, swallow the.

swallow the cackle. To learn a part: theatrical (— 1890). Barrère & Leland.

swallowed a stake and cannot stoop, he (she) has. A c.p. applied to a very stiff, upright person: from ca. 1600; ob. L'Estaing, 1667; Fuller, 1732. Apperson. Cf. at swallowed a stake, q.v.

swan-slinger. A Shakespearian actor: theatri- cal (— 1904); ob. Ex the phrase, to sling the Swan of Avon (late C. 19-20; ob.). Cf. spout Billy, q.v.

swank. Showy or conceited behaviour or speech; prétentieux dial. (— 1594) >, ca. 1904, s. The Daily Chronicle, April 17, 1905, 'What he said is quite true, barring the whiskey—that is all swank,' O.E.D.; Ware, 1906, records analogous senses, 'small talk, lying' as printers' s. Dates make it appear that the n. derives as v. but, dial. records being notoriously incomplete, the reverse may be true: in either case, swank, as Baumann suggests, derives prob. ex Ger. Schwang as in in S. sein (or gehen), to be in the fashion.—2. See swank.

—3. (Ex sense 1.) The tricks one plays; one's 'game': Cockneys: from ca. 1890. C. Rook, The Hooligan Nights, 1899—4. Hence, flattery, 'blar- ney': id.; id. Ibid., 'I... calls i'm a rare toff an' a lot of old swank of that kind.'

swank, v. To behave showily or conceitedly; to swagger; to pretend (esp. to be better than, or superior to, what one is): dial. (— 1890) >, ca. 1870, s., though not gen. till ca. 1901. H., 5th ed., 'Swank, to boast or “gae” unduly'; A. McNeil, 1903, 'To see... your sons swanking about town with Hon. before their names'. For the most viable etymology, see the preceding entry: but one cannot ignore these possibilities: Perhaps ex swing (the body) via either Scottish swang, agile (O.E.D.) or swagger (E.D.D.); or simply a perversion of swagger (W.).—2. To work hard: Public and military school s. (— 1890). Barrère & Leland. Perhaps ex suit = swank.

swank, adj. 'Swanny' (q.v.): from ca. 1917; ob. Ex swank, n., or swank(e)y.

swank-pot. A variant (— 1923), noted by Manchon, of...

swanker. One who behaves as in swank, v. and 2: same period and status. Cf. swanking, the vb.l.n. of swank, v., q.v.*


swank(e)y, adj. Showy; conceited; pretentious; pretentiously grand: dial. >, ca. 1910, s. The O.E.D.'s earliest record is of 1912. Ex swank, v., 1.

swankiness. The rather rare abstract n. ex swanky: from ca. 1914.

swanking, n. See swanker. —2. Adj. 'Swank(e)y': rare and only of persons: C. 20; ob.

swannie, keep a. To make out that all one's geese are swans: coll. (— 1755); ob. by 1890, † by 1930. Grose, 1st ed.

Swans, the. The Swansea Town Football Club: sporting: C. 20.

swap, swop. An exchanging; an exchange: dial. >, ca. 1850, s.; resp. ca. 1625 (Purchase) and 1682 (Flitman). O.E.D.: Ex swap, an act of striking (esp. the hands as a sign of a bargain made) or more imm. ex the v. Cf. swap, get the.—2. Esp. in get a swap (swop), to fail to effect a sale: drapery and kindred trades (— 1935).—3. Also, in the same trades, a synonym of tab, n., 6.

swap, swop, v.t. To exchange (for something else, or a thing with somebody else): coll. >, ca. 1850, s.; resp. 1594, Lyly, 'Ile not swop my father for all this,' and 1624, Quarles, '... That for his belly swop his heritage', O.E.D. A 'low word', says Johnson; 'Irish cant', says Egan (1823). Orig. a horse-dealer's term ex swap (strike) a bargain. —2. See swap away or off.—3. v.i., to make an ex- change: coll. >, ca. 1850, s.; 1778, Miss Burney; 1856, Jerome K. Jerome, 'I am quite ready to swap,' O.E.D. Ex sense 1.—4. v.t., to dismiss from employment: 1862, Macmillan's Magazine. O.E.D. Ex swap, get the.—5. v.i., to change one's clothes: 1904, D. Sladen. O.E.D. Ex sense 1.

swap or swop, have or get the. To be dismissed from employment: from before 1890. Barrère & Leland. Ex swap, v., 4, q.v.

swap away or off. V.i., to exchange: coll. >,
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sweat, be in a. To be at pains (to do something); lower-class coll. (— 1923). Manchon.

sweat, old. See old sweat. ('A very old expression', F. & Gibbons.)

sweat-box. A call for prisoners waiting to go before the magistrate: low a.: from ca. 1876, though unrecorded before 1833 (Churchward's Blackbirding: O.E.D.). In C. 20 U.S., sweat-box is the application of third-degree methods.

sweat-galley. (Coll. for) flagging juniors: Winchester: from ca. 1865; ob. Ex sweater, 2.

sweat on the top line; be sweating ... 'the more gen. form.' To be in eager anticipation 'or' on the eve of obtaining something much wanted: military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Ex the game of House: a player with four or five numbers on the top line anxiously await the call of one more number to win.

sweat one's guts out. To work extremely hard: (mostly lower-class) coll.: late C. 19—20. Lyell.


sweating. See bending, 2; also sweat on . . .

Sweatpore. India: Army officers': from ca. 1820. A pun on paw (hand) and pores of the hand, and also on such names of military stations as Borroday. Cf. the Stag (at shiny, 2).

sweav. See set the sweaves down.


sweeper. A chimney-sweep for: low coll.: 1848, Thackeray, 'The chimney-purifier, who had swept' the last three families', O.E.D. Cf. -p'.


sweeping the floor. See sweep, sweeping the.

sweeping the chimney. Used as a verb, sweeping the.

sweeping the brigade. The Rifle Brigade: military (— 1879) and prob. as early, at least, as 1850, for the black facings date from the Brigade's inception in 1800 and sweep = chimney-sweep dates from 1812. (F. & H.; O.E.D.)

sweeps and saints. Stockbrokers and their clientèle: City of London: mid-C. 19—20; ob. Ware, 'From the First of May (Sweeps' Day) and the First of November (All Saints' Day) being holidays on the Exchange'.


sweep as a nut, adj. and adv. Advantageously, with agreeable or consummate ease: coll.: late C. 19—20.

sweep as (or 's) your hand. 'Said of one dexterous at stealing', Grose, 1st ed.: c. (ob.) of C. 18—20. A New Canting Dict., 1725.

sweep craft. See craft, 2.—sweep damn all. A mild synonym (Lyell) of:

sweep Fanny (rare) or sweep Fanny Adams or sweep F.A. See F.A. and Fanny Adams.

Swept, Lambs, the. The 1st Madras European Regiment, now the Royal Dublin Fusiliers: mid-C. 18—mid-19; during the Indian Mutiny, Blue Caps took its place. Perhaps ex Kirk's Lambs. q.v. F. & Gibbons. (—2. For the Lambs, see Lambs, the.)

sweep-lips. A glutton; a gourmet: (low) coll.: from ca. 1870; ob.

sweep on, be. 'To coo, woo, entice, or allure', B.E.: late C. 17—18. The O.E.D. considers it s.E.; B.E. classifies it as c.; prob. coll., as, I think, is the mid-C.18—20 sense, to be very fond of, enamoured with (one of the opposite sex).

sweat-pea, do or plant a. (Of, and among, women) to urinate, esp. in the open air: mid-C. 19—20. Prob. suggested by pluck a rose.

sweatbread. A bribe; a timely reward of money: coll.: ca. 1670—90. Hacket, 1670, 'A few sweetbreads that I gave him out of my purse'.


sweetening. To decy, draw in; swindle: c.; late C. 17—early 19. B.E., Grose.—2. V.t., see sweetening, 1.—3. V.t., to allay the suspicions of (a victim): C. 18: c. or low s. E.D.D.—4. To bribe; give alms to: late C. 18—20: c. >, ca. 1850, dial. and low s. Haggart, former nuance; Egan's Grose, latter. Prob. ex sense 1.—5. To contribute to (the pool), increase the stake (the pot, at poker): cards: from 1896. Cf. sweetening.—6. V.t., to bid at an auction merely to run up the price: orig. and mainly auctioneers' (— 1844). H., 3rd ed. Cf. sweetener.—7. V.t., to increase (the collateral of a loan) by furnishing additional securities: financial (— 1919). O.E.D.

sweetening and pinch. Occ. v., gen. n., ca. 1870—1720, as in Anon., Four for a Penny, 1879: to get money, by politeness and considerateness, from a man about to be arrested. Bum-bailiffs'.

who, at an auction, bids only to run up the price;" auctioneers" (— 1864). H., 3rd ed.—4. A temporary officer (gen. first mate) replacing his predecessor, who is in hiding; nautical, with esp. reference to the Atlantic clipper packets: ca. 1850—1910. Bowen.—5. See:—

SWELLNESS (from sporting was c. of C. 1840 the C. puffed from Ray, 1816, 1891, 1907, 1699. from low resp. distinguished to 1800, things 1860; pasdia 1811. Dig. C. cut hence, a, got of C. 1920; much earlier in U.S. Ultimately ex dial. That of sweeten, b., 6.—4. That of sweeten., v., 4.

sweeten. A tame rabbit; (sporting and dealers') coll.: from late 1830's. Blaine's Encyclopaedia of Rural Sports, 1840 (O.E.D.). Ex winning ways of such rabbits.


sweetie. A sweetmeat: dial. (— 1758), and coll. (from ca. 1820) >, ca. 1800, S.E. W. Havergal, 1824, 'Baby ... was satisfied with a bit of sweetie'; Thackeray, in 1860, has 'Bonbons or sweeties'; the pl. is the much more gen. (O.E.D.)—2. A sweetheart; coll.: from ca. 1920; much earlier in U.S. Ultimately ex dial. That of sweeten., v.; and latter sense.

sweetest: occ. sweet-meat. The male member; a mere girl who is a kept mistress. Both senses are low and date from mid-C. 19.

*sweetener. See sweetheart, 1, 2, of which it is a frequent variant.

swell. A fashionably or smartly dressed person (a heavy being an 'extra' swell: 1819, O.E.D.); hence, though rare before ca. 1820, a (very) distinguished person, a lady or gentleman of the upper classes: s. (— 1811) >, in late C. 19, coll. Lex. Bal., 1811; Bee, 1823, of nob and swell, 'The latter makes a show of his finery; ... the nob, relying upon intrinsic worth, or bonâ-fide property, or intellectual ability, is clad in plainness.' Byron; Thackeray. Usually of men, and prob. ex swell, cut a, q.v.—2. Hence, one who has done something notable or who is expert at something: s. >, in late C. 19, coll. 'Steads (O.E.D.), but not gen. before ca. 1840; Barham, 'No ! no !—The Abbey [Westminster] may do very well] For a feudal nob, or poetical "swell" '; the Eton usage.—3. See swells.

swell, adj. Stylishly dressed: from ca. 1812. Eg. in Egan's Grose. Prob. ex n., 1.—2. Hence, from ca. 1820, gentlemanly (Byron, 1823) or ladylike; of good social position (Diirssel, 1845).—3. (Of things) stylish, very distinguished; from ca. 1811. Vaux.—4. Hence, excellent, whether of things (e.g. a swell time) or of persons considered as to their ability (e.g. a swell cricketer); not before mid-C. 19—and except in U.S.A.—slightly ob. All four senses were orig. s. (1—3, indeed, were low s. for a decade or more); they > coll. only in late C. 19.

swell, v. To take a bath: Winchester: from ca. 1860; ob. Ex swell, —2. See swell it.

swell it. swell, cut a; do the swell. To swagger; resp. ca. 1840. Oxford English Dictionary. The Spirit of the Public Journals 1800, 'Our young lords and ... gentlemen "cutting a swell" as the fashionable phrase is', O.E.D.; and mid-C. 19—20 (ob.), as in Baumann. (Cf. swell, n., 1.) Ex swell, arrogant behaviour.

swell (or itch) ?, does your nose. (Gen. completed by at this or at that.) Are you angry or annoyed ?; coll.: C. 19.

swell, rank. 'A very "flashy" dressed person ... who ... apes a higher position than he actually occupies', H., 1st ed.; ob. by 1800, by 1920. Ex swell, n., 1, first nuance.

swell about. See swell it.


swell-headed. Conceited; puffed with pride: coll.: 1817, Cobbett, 'The upstart, ... swell-headed farmer can bluster about Sinecures,' O.E.D.


*swell mob. That class of pickpockets who, to escape detection, dress and behave like respectable people: 1836, Marryat (O.E.D.): o. >, by 1870, low s. Ex swell, adj. 1 and 2.—2. In C. 20 c., the "kite" men, the confidence artists, and ... fashionably dressed young men who lie in wait for gullible strangers; Edgar Wallace in The Double, 1928.

*swell-mobsman. One of the 'swell mob': o. (— 1851) >, by 1870, low s. Mayhew; Hotten, 3rd ed., 'Swell mobsman, who pretend to be Dissenting preachers, and harangue in the open air for their confederates to rob.'—2. See preceding entry, sense 2.


Swell Street, be (— 1812) or live (— 1904) in. To be a well-off family man of good social standing: low: from ca. 1810; ob. Vaux. By 1864—see H., 3rd ed.—Swell Street had > the West End (London).

swelledom. The world of 'swell' (n., all senses): coll.: 1855, Thackeray; ob.


swelled-headedness. 'Swell-headed', sense 1, q.v.: coll.: 1907, E. Reich, 'The Germans are afflicted with the severest attack of swelled-headedness known to modern history,' O.E.D.

swelled nose. See swell P., does your nose.


swellishness. The n. of swellish, in sense 2, q.v.: coll.: late C. 19—20.

swellism. The style (esp. in dress) or the social habits of a 'swell', in sense 1, rarely in other than the first nuance, q.v.: 1840 (O.E.D.): s. >, by ca. 1870, coll.; ob. Cf.:

swellness. The being a 'swell', esp. in sense 2

**swell**. Occasions—e.g. Sunday church-services—on which surplices are worn: Winchester: from ca. 1860. Ex swell, adj., 3, q.v.

s'welp, s'welpe. (God) so help: as in Whiteing, 1866, 'S'welpe me lucky, I ain't tellin' yer no lie!'

Also *s'welpe me (— 1887); *s'welpe me or my bob! (— 1904); *s'welpe me davy (— 1887); *s'welpe my greena or taters! (id.), with which cf. the (— 1895) dial. *bles me taters! (E.D.D.) and the earlier (1864, H., 3rd ed.) *s'welpe my tater! See also *s'elp I, *s'elp me bob I, *s'elp my greena (1864, H., 3rd ed.); likewise *s'elp I! *Ex so help (me, God)!


*swi. Two-up, the gambling game: New Zealand c. (— 1932). Perhaps sui = (two)ce.

swift. A fast-working compositor; printers' (— 1841). Savage's *Dict. of Printing.

swift, adj. Apt to take (sexual) liberties with, or to accept them from, the opposite sex: coll.: late C. 19–20. Suggested by fast. Cf. speedy.

s'wig; in C. 16, also s'wigg. Liquor: coll.: mid-C. 16–18; very ob.—has been so since early C. 19. Udall, 1548 (O.E.D.). 'Etyymology unknown: W. proposes Scandinavian *svik, a tap.—2. Hence, a pull; (a copious) draught: coll. >, in late C. 18, a.: from ca. 1920. Middleton & Rowley, 'But one s'wig more, sweet madam'; Ned Ward; Marrsat: Whiteing. Also, in C. 17, s'widge.—3. At Oxford University (orig. and esp. Jesus College), toast and (spiced) ale, or the bowl in which it is served: from ca. 1825. Hence, S'wig Day, the day (? St David's) it is ritually served.

s'wig; in C. 18, occ. s'wigg. v.i. To drink deeply, eagerly, or much (esp. strong liquor): mid-C. 17–20: coll. >, in early C. 19, a. Ex n., 1.—2. V.t., with either the liquor or its container as object: coll. >, in early C. 19, a.: resp. 1760, 'S'wig Pastoral' Tomlinson, 'To s'wig porter all day!'; O.E.D., and 1832, in *Wit and Drolley. I . . . s'wigg'd my horn'd barrel,' this latter nuance being ob.

**s'wig, play at.** To indulge in drink: coll.: late C. 17–18. Ex s'wig, n. 2.

**S'wig Day.** See s'wig, n., 3.


**s'wiggling,** vb.n. (1723) and ppl.adj. (1702). See *s'wig, v.i. (O.E.D.)

**s'wigman; in C. 16, also s'wyegman.** 'One of the 13th Rank of the Canting Crew, carrying small Haberdashery-Whores about, pretending to sell them to colour their Roguery,' B.E.; Awdelay, 1661, says that he 'goeth with a Peddlers pack.' C. of ca. 1680–1800. Prob. ex *s'wyegman, despite the fact that *sawg, a bulgy bag, is recorded only in early C. 14.

s'wil. n. Sealing: Newfoundland nautical coll.: latest 19th. Ex s'wil.


**S'wil.** A colloid euphemism for (by) God's will: C. 17. Marston. O.E.D.

s'wil, v.i. 'To wash at a conduit by throwing water over the body': Winchester College coll.: C. 19–20. Wrench. Cf. Shrewsbury n. and get s'willed.


swim. A swimming, i.e. a dizzy, feeling: dial. and coll.: 1829, Ebenezer Elliott (O.E.D.).—2. A plan or enterprise, esp. a tortuous or a shady one: 1860, Sala (O.E.D.): slightly ob.

swim, give one's dog a. To have the excuse of doing something or, esp., a reason for something to do: South African and Australian coll. An English approximation is take one's dog for a walk.

swim, how we apples. See apples.

swim, in the. Whereas in the swim with, in league with, has always, it seems, been S.E., in the swim, lucky, very fortunate, is coll. and ob.: in 1880, Macmillan's *Magazine* (the earliest record, by the way) explained that it derives ex swim, a section of river much frequented by fish. By 1864, in a good swim = in luck, doing a good business (H., 3rd ed.); by 1874, in the swim = in the inner circle, movement or fashion; popular: a sense that, from coll., >, ca. 1900, S.E.—2. In c. (— 1860): a long time out of the hands of the police. H., 2nd ed.

swim, out of the. The opp. to in the swim, except that it has no c. sense: 1890. Rare in C. 20.

*s'v* swing, make (a man). To cheat (a pal) out of his share of booty: c.: late C. 19–20.

swim in golden grease, lard, oil. To receive many bribes: C. 17 coll. Jonson.

swim like a brick. See brick, like a.


*s'vimmer, v.** To cause (a man) to serve in the Navy instead of sending him to prison: c.: (— 1812); † by 1800. Vaux. Gen. be s'wimmered. Ex s'vimmer, n., 2.

**s'vimmer, have a.** A variant of the preceding term: 1811, Lex. *Balt.*

s'winge, *swimging, *swinding, *swindling. See s'winge, s'wingeing.

**swindle.** A lottery; a speculation, a toss for drinks: 1870, *Legal Reports*; slightly ob. Ex lit. S.E. sense.—2. Something other than it appears to be, a 'fraud': coll.: 1886 (O.E.D.). Cf. sense 1.—3. Any transaction in which money passes: from ca. 1870, as in what's the s'windle?, what's to pay?, which may have. been U.S., in why don't you pay you're s'winder?, his price, and in let's have a s'winder?, let's toss for it; all three phrases are ob., the third only slightly so.


**swindler.** A practitioner of fraud or imposition for gain; a cheat: *Ex Swindler,* 1782; c. 1790, a. >, ca. 1820, S.E. E.g. in Focot, 1776; Grose, 1st ed., but 'dictionaries' first in the 1782 ed. of Bailey. Ex Ger. *schwindler, a cheat; cf. schwinter,* to be extravagant or giddy. In England picked up from and applied orig. to German Jews in London;
sylvan. Incoerect though very gen. for sylva(n):
from incepcion (C. 16).
sympathy. A man’s intimate caressing of a
woman: C. 20. Ex that indelicate definition of a
sympath which arose from Byron’s ‘A follow-
feeling . . . ’
symptom, symptomatic. Catachrestic for symbol,
symbolic: C. 17, C. 19. Cf. the catachrestic use of
synchronized for ‘unrecorded speed’ — and by for ‘at
a uniform speed’ — late C. 18-20. O.E.D.

T

[In F. & H. arc, under T, the following ineligibles,
whether S.E. or dial. S.E.—T, to a; l-beard;
tabarder; tabernacle; tables, turn the; tag-end;
tag, rag, and bobtail; tag-alum, tail; unrecorded
tail’s and tailor’s; take and derivatives, etc., id.;
talesman; unrecorded talk, etc.; tall, id.; tallow-
face(d); tally-men; tame unlisted; tan, smell of the

tandem (bicycle); tannikin; tanquam; un-
recorded tantry; tantasy; tanyony, etc.; unrecorded tap’s;
tar, id.; target; tars, tart, adj.; Tartar, except as c,;
Tartuffe; taste if unlisted; tatterdemalion;
unrecorded tattle; tattoo; tart; tawney and
taverner; undefined tax’s, tawdry; tawny-coat
and -moor; tea-party; team; unlisted tear’s;
tease, on the; unrecorded teeth, etc.; teetotal;
tell, etc., where unrecorded; temple of Venus;
ten-in-the-hundred; tent; tendebelly; tentheakers;
tercel gentle; term; terrae flius; terrible boy
unrecorded that and that; thet; unlisted
thick’s; thief (one sense is dial.), etc., unrecorded;
thimble, id.; thin, id.; thing, etc., id.; thirving;
undefined thirteen, and thirty; Thomas Courteous;
thorns, on; thorough-stitch; thread’s unrecorded;
three, id.; Thresher, Captain; threat when un-
defined; throtile, id.; through, id.; throw, id.;
thrum, id.; thug; unrecorded thumb’s and
thump’s; thunder, steal one’s; thwack(er); tib
(also dial.); tick and toy; ticker (horse and stock-
indicator); undefined ticker’s; unrecorded tickle’s;
tidy, n.; tie, to marry; tiffy-taffe(ty), etc.; tigerkin;
unlisted tight’s; tim-whisky; timber-mare, timber;
timber, timothy tear;
out; tingle-tangle; unrecorded tinkler’s; tin-pot,
adj.; unrecorded tip, etc.; tipper; tippet;
tipple, v., and its derivatives; tipy, tif, a horse, and
other unlisted; titi; titter-tooter; tittup, n.;
tivy in hunting; toad, toady, etc.; to-do; toast
(pledged person, etc.); tobbacanalian, etc.; toby
(jug); toddle; toddle; undefined toe’s; token,
except in phrase; told you so; Toledo; toll;
undefined Tom’s; tomahawk; tonges; if un-
recorded; tongue, etc., id.; tomand; tommer;
too too; unrecorded tool’s; tooth, id.; top (etc.);
id.; tope, etc.; topsey-turvy; torch-race; Torpides;
torturer of anthems; tosher (a boat); unrecorded
soam, etc.; tostication; unlisted tot’s; totter;
tortery; unrecorded touch, derivatives and phrases;
touch, id.; tour; tosole; tow, in.; tower, n.
(fashion in head-dress); towhead; towerring;
un-
listed town, etc.; toy (excep. sense); tipot; trace;
unrecorded track’s; train; trap, etc.; trampren’s;
transcribber; transactuated; translate;
translator; trap, etc., unrecorded; trash
(worthless, and n.); trat; unrecorded travel, etc.;
tray (tray) toe; treacle sleep; tread, treadinig, etc.,
where unrecorded; treason; treasure; treat, a
round of drinks; treating; unrecorded tree’s;
tremble(’s) trench’er; trial; triangle; tribe;
tribune; tribute; unlisted trick’s; tried virgin;
trig where undefined; trillibum; trillil; unlisted
trim, etc.; unrecorded trip’s; trivet; trolley;
trolley-lyolly; tronk; unrecorded trot’s,
esp. old trot; trouble, id.; trounce; trowel;
unrecorded true’s; trumpery; trumpet;
unrecorded trunnk’s; trut; truth; try, etc., unrecorded;
tib, id.; tucker-in; unlisted tull’s, tugg, id.;
(Anglo-Indian) tum-tum; tumble, etc., id.; tun (vessel);
tup, etc., id.; turf, id.; tuck, Turk, id.; turn,
tid; tnah; tusle; tut; tut-work; tutvillus;
twaddle unrecorded; twang (etc.), id.; twatter-
light; twattle; twegue and tweek, id.; tweddle-
dum; twelvepenny; twenty; twice; twiddle;
twilight; twinklers; twitlile-twit; twire, v.;
twi; unrecorded twist’s; twit; twitteration,
twitterers; twitter-light; twitter(light); two-
handed; adroit; twopeeny (beer, adj.); Tyburn,
etc., — but see note on; tyg; tympany.
Dial.—tacker; tacks; tagler; tangle, tangelra-
bohs, tap-peckle, tasterwag(s), tasterwallow(s),
Tavistock grace, Teignton squash, thrapple, trim-
doodle, timothy, tinker, tinkler, tisty-tosy, tittle-
noese, tooby-trot, todge, toserly, tom-toe, tom-trot,
tommy (a simpleton), tooi, toooedlum-panied,
torri, tossey-tail, totty-headed, trail-logs, traneeen,
tranklements, trapes (a slattern), tray-trip, treacle-
wig, trarm-tram, troblykayes, trub, true, tumulter,
tussey, tuscissed, tuiting, trank, twankling,
twitcher, twitchet.]

*; That, esp. so, that so (e.g. one did so and-
so): sol. and dial.: mid-C. 19-20. O.E.D. (Sup.)
—2. It: as in 'If it comes to that, he doesn’t know'
so lovelnely coll.: late C. 19-20.

T. To; slovenly coll.: ? since early C. 19.
Esp. as in Neil Bell, The Years Dividing, 1936,
'Anna ought 've had her result by now.'
T. marked with a. Known as a thief: coll.: late
C. 18-mid-19. 'Formerly convicted thieves were
branded with a “T” in the band,' F. & H.
t. and o.; T. and O. Odds of two to one: sport-
ing: from ca. 1880; ob. Ware.
t.b.; loosely t-.b. (or T-.b.). Tuberculosis: coll.
(origin. medical): C. 20—2. t.b. or T.B. Top boy:
T. G. See temporary gentleman.
T.G.I.F., or T.G.I.F. A cp. among non-resident
teachers in secondary schools: C. 20. ‘Thank God
it’s Friday!’
T.P. See Tay Pay.
t.t.; oo. tee-tee. Teetotal; a teetotaller: late
C. 19-20.
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ta!; rarely taa! Thanks! : coll., orig. and mainly nursery: 1772, Mrs Delany, 'You would not say "ta" to me for my congratulation,' O.E.D. Ex a young child's difficulty with this and nse. Cf.:


-ta's (or -tas), go; go for a ta-ta. (Of a child) to go for a walk: (protestant) nursery coll.: late C. 19-20. Ex ta-ta/, v.q.v.


tab, v.l. (Of a customer) to give much trouble: drapery and kindred trades (— 1835). Perhaps cf. tab, n., 4; perhaps ex keep (a) tab. Hence tabber, a customer hard to please.

tab, drive. 'To go out on a party of pleasure with a wife and family': Grove, 1st ed.: ca. 1780—1830. Perhaps ex tabby, an old maid.

tab, keep (a); keep tabs. (V.t. only with on.) To keep watch, a check (on), a note of the doings (of a person): coll.: U.S. (from ca. 1880) anglicised ca. 1905. The form keep tabs is rare and specifically British. Not ex tab, a label or ticket, for this arises later, but perhaps by abbr. ex tables.

tab-same. Cakes and/or pastries: nautical, esp. stewards (— 1836). Prob. because they are mostly for the saloon—not for the crew or the steward.

tabber. See tab, v.

tabby; occ. tabbie. An old maid; coll. (in C. 20, S.E.): 1761, G. Colman, 'I am not sorry for the coming in of these old tabbies, and am much obliged to her ladyship for leaving us to such an agreeable tete-a-tete'; Grove, 1st ed., Either from Tabitha, a formal antiquated name; or else from a tabby cat, old maids being often compared to cats; Rogers.—2. Hence, a spiteful tacter: coll.: from ca. 1840. In C. 20, S.E. Cf. cat.—3. Loosely, any woman; mostly in tabby-party, a gathering of women: coll. (— 1874). H., 5th ed.—4. In C. 20, esp. in Australia, often 'girl', sweetheart.


tabecdical is incorrect for tabecical, consumptive: C. 17. O.E.D.

table-cloth, the. A white cloud topping Table Mountain; South African, esp. Cape Town coll. >, ca. 1880, S.E.: from mid-1830's. In Addresses to the British and South African Association, 1905, we read that "table-cloth is of three kinds—(1) "Tablecloth", [also as n. 1888] : ... (2) "Blind" ... (3) "Black" south-easters": all these are coll. Pettman.

table-part. A role 'played only from the waist upwards, and therefore behind a table': theatrical coll.: C. 19-20. Ware.

tablecloth. 'A small Sopwith biplane of high speed and rapid climbing powers': Air Force: 1917; ob. F. & Gibbons. Ex its 'concentrated excellences'.

tabs. See tab, 3; tab, keep (a).

tace is Latin for a candle! Be quiet; it'd be better for you to eat, tar, Sammy,' replied his father, O.E.D. Perhaps suggested by Fr. au 'voire.—2. Hence (also tata), a hat: theatrical (— 1923). Manchon.

Tab-la's (or -tas), go; go for a ta-ta. (Of a child) to go for a walk: (protestant) nursery coll.: late C. 19-20. Ex ta-ta/, v.q.v.


tab, v.l. (Of a customer) to give much trouble: drapery and kindred trades (— 1835). Perhaps cf. tab, n., 4; perhaps ex keep (a) tab. Hence tabber, a customer hard to please.

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tackle, v. To lay hold of; encounter, attack. physically: coll. orig. (—1828), U.S., anglicised by 1840 at latest. Perhaps ex tackle, to harness a horse, influenced by attack. — 2. Hence, to enter into a discussion, etc., with (a person), approach (a person on some subject): coll. 1840. Dickens (O.E.D.); 1862. Thackeray, 'Tackle the lady, and speak your mind to her as best you can.' — 3. Hence, to attempt to handle (a task, situation), or to understand or master (a subject); attack (a problem); etc. — 4. Hence, v.i., with to (1867, Trollope), to set to; or with, to grapple with (from late C. 19 and mainly dial.): O.E.D. and E.D.D. — 5. V.t., ex senses 1 and 3: to fall upon (food), begin to eat, try to eat: coll. 1889. Jerome K. Jerome, 'We tackled the cold beef for lunch,' O.E.D.

talk. An artist's paraphernalia: artists' (—1909) Ware, Ex tackle, equipment.
talk (as a verb), talk, I, and that, Bill, is. A C. 20 c.p. based on the chestnut of the plumber explaining to his assistant that 'tact is when you find her ladyship in the bath and you get away quickly saying 'Bog pardon, my lord'' — Occ. and that is what they call talk.
tusser, tusser. See tease-gir.
teso. See taipo.
taf; taffy. Fat, adj.; fatty, n.: back s., 'near' back s.: from late 1850's. H., 1st ed. The latter is very ob.
taff. A potato: Christ's Hospital: from ca. 1880. † ex taste or tatur. — 2. (Taff.) A C. 19-20 abbr. (noted by Bowen) of:
Taffy. A Weleman; a coll. nickname dating from ca. 1880 though adumbrated in Harrison's England, where a Welshman is called a 'David'. Popularised by the old nursery-rhyme, 'Taffy was a Weleman, Taffy was a thief' (see interestingly the v. welch). Also an 'inevitable' nickname of anyone with a Welsh name or accent: lower classes: mid-C. 19-20. Ex a (supposed) Welsh pronunciation of Davy. Cf. Paddy and Swayne. — 2. taffy. See taffy.
Tag, der. See der Tag.
tag along. To go along; to go: C. 20. (James Spenser, Limney Breaks In, 1924.) Perhaps ex tag (oneself) on to a person and go along with him. Cf.: tag around with. To frequent; follow about: C. 20. D. Sayers, 1933. 'He used to tag around with that dehomesie crowd.'
tail. The posterior; fundament: C. 14-20: S.E. until ca. 1750, then (dial. and) coll.; in late C. 19-20, low coll. — 2. The penis; more gen., the
female pudend: mid-C. 14-20: S.E. until C. 18, then coll.; in C. 19-20, low coll. — 3. Hence, a harlot: ca. 1780-1850; but extant in Glasgow. Grose, 1st ed., 'Mother, how many tails have you in your cab? how many girls have you in your nanny house?'' Other derivatives—prob. not coll. before late C. 17 or early 18, all ob. except those marked †, and all drawn from F. & H. — are these:—Penis, *tail-pike, *pin, *pipe, *tackle, *trimmer, and tenant-in-tail, which also = a whore; pudend, *tail-gap, *tail-hole. Also tail-teasers, public hair; tail-fence, the hymen; tail-flowers, the menes; tail-fruit, children; tail-juice (or 'water', urine or soment; tail-trading, harlotry; tail-wagging or *work, intercourse; cf. *make settlement in tail, go tail-ticking or -trawling, play at up-tails all, and, of women only, turn up one's tail, get shot in the tail; hot or fright or warn in the tail, (of a woman) wanton; but 'not-tailed or with tail on fire = venereally infected. These terms are not results of F. & H.'s imagination: most of them will be found in one or other of the following authors: Langland, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Rochester, Motteux, Ned Ward, Tom Brown, C. 18 Stevens and Grose. — 4. 'The train or tail-like portion of a woman's dress': late C. 13-20: S.E. until C. 18, then coll. Bridges, 1774, 'Brimstones with their sweeping tails'. (O.E.D.) — 5. A sword: o. late C. 17—early 19. B.E.; Grose, 1st ed.
tail, v.i., to coll.: C. 18-20; oh. — 2. V.t., to follow, as a detective a criminal; coll.: late C. 19-20. Perhaps ex Australian sense, tail (drive or tend) sheep or cattle.
tail, be—gen. shall or will be—on a person's. To look for, to pursu, a person with a view to punishing or severely scolding him: C. 20.
tail, cow's. A rope's end frayed or badly knotted: nautical coll.: from ca. 1800. whence hanging in cow's (or cows') tails, of an ill-kept ship.
tail, get (one) on the ; get on the tail of (someone). To attack an opponent in the rear: Air Force coll.: from 1915. F. & Gibbons.
tail, kiss my. A contemptuous retort: C. 18—20; very ob.
tail, make settlement in, and tenant-in-tail (see tail, n., 2) constitute an indiscrete pun on the legal S.E. tail (ex Fr. toile, assessment), limitation as to freehold or inheritance. K.W., 1861, has tenure in tail (O.E.D.)
tail, she goes as if she cracked nuts with her. A semi-provicial o.p. applied to a frisky woman: C. 19—early 20.
tail, top over; tail over top. Head over heels: coll.: C. 14-20 (ob.); S.E. until mid-C. 18, then coll. See tail, n., 1.
tail-board. The back-flap of a (gen. female) child's breeches: low: from ca. 1870. Ex the movable tail-board of a barrow, cart, van, etc.
TAKE

TAKE AND...

TAIL in the water, with. Thriving, prosperous: coll.: ca. 1850–1910. F. & H.

Tail is up the turd is out,—as hasty as a sheep, as soon as the. A low, mostly rural, c.o.p. of ca. 1890–1920.

Tail off, get on the. See tail, get on the.

tail off. To run or go off; or retire, withdraw: coll.: 1841, F. E. Paget, 'Mrs Spattordash . . .
tailed off at last to a dissenting chapel,' O.E.D., which cites from Rider Haggard (1885) the occ.
variant tail out of it. Ware, 'From the tails of birds and animals being last seen as they retreat'.

tail-pulling. 'The publication of books of little or no merit, the whole cost of which is paid by the author', F. & H.: publishers: from late 1890's; ob. In contradistinction to the honourable publication of books of considerable merit and—to say the least of it—inconsiderable saleability. The former is practised only by sharks and amateurs, the latter by all.

tail-tea. 'The afternoon tea following royal
drawing-rooms, at which ladies which had to court that afternoon, appeared in their trains':
Society: 1880–1901. Ware.

tail-twisting. The act of twisting the British
lion's tail: political: 1889 (O.E.D.). Whence the
rare tail-twist, v.i., and tail-twister.


tail will catch the chin-cough, (e.g.) his. A c.p.
applied to one sitting on the ground esp. if it is wet:

tailor. An explanation on falling, or sitting, un-
expectedly on one's behind: late C. 16–early 17.
Shakespeare, Midsummer Night, II, 1. Ex tail, n., 1, whence also — 2. Such a fall: C. 19–20; very
ob.

tailor, v.t. To shoot at (a bird) so as to miss
or, gen., to damage: sporting: 1889, Blackwood's
Magazine (O.E.D.). Ex tailor's slasher.—2. V.i.,
to have dealings or run up bills with tailors: coll.: 1861, T. Hughes (O.E.D.); very ob. and never
common.

tailor, the fag-end of a. A botcher: coll.: late
C. 16–17.

tailoring, do a bit of. To 'sew up', c.q.: from
c. 1890; ob.

tailor's report. 'Bread soft in the oil & vinegar
in which cucumbers have been sliced', Grosz, 3rd ed.
(at scratch platter): ca. 1790–1850. See cucumber.

tailor's wound. A bayonet wound in the back:
jocular military coll. (-1923). Manchon. Such a
wound being likened to the prick from a tailor's
needle.

tails. A tail-coat, as opp. a jacket: coll.: 1888.
—2. Esp. a dress-suit, esp. and properly the coat
only: C. 20 coll.—3. Batman completing a party of
horsemen of high rank: New Zealand soldiers: in the
G.W. Opp. the heads, those in authority: ex the
game of two-up.

tails, charity. A tail-coat worn by a Lower
School boy taller than the average: Harrow School:
from 1890's. Ex tails, 1.

tails of the cat. A nautical coll. variant (-1897;
ob.) of cut-o'-nine-tails. Baumann.

tails up, in good spirits, often used the imperative;
tails up, the reverse. C. 20 coll. (esp. military) on
the verge of S.E. Ex the behaviour of dogs. F. &
Gibbons.—Tails Up. Air Marshall Sir John Sal-
mond: Air Force: from 1918. Ibid. Ex a state-
ment made by him.

taint, tain'; also 'tain'. It is not: sol.: C. 18–
20. See ain't.

tazo; occ. taepo. A vicious horse; as name for a
dog: New Zealand coll.: mid-C. 19–20. Perhaps ex
Maori: but see Morris.—2. Among Maoris, a s. term
for a theodolite, 'because it is the "land-stealing
devil"' (Morris). Ex taepo, Maori for a goblin.

Tait. A moderate clergyman: Church coll.: ca.
1870–80. Dr Tait, Archbishop of Canterbury (d.
1882), tried in vain to reconcile all parties in the
Church of England. (Ware.)

taj. 'Ripping'; luscious: boys: ca. 1900–12.
Ware. Ex Taj Mahal.

take. See 'Moving-Picture Slang', § 6.

take, v.i. To be taken: coll. and dial.: 1674,
took with child: 1822, took ill, the gen. form; occ.
as in 1890, took studious, jocular. Ex be taken ill,
etc. O.E.D.—2. V.t., followed by to do: to re-
quire (a person or thing of a stated ability, capacity,
or nature) to do something: coll. 1860. The Paid,
March 8, 'Any ignoramus can construct a straight
line, but it takes an engineer to make a curve,'
O.E.D.—3. V.i. To be a good (well) or bad (badly)
subject for photographing: coll. (original photog-
raphers): 1889, B. Howard, 'The photographers
... say a woman "takes" better standing,' O.E.D.—4.
V.i., to hurt: Charterhouse: late C. 19–20. Ex a disease or an injection taking, i.e.
taking effect.

take! All right; all correct!; certainly!: Canadian:
C. 20. B. & P. Perhaps a perversion of jake; but cf. take eight!

take a Burford bait. To get drunk: C. 19 coll. ex
C. 18–20 dial. Orig., to take a drink: coll.: ca.
1630–1780. 'Water-Poet' Taylor, 1630; Fuller,
1662; 1790, Grosz in his Provincial Glossary.
Apperson.

take a carrot! I don't care!: a low c.p.
(-1837); slightly ob. Baumann.

take a dagger and drown yourself! A theatrical
to say one thing and do another, as in Ray, 1678.

take-a-tright. Night: rhyming a. (—1859);
slightly ob. H., 1st ed.

take a hair of the same dog. See hair.—take hair.
See pew.—take a pick. See pick, take a—
take a running jump. See go and take.

take a sight. (Gen. as vbln.) As skipper, to
engage a hand without knowing him: nautical

take a stagger. A more gen. form (-1935) of
do a stagger, v.q.

take a toss. To 'fall for' a person: coll.: C. 20.—2. As in Cecil Barr, It's Hard to Sin, 1935,
'In her set, the word adultery was not often men-
tioned. One went in off the deep end about some-
body; one took a toss, one even dropped a brick;
one slid off the rails.' Ex hunting.

take a trip. To give up a job: tradesmen's
(-1909). Ware: 'Followed by movement search-
ing for a new situation'.

take a tumble (to oneself). See tumble, take a,
and tumble to.

take a wrong sow by the ear. See sow.

take an earth-bath. See earth-bath.

take an oath. To take a drink: late C. 19–early
20. Cr. taking it easy.

take and ... (Gen. imperative.) To go and
(if doing) a lower class coll.: C. 20. Manchon.
Ex dial.
take and give. To live, esp. as man and wife: rhyming s. (—1909). Ware.

*take beef. To run away: c. (—1899); ob. H., 1st ed. Cf. cry beef, q.v.

take (one's) Braddock. To take one's oath: 1885-ca. 86. Charles Bradlaugb was 'intimately associated with the Affirmation Bill' (Ware).


take care off down. To look after 'No. 1'; political, 1856-60. Ware. ? cf. dial. dou = dial. daub = dab, stf expert.

take charge. See charge, take.

take cornor-pieces off. See take off corner-pieces.


take-down, v.t. To deceive grossly; to swindle: coll. (orig. Australian): 1896, The Melbourne Argus, Dec. 5. 'The [defendant] accused him of having taken him down, stigmatised him as a thief and a robber.'—2. In Australian sporting s., 'to induce a man to bet, knowing that he must lose ... To advise a man to bet, and then to 'arrange' with an accomplice (a jockey, e.g.) for the bet to be lost ... To prove superior to a man in a game of skill,' Morris; from ca. 1886. From ca. 1920, coll.

take (one) down a peg or take a peg lower. See peg.

take eight! You've won! a military c.p. of C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Ex points obtained at some game or other.

take (a person's) eye. To be appreciated by (a person); tailors' coll.: C. 20. E.g. The Tailor and Cutter, Nov. 29, 1928.

take (a person) for. To impose on to the extent of (getting); to 'sting' for: low: C. 20. James Curtis, The Gift Kid, 1936, 'Good kid that Molly even if she had taken him for a oneer' (£1).

take gruel. To live: lower classes (—1909). Ware. Ex gruel as staple food in long illness among the poor.

take gruel together, we or they. We or they live together as man and wife: 1884, The Referee, Dec. 14; † by 1890. Ware. Ex a euphemism in a police-court case late in 1884.

take his name, sergeant-major, (take his name) An army c.p. of: C. 20, though not gen. before the G.W. Ex the actual order so worded.

take-in. A (gross) deception, a swindle: 1778, Fanny Burney; H., 1st ed., 'Sometimes termed "a dead take in"' (†). Ex the v.—2. Hence, a person that, intentionally or not, deceives one: coll.: 1818, Blackwood's, 'There are ... least twenty take-ins ... for one true heiress,' O.E.D.—3. Hence, occ. as adj. = deceptive; late C. 19–20.—4. A man that takes a woman in to dinner: coll.: 1898 (O.E.D. Sup.).

take in. To deceive, impose on, swindle: coll.: 1725, A New Comting Dict.; 1897, 'Pomes' Marshall, 'He was "dicky", She was trickey--I took him in, and cleared him out.' On draw in.—2. To believe or accept as 'gospel': coll.: 1864, 'The Undergraduates took it all in and cheered ... ', O.E.D.

take (a thing) in smuff. See smuff.

take in your washing! A nautical c.p. 'order to a careless boat's crew to bring fenders, rope's ends, etc., inboard': late C. 19–20. Bowen.

take it. See take the biscuit.

*take it out, v.t. 'To undergo imprisonment in lieu of a fine', C. J. Dennis: low (? c.) Australian: C. 20.

take it out of that! Fight away!: London: ca. 1820–60. Bee, 'Accompanied by showing the elbow, and patting it'.

take-off. A mimic; a mimicking, caricature, burlesque: coll.: from ca. 1850. Ex:

*take off. To mimic, parody, mock: coll.: 1750, Chesterfield (O.E.D.); 1766, Brooke, 'He ... perfectly counterfeited or took off, as they call it, the real Christian.'

take off corner-pieces or take corner-pieces off. To best or manhandle (esp. one's wife): low urban (—1909). Ware.

take on. To show emotion; grieve, distress oneself greatly: C. 15–20: S.E. until early C. 19, then coll. and dial. Whyte-Melville, 1868, 'There's Missis walking about the drawing-room, taking on awful': that it had, ca. 1820, > a domestic servants' word appears from Scott, 1828, 'Her sister hurt her own cause by taking on, as the maid-servants call it, too vehemently.'—2. To become popular, 'catch on': 1897, 'Ouida' (O.E.D.).—3. V.t., to engage (a person, or army) in a fight, a battle: coll.: C. 20. C. J. Dennis.

take on with. To take up with (a woman): proletarian coll. (—1923). Manchon. Ex dial.


take one's last drink. See last drink.

take one's teeth to. To begin eating (something) heartily: coll.: late C. 19–20.

take (e.g. energy) out of (a person) is S.E., but take it out of (him) is coll. when = to tire or exhaust him (1887) and when = to exact satisfaction from, have revenge on him (1851, Mayhew). Baumann; F. & H.; O.E.D.

take sights. See sights, take.

take that fire-poker out of your spine and the (or those) lazy-tongues out of your fish-books (hands)! A nautical c.p. of adjuration to rid oneself of laziness: late C. 19–20.

take the air. To fly: Air Force jocular coll.: from 1916. F. & Gibbons.

take the aspro. An Australian variant of take the cask: 1934; ob. Suggested by Aspro advertisements, esp. slogans.

take the biscuit. A variant (—1923) of take the bun. Manchon notes also take it.

take the bun. See bun, take the. A lower-classes' variant of ca. 1900–14 is take the kettie (Ware).

take the cake. See cake, take the.

take the con back. To be reimbursed; see carry the con (back). nautical and military: late C. 19–20. Bowen. Perhaps ex illicit usage of its contents.—2. To be held responsible for a mishap: railwaymen's: from ca. 1919. The Daily Herald, Aug. 11, 1936.—3. To be imposed on: road-transport workers': from ca. 1925. Ibid. Cf. carry the con, q.v.

take the count. See count ... take the Hunley and Palmer. See Hunley and Palmer—take the kettie. See take the bun.

take the number off the door. A c.p. of ca. 1865–1915, applied to a house where the wife is a shrew. Ware. 'The removal of the number would make the cottage less discoverable.'

*take the stripes out. To remove, with acid, the
crossing on a cheque: e. (— 1933). Charles E. Leach.

take the tiles off (the roof), enough (or sufficient) to. Extremely extravagant (ly); Society: ca. 1878—1910. Ware.

take too much. To drink too much liquor; drink liquor very often indeed: coll. verging on S.E.: late C. 19—20. Perhaps orig. euphemistic.

take to one's land-tacks. To go ashore for a space; nautical: late C. 19—20. Bowen.

take-up. A point at which a passenger gets in: coachmen's and cabin's coll. (— 1887) ; ob. Baumann.


take your washing in, Ma; here come(s) the (name of unit). A military c.p. addressed, on the line of march, by one unit to another: late C. 19—20. B. & P.

*taker is a contemporaneous variant of take-up, q.v. Greene, 1591. (In Barnard's law, q.v.)


*take-up. He who, in a gang of four swindlers, breaks the ice with, and 'butters up', the prospective victim: c. of ca. 1590—1620. Greene, 1691.


taking any (occ. with object expressed), not to be. To be discreditable for: ca. 1900—10. The Daily News, March 10, 1900, 'In the language of the hour, "nobody was taking any".' Perhaps orig. of liquor. Now, and long, not having any.

taking it easy. Tipsey: ca. 1890—1914. Perhaps ex take one's ease in one's inn, to enjoy oneself as if at home.

taky. 'Taking', q.v. ; coll. : in C. 20, ob.; 1864, Wilkie Collins, 'Those two difficult and delicate operations in art technically described as "putting in taky touches, and bringing out bits of effect".' O.E.D. correcting F. & H.


tale !, tell that for a. A c.p. indicative of incredulity: from ca. 1870.

tale, tell the. To tell a begging-story; to make love: C. 20—2. To tell an incredible or a woful tale; from ca. 1910. (Esp. among soldiers.)—3. Hence, to explain away (gen. one's own) military offences and delinquencies: military: from ca. 1914. B. & P.


talent, the. Backers of horses as opp. the bookmakers: sporting coll. >, ca. 1910, (): from the early 1890's. Clever because they make a horse a favourite.

Italiano. An Italian: mostly lower classes': C. 20. Ex It, Italiano.

talk. To talk about, discuss: late C. 14—20: S.E. until ca. 1850, then coll.—2. (Of a horse) to roar: stable a. (— 1884) > coll. H., 3rd ed. — 3. See talking and talks.

talk big or tall. To talk braggishly or turgidly; resp. coll., 1699, L'Estrange (O.E.D.); and s. (— 1888), orig. U.S. Coulson Kernahan, 1900, 'Put down men who talk tall about the sacredness of labour.' Cf. tall, 1 and 2.

talk by a bow. To quarrel: London lower ' : ca. 1850—82. Ware.

talk it out. See talker, 2. —— talk nineteen to the dozen: See nineteen . .

talk the hind leg off a bird (Apperson), cow, dog, donkey (Baumann), horse (mainly dial.), jackass, etc. ; or talk a bird's (etc.) hind leg off. To wheedle, to charm; to talk excessively, often with implication of successful persuasion: coll. : Cobbett, 1808 ('horse's hind leg'). : Beckett, 1838, 'By George, you'd talk a dog's hind leg off.' In C. 20, often talk the leg off a brass pan (dial.) or saucepots (not brass). talk through one's hat. See hat, talk . . . talk through (the back of) one's neck. See neck, talk .

talk to. To rebuke, scold: coll. : 1878, W. S. Gilbert (O.E.D.). Ex lit. sense.—2. To discuss as being likely to reach (a certain figure or price): Stock Exchange coll. : from ca. 1920. 'Securities,' in Time and Tide, Sept. 22, 1934, 'Local loans are up to the new high level (post-war) of 931/4, and are being talked to 100.'


talker. A horse that 'roars': stable a.; from ca. 1870. Ex talk, v., 2. —— 2. From ca. 1860, as in Howson & Warner, Harrow School, 1898, 'Then followed solos from those who could sing, and those who could not—it made no difference. The latter class were called talkers, and every boy was encouraged to stand up and talk it out.'

talkie, talky. (Gen. pl.) A moving picture with words: 1928 (S.O.D.): coll. >, by 1855, S.E. On movie, q.v.

talking, now you're. Now you're saying something arresting, important, amusing: coll. : from ca. 1880. O.E.D. (Sup.).


talky-talk. Idle or pointless or trivial talk: coll. : C. 20. (O.E.D. Sup.) Cf. talkie—talkie house, q.v.

tall. (Of talk) grandiloquent, high-flown: coll. : 1670, Eachard, 'Tall words and lofty notions', O.E.D.—2. Hence, extravagant; exaggerated: U.S. (1844, Kendall) : anglicised, esp. as tall talk (Baumann) or tall story, in the eighties; by 1920, coll.—3. (Very) large or big or (of speed) great or (of time) long: U.S. (ca. 1840) : anglicised ca. 1860. 'Very tall' scoring (in cricket), 1864 (Lewis); H., 54th ed.; 'Pome's Marshall, 1867, 'Her cheek was fairly "tall"!' Ex sense 1 ; more prob. (despite contradictoriness of earliest records), ex sense 2. — 4. Hence, excellent; first-rate: orig.—ca. 1840 — and mainly U.S. Baumann, 1887, 'We had a tall time of it—it wir hatten lustige Tage.' (Often hardly distinguishable from preceding sense.)

tall, to talk. See talk big.


tall order. See order.

tall ship is catastrophio when applied to a steamer: C. 20. Bowen.

tall 'un. A 'pint of coffee, half a pint being a short 'un: urban lower classes': late C. 19—20. Ware.


tallow, piss one's. See p. one's t.

tallow-breeched. With fat behind: C. 18—mid. 19. Cf.:

TALLY


Tally, v.t. To reckon (that . . . ); coll.: 1860 (O.E.D.); ob. Ex tally, to count.

Tally, live (rarely on). To live in concubinage: chiefly mining districts (— 1864), H., 3rd ed. Ex tally, a corresponding half or part of anything. Whence:

Tally-husband or -man. A man living thus: from 1870's. On:

Tally-wife or -woman. A woman living thus: resp. early 1860's (H., 3rd ed.) and late 1880's. Like preceding, mostly Northern. See tally, live.

Tally wag; occ. tarri wag. The penis: late C. 18—20; ob., except in Derbyshire and Cheshire dial.—2. Gen. in pl. the testicles: resp. late C. 18—20 (Grose, 1st ed.) and C. 17—20 (Taylor; Grose; Beckett, 1838). ↑ origin, unless ex tally, the corresponding half, + (to) wag, v.l., an etymology that fits sense 1, since this sense derives ex sense 2.

Tam. tammy. A tam-o'-shanter: from mid-1890's: coll. >, by 1900, S.E.

Tam of the Cowgat. Sir Thomas Hamilton, noted mid-C. 16 Scottish lawyer. Dawson.


Tame cat. 'A woman's fetch-and-carry': coll.: from ca. 1870; ob. Ex S.E. sense.

Tame jolly. See jolly, n. (naval sense)—tammy. See tam.

Tan tart. A girl: c. 1845, in 'No. 747'. A perversion of jam tart or possibly its original.


Tandem. 'A two wheeled chaise, buggy, or noddy, drawn by two horses, one before the other': Grose, 1st ed. >, ca. 1852; coll. >, ca. 1860, S.E. Prog. university; viz. tandem, at length, so frequent in L. classical authors (esp. Cicero).—2. A pair of carriage horses harnessed: 1795, W. Felton (tandum, an erroneous form: O.E.D.): s. >, ca. 1820, coll. >, ca. 1850, S.E.—3. Ex sense 1, influenced by sense 2, as adv.: one behind the other: 1795 (O.E.D.): same evolution of status.—4. As adj., long: Cambridge University: ca. 1870—90, Ware. 'Used in speaking of a tall man'.

Tangier. Tangerines, the. The 2nd Foot Regiment >, in late C. 10, the Queen's (Royal West Surrey).—2. The 4th Foot > the King's Own (Royal Lancaster Regt.). Both, military: ↑ C. 17—20; ob. These regiments were raised to defend Tangiers, part of the dowry of Charles II's wife.—3. See:

Tanger. A room in Newgate, where debtors were confined, hence called Tangerines': Grose, 3rd ed.: o. of ca. 1780—1910.


tank. Incorrect abbr. of copped tank: late C. 17—


tank. v. To cane: King Edward's School, Birmingham; from ca. 1870. Ex dial. tank, a blow.

tank up. To drink much liquor: U.S. (ca. 1900), anglicised ca. 1916, esp. in the Army. O.E.D. (Sup.); F. & Gibbons. Cf. tanked.


Tanked. Tipsey: from early 1917. Prob. ex tank, n. 3; perhaps suggested by canned, q.v., though the term may have originated among soldiers with the floundering of the tanks in the mud of Flanders and Picardy in late 1916—early 17. ('Tanks first went into action at Pozieres ridge, Sep. 5, 1916, W.)

Tanker. A steamer fitted for carrying tanks of oil: 1900: coll. >, by 1930, S.E. (O.E.D. Sup.)

tanky. The foreman of the hold, ' which 'looks like a tank' (Ware): naval (— 1909).—2. The navigator's assistant: naval: from ca. 1912. Bowen. Because responsible for the fresh water.

tanned, ppl. adj. Beaten (severely), thrashed: perhaps as early as 1860. Ex tan.

tanner. A sixpenny man (— c. 1811), ca. 1790, gen. s. Lex. Bat.; Dickens, 1844. Etymology problematic: H., 1st ed., suggests Gypsy taumou, young, hence little; in 2nd ed., L. tener. But see the note at simon, 1.—2. Whence tannercab, a sixpenny cab (1908, O.E.D.) and tannergram, a telegram (when, early in 1896, the minimum cost was reduced from 1¢ to 6d.); both terms ↑ by 1920, the telegram-rate having been raised to ninepence during the War and to one shilling in 1920. The return, in 1936, of the sixpenny telegram has not revived the term.


'Tant, Tantest. Mast of a Ship or Man, Tall, Tallest'. B.E.'s cryptic entry should read: 'Tant, Tantest, Of a Ship's mast or of a Man: Tall, Tallest. It is a nautical adj., gen. spelt tawl.' 

'tan't. See tant—tandadin, tautaubin. See tantobin—tantarum. See tantrum.


tannrems. ' Franks, capers, or frolicking,' H., 1st ed.: coll. or s.: ca. 1850–1910. Ex tarnrems, q.v., + the dial. senses of the same + the occ. dial. spelling tarnrim. (H. thought tarnrem distinct from)

tanterm ; occ., though in C. 20 very ob. tarn- tarum ; in H., 1st ed., tarnrem. (Gen. in pl.) A display, or petticoat, fit of anger: coll. : 1748, Foote, 'I am glad here's a husband coming that will take you down in your tarnrems'; Grose, 1st ed.; Read. Possibly, as H., 2nd ed. (though actually of tarnrems), suggests, ex the tartanula (1903, O.E.D.); properly tarentella (not till 1782 ?), a rapid, whirling Italian dance; but perhaps rather ex the cognate tarentism, that hysterical malady which expresses, or tends to express, itself in dancing frenziedly, for tarentism, recorded ca. 1840, might easily be corrupted to tanda(r)nums, the singular not appearing before C. 19. Less prob. ex tranrant, a tantara, for it does not occur in C. 18. Much, much less prob. ex — 2. (Frequent in singular.) The penis: 1675, Cotton in The Scoffer Scoff'd; app. † by 1800. Possibly cognate with North Country tartan (a vagrant, a Gypsy), recorded as early as 1854 (E.D.D.); cf. the later G.W. dial. tartan-boltus, a noisy child, — which, however, is presumably ex tarnrem, 1. — 3. See tarnrems.

tanyard, the. The poor-house : Caithness s., not dial.: ca. 1850–80. Pejorative. E.D.D., 'Very common for some years after the Poor Law Act, 1845. The paupers had the greatest aversion to indoor relief and called the Poorhouse by this name.

taoco, toco; tot (not properly back s.) A coat: back a. (— 1850). H., 1st ed., also has tocit-tasian, a waistcoat; F. & H., 1904, adds taoc-tipec, a petticoat. The correct form, taoc, app. appears first in H., 3rd ed., 1864; and H., 1874, notes that "'Cool the delo taoc" means, "Look at the old coat," but is really intended to apply to the wearer as well.


tap, v.i. To spend, pay up, freely: ca. 1712–20. Addison; Steele. Semantics, 'to "turn on the tap"' of gifts', O.E.D. 2. V.t., to broach, in these a. senses: tap a quinea, to change it (Grose, 2nd ed.), † by 1890; tap a house, to burgle it (late C. 19–20/; ob.), tap a girl, to deflower her (Grose, 2nd ed.), — in C. 19–20, often tap a judy; tap one’s claret (1823, 'Jon Bee'), to make one’s nose bleed, tap by itself occurring in Diekens, 1840 (O.E.D.) but ob. by 1900, † by 1930; tap the admiral, see admiral. — 3. To arrest: also gen. (one) on the shoulder, an arrest ('); col.; resp. † by 1890, and ob. — 4. See tap for.


*tap* (a peanum) for. To ask (him) for (money): C. 20. Suggested by string, 2; ex tap, to hit,— therefore contrast tap, v., l., q.v. 


tap on the shoulder, n., and v. See tap, v., third sense.—tap one’s claret. See tap, v. 2.

tap the Admiral, he would. He’d do anything for a drink: naval: late C. 19–20. Bowen, 'From the old naval myth that when Lord Nelson’s body was being brought home seamen contrived to get at the rum in which it was preserved, — tap, v., 2, q.v. 

Tap-Tub, the. The Morning Advertiser: ca. 1820–80: book-world. Bee, 1823, 'Because that print catcheth the drippings of yesterday’s news, and disheft it up anew'; H., 1846, 'So called by vulgar people [because it is the principal organ of the London brewers and publicans. Sometimes termed The Gin and Gospel Gazette.' 

*tape.** Strong liquor: c. (— 1725) >, ca. 1840, (low) s. A New Canting Dict.— 2. Occ. gin: from ca. 1820; H., 1859, having ‘tape, gin,—term with female servants’, and Egan’s Grove quoting from Randall’s Scrap Book. Gen., however, white tape (1725) is gin, as occ. is ‘Holland tape (1755) and rarely ‘blue t. (1785, Grove); red tape (1725) is brandy; loosely (as in Grove, 1st ed.), red, white, blue t., any spirituous liquor. For semantics, cf. ribbons, q.v.— 3. Sending messages by ‘tic-tac men’ (q.v.): turf: ca. 1885–1910. MS. note in B.M. copy of H., 5th ed.


taped, be; gen. have or have got (one) taped. In these phrases, taped = sized-up; detected; so scen- through as to be rendered incapable of harm, mis-chief, etc.: orig. (1916), military >, ca. 1920, gen. B. & P.; Lyell. Ex tape, to measure (something) with a tape—on tacked, have one, q.v.—with esp. reference to the Engineer-plied tapes along which the Infantry lay waiting for the signal to attack when there was no trench or sunken road convenient as a jumping-off place.— 2. Hence, from ca. 1920, taped often = arranged, or settled, as in Ronald Knox, The Body in the Silo, 1933, 'Let’s get the whole thing taped.' Also taped up (G. D. H. & M. Cole, 1927).


taper, v.t. To give over gradually; v.i., to run short: from late 1850’s. H., 1st ed. Ex: taper, adj. (Of supplies, money) decreasing: 1851, Mayhew (O.E.D.); ob. Lit., (becoming) slender (cf. slender chance). Cf. also the later thin (time, etc.). See, too, taper, run: Addenda.

taper off, v.i. To leave off gradually; esp. to lessen gradually the amount and/or strength of one’s drink: coll.: from ca. 1870; ob. Ex taper, w., q.v. 

tapes, on the. Ready to commence: military coll.: from 1916. F. & Gibbons. For semantics see taped, be.

*tapes, on the.** Possible; rumoured: diplomatic coll. (— 1909) verging on S.E. Ware.


tapper (C. 19); shoulder-tapper (ca. 1780–1910). A bailiff; a policeman. Grose, 1st ed.; F. & H. Prob. on much earlier shoulder-clapper, q.v. Ex tap, v., 3.— 2. One who broaches casks of wine or


tarry-wag. See tallywag.


tars or Taras. Shares in the Thariss Copper Mining Company: Stock Exchange (— 1895). A. J. Will.
tart. A girl or woman (but if old, always old tart): from early 1860's. Orig. endearingly and of chase and unchaste alike; but by 1904 (F. & H.)—only of fast or immoral women,—a tendency noted as early as 1884 (Ware); by 1920—except in Australia (where, from before 1890, it = a sweet-heart and where it is still applied also to any girl)—only of prostitutes. H., 3rd ed. (1864), 'Tart, a term of approval applied by the London lower orders to a young woman for whom some affection is felt'; The Morning Post, Jan. 25, 1887; Baumann, 1887, 'My tart—mein Schatzen'; in late 1890's, the ooc. diminutive tartlet (Barrière & Leland); 'Pompey' Marshall, 1896: above all, F. & H.; B. & P. Ex the idea of sweetness in a woman and a jam-tart: cf. sweetness as a term of address.—2. The young favourite of one of the older boys; not necessarily a catamite: Scottish Public Schools': C. 20. Ian Miller, School Tie, 1935. Whence tarting, this practice.

'tartar; T. (Properly Tatar. 'The y was inserted in medieval times to suggest that the Asiatic hordes who occasioned such anxiety to Europe came from ball (Tartarus), and were the locusts of Revelation ix, The Century Dict. A thief, strolling vagabond, sharper: c. 1508, Shakespeare, 'Here's a Bohemian Tartar'; B. E.; 1780. Abbr. Tartarian, q.v.—2. An adept: from ca. 1790; ob. Grose, 1st ed., 'He is quite a tartar at cricket, or billiards.' Ex to catch a Tartar. Cf. hot stuff, q.v.

'Tartar, catch a. 'Said, among the Canting Variets, when a Rogue attacks one that he thinks a Passenger, but proves to be of [the 58th order of rogues], who, in his Turn, having overcome the Assailant, robs, plunder, and binds him,' A New Canting Dict., 1725: c.: 18. Ex tartar, 1.

'Tartarian. A strolling vagabond; a thief; a sharper or swindler: c.: though prob. from 1580's, not recorded before 1608, The Merry Devil of Edmonton; t by 1690. Nares. Ex Tartarian, a native of Central Asia, the home of a warlike race.

tarting. See tart, 2.

tartlet. See tart, 1. (After ca. 1910, rare and literary.)
tassel. An undergraduate; university a. of ca. 1828-40. Because his cap has a tassel. Cf. tuft, q.v.—2. See pencil and tassel.

Tassy, Tassie. (Pronounced Tazzy.) Tasmania: Australian coll. from ca. 1890.—2. Hence, in C. 20, a Tasmanian. Cf. the two senses of Ausie.

taste, a. adv.: A little; slightly; coll.: 1894; Hall Caine, Nancy will tidy the room a taste, O.E.D. (Cf. a bit used adverbially.) In Anglo-Irish, it dates from the 1890's (E.D.D.).

taste of the creature. See creature.

taste the sun. To enjoy the sunlight; Cookneys; ca. 1877-1900. Ware. Cf. see the breeze.

taster. A portion of ice-cream served in a [taster or] shallow glass: coll. from ca. 1890. Ware.

tastey; properly tasty. Appetising: from ca. 1815: S.E. until mid-C. 19, then coll. Buckle, ca. 1882, 'A tasty pie.'—2. Hence, pleasant, attractive: from mid-1790's: S.E. until mid-C. 19, then coll.; ob. except where it merges with senses 1 and 4.—3. Elegant: from ca. 1700: S.E. until ca. 1870, then coll.; rare in C. 20.—4. Hence, of the best: late C. 19-20: coll. verging on a. 'Pomes' Marshall, 'He's fond of something tasty . . . me and him was spliced last Monday week.'—5. (Ex sense 1.) Sexually alluring, 'spicy': from 1890's: a. rather than c.; slightly ob. Whitening, 1890. 'Nice and tasty, observes my friend . . . as he points to a leg that seems to fear nothing on earth . . . not even Lord Campbell's arm.'

tasty-looking. Appetising: coll. from mid-1800's. Ex tasty, 1, q.v.


*tat, v.i. To gather rags, be a rag-gatherer: a.: 1851, Mayhew. Prob. ex tat, n., 2.—2. V.t., to thresh, flog: low a. (—1812); ↑ by 1890. Vaux. Ex dial. tat, to pat or tap.


tats. See ta-ta l, 2, and ta-ta's, go.


tater (etc.), on for a. Fascinated; esp. of a man by a barmaid: lower classes (—1909). Ware. I.e. ready for a tête-à-tête.

tater l, s'elp my. The earliest form (—1860) of taterio; s'elp my; see s'elp. H., 2nd ed. A variation is s'elp my greens! For hidden sense, see strain one's taters.

tater, settle a person's. To thrash him: proletarians (—1923). Manchon.

tater-skiing. A game in which one throws potatoes up in the air and returns them, with a toss from the top of one's head, to one's opponent: proletarian coll. (—1923). Manchon.


taters, settle one's. To settle one's hash: low a. (and Shropshire dial.): late C. 19-20; ob. On settle one's hash. Contrast tater, settle . . . taters, strain one's. See strain one's taters.—taters l, s'elp my. See tater, s'elp my, and s'elp.


*tatier. See tattier.—*tato. See tatie.

tatol. A tutor in Commoners: Winchester College: from ca. 1870. It looks like a corrupted-ending blend of 'tutor' and 'Commoners', perhaps punning (a) tatle.

*tats, tattis. Dice; esp. false dice: o.: 1868, Shadwell; Grose, 1st ed.; Henley, 1887, 'Rattle the tats, or mark the spot.' Perhaps ex tat, to touch lightly: cf. tat, v., 2.


tati. See tat, n., 3.—tat-box, -monger, -shop. See tal-box, etc.

Tattenham Corner. 'The narrow water-way entrance into the Firth of Forth from May Island to Inchkeith, where German submarines constantly lurked, always passed by the British Fleet at full speed': a Grand Fleet nickname: 1916; now only historical. F. & Gibbons. The allusion is to a famous corner on a famous English race-course.

tatler. A rag-gatherer: o.: from ca. 1860. Ex tat, v., 1. Also tativer; from the early 1890's.

tatter, v.i. To collect rags; be a rag-gatherer: o.: from ca. 1860. ↑ ex tat, n., 2.—2. As a variant of totter, it is incorrect—and rare.—3. V.t., in tatter a kip, to wreck a brothel: 1766, Goldsmith; ↑ by 1830.

*tattersdemallion. 'A tatter'd Beggar, sometimes half Naked, with Design to move Charity, having better Clothes at Home', A New Canting Dict., 1725: o.: C. 18. Ex lit. S.E. sense.

*tatterer. See tatier, n.


*tattle. An occ. C. 18-19 mid variant, as in A New Canting Dict., 1725, of:

*tattler; occ. tatier. 'An Alarm, or Striking Watch, or (indeed any) ', B.E.: o.: 1868, Shadwell; slightly ob. The origin is explained by B.E.'s definition. Hence, flash a tatter; to wear a watch (late C. 18-20), and speak a tatter (1879) or nim a t. (—1890), to steal one.


*tatts. See tats—tatty tog. See tog, n.—tatutte. A rare error for tattou, an armadillo. O.E.D.—tatur. See tater.


Tavern, the. New Inn Hall: Oxford University: 1853, 'Cuthbert Bede'; exceedingly ob. for the
Hall did not survive the century of its foundation. By pun and ex its buttery open throughout the day. tavern-bitch has bit him in the head, the. He is drunk: C. 17. Middleton, 1608 (Apperson). Prob. the first form of:

tavern-fox, hunt s. To get drunk: coll.: 1630, ‘Water under the tail’; † by 1700. On swallow a tavern-token, q.v., but ex tavern-bitch ...

taw, I'll be one—or a marble—(up) on your. A threat (= 'I will pay you out !') derived ex the game of marbles, taw being the large and gen. superior marble with which one shoots: coll.: resp. from late 1780's and early 1800's; † by 1890, except among schoolboys. Grose, 2nd ed.: Vaux; H., 5th ed.

tax-collector. A highwayman: ca. 1890-90 variant of collector, q.v.


tax-gatherer. See gather the taxes.

taxes, the. The tax-collector: coll.: 1874, W. S. Gilbert (O.E.D.).
taxi; occ. taxi, rare after 1909. Abbr. taxi-cab: coll. and ob.—2. Abbr. taxi-cab: 1907 (ibid.); coll. †, ca. 1933, S.E. (Late in 1934, the latter sense was received into standard Fr.)
taxi. To go by taxi-cab: coll.: from ca. 1915.

Ex taxi, n., 2.
taxi-duty, on. (Of the destroyers of the Dover Patrol) 'employed ferrying politicians, etc., across to France': naval: 1916—18. Bowen.


*taylie; taylie-drawer. See tail, n., last sense, and tail-drawer.

tea. A spiriuous liquor: from ca. 1690. Sometimes defined: cold tea, brandy (1993); Scotch tea, whiskey (1887). Ex the colour. O.E.D.—2. Urine: 1716, Gay; implied by Grose, 1st ed., in tea-voider; † by 1860.—3. See ticket, be a person's. tea, v.t. To supply with, or entertain at: tea: coll. 1812, Sir R. Wilson.—2. Hence, to drink tea, have one's tea: coll.: 1823 (O.E.D.); Dickens, 1839, 'Father don't tea with us.'
tea and turn out. A proletarian c.p. of ca. 1870—1905 applied to absence of supper. Ware.
tea-blow. A taxi-cab rank where refreshments can be obtained: taxi-drivers': from ca. 1926. Ex blow, n., 8.
tea-cake or -cakes. 'A child's seat or fundament': Yorkshire s. (—1904), not dial. E.D.D.

tea-kettle groom. A groom that has to work also in the kitchen, etc.: low (—1887). Baumann.
tea in China. See China, not for all the tea in.
tea-man, teaman. A prisoner entitled to a pint of tea, instead of gruel, every evening: c. from ca. 1870; ob.
tea-party. See Boston tea-party, q.v.—2. Hence, a lively proceeding: 1903 (O.E.D.).
tea-party ribbons. 'The multi-coloured ribbons on some (usually non-combatant) officers' breasts': Army officers: from 1916, B. & P. (Cf. C. E. Montague's 'Honours Easy' in Fiery Particles.)
tea-pot. Same as tea-kettle purger, q.v.: same period and status. Ware.—2. A tea-party: universities: ca. 1880—1900. Ware.
tea-Room Party. A group of forty-eight Radicals in: Parliament: 1866. (Coll. rather than s.) They met in the tea-room. Ware.
tea-scramble. See tea-fight and:
tea-shirt. A 'tea-fight' (q.v.): coll.: 1838, Mrs Carlyle (O.E.D.); † by 1890.
tea-spoon. £5000: commercial: the 1890's and '70's. H., 3rd to 8th ed.
tea-tree oneself; be tea-treed. See ti-tree oneself.
tea-wad. A cup of tea and bun(s): military (—1935). See wad, a bun.
tea-wag(g)on. An East Indianman: nautical coll. of ca. 1835—90. Dana. Because these ships carried tea as a large part of their cargo.
tea with, take. To associate with: Australian: 1888, Boldrewood.—2. Hence, esp. to engage with, encounter, in a hostile way: 1890, Kipling: 'And some share our Tucker with tigers, [And some with the gentle Masai (Dear boys)!], Take tea with the giddy Masai.' Cf. tea-party, q.v.
teach-guy. A late, rare form of teach-guy (see teach-gens).
teach iron to swim. To perform the impossible: coll. verging on familiar S.E.: C. 16—20; ob.
teach your grandmother to suck eggs. See grandmother to.—teacher always a teacher, once a. See policeman always.
teacher l. please. (With upraised hand.) A c.p. indicating that the speaker wishes to make a remark; thank you, teacher, a c.p. connoting irony or derision towards someone permitting condescendingly or explaining pompously. Both: C. 20.
tease, teasing. One who takes tea; the taking of tea, or the corresponding adj.: coll.: resp. 1892, 1874, 1882 (Surtees): O.E.D. Ex tea, v., 2. Often written tea'er, tea-ing, or te'er, te'ing.

Teague; in C. 17, occ. Teg, in C. 18 Tèquè. An Irishman: coll. nickname: 1861, Merry Drolerry (Tèg); Swift, 1733; 1900, Stanley Weyman (O.E.D.); extremely ob., and since ca. 1870

*tease (but gen. teases or teises), nab or nap thee. To be flogged; esp. to be whipped privately in gaol:

1. ca. 1780-1840. Grose, 1st ed. Prob. ex tease, the act of teasing. Cf. sense 4 of:

- tease; teazer, very rare in C. 20. Something causing annoyance; a 'poser': coll.: 1750, Franklin (O.E.D.); of a difficult ball in cricket, 1866 (Lewis)—2. Hence, I boxing s. (1812, O.E.D.; ob.), an opponent hard to beat. — 3. An old horse belonging to a brooding stud—'though devoid of fun himself, he is the cause of it in others', Boe: turf: ca. 1820—70. — 4. A flogging or whipping: c. or low s.: from ca. 1830. Ex tease, v., q.v. Cf. teasing. — 5. A preliminary advertisement (specified by another article or advertiser, or, loosely, specifying only the one or the other), prior to an advertising campaign: advertising (esp. publicity) coll.: from ca. 1920.


- teasy. (Of persons) teasing; (of things) irritating: coll.: from ca. 1907. Rare. O.E.D. Ex dial.

- testaghir. See teash-gir.

- teestotal. Incorrect for teetotall: from the 1830's.

- tease. See tease, n., v., and phrase; teazer, sec te.


- teck; tech, v.t. To watch as a detective does: C. 20; rare. Ex n.

- tech. See tec, n., 2.—teck. See tec, n. 1.

- Teddies. One of the names for the U.S. troops on first landing in France; disliked by the Americans equally with 'Sammies' ['which, however, survived], and soon dropped; military: 1917—early 1918. F. & Gibbons. Ex Teddy's Roosevelt (d. 1919).


- Teddy my godson. An address to a simpleton: Anglo-Irish coll.: from ca. 1790; ob. Grose, 1st ed.

- Teddy Woodbine. See Woodbine, Teddy.

- Teddy's hat. The crown in the name of Crown and Anchor: military: 1902; ob. F. & Gibbons. 'With reference to King Edward VII'.

- tee-t. See t.t.

- teelay. A new boy: Winchester College: from ca. 1870; ob. Abbr. protégé. Also leay, 1st syllable as Eng. tee, 2nd as in Fr. Wrench.—Hence, as v. tech; tique. Mathematics: arithmetic: Harrow: from ca. 1880; ob. Ex a French master's pronunciation of the relevant syllable.

- teeming and lading; n. 'Using cash received to-day to make up cash embezzled yesterday' (Alfred T. Chenhall): accountant's: C. 20. Lit., unloading and loading.

teeth. See tooth for phrases, etc., not hereinunder.—2. (Only in pl.) A ship's guns: nautical: 1810 (O.E.D.); slightly ob. † ex show one's teeth.—
teeth. draw. See draw teeth.
teeth, fed up to the (back). See fed up.
teeth upwards, go to grass with. To be buried: late C. 19–20; ob.
teeth well abiot, have one's or the. To be tipsy: from ca. 1870; ob.
teethward (properly toothward), be clerk to the. A coll. of late C. 16–early 17 as in Hollywood's, i.e. Claude Desaislins's, Dictionnaire French and English, 1693; 'He is Clarke to the toothward, he hath eaten his service book; spoken in mawkage by [† of] such as maketh show of learning and be not learned.'
*Teetotal Hotel, (the). A prison: o.: from ca. 1890; ob.
teetotically. Teetotally: non-aristocratic jocular: 1890's. Ware. A perversion, silly enough; but with a less foolish glance at theoretically.
**teetotally. See Teague. —*teize. See tease, n., v., and phrase.—teje. See teejay.
tejious. tejious; tejeus. Tejiously; hence, extremely, as in teji(ous) bad, good, quick, etc., etc.: sol.: from ca. 1890; ob. as an intensive. Ex Kentish dial.
tekram. A market: back a.: from 1860's. Ware.
teleometer. Catachrestic for teleometer: from ca. 1890. By confusion with telometer. (O.E.D.)
teleoscope. To silence (a person): Australian: ca. 1890–1910. † ex telescoped carriages.
telent; tell. A telegraphist: telegraphists' coll. (—1923). Manchon. Ex these two words written as official abbr.
tell a lie. To tell (something) spoken of: absolutely: 'So I've heard tell', so I've heard. C. 13–20: S.E. until mid-C. 19, then coll. and dial. Stevenson, 1896, 'I asked him if he had ever heard tell of... the house of Shaws,' O.E.D. See also hear.
tell me l, don't; never tell me l I can hardly believe it: don't be silly!: coll.: resp. mid-C. 18–20, and by; and C. 17–20, extremely ob. Shakespeare in Othello; Footo (don't...). O.E.D.
tell the old, old story! A c.p. (often, too, a chant sung in unison), in retort on rumours of good times or on specious promises: military: 1915; ob. But it was in use in Sydney at least as early as 1905; often whistled. B. & P., 'The first line of a Non-conformist hymn!' tell mother! Tell me!: a C. 20 c.p. E.g. Somerset Maugham, The Casuarina Tree, 1926; "'What is it, old man?' she said gently [to her husband]. 'Tell mother.'" tell off. To scold, blame, rebuke severely: coll. (—1919). Perhaps ex the military sense. (O.E.D. Sup.)—2. Hence, to sentence (an inculminated per-son): o.: from ca. 1920. George Ingram, Stir 1933.
tell on, tell of: see of in sense of on.
tell one's own. To tell him frankly of his faults or mistakes: coll.: C. 18–20; ob. Horman, 1519 (O.E.D.). Cf. give a piece of one's mind.
tell that to the marines! See marines.—tell the tale. See tale, tell the.
tell the world I, Tll. I say so openly or emphatically: U.S.; anglicised in 1930 or 1931 as a coll.
tell you what, I'll: in C. 19–20, often I tell you what; in mid-C. 19–20, occ. tell you what (Baumann). I'll tell you something; this is how it is: coll. Shakespear, Tennyson; Violet Hunt, 'I tell you what, Janet, we must have a man down who doesn't shoot—to amuse us!' O.E.D.
teller. A well-delivered blow: boxing s.: 1814, The Sporting Magazine (O.E.D.); 1834, Ainsworth; 'Ven luckily for Jem a teller [Vos planted right upon his sniffer.' Ob. Lit., something that tells, makes a mark.
teller of the tale. He who 'tells the tale' (see tale, tell the, 1): mostly low: C. 20.
telling, that would be or that's. See tellings.
App. from ca. 1830.
telling, that's. A c.p. reply to a question that one should, or does, not wish to answer: from ca. 1835; slightly ob. Marryat, 1837, "'Where is this... and when?' "'That's tellings,' replied the man,' O.E.D. A playful coll. or perhaps, orig., a sol. for 'That's telling' = that would be telling, phrases that are themselves—at first, though not now—somewhat trivially coll.
telt. See telent.
temperature, have a. To be feverish; coll. from late 1890's. E. F. Benson, 1904, 'He has... had a temperature for nearly a week,' O.E.D. Abbr. have a temperature. Higher than one's usual.
tempest. A confused or crowded throng or, resp., assembly: Society coll. soon > S.E.: ca. 1745–80. Smollett, 1746, in a note on drum, says: 'There are also drum-major, rout, tempest, and hurricane, differing only in degrees of multitude and uproar.'
tempestive and tempestuous, temporal and temporary, are in C. 19–20 catachrestic if used one for the other of its pair; in C. 17, the interchange of the latter two words was permissible. Likewise with the derivative mn.
temple. From ca. 1860 at Winchester College, as in Pascoe, 1881: 'On the last night of term there is a bonfire in Ball Court, and all the temples or miniature architectural excavations in "Mead's" wall are lighted up with candle-ends.'
Temple of Baalum. 'Merry-making after getting a lice?', Egan's Groe: Oxford University: ca. 1850–50.
*temple-picking. The ducking, under a pump, of bailiffs, detectives, pickpockets, and other unwelcome persons: London c. or low s.: late C. 17–18. B.E.; Groe. Lit., a picking within the limits of the Temple.
temporary gentleman. An officer for the duration.
of the War or until demobilised: Regular Army pejorative coll.: 1916; ob. Manchon, who notes the occ. abbr. t.p. (or T. G.). The term caused much justifiable resentment.

tempoire. To extemporise (v.t.), lit. and fig.: catachresis: late C. 19–20. (O.E.D.)

temporary. A frequent sol. for temporary.

ten. To play lawn tennis: 1906, P. G. Wodehouse, Love among the Chickens; Collins.


ten bones. (One person’s) fingers and thumbs, esp. in a coll. oath: C. 15–19.

ten commandments. The ten fingers and thumbs, esp. of a wife: mid-C. 16–20; ob. Heywood, ca. 1540. ‘Thy wives ten commandments mayer sech thy five wyttes’; Dekker & Webster, 1607; Scott; H., 3rd ed., ‘A virago’s fingers, or nails. Often heard in a female street disturbance.’ (Apperson.)

[tan-in-the-hundred, a usurer: perhaps orig. coll.; certainly soon S.E.]

ten (gen. 10) wedding. A wedding at which (t and after) the wife = 1, the husband = 0: non-aristocratic (−1909); ob. Ware.


*ten penn’orth. A sentence of ten years: o.: C. 20. George Ingram, Stir, 1933.


ten-stroke. A complete victory: billiard-players (−1909). Ware. Ten being the highest stroke.


[tender Parnell or Parnél, a mistress, a well-educated and delicate creature, is on the borderline between coll. and S.E., which latter it probably is, as also is as tender as Parnel(l), who broke her finger in a goats’ drink, with variants. The former in B.E. earliest: the latter in Ray & Grose (1st ed.). Cf. the S.E. tende(r) as a person’s O.ED.]


tennis. Lawn tennis: catachresis >, ca. 1920, S.E., but to be depreciated on the score of ambiguity. St James’s Gazette, Aug., 1888. ‘It is melancholy to see a word which has held its own for centuries gradually losing its connotation. Such a word is “tennis”, by which nine persons out of ten to-day would understand the game of recent invention,’ O.E.D. Invented in 1874 as sphericistè, the game assumed its present form in 1877. See sticky.


tenny. Detention: Stationers’ Company School at Hornsey: C. 20. Words, esp. nicknames, in − are very noticeable there, it seems.

tempest, up a tree for. See up a tree.

tempest to the shilling (only). Weak in the head: a. (−1890) >, ca. 1900, coll. H., 2nd ed. Cf. S.E. tempersnag, cheap, hence inferior.

tens, dressed to the. An occ. variant (−1923) of dressed up to the ninees. Manchon.

[Tense, wrong use of. This matter is, at least in detail, ineligible here: the two ‘looi classic’ are the Fowlers’ The King’s English and H. W. Fowler’s Modern English Usage. Note, however, the errors in ‘It is a long time since he has (or, had) come here’ for came here; ‘I didn’t seem to have had any wish to eat’ for have any wish . . . ; ‘He had departed when I had arrived’ for when I arrived. See also at have and had and of and at ‘Preterite misuse . . . ’ (The best training for correct use of tense is perhaps a sound knowledge of Latin prose.) tent. An umbrella: Anglo-Irish (−1904). E.D.D.

Tenth don’t dance, the. A military, giving s.p. directed at the 10th Hussars in 1823–ca. 1840. It originated in 1823, when the officers, at a ball in Dublin and after much experience of London and Brighton society, declined to be introduced to the ladies, on the plea that ‘the Tenth don’t dance’. F. & Gibbons.


terps. An interpreter; military; G.W., and after 1870, (F. & G. B.) Suggested by terps, q.v.
terrae fluss. A Master of Arts acting as the orator making a satirical and humorous speech at the Encena; Oxford University (improperly at Dublin): ca. 1650—1760; perhaps orig. s., but certainly soon j. Ex t. f., a son of the earth, hence a man of unknown origin. (O.E.D.)
terrible as a more intense is coll. ; gen. = very large or great; excessive. From ca.1840. Dickens. 1844, 'She's a terrible other to laugh,' O.E.D. Cf. awful, filthy, foul, frightful, terrible, tremendous. Cf.: terrible, adv. Greatly; very: late C. 15—20: S.E. until C. 20, when gen. considered sol. 'She took on (something) terrible,' she was greatly distressed. Cf.: terribly. A frequent intensive (= excessively, extremely, very greatly; mid-C. 19—20: coll. Trollopes, Jowett. Ex terribly, very severely or awfully (O.E.D.). Cf. similarly.
territorially. Excessively, or very severe or great; extremely, excessively, frighteningly: coll. : in 1869, J. W. Croker describes the extent of business as 'territoire,' and in 1859 Darwin admits that the corrections in his Origin of Species are 'terricilly heavy.' O.E.D.—2. Hence, 'great'; very: Society: from ca. 1920. Dennis Mackail, passim.
terror. A 'hole terror': coll. : 1889 (O.E.D. Sub.)
Terry. (Gen. pl.) Same as Terrer, q.v.: 1907? 10. (O.E.D.)
terry. Abrupt in manner; Society coll. : from ca. 1829. (Maurice Lincoln, Oh ! Definitely, 1833.) Suggested by 'terse style' and 'short-tempered.'
test. A test match; properly one of a series (gen. three or five) of such representative matches: from 1908: coll. >, by 1913, S.E. Orig. of cricket matches, both the full term and the abbr. were by 1920 applied to football matches—and in 1932 to lawn-tennis matches—between two countries; international is also used in much the same way—often very loosely. Also as adj.: of a player in such a match. In 1906, Mr 'Plum' Warner wrote: 'Until the year 1894 no one had ever heard of a "test" match,' The Westminster Gazette, Aug. 19 (W.).
testament. Testimony: catachresis going back to mid-C. 15. (O.E.D.)—2. See biblia, 2.
tester. A sixpence: definitely in 1613 (O.E.D.), but prob. earlier by some twenty years: s. >, by 1700, coll.; by 1850, oh., by 1890 ?, except as an archaism. Farquhar, Swift, Grose (1st ed.), Lamb, H. Ex tester, a debased teston and teston, orig. worth a shilling but by 1777, at latest, only sixpence. testily. See detest.
testament. A 'testamur' or certificate: Oxford undergraduates (1899). Ware. 'By the Oxford—er'.
"testy. A c. form of tester (sixpence): C. 19. See cat on testy dodge. This form virtually proves the tester origin of tizzy, q.v.
Th. There, esp. in 's, is..., there is: C. 19—20: dial. and, esp. in Canada and U.S.A., low coll.—2. The: this slovenly coll. is, apart from being in several dial., esp. characteristic of Australian speech; this usage is implied by John G. Brandon in his amusing 'thriller,' Th Big City, 1930. Pronounced the with great rapidity.
Thames butter. Very bad butter: London's poorer classes: ca. 1870—5. Ware. Ex a journalist's attack on a Frenchman that was making 'butter' out of Thames mud-worms.
Thames on fire, set the. Earliest in Fosse, ca. 1770, as set fire to the Thames; in Wolcot, 1788, We find burn the Thames: both these forms were † by 1850. The present form arose ca. 1786, being first recorded in Grosse, 2nd ed. Gen. in negative: to do nothing wonderful; never make one's mark: coll. >, by 1560 at latest, S.E. A similar phrase has been applied to the Liffey and the Spree, and W. quotes Nigrinus, ca. 1580, 'Er hat den Rhein und das meer angezündet,' he has set fire to the Rhine and the sea. The proposed derivation ex tense, a sive, is unauthorized; in any case, it is prima facie improbable. See esp. Apperson, O.E.D., Skat.
than. Then: C. 14—20: in C. 14—17, S.E.; in C. 18—20, dial. and in C. 19—20, a sol. more frequent than the O.E.D. admits.—2. (After hardly or scarcely) when: catachresis; mid-C. 19—20. Froude, 1884, 'He had scarcely won...the place...than his health was found shattered,' O.E.D. By confusion with no sooner...than. —3. See than in Addenda.
than, like. (In comparisons.) Such as: catachresis: ca. 1590—1600 (? later). Warner, 1592; Anon., 1665, 'Then—see than, — which the like was never heard before.' O.E.D. Cf.: than, so (far, good, much, etc.), in comparisons. So...as: catachresis: C. 17—20. G. Blackwell, 1602, 'I can blame none so much...then—see than, — Mr Collington; ' Mandeville, 1723. O.E.D. Cf. than, 2, and than, like.
thank God we've got a navy! See navy i, thank God.
thank the muzzies! Thank the Lord!: lower classes: ca. 1870—1914. Ware. Ex mercy.
thank you for those few kind words! A semi-froncic c.p. (— 1933). Stang, p. 133.
thank you, teacher! See teacher i, please.
thanks! ooc. thanksy (Baum un). Thank you !: illiterate coll. verging on sol.: from ca. 1820. Dickens, 1848, 'Thankee, my Lady,' O.E.D. Corruption of thank ye / Cf.: thanks ! (1) thank you: coll.: late C. 16—20. Ex my thanks to you, etc. Likewise many or best thanks, rare before C. 19, though Shakespeare has great thanks. (O.E.D.)
thanks, be nicely. To be slightly drunk: coll. (— 1923). Manchon. Ex the reply, 'Nicely, thanks: thanks be! (May) thanks be given to God: coll.: late C. 19—20. Also in Cornish dial.
thanky! See thankee
thary, v.i. and v.t. To speak (to): tramps' s;
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THEATRE

from ca. 1845; ob. Gipsy Carew, 1891. "I grinned some of what you were a-tharin' to your cousin." App. ex Romany. Cf. rocker, rok(ler), q.v.

that, pronoun, in "anticipatory commendation by way of persuasion or encouragement (esp. to a child)" O.E.D.: which, illustrating by "Come along, that's a good boy!" implies that it is a coll. of late C. 19–20, ex that of commendation for something already done, as in Shakespeare's "That's my good son" (Romeo and Juliet). 2. Representing a statement already made and gen. coming first in its own clause, as in "That I will." I shall do that all right!: coll.: mid-C. 14–20. Shakespeare, "'Was there a wise woman with thee?" "Ay, that there was," O.E.D. 3. The omission of the relative that (cf. which, who) is an 'elemental' of coll. speech and is recorded as early as C. 13; but it occurs frequently also in S.E. and often justifiably—indeed, advisedly—on the score of euphony. No one would classify as coll., or object to, Tennyson's 'To put in words the grief I feel' (O.E.D.), but one might well condemn as slovenly, and prob. no one would describe as other than coll., such a sentence as 'This is the book you'll find the passage I spoke to you about in.'—4. The same applies to the conjunctive that. The omission occ. leads to ambiguity: this is prob. why the French never omit que.—5. Redundant that is catastrophic: almost immemorial. E.g. "I only hope that when we have personal servants, sir, that they'll do the same thing," John G. Brandon, The One-Minute Murder, 1934.

that, adv. So; so very: mid-C. 15–20: S.E. until late C. 19, then dial. and coll.; in these days, it is considered rather sol. Boldrewood, 1888. He was that weak as he could hardly walk," O.E.D.

that, all; and all that (= and all such things). These phrases used to be 'perfectly good English', but since late 1929, when Robert Graves's notable War-book appeared, or mid-1930, when Albert Perceval Graeme's To Return to All That somewhat modified that picture, they have been so coll. as to verge on s. Cf. things, . . . and, q.v.

that, as. 'As how', i.e. that: sol. (— 1887). Baumann, "I can't say as that I'm first-class.

that, at. (Estimated) at that rate or standard; even so; even so acting; in that respect; also; unexpectedly; or ambitiously; in addition; and, what's more; yet, however; in any case, anyway: U.S. s. (from 1840's), anglicised ca. 1865; by 1900, coll. Keighley Goodchild, 1888, 'So we'll drain the flowing bowl, 'Twill not jeopardise the soul, For it's only tea, and weak at that.' Perhaps ex 'cheap, or dear, at that price' (O.E.D.). But this phrase is so confusing to a foreigner and so little used in the Dominions, that other instances of its chameleonic use are required:—Charles Williams, The Greater Tramps, 1932.

'try and let me go if I fail. At that,' she added with a sudden smile, 'I think I won't fail!'; Ibid., 'The nearest village to his grandfather's, Henry told them, and at that a couple of miles away.'

that, 1, come out of. Clear out!: late C. 19–20. Litt., come out from inside or shelter.

that, of; esp. something of that (so. sort). See of, pronoun. 6. that man's soon made. That grief is easily consolèd: Scots coll. (— 1885). Ware.

that there (thing, etc.). See there, that, and cf. this here.

that won't pay the old woman her ninescore. A Bow Street Police Court c.p. (— 1906; ob.) in condemnation of an evasive act. Ware.

thatch. See thatched, be well.


thatched, be well. To have a good head of hair: jocular coll. verging on s. (— 1874). H., 5th ed. Ex that, a head of hair, esp. if thick: itself coll. from ca. 1630 (O.E.D.). Cf. Tutcho hair-tonic punningly named by G. R. Sims ex the Romany for 'genuine'.


thatched house under the hill, the. The female pudend: low coll. or s.: ca. 1770–1850. Used as a title by Stevens in 1772.

that's a cough-lozenge for him! He's punished: a proletarian c.p. of ca. 1850–90. Ex an advertisement for cough-lozenges. (Ware.)

that's up against your shirt! That's a point against you: lower classes' c.p. of ca. 1900–14. Ware. Perhaps ex stains on a white shirt.

that's where you spoil yourself! A non-aristocratic c.p. directed at a smart person overreaching himself: 1880–1. Ware.

that's right! Yes!: low coll.: late C. 19–20. Ex S.E. formula of approval.

that's the stuff. See stuff to give . . . that's where you want it. See want it, it's up there you.

the is coll. when it is used for my, as in, esp. and earliest, the wife, rarely the husband, often the mater and the pater or governor (1853), rarely the mother and almost never the father; only occ. of other relatives. Not recorded before 1838 (O.E.D.), but perhaps arising a score of years earlier. (O.E.D. for dates)—2. In Oxford s., as in the Broad, Broad Street, and the Turi, Turi Street: late C. 19–20. 3. See th', 2–4. See:

the wrongly 'cased' and 'typed'. There is a distressingly frequent tendency among printers and journalists, hence in the book-world, to put the The of titles, whether of periodicals or of books, into lower case and roman type. Thus, 'The Daily Mail' is reduced to 'the Daily Mail'. A title is as much an entity as the name of a person: we do not write 'john Smith' nor do we, if we adopt the italic mode, write 'Punch' or 'Punch'; nor should we write 'the Times' for 'The Times'. It has been advanced that in all such titles of periodicals as commence with The, the first element may be assumed; but if it were assumed, it would be omitted. Admittedly it is dropped in colloquial speech: a journalist, if asked on which newspaper he works, may reply 'Daily Mail'—that is, if he does not shorten it to 'Mail', but such an omission is a coll. If, however, he has a due regard for the dignity of his newspaper, he will, in reply, give the full title, and say 'The Daily Mail' not 'the Daily Mail'. In book-titles there is still less excuse for describing Arnold Bennett's 'The Card' as 'the Card'. We do not treat the A of titles in this cavalier fashion: there is no more reason why, e.g. The Window, edited by Bertram Rateville and myself in 1930, should be referred to as 'the Window' than that Barrie's A Window in Thrums, 1889, should be referred to as 'a Window in Thrums'.

the spirit of the troops is excellent. See spirit.

*theatre. A police court: c. (— 1867); almost f.
'Ducange Anglica.' Because there the prospective prisoner assumes a part unnatural to him.—2. The pronunciation *the-a-ter* is in the British Empire (?) except Canada) considered, in late C. 19–20, to be incorrect and almost illiterate. Baumann.

Theatre Royal, amen. A church: low (— 1909); ob. Ware. Precisely why? Perhaps it was orig. theatrical: touring players perform frequently at Theatre Royal.


theatrical. (Gen. pl.) An actor or actress; stage coll. (— 1859). H., 1st ed. I.e. theatrical person or people.

thesis - is incorrect for *theo-* in such words as *theocore*.: C. 19–20. O.E.D.

they, Eight, as in *they gen.* etc., and they *gynnephe*, 83. Rhyming s. (— 1859). H., 1st ed. See also *teach* (occ. teach or teaich). their,* them,* they for singular (*he or she,* etc.): a common error. E.g. Agatha Christie, *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*, 1926, 'It was rather like a jigsaw puzzle to which everyone contributed their own little bit of knowledge.' Esp. after anyone, everyone (or -body), nobody.


themselves, themselves, is, in late C. 19–20, gen. considered a sol., except naturally, where an adj. intervenes, as in *their very selves* (cf. the *your good selves* beloved of commerce). Cf. *their*, q.v.

them, adj. Those: late C. 18–20: S.E. until C. 18, then dial. and coll.; in C. 19–20, sol. The O.E.D. gives two excellent examples: 'It was a rare rise we got out of them chaps,' Thackeray, 1840, and 'Them ribbons of yours cost a trifle, Kitty,' Lover, 1842. Cf. they, q.v.—2. (As pronoun.) They; those (in the nominative, before who): late C. 18–20; S.E. >, ca. 1700, dial. and (low) coll.; in C. 19–20, sol. E.g. 'They as does this ain't no good.' Cf. they, 2, q.v.—3. (Pronoun in the oblique case.) They: *Cf.* Shrewd (O.E.D.); S.E. >, in early C. 19, (low) coll.; in C. 20, sol. E.g. 'I don't like them who say one thing and do another.'—4. Their: sol.: C. 19–20. Baumann.—5. After as and than and after is, are, were, etc., them a very frequent coll. (mid-C. 17–20), but, except exclamationarily, is grammatically incorrect. The O.E.D. quotes 'It was not them we wanted,' 1845,—which as compared with the absolute 'It was not them' (e.g. at the throat) by some justification since they represent them when.

*them's my sentiments! See sentiments.

then. Than: C. 14–20: S.E. until C. 19, then coll.; in late C. 19–20, definitely a sol. This is the counterpart of *then, 1, q.v.*

then comes a pig to be killed! A c.p. expressive of disbelief: lower-middle and lower classes: ca. 1900–14. 'Ware, 'Based upon the lines of Mrs Bond who would call her poultry—"Come, chicks, come! Come to Mrs Bond and be killed."' then the band began to play! See band played.

then the band played! That was the end of it: c.p. (— 1909); ob. Ware. Ex music played at end of a function, a celebration.
(mostly London) street s.: from ca. 1870; ob. Ex the consistency of cocoa as usually made.—4. Coffee: c. (— 1923). Manchon.—6. Porter, which is said to be ' a decoction of brewers’ aprons'; rather proletarian: from ca. 1870; ob.

thick, adj. In close association; familiar; intimate: coll.: ca. 1756, Bishop Law, " ‘Yes,’ said he, ‘we begin . . . without my seeking,’ to be pretty thick; "O.E.D. — Barnham; G. Elliot. And see the thick as . . . , and adj. Ex thick, close.— 2. Excessive in any unpleasant way; intolerable, unmanageable; unjust; from early 1890's, the O.E.D. recording it in 1884. ‘It’s a bit thick’, he said indignantly, "when a man of my position is passed over for a beginner . . ."”, Horace Wyndham, 1907 (O.E.D.): this being the predominant C. 20 sense. Perhaps ex S.E. lay it on thick, to exaggerate, to flatter fulsomely.—3. Hence, indelicate; esp. in a bit thick, rather indecent: from ca. 1890; slightly ob. F. & H. 1904.—4. Hence (?), noisily and/or bibulous, esp. the latter: from ca. 1891. W. Pett Ridge, Minor Dialogues, 1895, "I was out at a smoker last night." ‘Thick!’ ‘Thick isn’t the word’ — 5. See dead thick in the Addenda.


thick, got 'em. Very drunk: from ca. 1890; slightly ob. 'Pompey Marshall, 1877, 'I've got 'em thick, he said . . And . . . went upstairs to bed.' The 'em is generic: cf. got 'em, q.v.


thick as . . . similes—all coll.—elaborating thick, adj., 1. q.v.—as glue, C. 19–20; as indeckeweavers, late C. 17–20 (ob.), as in B.E., Cowper, Scott—ex their working so close together; as pease in a shell, late C. 18–19,—cf. as three in a bed; as thieves, C. 19–20, as in Theodore Hook, 1833, and Dr. L. P. Jacks, 1913, ex the confidential and secret manner of thieves conferring; as three in a bed, C. 19–20, as in Scott, 1820, but since ca. 1870 only in dia., rest the close-packed discomfort. (O.E.D. and Appendix). Dial. has many synonyms, e.g. thick as Darby and Joan, Dick and Laddy, Harry and Mary, harrings in a barrel, two dog's heads, and (also a C. 19–20 coll.) thick as thick: see esp. E.D.D.

thick ear. (Gen. give one a t. e.) An ear swollen as the result of a blow: low coll.: late C. 19–20. Ware. (Often in threats.)

*thick one; gen. thick 'un. A sovereign; a common place: both, c. (— 1859) >, almost imm. (low) s. the latter sense; f by 1920. H., 1st ed. 'House Scrape' Aitken; B. L. Farjeon. Hence, smash t. u., to change it.

*thick starch double blue. A 'rustling holiday dress for summer': middle classes: ca. 1905–14. Ware. Ex its over-laudered state.

thick upon one, bear one's blushings honouring. To have the red face of a drunkard or of one who, at the least, drinks much: jovial coll. ca. 1820. Manchon.

With a pun on the tribe S.E. phrase.

Thicker. Thucydides, as a text: Harrow: from ca. 1890. See ‘st. Oxford’.

thickest part of his thick . . . See hummudgeon. Thucydides: Public Schools; from ca. 1880. P. G. Wodehouse, Tales of St Austin's, 1903, 'I'm going to read Pickwick. Thickides doesn't come within a mile of it.' Cf. Thicker, q.v.


thief and a murderer, you have killed a baboon and stole his face,—you are a. A c.p. of vulgar abuse: ca. 1780–1830. Grose, 1st ed.

thief in a mill, safe as. See safe as.


Thieves, the Murdering. The Army Service Corps: military: 1857–60. Ex 'the Military Train', as the Corps was then known. Also nicknamed the London Thieving Corps, 1855–7, and the Moke Train, 1857–60. For C. 20 names, see Ally Sloper's Cavalry; cf. Lineed Lancers, the A.M.C.

*thieves' cat. A cat-o'-nine-tails with knots: nautical (— 1867); ob. Smyth. Because it was used as a punishment for cats.

Thieves' Kitchen, the. The Law Courts: London satirical: 1892–ca. 90. Ware.—2. The City Athenæum Club: City of London jocular (— 1923). Manchon (‘cercle des financiers de la Cité’). [thieves' Latin, as a term, is S.E. It is often used—orig. by Scott, in 1821—as a synonym for cunt as used in this dictionary: the 'secret' language of criminals and tramps. Cf. St Giles' Greek.]


*thimble and Bodkin Army. The Parliamentary Army in the Civil War: a coll. nickname at the time; recorded by O.E.D. for 1647. Ex the smallness of Roundhead gifts to the cause as compared with Royalists' munificence.


*thimble-rib. A sharpening trick with three thimbles and a pea: s. (1825, Hone >), ca. 1850. coll. >, before 1890, S.E.—2. Hence, from ca. 1830, thimble-riper, such a sharper. See rig, n.

*thimble-twister. See thimble, 2. The vulgar is thimble-twisting (— 1845: "No. 747").

*thimbléd. Owning or wearing a watch: c. (— 1812). Vaux. See thimble.—2. Arrested, laid by the heels: c. of ca. 1820–40. Bee. t by a pun on thimble = a watch = the watch = the police.

*thin. To deceive, dupe, 'catch out', swindle: from ca. 1822. Manchon. Cf.: thin, adj. Disappointing; unpleasant; distressing. Gen. (have) a thin time, to go through hardship, spend a disappointing holiday, have a thoroughly disagreeable or distasteful experience. From ca. 1922. Mainly ex S.E. thin, feeble (as in this story), slight, almost worthless, but partly proleptic (‘enough to make one thin’). Cf. slender, lank, and coarse thick, adj.; q.v.

*thin as a rack of wind. See rather of wind. thin-gut. A very thin person; a starveling: C. 17–20: S.E. until C. 19, then (low) coll.; so ob. as to be virtually f. Thin Red Line, the. The 93rd Foot Regiment,
afterwards the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders; military: from ca. 1855. Ex an incident in the Crimean War; whence the vague S.E. sense of the phrase. (The Army was reconstituted in 1881.)

thing 'un. A half-sovereign: from ca. 1860; almost †. On thick 'un, q.v.

thing. 'Thangmery', e.g. Mrs Thing. Low coll.: C. 20. Heard in the street, May 3, 1835.—2. Euphemistic — see and old thing, good thing, old thing, a thing or two, and know a thing or two.—3. See thing, the, and things.

thing, the. (Always in predicate.) That which is suitable, fitting, fashionable; the correct thing; (of a person) fit, in good form or condition: coll.: 1782, Goldsmith, 'It is at once rich, tastey, and quite the thing'; 1775, Mme D'Arblay, 'Mr Bruce was quite the thing; he addressed himself with great gallantry to us all alternately.' O.E.D.; 1781, Johnson (of a procedure), 'To use the vulgar phrase, not the thing'; 1844, Meredith (of health), 'You're not quite the thing to-day; sir,' O.E.D.; — in C. 20, gen. feel the thing or not quite the thing.—2. Hence, the requisite, special, or notable point: coll.: 1850, Thackeray (O.E.D.); M. Arnold, 1873. '[A state church] is in itself ... unimportant. The thing is to re-cast religion.' —3. See things, the. thing-a-merry. See thingummajig. — thingamobob. See thingumobob. thingummajig. See thingummary. — thing'eem. See thingum. — thing'eem bob. See thingumobob. — thing-o-me (my). See thingummy. — things. Personal effects carried with a given time; impedimenta: coll.: C. 17–20; e.g. in 1662, J. Davies, 'We ... went to the Custom House to have our things search'd,' O.E.D. Ex things, possessions, goods. — 2. Clothes: coll.: from ca. 1630, as in Sheridan, 1775, 'I suppose you don't mean to detain my apparel—I may have my things, I presume?' —3. Hence, esp. such garments, etc., as, in addition to her indoor dress, a woman dons for going out in: coll.: 1833, T. Hook, 'Take off your things—and we will order ... tea,' O.E.D. — 4. Implements or utensils; equipment: if the kind is specified, then coll.: C. 18–20. 'The kitchen things' is recorded by O.E.D. at 1738. Cf. sense 1.—5. Base coin: c. of mid-C. 19–20; ob. Ex contemptuous use of things. thing and other such things and cetera. — thingumaries. — 1. cf. 1596, Shakespeare, 'Ruffs and cuffs, and fardingales, and things'; 1920, Denis Mackail, What Next? 'We've had such tremendous fun and things.' Cf. that, all, q.v.

things, no great. (Predicatively.) Nothing much; mediocre; very ordinary: coll. and dial.: 1616, 'Quix,' 'The Governor,' 'He's no great things ... Sir,' O.E.D.; slightly ob.

things, the. Base coin: c. (— 1830); virtually †. Broadsheet.

thingtable. 'Mr Thingtable, Mr Constable, a ludicrous affectation of delicacy in avoiding the ... first syllable in the title of that officer, which in sound has some similarity to an indecent mono-
syllable,' Grose, 1st ed.; † by 1830. (Cf. rooster for cock.)

thingum; in C. 19, occ. thing'm. 'Thingummy' (q.v.): coll.: 1891, Flatman, 'The Thingum in the Old House ... O.E.D.; from mid-C. 19, only in dial. Cf. thing + um, a meaningless suffix. Prob. earlier than:

thingum thingum. 'Thingummy' (q.v.): coll.: 1880, Otway; † by 1800. Reduplicated thingum. thingumajig (occ. thingumajig, thingumijig (or -jig), thingumyajig, etc.), often hyphened thingum-a-jig; thingumary, occ. thingummarie, also thing-a-merry. A 'thingummy' (q.v.): coll.: 'jig, 1876, 'Lewis Carroll'; -ary (etc.), 1819, and ob. by 1930, the rare thing-a-merry, occurring in 1827, is † by 1890. Elaborations of thingum, q.v. O.E.D. Cf.: thingumobob; occ. thingumobob, thing'em bob, thing(-em-)bob, thingumobob, thingumyobob. A 'thingummy' (q.v.): coll.: resp. 1761, Smollett, cf. Grose, 1st ed., 'A vulgar address or nomination to any person whose name is unknown'; 1870; C. 19–20; 1778, Miss Burney; 1832, Lyttton; mid-C. 19–20 and due to a confusion with thingummy. Ex thingum, q. v. + a senseless suffix. (O.E.D.; F. & H.) Cf. thingummy. — 2. In pl.: see senses 3, 4, of thingummy.

thingumitum. An occ. C. 20 variant (Manchon) of:

thingummy; often thingumy; rarely thing-o-me or -o-me or -o-my; fairly often thingummie or -umy. A thing or, occ., a person one does not wish to, or cannot, specify, or the name of which one has forgotten: coll.: resp. 1819; 1796, thing-o-me, perhaps a nonce-use, as prob. also is thing-o-me in late 1790's; thing-o-my, rare, is of early C. 19; -ummie, from ca. 1820; -umy, H., 1894. Thackeray, 1892, 'What a blasted aristocrat Thingamy has become.' Ex thingum, q. v. diminutive y or (is) or, less prob. ex thing + -of me (= mine). Thackeray, 1892, '... ummies, from ca. 1820; -umy, H., ...'

thought; esp. by racking one's brains, to hit upon, to devise: U.S. coll. (1885) anglicised ca. 1900. E.g. 'Things look bad; I must think up some stunt.' Possibly, to bring up to the surface of one's mind by hard thinking.

**thinker.** An actor playing a 'thinking part': theatrical coll.: 1866. (O.E.D.)

**thinking part.** A role in which one says very little or nothing: theatrical coll.: 1898, *The Daily News*, March 12 (O.E.D.). Because in such a part, an actor has plenty of time for thought.

**thinks he holds it, he.** He's a vain conceited fellow; from ca. 1870: a sporting c.p. > gen. ca. 1875; ob. Ware. Presumably it is the prize.


**third.** See second.

[‘Third person for first or second singular is a 'constant' of sol. speech: immemorial.' E.g. John Rhode, *The Hanging Woman*, 1931, 'I never opens none of the ground-floor windows.']

**thirsty.** Causing thirst: late C. 16–20: S.E. until C. 19, then coll.

**thirteen clean shirts.** 3 months' imprisonment: late C. 19–20; slightly ob. i.e. at the rate of one shirt a week.

**thirteen to the dozen, talk.** An occ. C. 20 variant (Manchon) of talk nineteen to the dozen.

**thirteenth jurman.** 'A judge who, in addressing a jury, shows leaning or prejudice': legal (— 1895). Ware.

**thirtyish.** Approximately thirty years of age: coll.: from the early 20's. O.E.D. (Sup.).

**this.** The present; now in office: coll.: 1785, Boswell, 'This Mr. Walker was a plain country gentleman,' O.E.D. (Sup.).—2. This... now fashionable or recently invented (or introduced): coll.: C. 20. The O.E.D. instances, in 1916, 'What do you think of this wireless telegraphy?'

**this child.** I; myself; I myself: orig. (— 1842), U.S., at first esp. among Negroes; partly anglicised, mostly in the Colonies, late in C. 19. (Thorton.)

**this here.** Emphatic, esp. if contemptuous, 'this': see here, this

**this is all right! Everything is wrong!** non-aristocratic c.p. of ca. 1896–1906. Ware.

**this is the life.** A c.p. dating from several years before, but popularised by soldiers in the G.W. Mencken alludes to it in his admirable *American Language.* Also, 'it's a good life!

**thistle-down.** Children apt to wander, esp. on moor or heath: Anglo-Irish coll. (— 1906). Ware. Of the plant, *Thistle-seed, Gypsies.*


**thoke.** A rest, esp. in or on one's bed: an idling: Winchester (— 1891). Wrench. Prox *thoky,* q.v., not as at Winchester but as in idale.

**thoke, v.** To lie late in bed; to idle: Winchester (— 1891). Ex n.

**thoke on or upon.** To look forward to: ibid.; id. Elaboration of preceding.

**thokes.** A piece of bread soaked in water and toasted or baked in the ashes': Winchester College: mid-C. 19–20. Wrench. Ex *toasted + soaked.*

**thokster.** An idler: ibid.; id. Ex *thokes, v., q.v.*

**thoky.** Idle: Winchester College (— 1891). Ex dial. *thoky, earlier thokish, sluggish, lazy.*

**thole; tholl.** t incorrectnesses for toll, as is Scottish *tholl(i).* O.E.D.


**Thomasina Atkins.** A 'Wase.' (q.v.): journalistic coll.: 1917; b 1920. F. & Gibbons.

**Thomond's cocks, all on one side—like Lord.** Applied ironically to a group of persons nominally in agreement, actually likely to quarrel: late C. 18–early 19, Grose, 2nd ed. Lord Thomond's cork-tender shut in one room a number of birds due to fight, the next day, against another 'team'; result, internecine warfare.

**thornback.** An old maid: late C. 17–early 19. B.E.; Facetious Tom Brown; Grose, 1st ed. A pun on maid, the female young of the *thornback* (ray, skate).


**Thorough.** Sir Thomas Wentworth (1593–1641), 1st Earl of Strafford. Dawson, 'From his giving the name to a scheme of his which was to make England an absolute monarchy'.

**thorough bass.** Catachrestic when = a deep or loud bass. Mid-C. 18–20. O.E.D.

**thorough churchman.** A person who goes in at one door of a church, and out at the other without stopping', Grose, 1st ed.: ca. 1780–1850. A pun on *thorough*, through.

**thorough cough.** A simultaneous cough and copulation: late C. 17–mid-19. B.E.


**thorough good-natured wench.** 'One who being asked to sit down, will lie down', Grose 1st ed.: ca. 1780–1880.

**thorough passage.** 'In at one Ear, and out at t'other', B.E.; late C. 17–mid-19. Cf. *thorough churchman* and *thorough-gnome*, q.q.v.

**those, one of.** See one of those.

**those kind or sort of (e.g. men, things).** Loose, indeed catachrestic, for this: mid-C. 16–20. The error is generated in illogical minds by the pl.n. following of. Cf. *these kind*... thou. A thousand; esp. £1000; coll.: 1809 (O.E.D.). Ware dates it from 1860. Cf. *soe*.

**though.** (As adv., gen. at end of phrase.) For all that; nevertheless; however, yet: C. 9–20: S.E. until mid-C. 19, then coll. Browning, 1872; Anstey, 1885, 'I've lost [the note]. She told me what was inside though.' O.E.D. Cf. the enlilic use of *however* and even the very awkward but.—2. Clumsily used, i.e. as a non-adversative, conjunction: stylistic or logical error rather than catachresis: immemorial. Fowler.

**thought did I, you know what.** A c.p. to 'I think...'; late C. 19–20. If the other asks *What?, one adds Ran away with another man's wife.* A softening of the late C. 18–mid-19 form recorded in Grose, 2nd ed.: 'What did thought do? Lay in bed and be his own self, and thought he was up; reproof to anyone who excuses himself for any breach of
positive orders, by pleading that he thought to the contrary. Cf. the curious thing proverb (no. 1) in Apperson, p. 625.

thou'rt. Thou art; thou were: coll.: C. 16–20; in C. 19–20, only as archaism. Baumann.
thousand a year, another (ten). A drinking pledge: coll.: mid-C. 19–20; very ob.
thousand strokes and a rolling suck, (a). A nautical c.p. applied to a leaky ship: from ca. 1870. Bowen. Her pumps require many strokes and suck—an indication that she is dry—only when the ship rolls.
thread one's jacket or the life out of one. To thrash; to thrash severely: coll.: resp. 1687 (T. Brown), in C. 20 almost †; from ca. 1870. O.E.D.
thread the needle. To coil with a woman: C. 19–20; ob.
threes, the rule of. An Oxford toast of 1705–6. Thomas Hearne, in his Reliquia, 'The great health now is, . . . . . . 27, the number of the protesting lords.' In reference to a political incident of the day.
three acres and a cow. A satirical c.p. (1887–ca. 89) directed at baseless or excessive optimism. Ware. (Cf., however, Collinson who notes that it was revived ca. 1905.)
three balls. See uncle Three Balls.
three B's. Brief, bright, brotherly: ecclesiastical (– 1909). Ware. In reaction against the somnolence of so many services in Victorian days.
three cold Irish. See Fenian.
three-cornered constituency. A house where one person's 'vote' gives victory to either wife or husband: Society: ca. 1870–1914. Ware. Ex boroughs in which one voted for two of the three members returned.
three-cornered scapula. A cocked hat: nautical (– 1864); † by 1900. H., 3rd ed.
three-cornered tree. See three-legged mare.
three-corse double (or treble). A glass of beer, a half-glass of rum, and a glass of claret wine: Glasgow public-houses' (– 1934). Cf. roll-up, q.v.
three dark-blue lights was a 1916–18 military o.p.; thus would peace be announced; i.e. never, since such a light would be virtually invisible against a night sky. B. & P.
three draws and a suit. (Oce. hyphenated.) A cigarette: low: late C. 19–30; ob.
three-ez. Something counting for three, esp. in cricket; coll.: from the early 1890's. O.E.D. (Sup.).
three F's, the. F*-*k, fun, and a foot-race: low: ca. 1882–1914. Punning the three demands of the Irish Land League, Free Sale, Fixity of Tenure, and Fair Rent.
three ha'porth of Gorda(l)pus. A street arbor: London (– 1909); ob. Ware. Ex Cookney form of God help us !
three is an awkward number. A c.p. (1885–9) paraphrasing two are company; three, not. Ex Lord Durham's nullity-of-marriage law-suit (1885). Ware.
three-island ship. 'A steamer with forecastle, bridge deck and poop': nautical coll.: C. 20. Bowen.
three-legged mare, stool. The gallows: in C. 17–18, esp. that at Tyburn: resp. 1865, T. Brown, and Grose, 1st ed., † by 1850; and late C. 17–mid-19, as in B. E. Also three-cornered tree, 1854, but † by 1800; mare with the three legs, Ainsworth, 1834, and rare; the three trees, late C. 18–mid–17, as in Breton. Also the) triple tree, (the) Tyburn tree, q.q.v. 'Formerly consisting of three posts, over which were laid three transverse beams'; Grose, 1785.—2. comb one's head with a three-legged (or a joint-) stool. Gen. as threat, 'I'll comb your head, etc. : coll.: late C. 16–18, then in dial. Shakespearian (noddle).
three-man breeze. A stiff breeze: sailing-ships': late C. 19–20. Ibid. A pun on catamaram, from whose crew such a breeze sent several men 'out on to the weather outrigger'.
three more and up goes the donkey! See donkyl., a penny . . .
three-o; two-o. Third officer; second officer: nautical: C. 20. Ex the abbr. 3 o. and 2 o.
three-out. A glass holding the third of a quartern; coll.: from ca. 1836. Dickens in Sketches by Boz.
three-out brush. A drinking-glass shaped like an inverted cone and therefore rather like a painter's brush esp. when dry: taverns' (– 1909). Ware.
three-quarter man. See six-quarter man.
three-quarters of a peck, often abbr. three-quarters and by experts written '1/2'. The cak: rhyming s. (– 1857). 'Ducauge Anglica,' three sheets in the wind. See sheets.
THREE SIXTY-FIVE

three sixty-five; gen. written '365'. Eggs-and-bacon: commercial travellers': late C. 19-20. Because eaten for breakfast every day of the year. On slates in commercial hotels may be seen the legend 'T (or T), 365', which means 'Call me at 7 (or 7.30); eggs and bacon for breakfast.'

three skips of a house; not three ships of a house. (Of) no value; not at all: coll.: 1833, Jonson, 'I care not I, sit, not three skips of a house'; † by 1850. Hence, for those, etc.: very easily, or with very little provocation, as in Murphy, 1769, 'I'd cudgel him back, breast and belly for three skips of a house!'; † by 1850. Cf. for tuppence (i.e. tuppence).

three slips for a tester, give. (To give) the slip: coll.: ca. 1826-1700. F. Grove, 1827; Anon., ca. 1886, 'How a Loss gave her Love Three Slips for a Tester [part of a ballad title], and married another three weeks before Easter.' Lit., (to give) three counterfeit twopence for a sixpence. Apperson, as also for the preceding.


three steps and overboard. See fisherman's walk, three-stride business. The taking of only three strides between hurdles, this being the 'crack' style: athletics coll.: late C. 19-20.

Three Tens, the. The 30th Foot Regiment; after 1881, the 1st Battalion of the East Lancashire Regt. military: C. 19-20. Also the triple X's.

three to one (and sure to lose), play. (Of a man) to coll: low: late C. 18-20, ob. Grose, 2nd ed (though for and). Physiological arithmetic.

three trees. See three-legged mare.

three (in late C. 19-20, often two) turns round the long-boat and a pull at the scuttle characters, among sailors (—1867; ob.) the activities of an artful dodger, 'all jaw, and no good in him', Smyth. Also Tom Cox's traverse, 'up one hatchway and down another', Smyth; likewise ob. This traverse dates from (not later than) 1835, when Dana first heard the phrase. Bowen makes the two turns phrase mean also: 'Under sail, killing time.'

three-up. A gambling game played with three coins: only if three heads or three tails fall is the toss over: coll.: ca. 1900, S.E.: 1851, Mayhew (O.E.D.); H., 1st ed.


Three X's, the. The same as Three Tens, q.v.

threepeny, smart as. See smart as threepeny.


threepeny maisher. A young man 'of limited means and more or less superficial gentlemanly externals': non-aristocratic: ca. 1883-90. Ware.


threepeny upright. See threepeny bit.

threepeny (pronounced 'threepenny') vomit. Fish and chips: low Glasgow (—1834).

threep, threip; *threip(p)s, threips. Threepence; a threepenny bit: in C. 17-18, c., but in C. 19-20, (low) s.: resp. late C. 19-20; id.; late C. 17-mid-19; from late 1850's. B.E. threpps; H., 1st ed., threps; threip existed in U.S. as early as 1834 (Thorton) for a coin intermediate between a nickel and a dime. Ex popular pronunciation of threepence; the s arises ex. the suffix -ence. Cf. threms, q.v.


thrill. A 'thriller', whether fiction or non-fiction; ca. 1880-1906. Ex its effect.

thrilled. Pleased; content; quite satisfied: Society coll. from ca. 1916. E.g. Denis Mackail, passim. Cf. thrilling.


thrilling. Pleasing; pleasant; suitable, apt: Society coll. from ca. 1915. Cf. thrilled, q.v.

thrip. See threip.

thrips. Incorrectly treated as a pl., with erroneous singular thrip. The genus of Thripsida, or an insect belonging thereto: catachrestically of one of the Jassidae (leaf-hoppers). Late C. 18-20. O.E.D.

throat, have a. To have a sore throat: coll.: late C. 19-20. Cf. temperature.

throat a mile long and a palate at every inch of it, wish for a. Applied to a 'healthy' thirst: mid-C. 19-20; slightly ob. 'A modern echo of Rabelais', F. & H.; see Motteux's Rabelais, V, xiii. Cf. the C. 20 what wouldn't I give for a thirst like that! and I wouldn't sell my thirst for a fortune or a thousand (guil), etc.

throat (is) cut, one's belly thinks one's. One is extremely hungry: 1640, Palsgrave: a semi-proverbial c.p.; in mid-C. 19-20 mostly rural. (Apperson.)

throats, cut one another's. To compete ruinously: coll.: from 1880's. Cf. cut-throat.

throstles, the. The West Bromwich Football Club ('soccer'): sporting: C. 20. Perhaps because their ground is in Hawthorn Road; thrushes like hawthorn hedges.

*through, be. To be acquitted: c. of ca. 1810-50. Vaux, be through it, through the piece. Ex lit. S.E. sense.

through a woman, go. To coll with her: low coll.: C. 19-20. Often, more vulgarly, go through a woman like a dose of salts: C. 20.

through-shot, adj. Spendthrift: coll.: late C. 19-20; ob. † ex going through one's money much as a shot goes through paper.

through the lights. (Of a punch) that is an upper-cut: low, and boxing (—1836).

*through the piece. See through, be.

throw. 'He threw me with a stone' = he threw a stone at me. This South African Midlands coll., of late C. 19-20, like throw wet (q.v.), shows Dutch influence; Pettman aligns Ger. Er warf mir ein Loch in den Kopf, he threw a stone at me and cut my head open.—2. To throw away, i.e. lose deliberately, a game, a set in order to obtain service or to conserve energy: lawn tennis coll.: from 1935, or early 1934, Lowe's Annual, 1935.—3. To bring as wages: lower-class Glaswegians: C. 20.

MacArthur & Long, No Men City, 1935, 'His job 'threw him' forty-eight shillings for the week of forty-eight hours.'

throw a chest. See chest, throw a.

throw a levant. To make off: mid-C. 19-20

Ex levant, to a seaboard.

throw a party. To give a party: U.S.; angi
THROW AT A DOG, NOT A

THUMP

THROW AT A DOG, NOT A 230

called ca. 1926. Prob, ex such U.S. phrases as throw have) a fit: cf. chuck a dummy, q.v.

throw at a dog, not a (this, that, or the other) to. Gen. preceded by have. No — at all: coll.: from ca. 1540, for it is implied in Hoywood, 1546; 1600, Day, 'I have not a horse to cast at a dog'; Swift, ca. 1706, 'Here's miss, has not a word to throw at a dog'; 1884, Stevenson & Henley. Slightly ob. Apperson.

throw back. 'To revert to an ancestral type or character not present in recent generations': coll. >, ca. 1920, S.E.: 1879. Also fig., as indeed is the earliest recorded example. (The n. has always been considered S.E.) O.E.D.


throw-down, v. To be too much for, to floor: 1891, Anon., Harry Fidger, 'These blessed exams. are getting awfully close now; but I think I shall floor mine, and Dick's sure to throw his examiners down.' Also of the 'exam.' itself and the papers constituting it. Perhaps ex throwing down a wicket at cricket.

[throw in the towel is rather sporting j. than coll. See sponge, chuck up the.]

throw it up against, at, or to one. To reproach or upbraid one with: coll. (to: low coll.): 1890, The Universal Review, Oct. 15 (O.E.D.).

throw me in the dirt. A shirt: rhyming s. (—1857); † by 1900. 'Ducange Anglicus.' The modern form is Dicky dirt: much C. 20 rhyming s. retains something—actual word or semantic essence—of the discarded form: daisy retreats and German flutes, both —'boots,' afford a particularly interesting example.

throw mud at the clock. To despair much or utterly: lower classes: (—1909). Ware, 'Means defy time and die'.

throw-off. A deprecative remark or allusion: C. 20. Manchon. Ex sense 2 of:

throw off. To best of my recollection of the past: o. of ca. 1810—60. Vaux, who notes also:—2. 'To talk in a sarcasatical strain, so as to convey offensive allusions under the mask of pleasantness, or innocent freedom': o. (—1812) >, by 1860, o. in sense, to be deprecative (at a person).—3. To deduct (so much) from (a stated sum): lower classes: (—1923). Manchon. Perhaps suggested by cost accounts.—4. To vomit: coll. : C. 20.

throw-off practice. 'Gunner practice where an actual ship is used as the target': naval coll.: C. 20. Bowen.

throw one's weight about. See weight about.

*throw over the bridge. (Gen. pl.pladj. thrown . . .) To swindle as in 'bridge, v., Vaux.

throw on't about. To weep: low: 1678, Ray; ob. See not.

*throw the feet. To hustle; to beg: tramps' o. and (low origin — 1900) U.S. Ex a horse throwing his feet, lifting them well.


throw up. To abandon hope completely: from ca. 1929. A. A. Milne, Two People, 1931. 'When it became definitely mortified, there was really nothing for a girl to do but to 'throw up'.' Perhaps ex throw up the sponge.

throw up one's accounts. To vomit: from ca. 1760; ob. C. Johnston, 1763 (O.E.D.). A variant of cast up one's accounts.

throw up the sponge. See sponge, chuck up the. throw wet. To dash water upon: Cape Midlands (Sth. Africa) coll.: C. 20. 'A literal rendering of the Dutch nat gooien,' Pettman. Cf. throw, q.v.

throw with. See throw.


thrum, n. See thrumbugins.


*thrumbugins, thrumman; thrum(m)a. Three-penny: o. thrum(m), l. thrum, 19—20; the other two forms (Vaux, 1812) are elaborations and rare. B.E. has thrums, Grose thrums; H. (all edd.) the latter. A corruption of threepence: cf. thrups (at thrup). Dial. has thrum, a commission of 3d. per stone on flax; E.D.D. Cf.: *thrummer. A threepenny bit: o. or low s. (—1850); † by 1910, except among grafters: witness P. Allingham, Cheapside, 1934. Ex proceeding.

*thrum(m)a. See thrumbugin.—thrupenny. See threepenny.—thrips. See thrip.

thrust. One who, in the field, thrusts himself forward or rides very close to the hounds: hunting s. >, ca. 1920, coll.: from 1885. Ex usual sense. (O.E.D.) Also thrusting, n. and adj.

thump. To drain (a glass) upon a thumb-nail (see supranucleum): coll.: ? C. 15—mid-19. F. & H. gives this term without quotation; the O.E.D. has it not.—2. To possess (a woman): C. 18—19. In C. 20, only in well-thumbed (girl), 'a foundered whore' (F. & H.). Ex thump, to handle, paw, perhaps influenced by fumble and tumble.

thump, as easy as kiss my. Exceedingly easy: coll.: from ca. 1890.

thumber. A sandwich; a slice of bread and meat eaten between finger and thumb: low (mostly London): late C. 19—20; ob.

thumby; occ. thumnie, y. A little thump; a pet-name for the thumb: coll.: from ca. 1810. W. Tennant, 1811 (O.E.D.). Rare in C. 20.

thumby. 'Soiled by thumb-marks': coll.: from late 1890's. (O.E.D. Sup.);—2. clumsy: coll.: 1909 (O.E.D. Sup.). Ex all thumbs.


thump! 'I don't think': it's,—as is,—very improbable: an ejaculation of dissent modifying the preceding statement: military in G.W. See esp. Ernest Raymond’s fine War-novel, The Jeering Army, 1930. Hence, among the lower and lower-middle classes, as in Ernest Raymond, Mary Lowth, 1931, 'Call me a business man! Am I? Thump! I’m going in for gardening.'

thump, v. To defeat; to lick, thrash (severely): coll.: 1694, Shakespeare; 1827, Scott, 'We have thumped the Turks very well.' Ex thump, to strike violently. O.E.D. Cf. thrum, v., 1.—2. To oot with (a woman): a. or coll.: C. 17—20; ob. in C. 19—20. Shakespeare in Winter’s Tale. 'Delicate burrhons of dildos and fadings, "jump her and thump her".' Cf. thrum, v., 2, knock, and Kluge’s proposed etymology of *feok.

sith, thistle, thunder and... 'Words to
the Irish, like the Shibboleth of the Hebrews', Grose, 2nd ed.: Anglo-Irish of mid-C. 18.-mid-19. A cross between an (esp. an) incantation and a c.p.

thump on the back with a stone, this is better than a. A c.p. said on giving any one a drink of good liquor on a cold morning', Grose, 2nd ed.: ca. 1786—1850. Cf. the C. 20 it's better than a kick on the pans and the mid-C. 19-20 it's better than a poke in the eye with a sharp stick.

thumped-in. (A landing that is) badly effected, necessitating the use of the engine: Royal Air Force's: from 1932.


thumping. Unusually large, heavy, or, of a lie, outrageous: coll.: 1576, Fleming, 'He useth great and thumping words' ; Grose, 2nd ed., 'A thumping boy'; of a lie, app. not before C. 19, though applied to commendation as early as 1671. (O.E.D.)

Cf. thumper, q.v.


thunder; by thunder!; (what, where, who, etc.) in thunder?; thunder and lightning!; thunder and surf! Imprecatively, exclamatorily, intensively used as a. (thunder and surf) or coll. (the rest): resp. C. 18–20 (Steele); C. 19–20; mid-C. 19–20; late C. 19–20, ob.; and ca. 1840–70 (Barham, Lover). Cf. the German improvisations and U.S. thunderation !


Thunderbomb, the; or H.M.S. Thunderbomb. An imaginary ship of fabulous size: nautical coll.: ca. 1828, Buckstone in Billy Taylor, 'Straightway made her first lieutenant | Of the gallant Thunder bombard'; β by 1915. Cf. Swiss Navy, q.v.

Thunderer, The. The The Times newspaper; journalistic a. (1840, Carlyle) >, ca. 1850, coll. Anon., The Sibyl 1874, 'If a small cloud in the East alarmed the world, then speaks The Thunderer, and all men hear '; many critical notices in Jan., 1935 (notably in The Times Literary Supplement, Jan. 3). Ex its Olympian utterance and pronouncements + Jove (Iuppiter tonans) and his thunderbolts. Legend (see Pobsoby's English Journalism) has it that it was the writing (1830–40) of Edward Sterling ('Vetus') which gave The Times this name—orig. applied to Sterling himself.

thundering. Very forcible or violent: coll.: adumbrated in Hall, 1567, 'Grace with huff-cap terms and thundering threats'; 1618, T. Adams, 'He goes a thundering pace'; 1832, Lithgow, 'A thundering rage', O.E.D. Ex the noise made thereby or in that manner.— 2. Hence, as an inten-


thunderstorm, like a dying duck (or pig) in a. See dying duck.


thunderstorm, like a dying duck (or pig) in a. See dying duck.


Egan's Groce (1823): 'Standing debts, which only discharge themselves at the end of three years by leaving the Lake of Credit, and meandering through the haunts of 100 creditors.'

tick, run (up) on. v.i. To buy on credit; run up a debt or into debt: 1842 (O.E.D.); coll. >, ca. 1800, s. A variant is go on tick (1762, Wycherley) or go tick (1861, Hughes); O.E.D. Thus (upon) tick, on credit,—though, despite the dates, this prob. preceded run on tick, for we find (up) on ticket (on note of hand) a generation or so earlier: ticket being abbr. to tick.

tick being no go. No credit given; low (—1857). 'Ducange Anglicus.' See ticket, n. 2.

tick-down; tick-off. n. See mark-off.

tick off. v. To identify: coll. >, ca. 1800. Ex tick off a person's name on a list.—2. Hence, from ca. 1916 (orig. military), to reproach, upbraid, blame; esp. to reprimand. 'I ticked him off good and proper.' Partly influenced by tell off, q.v.

tick-off, work the. A tick-off is a fortune-teller; gen. in work the tick-off, to practise fortune-telling: grafter's >, late C. 19—20. Philip Allingham, Cheepjack, 1834, 'Dates from the time when grafter's working this line of card reading on which were printed various... statements.'

Tick-Offs' Gaff, the. Hull Fair: grafter's >, late C. 19—20. Philip Allingham, Cheepjack, 1834. Fortune-tellers have always flourished there. See tick off, work the.

tick over, v.i. To come; to act, function: from ca. 1930. F. Keaton Clarke, in The Humorist, July 28, 1834, of water-divining, 'How shall I know when the influence is ticking over?' Ex motorizing j.


tick-tacker, one practicing such telegraphy as that mentioned in the tick-tac entry: 1912 (O.E.D.).


ticket. A certificate: nautical s. (late 1890's) >, ca. 1920. Coll. Chiefly captain's or mate's ticket.

Ex ticket, a licence.—2. See ticket, the.

ticket, be a person's. To appeal to one, be of his kind: from ca. 1820. (Evelyn Waugh, A Handful of Dust, 1934.) Often abbr. to tea (properly so—Evelyn Waugh, ibid., but cf. run of tea, q.v.): ticket, be on the straight. To live respectably: lower classes (—1923). Manchon.

(Hicket, get one's. See ticket, work one's.)

ticket, have the run of. To buy on credit, run

**Tick-tock**

of a clock), perhaps influenced by tape, n., 2. Hence, tick-tacker.—2. See:

tic-toc or -toc. A signaller: military: 1914; ob. F. & Gibbons. In the telegraphic form, ex tic-tac, 1; it was suggested by 'the sound of the telegraphic instrument':

ticca. See ticket, 3.

tick. To something between a half-volley and a Yorker; cricketers: from ca. 1840; ob. Lewis. I.e. an enforcer.


Tich, I. no. No talk about the Tichborne case! Society: 1870's. Ware (at pas de Lafortre).

Tichborne's Own. The 6th Dragoon Guards: military: from ca. 1872; ob. Sir Roger Tichborne, of the famous trial (1871—4), served therein in 1849. Also the Wagga-Wagga Guards, q.v.

tick. An objectionable or meanly contemptible person, though rarely of a female: C. 17—20: S.E. until 19 c. >, Ca. 1800; <, *submerged* for years: in C. 20, s. (Lyell.) E.g. 'That awful little tick!' Ex the insect parasite. —2. Credit, trust; reputed solvency: coll. >, in C. 19, s. >, 1668, Sedley, 'I confess my tick is not good, and I never desire to game for more than I have about me'; 1901, The Sporting Times, Aug. 17, 'During my late Oxford days, I got put up to at least twenty different ways of getting tick.' Ex (up) on tick, esp. run on tick, q.v. >, 1902. —3. Hence, a score or reckoning, a debbit account: coll. >, ca. 1800, s.; in C. 20, ob. >, 1861, Prideaux (Dean of Norwich), 'The Mermaid Tavern [at Oxford] is lately broke, and our Christ Church men bear the blame of it, our ticks, as the noise of the town will have it, amounting to 1600.' 'Thackeray, 1882.—4. A watch: o. of ca. 1780—1800. Parker, 1789. Cf. tick, 2, q.v. Ex the sound.—5. A second, moment; properly and etymologically, the time elapsing between two ticks of the clock: coll. >, adumbrated by Browning in 1879, but not gen. before the late 1890's. Esp. in a tick (or 1904, Jerome K. Jerome) in two ticks, and to the tick, with meticulous punctuality (1907, Phyllis Dare of theatrical fame). O.E.D.

tick, v.i. To buy, deal on credit: coll. >, ca. 1800, s. (In C. 20, ob. >, 1848, Winyard (O.E.D.).) Ex tick, run on, q.v.—2. Hence, to run into debt: 1742, Fielding (O.E.D.); ob.—3. V.t., to have (an amount) entered against one: coll. >, ca. 1800, s.; ob. >, 1874, S. Vincent (O.E.D.); ca. 1703, T. Brown, 'Pretty nympha... forced to tick half a shilling-piece for their watering.'—4. V.i., to grant credit; supply goods, etc., on credit: coll. >, ca. 1800, s.; in C. 20, rare: 1712, Arbuthnot, 'The money went to the sailors; the wheel won't tick.'—5. Hence (v.t.), to grant credit to (a person) >, 1842, 'Nimrod Applerley, 'He never refused a tandem, and he ticked me for a terrier at once,' O.E.D. ; ob.—6. V.i., to grumble: military: from 1916 or 1917. F. & Gibbons. Prob. ex tick off, 2.—7. See tick off; tick up.

tick, buy on the never. To buy 'on tick': lower classes (—1923). Manchon. With allusion to a clock.

tick, full as a. See full as a tick.—tick, go on. See tick, run upon.

Tiek, River. Oxford University, ca. 1820—40, as in
ticket, the. The requisite, needed, correct, or fashionable thing to do. Esp. *that's the ticket: 1838, Haliburton (O.E.D.); 1854, Thackeray, *Very handsome and ... finely dressed—only somehow she's not—she's not the ticket, you see.* (See also *very nice, the.*) Perhaps ex *the winning ticket.*—2. Hence, the plan or procedure; the job, on, or (on) hand: 1842, Marryatt, *What's the ticket, youngster? Are you going to go abroad with me?* ticket? what's the? What's the price? C. 19-20; very ob.

ticket, work one's (occ. the). To obtain one's discharge from the Army by having oneself adjudged physically unfit: from late 1890's: a. >, ca. 1910, coll. (The phrase *get one's ticket* to be, in the ordinary way, discharged from the service, is military j.) Wyndham, *The Queen's Service,* 1899, *It is a comparatively easy matter for a discontented man to get a ticket.*

ticket for soup I, that's the. You've got it—be off!: c. of ca. 1859-1910. Cf. ticket, the, sense 1, which it elaborates. H. 2nd ed., *[From] the card given to beggars for immediate relief at soup kitchens.*

ticking. The taking of goods on credit: mid-C. 18-20. See tick, v., 1, 2.

*ticket man.* A distributor of tickets for a meal and/or a bed: tramps' c. (—1933). Cf. slice, 2, q.v. for *authority.* Cf. ticketer, q.v.

ticket of leave. A holiday; an outing: lower classes: ca. 1870-1900. Ex S.E. sense. (Ware.)

*ticketer.* One who hands out, or checks, cards in a casual ward: tramps' and beggars' c. (—1887). Baumann.

tickey, tickey; tickey-nap. See *tickey* nap.
ticking, ppl.adj. of tick, v., 1, 2, etc. (q.v.): 1873, Wycherley (sense 1). O.E.D.

tickle. To puzzle (a person): coll. (—1784); ob. H., 5th ed. Ex dial: cf. tickler, 1, q.v.—2. To steal from, to rob, as in *ticket a peter,* to rob the till: New Zealand c. (—1932). Perhaps ex *to tickle trout.* See more and tail.—3. F. & H.'s *tick-faggot,* -pizard, and *beetle* are almost certainly S.E. nonce-words.


tickle-tail. A wanton; the penis: S.E. or low coll.: C. 17-20; ob.—2. A schoolmaster; his rod: coll. (—1785); ob. Grose, 1st ed. Cf. tickle-toby.
tickle-text. A person: from ca. 1780; very ob. Grose, 1st ed.


Tickler's. See preceding, sense 4.

Tickler's artillery. Hand-grenades (see preceding, 5); those who used them: military: 1916; ob. B. & P.

tickling his ear. See *guardee-wriggle.*

*tickrum.* A licence: c. : ca. 1670-1830. Coles; Grose, 1st ed. A corruption of *ticket*.

ticky, ticky, ticki, tickie. A threepenny piece: South African coll.: from ca. 1850. Etymology obscure: perhaps ex a native attempt at *ticket* (O.E.D.) or at *threepenny*; perhaps—though much less likely—suggested by Romany tikeno, tikno, small, little; prob., however, as Pettman ably shows, ex Portuguese, hence Malay, pataca († Fr. patate).

tiddlerly push, and. And the rest of it; and so on: a. c. (—1923) *used to replace any statement ... considered ... too long or too involved to be expressed in full* (Kastner & Marks, at the Fr. equivalent, et patati et patata). Manchon.
tidd. A children's abbr. (late C. 19-20) of *tiddler,* 1, q.v. (Collinson.)
tiddle, v.i. To fidget, pitter: S.E. until ca. 1830, then dial. and coll. : 1748, Richardson; slightly ob.—2. V.t., to advance slowly or by small movements (e.g. a ball, a wheelbarrow); *tiddle a girl,* to master her very gradually: coll.: mid-C. 19-20. Perhaps ex dial. *tiddle,* to tickle, possibly influenced by *diddle*; much more prob. by a development of sense ex S.E. (in C. 19-20, dial. and coll.) *tiddle,* to pam per, to fiddle excessively.
tiddle-a-wink. See *tiddlywink.*—tiddlyhat. See *tiddlyhat.*
tiddly(e). See titley.—tiddlywinks, *tiddlywink.*

See *tiddlywink.*
tiddlywink, run. To run over unsafe ice: provincial: mid-C. 19-20.
tiddling. A v.l.n. ex *tiddler,* 1, q.v.: nursery coll.: C. 20.

Tiddly Chas; Tiddly Quid. H.M. ships Chatham


tiddlywink, v.i. To spend imprudently or with unsanctioned excess: Australian: 1888, Boldrewood, 'He's going too fast ... I wonder what old Morgan would say to all this here tiddy-winkin', with steam engine, and wire fences'; ob. Ex the n.; rare except in the form of the vbl.n. Ware.
tiddlywink, adj. Slim, puny: from ca. 1863; ob. H., 3rd ed. Not because tiddlywinks is considered a feable, futile game, for it is recorded later, but ex tiddlywink, n. I. Occ. tillywink.

tiddlywink, n. I. A cheat; a trifler: resp. 1893 (O.E.D.), ca. 1895. Ultimately ex tiddywink, n., but imm., though nuance 2 is perhaps influenced by tiddlywinks, ex:
tiddlywink. See tiddlywink, n.s 2 and 4.
tiddy iddy. A reduplication of tiddy, q.v.: 1868, W. S. Gilbert (O.E.D. Sup.).

tiddyvale, tiddivate. See tittle.-v. t. See tiddywink.
tiddy. Fairly meritorious or satisfactory; of (or a person) decent, nice: coll.: 1844, Dickens, 'For a coastguardman ... rather a tidy question', O.E.D. Ex t S.E. tidy, excellent, worthy.—2. (In amount, degree) considerable: coll.: 1838, Dickens, 'At a tidy pace', Dickens (O.E.D.). Hence, a tidy penny, very fair earnings, etc. Cf. sense 1, and the adv.
tiddy, v.t., often with up. To make orderly, clean, etc.: from ca. 1820: in serious contexts, familiar S.E.: coll. Ex tidy, tidy in good condition, clean.—2. Hence, v.i.: coll.: 1863, Dickens, 'I have tidied over and over again, but it's useless.'—3. Also ex sense 1: tidy away or up, to stow away, up, for tidiness sake: coll.: 1867 (O.E.D.).
tiddy, adv. Pretty well; a good deal; finely, comfortably: dial. and low coll.: 1824 (O.E.D.); 1898, Whittle. "Was you knocked about much?" "Pretty tidy." See tidy. See tye.—2. The need of constant attendance (e.g. on invalids or children); restraint, or deficiency, of freedom: coll. and dial.: C. 20.—3. Thigh: London tailors' (—1909). Ware. (Only as applied to a leg of mutton.)

"tie it up. See tie up, v., 1.
tie one's hair or wool. To puzzle (a person): tailors: from ca. 1870.
tie-o(h). See tyo(h).
tie-up. A knock-out blow, a 'settler': boxing: 1818 (O.E.D.). Ex lit. sense (cf. cricket j.)—2. Hence, a conclusion: 1829 (O.E.D.); rather ob.—

3. An obstruction, stoppage, closure: from late 1860's: coll. >, by 1920, S.E.

*tie up, v. To forsware: o.: mid-C. 19—20; ob. E.g. tie up priggling, to live honestly. Ex the parallel a. sense, to desist, to desist from,—a sense recorded by O.E.D. for 1760 (Foote).—3. To knock out: boxing: from ca. 1810. Vaux. Cf. tied-up, 1.—4. To join in marriage: coll. >, ca. 1910, a.: 1884, Asley (O.E.D.).—5. To get (a woman) with child: low: C. 19—20; ob.

tie up your stocking! No heel-taps!: Oxford University: late C. 19—20; ob. Ware.
tie with St Mary's knot. See St Mary's knot.
tied with the tongue that cannot be untied with the teeth a. knot. See knot tied with the tongue.
tiego. Vertigo: sol. or low coll.: C. 17. Mainger, 1634. O.E.D.
ties, be in one's. To have reached the age of twenty: coll. (—1923). Manchon. Abbr. twenties. (By the way, in his sixties and in the 'Sixties, etc., etc., are S.E.—not, as is sometimes stated, coll.)
tiff. Liquor, esp. if thin or inferior: from ca. 1830; ob. by 1870, † by 1930: coll. >, ca. 1750, etc. Cornet, ca. 1635 (O.E.D.) Fielding; Scott. Perhaps of echoic origin.—2. Hence, a small draught (rarely of other than diluted liquor, esp. punch): coll. (—1727) >, ca. 1750, a. Bailey; Scott.—3. A slight outburst of temper or ill-humour: coll. (—1727). Bailey; Thackeray, 1840, 'Numerous tiffs and quarrels'; ob. Etymology problematic, but possibly ex (the effects implied by) sense 1; cf., however, echoic huff and snuff.—4. Hence, a slight quarrel, a briedly peevish disagreement: coll. 1764, Richardson.—5. Ex sense 1: a gust of laughter, etc.: coll.: 1855, Carlyle (O.E.D.). Rare and ob.

*tiff, v.i., occ. t. (The rare form tiff occurs only in sense 3.) To lie (with a woman): c.: late C. 17—early 19. B.E.; Grose, 1st ed. Cf. the rare or 'nonsce' tiffly-taffety girls, harlots (late C. 10), and the C. 10) latter tiff, to be tidy employed.—3. V.t., to drink, esp. slowly or in sips: ca. 1769—1850. Combe, 1811, 'He tiff'd his punch, and went to rest.' Ex tiff, n., 2, q.v.—3. V.i., to have a tiff, be peevish or pettish: coll. (—1727). Bailey; 1777, Sheridan. 'We tiffed a little before going to church, and fairly quarreled before the bales had done ringing'; slightly ob. Ex tiff, n., 4.—4. To have, eat, lunch: Anglo-Indian coll. (1803, Elphinstone: Yule & Burnell) >, ca. 1860, S.E. But much the earliest record I have seen is this: dated Sept. 23. 1712, from Bencoleen in Sumatra: 'At 12 tiff, that is eat ... some good relishing bit, and a drink a good draught': The Letter Books of Joseph Collett, ed. by H. H. Dodwell, 1933. Abbr. of the v. implicit in tiffin.

tiffining. 'Eating, or drinking out of meal times', Grose, 1st ed.: ca. 1780—1830. Ex tiff, v., 2, q.v.
Whence *tiffin*, q.v. It occurs in 1784 as *triffing* (Yule & Bburnill).

*tiffin*. Apt to take offence; peevish: coll. — (1865). Rare. Ex *tiff*, n. 3. (O.E.D.)


tiff. See *tiff*, v. 3.


*Tiger*, or the *Tiger*. Edward, 1st Baron Thurlow (d. 1808), Lord Chancellor. Dawson.— Mr Joseph Chamberlain: political: 1865 till his death. — (1899). — (O.E.D.)


**Tiger Bay**. A certain well-known sailors' quarter in London, before 1887; Mayhew delimits it as Brunswick Street (East End); Cockneys: ca. 1820—90. Baumann. Ex their wild goings-on. Also ex the fact that 'Tiger Bay ... is full of brothels and thieves' lodging houses,' Mayhew, 1861.

[Tiger Earl, the. See Earl Beardie. Subroquet rather than nicknaming.]

tiger, hot. See hot tiger.


tigerish. Flashy; loudly dressed: ca. 1820—70. Lytton, 1853, 'Nothing could be more ... to use a slang word, *tigerish*, than his whole air. Ex tiger, 4. (The n.: *tigerism*, may perhaps be considered s. or coll. s. in sense of tiger, 1, mainly in 1840's; of tiger, 4 and 5, rarely after 1830's. O.E.D.)


tight, I, blow me. See blow, v. 3. (Ex blowing up bladders, balloons, etc.)

tight I, hold. Stop! don't move!; steady!: coll. — (ca. 1910). Ex bus-conductor's adjuration.

tight junior. See junior.

tight, sit. To sit close, stay under cover: not to budge: coll. — from mid-1890's.— 2. Cf. the C. 18 sense: to apply oneself closely to: 1738 (O.E.D.).


tight as a drum. Extremely drunk: 1908, A. S. M. Hutchinson, *Once Aboard the Lugger*.

tight boots, sit in. To be ill at ease with one's host: semi-proverbial coll. — (1856). H. G. Bohn's *Handbook of Proverbs*. (Apperson.)


tight fit, a. Coll. when used of things other than clothes: late C. 19—20.

tighten, v.i. To tight-lace: (not aristocratic) coll. — 1896 (O.E.D.); slightly ob.

tightly one's galabieh. See galabieh.

tightener. A hearty meal; occ. a large amount (of liquor): low coll. — 1851, Mayhew. Hence, do a or the tightener; the latter in J. E. Ritchie's *Night Side of London*, 1857.

tighties. Women's drawers that fit very tight: feminine coll. — from ca. 1933. See quotation at neatne.-is.

tightified. (Rendered tight); close-fitting: (low) coll. — C. 20. (Compton Mackenzie, 1933.)

tightener. See tightener.

tightness. Tipsiness: from some time in 1853—64. See tight, 5.

tigress. A vulgarly overdressed woman: 1830's. On tiger, 4, q.v.

tiger, n. 'A slang juvenile epithet used when a person is in quick motion ... "Go it, tiger"': West Yorkshire s. — (1904), not dial. Prob. ex dial. *tig*, 'to run hither and thither when tormented by flies, &c.'


tikk(e). See ticky.

**tilbury**. (A) sixpence: ca. 1790—1850. Grove,
TILE

3rd ed., 'From its formerly being the fare for crossing over from Gravesend to Tilbury fort.' Cf. *tisy.

*HUE. By (O.E.D.).

Edward. 1861 from cricket 1875, c.

(cf. *HUE. by (O.E.D.).

*HUE. by (O.E.D.).

1861 from cricket 1875, c.

Hence trivially used 1840.

timber-tune. Heavy-fingered; wooden in movement: late C. 19-20; ob.

timbers. The wickets: cricketers' coll. (— 1877).

timber-yard. One's wickets; more precisely, the place where one's wickets stand: cricket: 1853, Cuthbert Bede, 'Verdant found that before he could get his hand in, the ball was got into his wicket . . . and . . . there was a row in his timber-yard'; virtually †.

timbered up to one's weight, not. Not in one's style: coll.: mid-C. 19-20; ob.

timbers. The wickets: cricketers' coll. (— 1877).

timber-ground. Contrast *bowl for timber.

time, knock out of. —2. (The time spent in) a term of imprisonment: rare except in time, do, q.v.—3.

among cab-drivers of ca. 1865-1910, the hours are used to denote the amount of a fare. *To express 9s. 9d. they say ' it is a quarter to ten'; if 5s. 6d., half-past three; if 11s. 9d., a quarter to twelve,' H. 3rd ed. —4. See times.

*time, do. To serve a term in prison: 1805 (O.E.D.): o. >, by 1890, a. H., 5th ed. —Sometines stir-time (imprisonment in the House of Correction) is distinguished from the more extended system of punishment . . . called "pinnal (penal) time"'; Nat Gould, 1896, 'If it had not been for me you would have been doing time before this.' Hence *time, a convict, in such combinations as first, second, third timer, a prisoner serving for a first, etc., stretch: e. (— 1887) Bauamn.

time, hot. See hot time.

time, in no; in less than no time. Very soon, immediately; (very) quickly; coll.: resp. 1843, Borrow: 1875, Jowett—but prob. a decade or even two or three decades earlier. (O.E.D.)

time, knock out of. 'So to punish an opponent that he cannot come up to the call of time', F. & H.: boxing: from ca. 1870; slightly ob.

time, on. Punctual or, orig. (1787) U.S.; anglicised ca. 1890; by 1930, virtually S.E.


time for, have no. 'To regard with impatient
TIME OF DAY

1687, ca. certain know ob. the from naval from S.E. from mili-
cation. Collier, *The favour of a prince was not . . . unre-
ceptible at that time of day, O.E.D. — Hence, give one, or pass, the time of day, to greet a person, to ex-
change greetings: resp. C. 17—20, mid.C. 19—20; S.E. up to late C. 19, then coll. and dial.; give one . . .
is ob. as a col. Whitting. G. R. Sims. —3. The prevailing state of affairs; the present state of the case: coll.: 1667, Poole, slightly ob. O.E.D. Ex sens. 1.—4. Hence, ‘what’s what; the right or most fashionable way of doing something; the latest dodge: from ca. 1820. ’Jon Bee’, 1823, ‘In the island (Wight) every good joke is “the time o’ day”’; more clearly in Dickens, 1838, “Pop that a shawl away for . . . that’s the time of day.” Esp. in *fly to the time of day, of *fly, alert, ‘knowing’ (1828, Maginn; ob.); put one up to the time of day, to initiate a person (1834, Ainsworth); know the time of day (adsumated in Bunyan, 1862, but not at all gen. before ca. 1895), to know ‘what’s what; — Guilda, 1897, ‘She knows the time o’ day,” said the other, O.E.D.; that’s your time of day; well done! (1860, H., 2nd ed.),—5. (give one) the time of day, (to administer) a knock-out blow: boxing: late C. 19—20; slightly ob.

time on, mark. See mark . . .
timer. See time, do.
times, behind the. Old-fashioned; having only such knowledge (esp. of method) as is super-
annuated: mid-C. 19—20: coll. >, by 1930. E.S. Cf.: times go as. As things are at present: coll.: 1712, Steele (O.E.D.).

Times Lit., The. The Times Literary Supple-
ment: book-world coll.: from 1901.

Timmie. The gymnasium: certain schools; late C. 19—20. (Geoffrey Dennis, Bloody Mary’s, 1934.)

tinnymoggy. A term for almost any time-
or labour-saving device: naval: ca. 1850—96. Bowen. Ex dial. mignoggy, a name not G. R. Sims, piece of wood; used to support the lower end of the ‘vargood’ or long spar as serving a bowline, itself ex dial. timmy, the stick or bat used in the game of rounders: E.D.D. Cf. gadget, q.v.
timoth. A brew, or a forum, of liquor: Scot-
tish: 1835, Strang (O.E.D.). Ex the proper name (* of a brewer or a noted publican). —2. The penis, esp. this: other dial. or provincial s. (—1947). Halliwell. The personification of penis (Dick gun or John Thoms) and of pudend (Panny) would make an interesting but unpublished essay.
timp. See tymp.
tin. Money, cash; orig. of small silver coins, so apt to wear thinly smooth and thus assume a tinny appearance; prob. from early C. 19, but not re-
tin, v. To dismiss or supersede (gen. an officer) military: 1916; ob. B. & P. Perhaps ex put the tin hat on.
tin-arsed. See timely.

Tin Bellies, the. The 1st and 2nd Life Guards: military: from 1821. F. & Gibbons. Ex the cuirass.

tin gloves. A criss-cross of blisters methodically made by a bully on the back of a victim’s head: Winchester: ca. 1840—60. Mansfield.
tin hat on, put a or the. To finish in a manner regarded as objectionable by the speaker: from 1916: mainly military. On put the lid on, ex tin hat, n., 2.—2. (V.i.) To ‘talk big’; Glasgow (—1934).
tin-opener. A bayonet: dating from the Boer War (1899—1901); military. F. & Gibbons. Ex its chief use.
tin-tab. The carpenter’s shop: Dulwich College: late C. 19—20. Cf.:
tin tabernacle. An iron-built or tin-roofed church: 1898, William Le Queux, Stories and Pharisaic, V. Plastics, a time s. >, by 1930. Coll. Cf. dolly-
shop and similar amenities.
tin tacks, come (or get) down to. An occ. coll. variant (dating from middle 1920’s) of brass tacks, . . ., q.v. (O.E.D. Sup.) Both are rhyming s. on facts.
tin town. A hutment of corrugated iron: military coll.: from 1915. B. & P.
tin-type I, not on your. Certainly not!: a c.p. of late C. 19—20; † by 1930, except in Australia; witness Christina Stead’s brilliantly realistic novel, Seven Poor Men of Sydney, 1930. Ex an old-
fashioned type of photograph. Perhaps with a pun on not on your life?, certainly not.
tin-wedding (day). The tenth anniversary of a wedding: coll.: 1876 (O.E.D. Sup.). Punning golden and silver weddings.
tinges. A commission allowed to assistants on the


tinker's curse (or curse) or damn. See curse.


tinkler. A bell: (low) coll.: 1838, Dickens, 'Jerk the tinkler'.

tinkling-box. A piano: South Lancashire s. (—1904), not dial. E.D.D.

tinky. A South African juvenile coll. variant (—1899) of tink-tinky, itself orig. (the 1890's) coll. for the bird properly known as ting-ting. Ex its cry, ting, tink, tink. (Petman.)

tinman. A rich man, esp. a millionaire: sporting: from ca. 1880; ob. Ware. Ex tin; cf. tinnny, adj., 1.


tins, on the. On the scoring-board: cricketers' coll.: C. 20. O.E.D. (Sup.). Ex the tin plates on which the numbers are painted.


tinker. See barrel tinker.


†tip. 'The tip... money concerned in any dealings or contract... synonymous with the dues', Vaux: c. of ca. 1810–50. Cf. v., 8, 9. —2. Special information conveyed by an expert, private knowledge, esp. as to investment in the money market and to racing: a hint for an examination: from ca. 1840: s. †, by 1900, coll. The Quarterly Review, 1846. 'It should be the first duty of consuls to keep the Foreign Office promptly supplied with every commercial tip that can be of use to British trade.' —3. Hence, something 'tipped' to win, to prosper; esp. a horse: 1873, Besant & Rice (O.E.D.). —4. Hence, a special device, a 'wrinkle': from the 1890's: s. †, by 1910, coll. —5. Hence, at Felsted School, from late 1880's, a false report; hence, ibid., from early 1890's, a foolish mistake in translating. The Palatines, Feb. 3, 1890. 'Some one ventured to suggest that it was all a beastly tip.' —6. See phrases. —7. A draught of liquor: c. (-1700) soon > s.; † by 1840. B.E., Swift, Prob. abbr. Jiggle. —8. Drink in gen.: c. (-1700) soon > s.; † by 1830. B.E. Certainly ex tipple, q.v.

tip, v. To render unsteady, esp. to intoxicate, mostly in the passive: C. 17–early 18. Camden, 1695 (O.E.D.) Ex tip, to tilt or incline.—2. (Often tip off.) To drink off: late C. 17–20: c. until mid-C. 18, then s.; from mid-C. 19, only in dial. B.E. Ex tipping the glass or bowl in order to drain it.—3. To die: rare except in C. 19–20 dial. and in tip off (late C. 20): c., as in B.E., > a. by 1730; in C. 19–20, dial. See perch (1737, Orell) or tip the perch (C. 19–20, in the same sense). (The perch phrases are ob. in C. 20.) Partly O.E.D.—4. To give; pace: C. 17–20: c. †, by 1730, a. Rowlands, 1610, 'Tip me that Cheate, Give me that thing.' Esp. of money, as in Rowlands, 1610; Head; B.E.; Grose. Perhaps ex tip, to touch lightly; the Romany tipper, to give, is a derivative.—5. Hence, to lend (esp. money): c. late C. 17–20. B.E.—6. Hence (of a person in the presence of others), to assume the character of: from ca. 1740; ob. For its most frequent use, see tip the traveller.—7. Often almost synonymous with 'do' or 'make' (cf. fake, q.v.): late C. 17–20: c. †, early in C. 18 though not in certain phrases, (low) s. See, e.g., tip a nod (1), stave, yarn, and tip the grampus. —8. To earn: C. 17–18: c. †, by 1730, (low) s. Rowlands, 1610; Bridges, ca. 1770, 'This job will tip you one pound one.' Ex tip, to give, and cognate with: —9. To give a tip or present of money to:—whether to an inferior in recognition of a service or to a child or school-boy or girl: s. †, early in C. 19, coll.: 1706–7, Farquhar, 'Then I, Sir, tips me—ethic dative—' the warker with half a crown.' Ex sense 4.—10. Hence, v.i., in same sense: 1727, Gay, 'Did he tip hantisomely?: s. †, early in C. 19, coll.—11. To indicate by a secret wink: 1749, Fielding, 'I will tip you the proper person... as you do not know the town,' O.E.D. Ex tip the wink, q.v.—12. To give private information, a friendly hint, about: from early 1880's: s. †, by 1910, coll. Esp. to indicate a horse as a probable winner, a stock as a profitable investment. Ex tip, n., 2, q.v.; perhaps cognate with preceding sense of the v.—13. Hence, to supply (a person) with 'inside' information: from ca. 1890: s. †, by 1910, coll.—14. Hence, v.i., to impart such information: s. (—1804) >, by 1910, coll.

tip, miss one's. To fall; fail at a jump: showmen's: from ca. 1850. (In late C. 19–20 circus s., to miss the word indicating that one is due to do something. Barrère & Leland.) Dickens, 1854.—2. Hence, to fall, fail, in gen.: 1869, H. J. Byron, 'Mr Topham Sawyer missed his own tip as well as his victim's, and came down a cropper on a convenient doorstep.' Lit., to fall in one's expertise: see tip, n., 2, q.v. Of fall down, q.v.

†tip, stand the. See tip, take the.

tip, (gen. the) straight. Genuine or valuable (inside) information, esp. and orig. as to a horse: s. †, by 1900, coll.: from late 1860's, to judge by H., 5th ed. (1874); 1871, Punch, Aug. 26 (O.E.D.). Because direct from owner or trainer; influenced by straight, honest.—2. Hence, the horse or the stock so recommended: from ca. 1890: s. †, by 1906, coll. Tip, take the straight. —3. Hence, the horse which is to be made the subject of a tip: s. †, by 1910, coll. Ex tip, a gratuity: a sense that the O.E.D. (rightly, I believe) classifies as S.E.
tip, that's the. 'That's the right thing: from ca. 1860. H., 3rd ed. Ex tip, n. 1.

*tip a copper. To sky a coin: c. or low s.: mid-C. 19–20.

*tip a (gen. one's) daddle, a (gen. one's) fin, the fives, the gripes in a tangle. To shake hands; with to expressed or implied, to shake hands with or extend one's hand to be shaken: c. or low s.: resp. late 18–20 (Grose, 1st ed.), mainly nautical (— 1860: H., 2nd ed.), late C. 18–20, late C. 18–early 20. See daddle; the third and fourth occur in Anon., Ireland Sixty Years Ago, 1847; tip the gripes [gripes] in a tangle is Anglo-Irish and rare.

*tip a mish. 'To put on a shirt,' F. & H.: c. 18–20; ob. The definition is suspect for the normal sense is to give, lend, it.

tip a moral. To give 'the straight tip': racing: late C. 19–20. See tip, straight, and moral, a 'moral' certainty.

tip a nod (to). To recognise (a person): low: mid-C. 19–20.—2. The same as tip the wink, q.v.: 1861, Dickens (O.E.D.).
tip a rise. To befool: low: from ca. 1880. See rise.
tip-a-runner. The game of tip and run: coll.: 1806; ob. Lewis.
tip a settler, a 'sock. To land (a person) a knock-out blow, a heavy blow: low: resp. 1819 (Moore) and late C. 17–20 (B.E.: c. > low s.).
tip a stave. To sing a song: 1881, R. L. Stevenson, Treasure Island.
tip a yarn. To relate a story: low: from ca. 1870.
tip all nine. To knock down all the skittles at once: from ca. 1780. Grose, 1st ed. Perhaps ex tip, to touch; cf. tip, v., 1.
tip and run, n. and v. 'Used during the Great War of German naval deserts at seaside resorts,' W. Ex the tip (hit lightly) and run of cricket.
tip-merry. Slightly drunk: C. 17. Ex tip, n., last sense.

*tip one's legs a gallop. To make off; decamp hastily: c. (— 1823); ob. Edgar's Grose.
tip over the perch. See tip, v., 3. (Cf. C. 19–20 dial. to, up, off, shov, v., 3, 17, 18., Thu., 36.)
tip the double. To give the slip: low: 1838, Wright, Mornings at Bow Street, 'In plain words he tipped them the double, he was vanished.'
tip the grampus. To duck a man (for sleeping on watch): nautical: from ca. 1860; ob. Also blow the grampus. Contrast:
tip the lion. 'Tip as a man's nose against his face and then either, as in Steele, 1712 (O.E.D.), bore out his eyes with one's fingers, or, as in Grose (1st ed.) and gen., 'at the same time to extend his mouth with the fingers, thereby giving him a sort of lionlike appearance'; † by 1860.
tip the little finger. To drink: Australian: late C. 19–20; ob.
tip the long 'un. 'To foraminate a woman,' F. & H.: late C. 19–20 low.
tip the nines. (Of a sailing-ship carrying too much sail in dirty weather) to be 'driven right under' (Bowen): nautical: late C. 19–20; ob.
tip the rags (occ. legs) a gallop or the double. To decamp: low: resp. C. 19–20 and mid-C. 19–20 (H., 1st ed.). Cf. tip the double.
tip the red rag. See red rag, tip the.
tip the traveller. To exaggerate; to manoeuvre, as a traveller is apt to do: 1742, Fielding (O.E.D.); Smollett; Grose. App. ob. by 1869 and † by 1830. Variant of play the traveller. Cf. the C. 16–18 proverb, a traveller may lie by authority (Apperson).—2. Hence (variant: put the traveller, C. 19: Manchon), with upon, to impose upon; befoul: implied in 1762 in Smollett; † in C. 20.—3. Grose, 1st ed., has top the traveller, but this is prob. a misprint.
tip the velvet. See velvet.
tip the (occ. C. 18–19, a) wink. To warn, signal to, with a wink: 1876, Etheredge (O.E.D.); Dryden; Pope; Grose. S. >, by 1850, coll. Cf. tip the nod.
tip-top. The very top; fig., the acme: coll.: 1702, S. Parker (O.E.D.). Ex top strengthened by tip, extremity, or, as O.E.D. suggests, reduplicated top.—2. Hence, occ. as collective singular, the 'swells': coll.: mid-C. 18–mid-19. Thackeray, 1849, 'We go here to the best houses, the tiptops,' O.E.D.
tip-top, adj. At the very top; excellent; 'splendid': coll.: before 1721, Vanbrugh, 'In tip-top spirits'; G. Elliot. Ex the n., 1.
tip-top, adv. Excellently; 'splendidly', 'tippingly': from ca. 1860. Ex preceding.
tip-topper. A 'swell': 1837, Thackeray (O.E.D.); ob. Other forms (tip-topping, etc.) are too little used to qualify as unconventional: they're merely eccentric.
tip-toppedest. See tippest-tippest.
tip up. To hand over, 'fork out', esp. money: low (— 1859). H., 1st ed.—2. To hold out: low and nautical (— 1887). Eesp. as in Baumann, tip up your fist (or fin), reach or give (me) your hand, shake hands! (Cf. tip a dodger, q.v.)
tippery fortune. Breasts, punder, and anus: Anglo-Irish (— 1788); ob. Grose, 1st ed., 'Two town lands, stream's town, and ballimocack, said of Irish women without fortune.' Cf. at wind-mill; see Rochester, Tisbury, Whitechapel portion; also Whitechapel fortune.
tippest-tippestest. Absolutely 'tip-top': jocular (— 1887); ob. Baumann (also tip-toppestest).
tippet; hempen t. (Marlowe); St Johnstone's t. (Scott); Tyburn t. (Latimer, 1549). A hangman's rope: mid-C. 15–early 19: jocular coll. verging on S.E. (O.E.D.)
tipple, v.t. To disarrange (heels): Bootham.
tippling-ken, A tavern: low: C. 18. N. Ward, A Vade Mecum for Multisworn, 1715. (His
tippling-ken; however, is prob. a nonce-word. W. Matthews, in Notes and Queries, June 15, 1935.)
1910. (Miles Burton, Murder At the Mornings, 1932.)
tippy. Extremely fashionable: 'swell': 1810 (O.E.D.) ob. by 1900, † by 1935, except in Glasgow.
Cf. the U.S. tippy (occ. tippee), an exquisite of 1809-10. Thornton. Ex. — the tippy. The
height of fashion: the fashionable thing to do: ca. 1794-1812. Ex tip, the very top. O.E.D.—
3. Extremely ingenious; very neat, smart, effective: 1883, M. Dods, 'A tippy little bit of criti-
cism' ; ob. Perhaps ex tip, n. 1.—4. Unsteady: col.: from mid-1880's. Lit., likely to tip over.
Cf. tippily, q.v. The Century Dict.—5. Generous with tips (of money): servants' and subordinate
staff's. C. 20. E.g. John G. Brandon, 'Th' Big City, 1931.
tipster. One who gives 'tips', orig. in racing (1862) and by 1884 in gen.: col. >, by 1900, S.E.
See tip, n. 2. (O.E.D.)
tip-top. See tip-top.
tique. See teek.
tire, tire out, to tire to death. To tire to exhaustion: col.: resp. mid-C. 18-20, 1740. (O.E.D.)
tired. (Of a picture, or rather of the painting thereof) overworked; artistes': C. 20. Virtually
synonymous with the longer-established tight (sense 0.)
Also hard. (J. Hodgson Lobley, R.B.A.)
tired, be born. To dislike work; occ. as 'an
excuse for assumed apathy or genuine disinclina-
Occ. be tired.
tired, make (a person). See you make me tired.
tiresome. Troublesome, annoying, unpleasant:
col.: 1798, Charlotte Smith, 'The tiresome custom
you have got of never being ready' (O.E.D.).
tirily-whirily. The female pudend: Scots: late
Lit., 'a whirled figure, ornament, or pattern': cf.
it. sense of tirily.
Tirps. Von Tirpitz, Admiral-in-Chief of the
German Navy: naval: 1914; ob. F. & Gibbons.
Contrast fers and tirs.
tirte, tirrit. A fit of temper, occ. fear; an 'up-
set': col.; orig. illiterate for terror, perhaps
influenced by dial. frt., frightened: late C. 16-20.
Shakespeare.
'tis. It is: col. when not poetic,—at least
after ca. 1850. Baumann.
Anon., The Siulet, 1874, 'The Victualler's anger, and
the 'Tiser's rage'; † by 1920.
tish. A partition; esp. a cubicle: Public
Schools, universities' (—1904).
tissey. An occ. variant of issey, q.v.; † by 1900
tisty-tosy. Twistigrab (a game): C. 20; ob.
W. J. Lewis, The Language of Cricket, at goopy.
Ex dial. tisty-tosy, a cowpail-ball, hence adj. 'round
like a ball' (E.B.D.).
tit. A girl or young woman (in mid-C. 19-20,
often, in low s., of a harlot): from end of C. 18:
S.E. until C. 18, then col. until C. 19, then s.; from
late C. 19, low s. and possibly influenced by titter,
Tavistock] thinks the Queen a resolve little tit.'
O.E.D. Ex tit, a (small) horse: cf. fify, q.v.—2.
tit-but, titmouse, in same sense (C. 17-18); the former
occ. — the penis, as in Urquhart, 1653.—3. A sol.
spelling and pronunciation of test: prob. from C. 17
or even earlier.—4. A student at Durham Uni-
Also Varsity tit. Ex tit applied to persons.—5. A
horse: c. : 1834, Ainsworth; Charles E. Leach.
Earlier in dial.
tit-bit. See tit, 2.
Tit-Blis. The R.F.C. weekly communiqué: Air
Force: 1915-18. F. & Gibbons. Punning the
popular weekly.
tit-fer (gen. titter): tit-for-tat. A hat: the
short form being an obvious abbr. (C. 20) of the
second, which is rhyming s. of late C. 19-20. F. &
Gibbons; B. & F.—2. (tit-for-tat.) 'Too bloody
right' (q.v.); military: 1914; ob. B. & F.
tit will. A pillow: from ca. 1870. P. P.,
Rhyming slang, 1893.
titch. A flogging: Christ's Hospital: mid-
C. 19-20. † ex tight breeches by blending, or ex. dial.
titch, touch.—2. Hence, occ. as a v. F. & H.
tittery. See tittery.—titter. See tit-fer.
titter. Tight: col. and dial.: ca. 1615-30. Rare
except in dramatist Fletcher. O.E.D.
Titter-Tu. See Tivery-Tu.
titivate, tittletivate; occ. tiddivate, tiddi-
dyrate. To put finishing or additional touches to (one's
toilet, oneself): col.: resp. 1805, 1836, 1824, 1833,
1823. E.g. Dickens in Box, 'Regular as clockwork
—breakfast at nine—dress and tittletivate a little',
this quotation illustrating and affording the earliest
example of the v. i. used as v. reflexive. Perhaps ex-
tidly with a quasi-Latin ending on cultivate: O.E.D.
'Or fanciful elaboration of synonymous dial. tiff,
Fr. atter, "to deck, ... adorn" (Colgrave): W.
Also with tiff or up.—2. Hence, v.t., to treat
gently; lower classes' (—1923). Manchon.
titivated, -ating, -ation, -ator. Obvious deriva-
tives ex titivate: C. 19-20; Coll.
titley; gen., and in C. 20 almost always, tiddly,
H., 1st ed. (titley). Prob. ex tiddlywink (q.v.), a
public-house.—2. Hence, a drink: low: from ca.
1850. Baumann. In C. 20, gen. a little drink
(Manchon).
titly; tiddly. Drunk: low: app. unrecorded
before C. 20, though on the tiddly(ey), intoxicated or in
a fair way of becoming intoxicated, appears in
Punch in 1895 (O.E.D. Sup.). If thus late, then ex
the n., but if earlier than tiddlywink (q.v.), then
perhaps a corruption (1 orig. dial.) of tippy.
titley (or tiddy) and binder. A drink of beer and
a piece of bread-and-cheese (cf. binder, 1); public-
house phrase: C. 20. (Desmond Ryan, St
Eustace and the Albatross, 1935.)
titmouse. See tit, n., 2. Ex titmouse, fig. — a
small thing.
titular booth. Absolute nonsense: orig. and
mainly music-halls': 1897-9. Ware. Punning
titley.
'tis's back, as fine a fellow as ever crossed. A
very fine fellow: either c. or. low (—1887).
Baumann. See tit, 1.
titter. A girl or young woman: criminals' and
tramps' c. (—1812) >, by 1900, low s. Vaux;
H., 1st to 3rd ed.; Hanley, 1887, 'You fanny
utters full of fum.' Either ex titter, a giggle, or ex
Toasting-fork, -iron

Scots titty, a sister, or again, ex dial. titty, a breast; the third possibility is perhaps the likeliest, for titty, sister, is mainly a child's word, unless we consider that dial. titty, a girl, has been influenced by titty, a breast.


Tittery-to. See Tityre-to.
titty. To whisper; to gossip: late C. 14–20; S.E. until late C. 18, then coll. and dial.; in C. 20, mainly dial. Prob. echoic.
titup; occ. titup. As n., eligible only in the tit(up), the thing: that's the t', that's the thing; the correct t, the correct thing: low: late C. 19–20; also Ex tit(t)up, a horse's canter, itself echoic. titup, v.i. To toss for drinks: nautical: C. 20. S.O.D. Ex titup, to canter. Cf.: tit(t)uppy. Unsteady, shaky: coll.: 1798, Jane Austen. Rarely of persons, and in C. 20 mainly dial. Ex tit(t)up, a horse's canter.
titty-bag; bottle. Resp., a small linen bag containing bread sprinkled with sweetened milk, given by some nurses to their charges; a bottle (of milk) with teat attached: children's: C. 20. Manchon.
tittyre. See tittery.
titup. See titup.

Tittery-to. Also Tityre-Tu, Tytters (or -ie)-to.

Tittery, tityry. A member of a band of rich and leisureed roughs of ca. 1620–60: a coll. nickname > S.E. The O.E.D. records the name in 1623 (J. Chamberlain); 'Water-Poet' Taylor; Herrick. Ex the opening words of Virgil's First Eclogue.


Warre restricts it to East London.

Tizer, The. See Tizer.

occ. tizzzy, tisszy. A sixpence: resp. 1804, 1809, and (cf. in C. 20) 1829. Moncrieff, 1823, 'Hand us over three crows butts out of that 'e tizzy.' O.E.D.; F. & H. Prob. a corruption of tesser, q.v., via titbury, q.v. See also titty. Cf. swiss for swindle (W.).

to, preposition. At (as in to home); in (a place; as in 'He lives to London'); S.E. until mid-C. 18, then dial. and (mostly U.S.) coll.—in England, it is, as a coll., illiterate, as indeed it is throughout the Empire, except Canada.—2. (After to be and in all to bits or pieces) in, into: coll.: C. 18–20. Vanbrugh, ca. 1720, 'The glasses are all to bits,' O.E.D.—3. The very pregnant use of to (in speech, gen. emphasised) as in 'There's more to the Bible than there is to The Sheik.' 'There's something to Shakespeare' is a C. 20 coll. (* earlier than 1915) prob. derived ex to, q.v.—4. Used at the end of phrase or clause and = to do', etc., it is rare before C. 19, but a very frequent coll. in late C. 19–20. 'I went because I had to.' O.E.D.

to, adv. Expressing contact as in shut a door: M.E.—C. 20: S.E. until mid-C. 19, then coll. (O.E.D.)—2. 'Expressing attachment, application, or addition': C. 15–20: S.E. until C. 19, then coll.

We ordered the horses to', 1883 (O.E.D.).—C. W. Thurlow Craig, 1935, 'We threw the cost to', i.e. on to the body.

to, conjunction, is sol.: late C. 19–20. E.g. 'Wait to I see you.' Rare. (Also in dial).

to, that's all there is. There is nothing to add, do, or say: coll. (orig. U.S.), anglicised ca. 1910. Cf. to, q.v. In these cognates, (is) to = (is) notable, good, significant (in it, etc.). Possibly the pregnancy of this to originated in the to stated or implied in the ethic dative.

tob-ness the night! A c.p. of late C. 19–20; ob. to rights. See rights. to.—tace. See tace.
to the nines, to the ruffman. To an extreme or supplerative degree: for to the nines, see nines; to the ruffman is of. ca. 1810–50: Vaux.
toad is of feathers, as full of money as a. Penniless: coll.: ca. 1785–1900. Grose, 2nd ed.; Bawmänner. Prob. suggested by:
toad of a side-pocket, as much need of it as a. See side-pocket.
toad on a chopping-block, (o) she sits like a. (She)she sits badly on a horse: coll. (—1786); † by 1920. Grose, 1st ed. A picturesque simile as applied to a side-saddle. (In Lincolnshire dial.: . . . on a shoel: E.D.D.)
toad. A toper; (old toad) a lively old fellow fond of his liquor: ca. 1600–1800, but ob. by 1730. L'Estrange, B.E., Grose. Ex such phrases as ale and toad.
toad, (had) on. Swindled: from ca. 1885. St James's Gazette, Nov. 6, 1886, refers to had toad as 'a quaint and pleasing modern phrase'—2. Hence, on toad = cornered: from early 1890s.—3. Hence, in C. 20; compliant, extremely willing to help, servile, at one's mercy.
toad your blooming eye-brows! Go to blazes: lower classes' c.p. of ca. 1895–1915. Ware.
toasting-fork, -iron. A titching word: jocular coll.: 1598, Shakespeare, and Grose, 1st ed., have t.-iron, which is ob. by 1880; † by 1914: t.-fork dates from ca. 1860 and occurs in Tom Brown at Oxford, 1861. Cf. cheese-toaster (and the † S.E. toaster), likewise derived ex its most gen. use.
TOASTY

TOE, TURN ON THE

*toby, ply or ride the. To practise highway robbery: c. of ca. 1812-70. Ex toby, n., 3, and cf. toby, high.
*toby concern or lay. The practice of highway robbery: c. of ca. 1811 (lay); † by 1880. ‘Ducange Anglica’ and H. 1st ed., have toby concern.
*toby gill; high toby gill; toby man. A highwayman: c. of ca. 1810; † by 1880. Vaux, 1812, has all three. (Romany: tober kov, cove.) Cf.: *toby man, high and low. A highwayman and a footpad: c. of ca. 1810-80. Lex. Bal., 1811. Ex toby, n., 3, and cf. toby gill, etc.
*toby spice. See toby, high spice, and *spice.
too emma. A trench mortar; military: from 1915. Ex signailese for to m.—2. Hence, a travelling medical board: Australian; from 1916. Such a board 'shot' soldiers into the trenches.
toco, toko. Chastisement; from ca. 1820; ob. Bee, 1823. If ... Blackee gets a whip about his back, why he has caught toco. Hence, to give (a person) toco, to thrash him, as in Hughes, 1857, 'Administer toco to the wretched fags'. Perhaps ex (the dative or ablative of) Gr. τόκος, interest, as the O.E.D. suggests; or ex Hindustani toka, to censure, via the imperative toko, as Yule & Burnell perceptibly remarks; or, as I difflidently propose, ex some Negro or Polynesian word: cf. Maori toko, a rod (Edward Tregear’s Dieh., 1881). Cf.: toco for yan, get or nap. To be punished; among sailors from ca. 1860, to get paid out. Bee records this (the get), prob. the orig. form, in 1823. On the analogy of a stone for a loaf of bread, and, presumably, at first a treatment moted out to slaves. See toco.—2. By 1874, toco for yan had come to mean 'a Roland for an Oliver' (H., 5th ed.); ob. Tod is the 'inevitable' nickname of any man sur- named Sloan (after the famous jockey) or Hunter (cf. the surname Todhunter): naval and military: late 19-20. F. & Gibbons.
tod; toddy. A foppishly or gaily dressed person (rarely female): West Yorkshire s. (—1904), not dial. E.D.D. I.e. dial. tod, a fox.
tod, adj. Alone; esp. be on one's tod, to be, or to work, alone; grafters: from ca. 1895. Philip Allingham, Cheapsjack, 1894. Prob. ex a lost Tod Sloan Bean, rhyme s. Sayers, 1914; cf. Tod.
toddle; to go, walk, depart, is, by the O.E.D., considered S.E.; but its ca. 20 use, esp. in the upper and upper-middle classes (see, e.g., Dorothy Sayers’s Lord Peter Wimsey novels), seems to me to be coll.] toddy, -ie. In address to a child of 1-3 years: coll.: † mid-C. 19-20. Such a child toddles rather than walks; cf. dial. toddy, little, and familiar S.E. toddles, a toddling child.—2. See tod, n.
toddy-blossom. A spiny-gum-blossom: q.v.: C. 19-20; ob. Ex toddy, the beverage.
toe, v.t. To kick: low: from ca. 1860: coll. >, ca. 1910, S.E.
toe, have or hold by. To hold securely: coll.: mid-C. 16—17. Chronicle Hall and Bishop Hall, O.E.D. Cf. short hairs, q.v.
toe, kiss the Pope's. Respectfully to set one's lips to the golden cross on the Pope's right sandal: 1768, the Earl Carlisle: s. >, ca. 1890, coll. (O.E.D.)
toe, turn on the. To turn (a person) off the ladder.


Tobacco Brown. Isaac Hawkins Brown (1705-80), wit and poet; author of parodies entitled A Pipe of Tobacco. (Dawson.)

tobacco chart. Gen. pl., the ... inaccurate charts that could formerly be bought from any ship chandler at a low price: nautical: ca. 1840-90.

Bowen. Perhaps as sold at an ounce of tobacco, or because they were tobacco-stained.

tobacco-pipe curls. Corkscrew curls worn by oastmen and Gypsies: (esp. London) lower classes: (—1887); ob. Baumann. Ex the curve of such a pipe.

tobacco. Tobacco: lower classes' coll.: from the 1870's if not earlier. W. S. Gilbert, H.M.S. Pinafore, 'I've snuff and tobacco and excellent jacky.' (Slang, p. 101.)


*tobier. A road: tramps' c. and Romany, the former in 1845 in 'No. 747'. See toby, 3.—2. Hence, a circus-field: Parlyaree (?) and circus s. (—1835). E. Seago, Circus Company.—3. Among grafters, it is a fair-ground or market; hence, one's pitch thereon or therein: c. 20. Philip Allingham, Cheapsjack, 1934.

*tobier-mush. A market-inspector: market-trade's (e.g. Petticoat Lane): c. 20. Ex preceding + mush, n., last sense: cf. coring mush and rye mush. Cf. also:


*toby, v.t. To rob (a person) on the highway; hence, done for a toby, convicted for highway robbery: c. of ca. 1810-90. Vaux (v. and phrase).

*toby, high (or main). Highway robbery by a mounted man, the victim of which is called the low toby. C. of ca. 1810-90. Vaux. See toby, n., 3. —2. Also (high toby only), the highway itself.

*toby, high spice; high toby spice. The highway viewed as the locality for robbery: c. (—1812). Byron, 1812 (h.f.); Hindley, 1876 (h.f.). Ex toby, n., 3.

(toe-and-rag is Manchon’s error for toe-rag, q.v.)

toe-face. An objectionable or dirty fellow: low (- 1823). Manchon.

(toe-fit-ti), To tie a string to (a boy’s) toe and haul him out of bed: Public Schools, esp. Winchester and Felsted: ca. 1870—1900. The Felstedian, Nov., 1881, ‘‘To fit-ti’’, in reference to verbs of the third conjugation transferred from the similarity of sound to the schoolboy’s toe.


toe-rag, shake one’s. See shake one’s toe-rag.

toe-roller. A term of opprobrium: Australia and New Zealand resp., as in Truth (the Sydney one), Jan. 12, 1896, ‘‘A toe-ragger’’ is Moari . . . The nastiest term of contempt was tua rika rika, or slave. The old whalers on the Maori-land coast in their anger called each other toe-riggers, and to-day the word in the form of toe-ragger has spread throughout the whole of the South Seas.’’ Morris.

* toe-rags. Those windings of cotton-wool about the ball of the foot and the toes which, to displace socks, prevent blistering: tramps’ o.: C. 20. E.g. in F. Jennings, Tramping with Tramps, 1932.

toes, claw one’s. To indulge oneself: coll.: mid-C. 16—early 16. O.E.D.

toes, cool one’s. To have to wait: coll.: ca. 1690—1700. Brathwait, 1685 (O.E.D.). Cf. to cool (or kick) one’s heels.


toe’s length, the. Almost no distance: coll.: from ca. 1820: ob. (O.E.D.)

toes of, step or tread on the. To vex; give umbrage to: coll.: mid-C. 19—20. Robert Browning, 1868 (O.E.D.). Ex lit. sense.

toes up. (Lying) dead: 1851, Mayhew (O.E.D.): slightly ob. Cf. toe up, turn one’s. To die: 1860, Reade, ‘‘Several arbalistors turned their toes up.’’ In C. 20, occ. elaborated to turn one’s toes up to the dainties (Manchon). Cf. toes up, and ‘‘die’’ synonymy in Words /


 toff. A ‘‘swell’’: a ‘‘nob’’ (well-to-do person): proletarian: from 1840’s: slightly ob. Ca. 1848, there was a music-hall song entitled The Shorelitch Toff, by Arthur Lloyd; Whiting, 1899. Ex tuff, via toft, q.v.—2. Hence, a man of fortitude and courage: late C. 19—20; slightly ob. The Daily Telegraph, Sept. 16, 1902, ‘‘He held out his wrists to be handcuffed, and exclaimed, ‘Now I’ll die like a toff’’’.—3. A ‘‘brick’’, a ‘‘person behaving handsomely’’: 1898 (O.E.D.): slightly ob.

toff, v. Esp. to be dressed like a toff: low: 1928 (O.E.D. Suppl.).

toff bundle-carrier. A gentleman accompanying a prosperous serio-como from hall to half on her evening ‘rounds’: theatrical: ca. 1870—1900. Ware. Ex toff, l.

*toff-omsee. The superlative of toff: 1: o. (- 1909). Ware.

toff-showing. ‘‘Pushing about well-dressed men in a crowd’’: London roughs’: ca. 1882—1900. Ware.


toffee, not for. Not at all; by no manner of means; not in any circumstances: uncultured: late C. 19—20. Hugh Walpole, Vanessa, 1933: ‘‘That fellow X. can’t bat for toffee,’ of a Test cricketer in 1934.

toffee-apple. A trench-mortar stick-bomb: military coll.: 1915—18. F. & Gibbons, ‘‘From . . . the apples dipped in toffee [and] sold under the name at English country fairs’.

Toffee Men, the. The Everton Football Club (‘‘soccer’’): sporting: C. 20. Ex Everton toffee.


toffish; toffy. Stylish; ‘‘swell’’: resp. from ca. 1873, when toffiness occurs in Greenwood’s Strange Company; 1901, Jerome K. Jerome (O.E.D.); tof, ob., ex tofficky.

toff. A variant, prob. the imm. source of toff, 1, q.v.: ca. 1850—1910. Mayhew, 1851; H., 1st ed. If not toff debased—and the dates seem to preclude this—then tuft corrupted.

* tog. A coat: late C. 18—20: o. >, ca. 1820, low s. Tuft, 1798, ‘‘Long tog, a coat’’: Andrews, 1808, ‘‘Tatty tog, a gaming cloth’’: Vaux, 1812, ‘‘A tog, a coat’’. O.E.D. Ex togs, q.v., or, less prob., tog(e)man(a), a cloak.—2. See togs and toga.—3. See tace.—4. A week’s wages on piece-work: tailors’: C. 20. Perhaps ex sense l.

tog, v. First as past pprl. tagged, dressed, 1793, to tog being recorded not before 1812. Vaux, ‘‘To tog is to . . . put on clothes; to tog a person, . . . to supply them with apparel.’’ Low s, verging on o. Ex toge.

tog, long. See tog, n.—toga, taty. See ibid.


tog it; t. out; t. up. V.i., to dress smartly: proletarian: resp. 1844, 1869, 1903. O.E.D.—2. As v. to tog out occurs in 1820 in The London Magazine (I, 25), ‘‘He was always tagged out to the mines,’’ and tog up in 1894 (O.E.D.).


tog up. See tog it.

toga play. An Ancient-Classics drama: theatrical coll. (— 1909); Ware. Ex the ancient Roman male garment.

* togeman. See togmans.


togeman(s); toman. A cloak; a (loose) coat; rarely, a gown (B.E.): o. ca. 1665—1840, but ob. by 1800 if not indeed by 1750. Harman, 1867, all
three forms; togmans, very rare after 1700, togman
app. not later than 1700; Grove, 1st ed., togmans, 2nd ed., togmen; G.""
Cf. tog, toge, togs.

toggy. A knotted lanyard used decorously or
bullyingly: in the training-ship Britannia; late

togged, togged out or up; togged up to the nines.
Sci. resp. tog-, and tog it.

toggy, the suffix -tant, q.v. Cf. togs, toge, togs.

*toge. A cloak; a coat: ca. 1815-1910.
Ex toilet, n. 1, on tog, or perhaps imm. ex *togy.
toggy, an uppercoat for the arctic regions.
togies. See togy.

*togman. See togmans. The togmans of
Grose, 1st ed., is a confusion, as also, prob., is
Baumann's togmans.

togs. Clothes: o. (—1909) >, ca. 1825, low s.;
ca. 1890, gen. s.; in C. 20, usually jocular. Coll.
G. Andrews's Dict.; Dickinson; Blackmore. Ex
tog, n., i, q.v.—2. In phrases, chiefly these two:
togs, long. Landsmen's clothes: nautical s.,
ca. 1890, coll.; 1830, Marryat, 'I retained a suit of
"long togs", as we call them," O.E.D.; Dana.
Prob. on long clothes. Cf. atoggy, 2, and the
derivative:
togs, Sunday. One's best clothes: London and
nautical s. (—1859) >, by 1904, gen. s.;
Smith; F. & H. Ex togs, q.v.: cf. toga, long.
toggy. (Gen. pl.) A knotted rope's-end 'carried
about hidden by elder boys to beat their fags with';
Public Schools': ca. 1870; ob. Ware.
Prob. ex toco, q.v. Also toge, q.v.
toheno; occ. tohenero. Very rare: late C. 19-
20: costers'. Lit., hot one reversed.

tokes. (Dry) bread: low s. (—1859) v.ing,
orig. on o. H., 1st ed. Perhaps tack (food) or
(hard and soft) tack corrupted. —2. Hence, food in
gen. low s. and o. from ca. 1876. Anon., Five
Years' Penal Servitude, 1877, 'What in prison slang
is called his toke or chuck.'—3. A loaf of bread, esp.
a small loaf of bread served in prison: (mostly
prison) c.: late C. 19-20. 'Stuart Wood', 1932,
James Spenser', 1934—4. (Prob. ex l.) A piece,
portion; lump: rare and low: from early 1870's;
tokes. To idle, 'loaf': Leys School: late
B.E. Contra.

token, the. Venereal disease, esp. in tip one (gen.
ma). the token, to infect venereally: low: from ca.
1780; very ob. Grove, 1st ed. Ex token, a blotch
or discoloration indicative of disease, esp. the
plague. (the tokens, the plague, is S.E.)
toko. See toco.
toko, take. 'To take four dozen lashes in the old
Navy without crying out' (Bowen): ca. 1840-90.
Ex toco for yam, q.v.
tokon. A rare variant (—1923) of toco, q.v.
Manchon.
tol. A sword: o. of late C. 17—18. B.E.;
Grose, 1st ed. Abbr. Toledo, a sword there made.
Hence, rum tol, a gold- or silver-hilted sword;
Queen tol, a brass- or steel-hilted one, i.e. an ordinary one.
—2. A share; a lot (of ...): back s. (—1839).
H., 1st ed.
tol-lol. Intoxicated: Yorkshire and Notting-
hamshire: from ca. 1890. E.D.D.—2. See:
tol-lol(l); tol-lollish. Pretty good: resp. from
mid 1790's and late 1850's; ob. Mrs A. M.
Bennett, 1797; H., 2nd ed., has both W. S.
Gilbert, 'Lord Nelson, too, was pretty well—|That
is, tol-lolish!' F. & H.: O.E.D. By the
re-duplication of the first syllable of tolerable.—2. As
adv., tolerably: from late 1850's. H., 2nd ed.
told, be. To obtain one's colours in a school
told out. Exhausted: coll.: 1861, Whyte-
Melville: 'a horse. Lit, counted out. O.E.D.
tolerable. In fair health: coll.: 1847, C. Bronte,
'We're tolerable, sir, I thank you.'—2. As adv.
(= tolerably): from ca. 1870: S.E. until late C. 18,
then coll. and dial. tolerably. (Predicatively, of health.) Pretty
well: coll.: 1778, Mme D'Arblay (O.E.D.).
tolleester. Incorrect for tolleester: C. 17.
O.E.D.
tol-lol. A species of cheat carried on by
a woman, assuming the character of a deaf and
dumb conjurer', Grove, 2nd ed., o.: ca.
1786-1850. Ex rig, a trick, + tolben (q.v.),
tol-lol, the tongue.
(Cf. tolly up, q.v.) Ex tallow. Hence, the Tolly,
a tapering spire at the back of the Close of Rugby
The Athenaeum, June 16, 1800.—2. A flat
instrument (e.g. a ruler) used in caning; Stonyhurst;
late C. 19-20. Ex sense 1, or ex L. tollare. Esp.
got the toolly (Manchon).
tolly. gen. toolly up. To work by candle-light after
the extinction of the other lights: Harrow School
tolly-shop. A prefect's room (where caning is
done): Stonyhurst: late C. 19-20. Ex toolly,
n. 2nd sense. Cf. toolly-ticket, a good-condit card: ibid.: id.
Because it ensured against caning, except for
a particularly serious offence.
tolly up. See toolly, v.
Hence, tolohen rig, fortune-telling. Cf. tollibon rig.
Also occ. spelt tollibon or tollein. (I am, however,
un convinced about toloben being the tongue: it is
voiced-for only by F. & H. and I think that there
may be a confusion with Romany tulopan or
Tulpen (Smart & Cross) or Tulpen (Samson). Fat,
lard, grease, a sense that, if extended to 'paint'
for the face, might well explain toloben-rig, fortune-
telling, and possibly also tollibon-rig as above.)

Tom, the big bell at Christ Church, Oxford, is S.E.,
TOM-A- STYLES


Tom—Styles or -Stiles. Anybody, esp. in law, with John-a-Nokes, q.v., as his opponent: ca. 1770–1830; coll. >, by 1800, S.E. O. A. Stevens, 1772, 'From John o' Nokes to Tom o' Stiles, | What is it all but fooling?';Grose, 1st ed. (Tom-a-Stiles). Occ. John-a-Stiles. See Words!

Tom and funny. Money: rhyming s. (—1909); ob. Ware.

Tom-and-Jerry days. The Regency (1810–20); also, the reign of George IV: coll. : ca. 1825–80. Ex Tom and Jerry in Pierce Egan's Life in London, 1821, with a continuation in 1828. The v., Tom-and-Jerry, to behave riotously (1828), is rather S.E. than coll. but, Tom-and-Jerry (—1864) or T.-and-J. shop (—1874), a low drinking-shop, is coll.; † by 1910. The latter elaborates jerry-shop, a low beer-house, recorded in 1834. H., 3rd and 5th ed.; s. & H.; O.R.D.

Tom and Thb. See Tom, Dick, and Harry.

Tom Asteron. A dashing or devil-may-care fellow: nautical: from ca. 1860; ob. Smyth. Ex to astonish or perhaps abbr. astonisher; Ned Ward, however, has, in 1706, Tom Estenor, which may purport a surname (O.E.D.).

*Tom Bray's bilk. Laying out ace and deuce at cribbage', Vaux, 1812: ca. 1810–60: prob. orig. c. (> low) gaming s. † ex noted sharper.


Tom, Dick, and Harry. The common run of men (and women): coll. soon > S.E.: T., D., and H., app. not before ca. 1815, but Lindsay, in 1868, has Jack and Tom and Tom is frequent in C. 17, Jack, Tom, Will, and Dick in 1804 (James I loquitur), Tom, Jack and Dick in 'Water-Poet' Taylor, 1822, Tom and Dick occurs in C. 18, Tom, Dick, and Francis in Shakespeare (1596), Dick, Tom, and Jack in 1860 (A. Brome), Jack, Tom, and Harry ca. 1693 (T. Brown), and Tom, Jack, and Harry in 1865. F. & H.; O.E.D.; Apperson (above all), and my Words. Cf. Tom Tier.

Tom double. A simpleton: popular coll.: C. 18–20; ob. Ned Ward, 1707, 'That Tom double of a son ... talks of nothing but his mother.'


Tom Drum's entertainment. The (very) rough reception of a guest: coll.: ca. 1570–1640. Holiness. Also John (Shakespeare), Jack ('Water-Poet' Taylor). Possibly ex an actual person's name; more prob., a pun on drum.


Tom Fool than Tom Fool knows, more know. A semi-proverbial c.p. of C. 18–20; ob. Defoe; F. & H., 'A sarcastic retort on failing to recognise, or professing to be unacquainted with, a person saluting.'

Tom Long. A person long a-coming or 'tire-somely' so in telling a tale: coll. (?) > S.E.; from ca. 1630; ob., except in dial., which in C. 19–20 it mainly is. W. Foster, 1631, 'Surely this is Tom Long the carrier, who will never do his errand', O.E.D.; but this is preceded by 'Proverbs' Heywood, 1546, 'I will send it him by John Long the carrier,' i.e. at some vague date, and by Cotgrave, 1611, 'To stay'—in C. 18–20, gen. wait—'for John Long the Carrier: -to tarry long for that which comes but slowly.' In his Phraseologia Generalis, 1681, W. Robertson has Tom Long the carrier; in late C. 17, B.E. has come by T. L. the c., 'of what is very late, or long a coming', and Grose, 1st ed., much the same phrase. Apperson.

Tom-noddy. A stupid, a foolish, person: coll. (—1828) >, by 1860, S.E.


Tom Owen's stop. 'The left-hand open, scrawling over the protagonist's face, service with the right'; Bee: pugilistic: ca. 1820–40. Ex a boxer.

*Tom Pat. A parson or hedge-priest: c.: late C. 17–early 18. Street Robberies Considered. A rum Tom Pat is a clerk in holy orders, i.e. a genuine cleric. App. Pate = patrico, q.v.—2. A shoo: c. : C. 19–20; ob. (In Romany, a foot.)

Tom Pepper. A liar: nautical s. (—1867) >, by 1890, coll. Smyth. In sailors' folk-lore, 'Tom Pepper was the seaman who was kicked out of Hell for lying' (Bowen).

Tom Quad. The big quadrangle at Christ Church, Oxford: Oxford University coll. : late C. 19–20. Ex Tom, the great bell at Christ Church.

Tom Right. Night: rhyming s. (—1857); ob. 'Ducauge Anglicus.'

*Tom-rot. A variant (—1887; † by 1920) of tommy-rot, q.v. Baumann.


Tom Tell-Tongue (Truth). An honest man: coll. resp. C. 17 and C. 18–20 (ob.). Tom True-Tongue, C. 14, is the generator; Tom Truth, mainly C. 16 (e.g. Latimer), the imm. generator. O.E.D.; F. & H.; Apperson.


Tom-tit. To decoate: rhyming s. (late C. 19–20)
Tom-Tom

A Chinese gong; cæstrophetic; from late 1830's. Also tom-tam. O.E.D.

Tom Topper(s) or Tug. A ferryman; any river hand; low London: from ca. 1860; ob. H., 3rd ed. ('Topper ... From a popular song, entitled "Overboard he went")”, for both; Tug presumably from that vessel, though perhaps im. ex 'the small stage-play”, H., 5th ed.

Tom Tripe. A pipe: rhyming s. (—1859); † by 1900. H., 1st ed. The C. 20 term is cherry ripe, q.v. Cf. Tommy tripe, q.v.


Tom Turkman. A nightman: low: from ca. 1700; ob. E. Ward, 1703 (Matthews); Grose, 1st ed.

Tom Tyler. See Tom Tiler.

tomahawk is cæstrophetic when used of a knobby: late C. 17—20. O.E.D.—2. A policeman's baton or urban, esp. Cockneys' (—1909); slightly ob. Ward.
tomall(e)y. Incorrect when = lamal, a South American dish: mid-C. 19—20. O.E.D.

Tommaso di Rotto or tomaso di roto. Tommy-rot: middle-class youths' ca. 1905—14. Ware. 'Italian shape', i.e. an Italianness of Tommy Rot.

*tomato-can tramp. A tramp that, to sleep, will curl up anywhere: tramps' o. (—1932). Frank Jennings. Even an old tin suffices as a pillow.

tombstone-style. An advertisement (rarely of other matter) so 'displayed', i.e. composed, that it resembles a monumental inscription: printers' coll.: from ca. 1880.

tommy, as applied to goods (mainly food) supplied to workmen in lieu of wages, is S.E.: so too, according to the O.E.D., it is as the soldiers' and, from ca. 1860, the lower classes' word for (orig. brown) bread. The latter I hold to be s. in C. 18—early 19, coll. in mid-C. 19—20, as are soft (or, 1811, while) tommy, bread as opp. to biscuit (Grose, 2nd ed.), and brown tommy (Lex. Bal., but prob. much earlier) as used by workmen for food or provisions in gen., from ca. 1860 (H., 3rd ed.), it is a coll. that in 1914—18 was the prevailing sense among soldiers (B. & P.). Perhaps by a pun: brown George (q.v.) suggesting brown Tommy, with alternative Tommy Brown, whence Tommy, whence tommy. See esp. Grose, P. But note that in Bedford (and elsewhere) tommy = loaves of bread distributed by charity on St Thomas's Day (21st December), for hundreds of years: this, which prob. explains the orig. of a puzzling word, I owe to Mr R. A. Parrott of Bedford.—2. A sham shirt-front: Dublin University (—1860); ob. H., 2nd ed.; F. & H. Prob. on equiv. dickey ex Gr. ρωμαίος, a section.—3. (Gen. in pl.) A tomato: low: from ca. 1870.—4. Tommy. 'Tommy Atkins', a private British (specifically, non-Colonial) soldier: 1893, Kipling (G.E.D.) coll.—by 1916, E.E. Tommy Atkins occurs in S.E.: coll. by 1895, S.E. Ex Thomas Atkins, a specimen name for signature on attestation-forms and in pay-books since early C. 18. See Words for further details.—5. A prostitute's bully: low (—1923). Manchon.—6 A frequent term of address to a young boy whose name is unknown to the speaker: coll. (—1887). Baumann. Cf. George and Jack addressed to a man in these circumstances.
tommy (or T.) v. See Tommy Tripe.
tommy or Tommy, hell and. An elaboration of held in intensives or secessurations: from ca. 1885. In P. MacDonald, R.I.P., 1933, we find a variation: 'Where the devil and Tommy did I put that cork-screw?' Cf. hell and spots, q.v. The tommy is perhaps ex Tommy-rot; the capital T, on my eye and Beatie Martin: 1 cf. go, Tommy', q.v.
tommy and exes. Bread (see tommy, 1), beer, and 'bacon: workmen's (—1909). Ware. Here exes = extras.

Tommy Atkins. See tommy, 4.
tommy-axe. A tomahawk: Australian coll.: late C. 18—20. Not certainly a corruption (by Hobson-Jobson) of tomahawk; perhaps on tommy as applied to a small tool or instrument, e.g. a spade, —with which cf., in military, tomy bar: a bent wire spanner used to unscrew the base of Mills bombs.' [Tommy Brown's, in. The entry in the first edition is grotesquely erroneous and it arose from too ingenious interpretation.]

Tommy Dodd. In tossing coins, either the winner or the loser, by agreement; the mode of tossing: from ca. 1863; ob.: rather proletarian. H., 3rd ed. Ca. 1863 there was a music-hall song, 'Heads or tails are sure to win, Tommy Dodd, Tommy Dodd.' Rhyming on odd.

Tommy, make room for your uncle! A c.p. addressed to the younger man (men) in a group: from ca. 1883. Ware. Ex a popular song.

Tommy o'Rann. Food: rhyming s. (—1869) on scra. H., 1st ed.

Tommy Pikes. Nickname for a boatswain—'because he pipes or whistles all hands'. Naval: ca. 1850—1910. Ware.

Tommy Rabbit (or r.). A pomegranate: rhyming s. (—1909). Ware.
tommy-rot. (See also tom-rot.) Nonsense; as exclamation, 'bosh!': s.s. > ca. 1900, coll.: 1884, George Moore, 'Bill ... said it was all "Tommy rot"," O.E.D. Perhaps ex tommy, goods supplied instead of wages; though Manchon's theory that it is a euphemism (via the Tommies' former scarlet uniform) for bloody is not ridiculous. Cf. tommy in Hell and Tommy (or h. and t.), q.v. at tommy, hell and.—2. Occ. as v.i., to fool about; v.t., to humbug: rare: late C. 19—20.

Tommy-Shop, the. The Royal Victualling Yard; naval (—1923). Manchon. An extension of S.E. tommy-shop.

tommy tit. 'A smart lively little fellow'; Grose, 1st ed.: coll.: mid-C. 18—19.


Tommy Tripe. To observe, examine, watch: rhyming s. (—1874) on pipe, v. H., 5th ed. Occ. abbr. Tommy or tommy, as in 'Tommy his plates (of meat)', look at his feet!

Tommy Tucker. Supper: from ca. 1860. F. P., Rhyming slang, 1932. Suggested by the nursery rhyme, 'Little Tommy Tucker sang for his supper.'


ton. (Rare in singular.) Much; plenty: coll. from early 1890's. E.g. Barrie, 1911, "I say! Do you know a lot of tones?" L.R.C., 1911. O.E.D. —2. Gen. the ton. The fashion: fashionable Society: from late 1780's: coll. (mostly Society) until ca. 1840, then S.E.; ca. 1815-25, it verged (witness 'Jon Bee') on a. Ex Fr. ton.


ton of bricks, like a. See bricks.

tone, tone; tother, t'other. (Whether pronouns or adj.) The one: the other: S.E. until C. 18, then coll. and dial.: in C. 20, tone as coll. is slightly illiterate. Often in juxtaposition, tone ... t'other. N.B., tother day in F.S. = the next day, occ. the preceding day; as = a few days ago, it arose in C. 16 and was S.E. until C. 18; then coll. and dial.

toney. See tony. n. and adj.

toney. Forecose: dental and medical: from ca. 1870.

tongs, pair of. A tall thin person: low: from ca. 1880: ob. Ex the two thin 'legs'.—2. Whence, in sarcastic address or comment, tongs —3. Touch with a pair of tongs. See touch with ...

tongue, v.t. To talk (a person) down: low (—1860): ob. H., 2nd ed. Ex the ob. S.E. sense, to attack with words, to reproach.

tongue, ed (a lack with the rough side of one's). To scold, abuse: coll.: 1820, Scott (O.E.D.). ob. Cf. dial. give a person the length of one's tongue (E.D.D.).

tongue, have a. To be sarcastic and/or ironic: non-aristocratic coll. from ca. 1880. Charles Turley, Godfrey Martin, Schoolboy, 1902, "He had a tongue", as servants say, and could be sarcastic. Ex Fr. ton'

tongue, lose one's. To fall very, be long, silent: coll.: 1870, Dickens (O.E.D.).

tongue, and a little older than my teeth,—as old as my. A c.p. reply to how old are you?: late C. 18-20; ob. Grose, 2nd ed.

tongue enough for two sets of teeth, (with; to have). Applied to an exceedingly talkative person: ca. 1786-1870. Grose, 2nd ed. Cf. tongue-pad, tongue too long for one's teeth, and tongueed, qq.v.

tongue in another's purse, put one's. To silence: ca. 1840-1820. 'Proverbs' Heywood.

tongue is well hung, his (etc.). He is fluent, ready, glib of speech: coll.: C. 18. Swift; Berthelson's Dict., 1754. Apperson. Cf. tongue-pad, q.v. Perhaps also coll. are the C. 18 semi-proverbial your tongue is made of very loose leather ('Proverbs' Fuller, 1732) and the semi-proverbial C. 16-17 (earlier, q.v.) tongue runs on wheels (Proverbs' Heywood; Davies of Hereford), both recorded by Apperson, who notes the analogous his (etc.) tongue runs on wheels (mid-C. 16-20; in mid-C. 19-20, dial.) enshrined by Swift.

tongue of the trump, the. The best or most important thing or person: Scots coll.: from ca. 1870. In a Jew's harp, the tongue is the steel spring by which the sound is made.

tongue-pad. A talkative person, esp. if smooth and insinuating: late C. 17-20; a. until late C. 19, then dial. B.E.; Grose in 1st ed., adds: 'A...
the regimental indication on the shoulder-strap:

D.G.


too many (gen. too much) for. Sufficient to overcome or quell; too able or strong, i.e. more than a match, for: coll. much, 1832; 1861, Dickens, 'Mr Juggers was altogether too many for the Jury, and they gave in,' O.E.D. Catachrestic is too many applied to things, as in A. Neil Lyons, Arthur's, 1914, 'This job is one too many for me' (Manchon).

too much l, this is. A c.p. retort or comment: from mid-1860's. F. & H. suggests that it echoes Artemus Ward among the Shakars (ca. 1882).

too much of a good thing. Excessive; intolerable: coll. 1808, Sydney Smith, 'This (to use a very colloquial phrase) is surely too much of a good thing,' O.E.D. An elaboration of too much, but perhaps prompted by the literal sense, as in Shakespeare's As You Like It, IV, i, 'Why then, can one desire too much of a good thing?' Apperson. Cf. preceding entry.

too much with us. Excessively boring; an intolerable nuisance: Society c.p. 1897-9. Ware. Ex the Wordsworthian the world is too much with us, too numerous to mention. Angrily drunk: London: 1892-ca. 90. Ware. Prob. uttering curses too, etc.

too right! Certainly! 'rather': Australian: from ca. 1910. Jice Doone. See also too bloody Irish.

too-too (see too all-but) was in 1881 a Society c.p. Cf. the derivative too utterly (1883) and too utterly utter (late C. 19-20; ob.): also Society c.p. toole-em-buck. The game of Crown and Anchor: Canadian: C. 20. B. & P.

tool-co. See toole-co!


tool. The penis: mid-C. 18-20; S.E. until C. 18, then coll. in C. 19-20, s. unless the context definitely renders it archaic S.E. (O.E.D.)—2. A whip: ca. 1820-90. Ex tool, to drive—3. A small boy employed to creep through windows, etc., to get into a house: e. g.: ca. 1820-1910. 1845 in 'No. 747'; H., 3rd ed.; F. & H. Cf. tool, v., 4.—See tools.


tool, grind one's. (Of the male) to colt: low: mid-C. 19-20.

tool about or around. To do nothing in particular: upper classes: from ca. 1910. Francis Iles, Before the Fact, 1932, 'What are you doing with yourself?' 'Me, eh? Oh, tooling round, you know. Nothing much.' Ex coaching, perhaps on foot around. Cf.


Tooleries, the. Toole's Theatre: theatrical: 1885-ca. 87. Ware. Ex Toole on Colinderies and Fisheries, qq.v., with a pun on the Tuileries of Paris.

Tooley Street tailor. A conceitedly humpious fellow: mostly London: ca. 1870-80. H., 5th ed. 'The three tailors of Tooley Street' are said to have immorralised themselves by preparing a petition for Parliament—and some say, presenting it—with only their own signatures thereto, which commenced, 'We, the people of England': How do such yarns arise?


**toosh.** A sovereign, coin or value: c. (esp. tramps): from before 1835. Ex tusheroon.


toot, at (occ. on) the. Immediately: at high speed: military: from 1915. Ex tout de suite (pron. toot sweet), whence also the military c.p., the tooter the sweeter, the sooner the better. B. & P.


tooth. See teeth: and the following compounds and phrases: tooth, have an aching. To have a desire, a longing (for): coll. late C. 10-20: in C. 19-20, mostly dial. Lodge, 1690; North, 1742; 1887, Parish & Shaw, Dict. of Kent Dialect. (Apperson.)—2. (have . . . at a person.) To be angry with: coll. C. 18. N. Bailey, 1730.

tooth, have cut one's eye. To be knowing: a (— 1860) variant of teeth, have cut one's eye. H., 2nd ed.

tooth, high in. Bombastic: low: from the 1870's; ob. Baumann.

tooth, long in the. See long in the tooth.

tooth, old or up in the. (Esp. of old maid) aged: from ca. 1860. H., 2nd ed., 'Stable term for aged horses which have lost the distinguishing mark in their teeth.'

tooth-brush. A tooth-brush moustache, so named because, at most one and often only a half-inch laterally, and short and briskly vertically, it closely resembles the hairy part of a small toothbrush: coll.: from 1915.


Tooth-music. (The sound of) mastication: from ca. 1786; ob. Gros. 2nd ed.


Toothachy. Having, characteristic of, toothaches; coll. 1839, Lady Granville (O.E.D.).

Tooth. A punch on the mouth: boxing: from ca. 1890; slightly ob.


Toothpick brigade, crutch and. Foppish 'men about town': London society: ca. 1885-1905. Ex.—2. Hangers-on at stage doors, esp. at the Gaiety: London society: ca. 1884-5. They affected their badge of their tribe, a crutch-handled stick and a toothpick, F. & H.

Toothy-peg. A tooth: nursery coll.: 1828, Hood, 'Turn we to little Kilmansag, / Cutting her first little toothy-peg.' By itself, toothly, a child's tooth, is less common: lit., a little tooth.

[Tooting-tub, in F. & H., is U.S.; his 'authority' is Wesley Brooke.]


Tootle-oo! loosely, tootle-oo! Good-bye! by ca. 1905, according to Collinson; the O.E.D. (Sup.) records it at 1907. Ob. Perhaps ex tootle, v., 1, q.v., or ex tootle-too, to toot frequently or continuously.

Tootis, tooty; tootis (or -y) woostis. A child's, a woman's small, foot: playful or affectation coll.: resp. 1854, Thackeray (O.E.D.); ca. 1890. The form tootisum is a facetious 'literary' elaboration.

On foot, but ex tootle: W.

Top. See Topsy.

Top. See old top.—2. Abbr. top gear in motoring; gen. on top, very rarely—and, by 1930, ↑ on the top: 1906, on the top; 1909, on top. O.E.D.—3. In o., a dying speech: ca. 1830-60. H., 1. ed. (Also known as a croak.) Ex the o. to, to behold.—4. In reality, a cheating trick whereby one of the dice remained at the top of the box: gaming: ca. 1705-50. The Tatler, No. 68, 1709. O.E.D. Ex the specific gaming sense of the v.—5. (Gen. pl.) Counterfoil of a divided warrant: accountants' coll. (C. 20) verging on j.

*Top, v.l. To cheat, esp. at cards: o. > by 1750, o. s.: ca. 1860-1820. Etheredge, B.E. Gros. v.t. with on, upon, ↑ on. ↑ hence, v. i. and v.t. (the latter, gen. top upon), to insult: late C. 17-early 19: o. >, by 1750. low s. B.E. Gros. —3. (Likewise ex sense 1.) To impose or foist (a thing) on: ca. 1670-1750. O.E.D.—4. To behead, to hang: o. C. 18-20, in C. 20, mostly in the passive. Implied in topping cheat, t. cove, and topman or topman, though not separately recorded before 1811 (Lex. Bal.).—5. (Gen. v.i.) To break in, through skylight or roof trap-door: o. (— 1933). Charles E. Leach.—6. See top a clout, top off, top up, and other v. phrases.

Top, a little bit off the. Some of the best: coll. late C. 19-20; ob.—2. Slightly crazy: from ca. 1897; ob. top, go over the. To leave one's own trench and join in the attack on the enemy: military coll.: from 1916. The top is both the top of the trench and the open ground between the trenches. B. & F.—2. Hence, to do something dangerous and/or notable (e.g. getting married): from 1919. Col- linson; Lyell ('take the plunge').


Top, old. See old top.—top, on. See bet on top. top, on the. Above trench-level in the front-line area: military coll.: in the O.W. top, over the. See over the top.—2. Whence, in trouble: with the: ca. 1916-18. F. & Gibbons. Cf. top, go over the, 2.

*Top a clout (a handkerchief) or other article is to draw a corner or an end to the top of the pocket in readiness for removal at a favourable moment: o. (—1812); slightly ob. Vaux.


top-drawing-room. An attic or garret: London lower-classes' jocular (—1899). Ware.


top-tenero, seller. A seller of last dying speeches: ca. 1830-70: resp. o. and (low) s. Ex top, n. 3.

top-gob. A pot-boy: o. (—1857); ob. 'Ducange Anglicus.' Complete back s. would be: top-gob.

top-hat. A tall or high hat (esp. as for formal occasions): coll.: from ca. 1880. Miss Braddon, 1881 (O.E.D.). Suggested by toppar, 2, q.v.


top-hole, adj. Excellent; 'splendid', 'topping' : 1908, E. V. Lucas, 'A Top-hole Idea,' but adumbrated by Conan Doyle, 1899, as up to the top-hole, though this may be considered a variant (↑ by 1930, and, indeed, ob. by 1915). O.E.D. On top-notch.

top-joint (pron. jint). A pint (of beer): rhyming s. (—1857); ob. 'Ducange Anglicus.' Cf. top-o'rees, q.v.

top lights l. blast your. Blast your eyes: nautical: from ca. 1780; ob. Grose, 3rd ed.
top line, sweat on the. See sweat on...
top-lofty, toplofty; toploftical. Haughty; 'high and mighty'; highflutin': coll.: resp. mid-C. 19–20 and 1823; both slightly ob. (O.E.D.)
top of Rome. (A) home: rhyming s. (–1857); ob. 'Dawange Angels.'
top of the bill. First-rate; the best of all: coll.: C. 20 (1934), "'She's wonderful,' I breathed. 'Marvellous. Top of the bill, in fact.'") Ex theatrical and music-hall advertisements, 'stars' being at the top. Cf. S.E. top-liner.
top of the house (or shop). No. 99 in the game of House: C. 20: coll., now verging on j. F. & Gibbons; B. & F. Also, esp. among soldiers with service in India, top of the bleeding bungalow (Frank Richards, Old-Soldier Sahib, 1936).
top of the shop. See top of the house.
top of the world, (sit) on. (To be) prospering, prosperous; esp. to be it and show it, to be very confident and high-spirited: U.S., anglicised ca. 1850. Cf. take pride, q.v.
top off or up. To finish off or up; to conclude: coll.: both from ca. 1835, Newman in 1836 having up, Dana up (printed 1840, known earlier). O.E.D. ed. 2. To put the finishing touch to: coll.: from ca. 1870. Both senses derive ex top (or top up), to put the top on, to crown.—3. (Only top off.) 'To knock down; to assault,' C. J. Dennis: Australian c. > low s. (–1916).
top (on) top up one's fruit, punnet, etc. To place the best fruit at the top of one's basket, punnet, etc.: garden-produce market: from mid-1860's. O.E.D. Cf. topppers, which prob. suggested it.
top-ropes, away away on all. To live extravagantly or riotously: nautical coll: of ca. 1810–1900. Ex fig. essay (incorrectly swing) on all t.-r., to go to all lengths. (O.E.D.)—Hence, 2. (say all top-ropes.) To give oneself airs: nautical: late C. 19–20: ob. Cf. top-heavies, q.v.
top-sawyer. A coltar: tailors: from ca. 1870; ob. —2. The sense, 'the best man; one in a superior position,' may orig. (–1823) have been s. > coll. >, by 1860, S.E. Egan's Grose. Ex the timber trade, where he 'who works the upper handle of a pit-saw' gets a much higher wage than those beneath him. (O.E.D.)—3. Hence, the favourite (horse): turf coll. (–1920). Manchon.
top-seller. See top-fencer.
top-shuffle. To shuffle the half of a pack over the upper half without disturbing it,' F. & H.: gaming s. (–1904) > j.
top ... tail. See tail, top ...
top the officer. 'To arrogate superiority,' Smyth: nautical: 1833, Marryat. D.E.D.
top up. See top one's fruit.—2. See top off.
top upon. See top, v. 1 and 2.
top with the best of luck l. over the. An officers' and sergeant-majors' c.p. to the men as they leave the trench in attack: 1916–18. B. & P. Cf. top, go over the.—2. Hence, from 1919, often fig. among ex-service men; ob.
top-yob. A pot-boy: back s. (–1859); ob. H., 1st ed.
top your boom! Go away! : a nautical c.p. addressed to a man, esp. 'when he has forced his company where he was not invited': late C. 19–20. Bowen.

topos. A variant of pros. n.: English under-graduates (–1864); ob. Ex Gr. vóros, a place.

topper, v. To knock on the head; to kill thus: from late 1860's; slightly ob. E. Farmer, 1869 (O.E.D.). Ex toppper, n., 3, q.v.

toppers. Large, fine fruit (esp. if strawberries) luring one from their display-point at basket- or punnet-top: 1839, Mogridge (O.E.D.). Because they are at the top. Cf. top one's fruit, q.v.
topping. A lower-class coll. variant (–1923) of the preceding. Manchon. An extension of the S.E. sense, a top layer.
topping, adj. In c., only in topping cheat and cope and fellow, q.v. —2. Excellent in number, quantity, or quality; tip-top: from ca. 1830: coll. >, ca. 1890, s. G., 1822 (O.E.D.); Clough, 1860, 'Shady in Latin, said Lindsay, but topping in Plays and Aldrich.' Ex topping, eminent.—3. Hence, as an adv.: mid-C. 19–20.

*topping cheat; t.o. A galloway (gen. the t. c.): c. mid C. 17–early 19. Coles, 1876; B.E. Grose. Ex cheat, chete, a thing; and cf. top, v., 4, and:
topping cope or fellow. A hangman: resp. c., mid C. 17–mid 19 (Coles, B.E. and Grose); (low) s., late C. 19–mid–19 (B.E.). The latter puts the lit. sense, a prominent person. Cf. topping cheat and topsman, q.v.
topping man, as opp. topping fellow (in lit. sense), is a rich man; prob. the s. of a London social class or convivial set: ca. 1788–1800. Grose, 3rd ed.

*tops and bottoms, play at.* To copulate: mid-C. 19–20; ob. Anatomical pun.

top sail, pay one's debts with the. (Of a sailor) to go to sea having left his debts unpaid: nautical: ca. 1793–1825. Grose, 2nd ed., who adds, 'So soldiers are said to pay off their scores with the drum; that is, by marching away ;' same period, but chiefly military.

topseal. A coll. nautical variant (–1887) of *topsail.* Baumann.

topside. Fig., on top; in control: coll.: from late 1890's. O.E.D.


Topsy. William Morris. 'At Oxford [1853–6] he was given the nickname of "Topsy", after the character in Uncle Tom's Cabin, owing to his conspicuously thick mop of hair, and later he was always known as "Topsy" or "Top" to his intimates,' Montague Weekley, in his biography of William Morris, 1934.


tor-locular. Feminine bust, esp. if somewhat exposed: theatrical (–1900); ob. Ware. Perhaps ex dairies via dial. tooral-ooral (merry with drink), itself ex truly rural used as a test for drunkenness (E.D.D.).


torn it!, that's. That has spoiled it, ruined everything: a. (orig. low): 1909, 'Ian Hay' (O.E.D., sup.). Rare in other parts of the v. Cf. the Northern proverbial *the swine's run through it,* of anything—orig. and esp. a marriage—ruined by bad luck, and tear one's seat, q.v.


Torpid. See *toter 4.*


Torricel-shell. The pronunciation *torte(r)-shell* is coll.; both a's should be sounded.


*torso-truck.* A hospital trolley (bearing lancets, fomentations, etc., etc.): military: 1915; ob. B. & P.

Tory. (Despite F. & H., all senses are S.E. except these two —) One of those who, in 1770–80, opposed the exclusion of James from the English crown: a nickname in use among the Exclusionists; rare after C. 17. Cf. *Tantiy* and see esp. Roger North's *Examen,* II, v., § 9. F. & H.; O.E.D. Ex *Tory,* a rapparee or outlaw and itself ex an Irish word = "a pursuer". Cf. *whig,* q.v.—2. Hence, a Conservative: coll.: from ca. 1830, when *Conservative* superseded *Tory* as the official and formal name for a member of the traditionalist party. (The same holds of *Tory* used as an adj.)

Tory Rory. A London nickname given, ca. 1780–1845, to those who wore their hats fiercely cocked (Ware).


tosh-can.—pan. See *tosh,* n., 3.—tosh-pond, the bathing pond: Royal Military Academy: from 1880's. Ex *tosh,* n., 3.


totheseroon. A variant of *fusheeron.*


toss, argue the. See argue the *toss*—toss, take a. See take a toss.

toss in the towel. An Australian coll. variant of *rag, sky the.* C. J. Dennis.

toss it up airy. To 'show off,' put on 'side' —lower classes (—1923). Manchon.

toss-up. An even chance: coll.: 1809, Malkin, 'It is a toss up who fails and who succeeds: the wit of to-day is the blockhead of to-morrow.' Ex toss-up, the 'skying of a coin.

tossaroon. See tusseroon.


tost. See toast. (B.E.'s spelling).—2. A corruption of toss (v.): C. 17. O.E.D.

tostificated. Drunk: late C. 19–20; ob. Elaboration of dial. tosticated (i.e. corrupt intercalated).

tot. The sum-total of an addition, an addition sum: coll.: from 1870's. Perhaps imm. ex tot-up, n., q.v.; ultimately ex total, less prob. ex L. totum, the whole. Cf. tots, long, q.v.—2. A very young or small child: dial. and coll.: 1728, Ramsay. Cf. Danish tomme-ltot, Tom Thumb (O.E.D.). Gen. tiny or wee tot.—3. hence, a (very) small drinking- vessel, esp. a child's mug or a tin mug: dial. (— 1828).—2, by 1840, coll. O.E.D.—4. (Perhaps ex sense 2; prob. ex sense 3.) A very small quantity, esp. of liquor: dial. (— 1828).—2, by 1850, coll., as in Whyte-Melville, 1868, 'He . . . often found himself pining for . . . the camp-fires, the fragrant fumes . . . , and the tot of rum.'—5. A bone; hence, anything worth taking from a dustbin or a refuse heap; but esp. a rag, as in The Gilt Kid, 1930: dust-heap pickers', hence rag- and-bone men's: from early 1870's. H., 6th ed. Perhaps on tot, a rag, = the suggestion coming from the juxtaposition in rag-and-bone. Hence tot-picker (— 1874) or -raker (— 1904) or -hunter (— 1909), and totter (— 1891), such a scavenger, esp. if illicit, and totting (— 1874), such scavenging: H., F. & H., Ware, O.E.D.—6. See tot, n., 2.

tot, v.t. To add (orig. together) to ascertain the total of: coll.: ca. 1700, H. Brooke; slightly ob. Ex total or at as abbr. total or totum: cf. tot, n., 1.—2. Hence, tot up, to ascertain (esp. expeditiously) the total of: from mid-1830's. O.E.D.—3. Hence, vbl.n. totting-up, totting: coll.: resp. ca. 1820, 1860.—4. Hence, v.i., to amount; often constructed with to. Coll.: 1882, Besant, 'I . . . wondered how much it would tot up to,' O.E.D.—5. To drink drams: mid C. 19–20. Ex tot, n., 4.

tot. To it: when not poetical, it is, in mid C. 19–20, coll.


tot-hunter, -picker or -raker. See tot, n., 5.

tot-hunting. 'Scouring the streets in search of pretty girls': low (— 1909). Ware. Cf. Tottie, 2, q.v.


tote; occ. tot. A hard drinker: ca. 1870, a music-hall song entitled 'Hasn't Got over It Yet,' 'As well we'd another old shunt.| By all of his mates called the Tote, | So named on account of the rum | He constantly put down his throat.' Perhaps punning tote, total, and, tot, n., 4; perhaps ex: — 2. (Occ. tot.) A total abstainer: low coll.: prob. from late 1860's, but not irrefutably recorded before 1887 (O.E.D.). The music-hall song Paper and Tote, ca. 1890, has: 'You'll always find the sober Tote | With a few pounds at command.' F. & H.—3. A totalisator: from ca. 1890: Australian coll.: ca. 1901, gen. British coll. Kinglake, 1891 (O.E.D.). Cf. tote-shop.

*tote. A C. 17 variant of touter, a spy: c.: 1633, Jonson.

tother, t'other. See tone, t'one, which cf. tother, one with. Copulation: 1 C. 18–20; ob. Rather coll. than n.

tothing from which, tell. (Gen. in negative). To distinguish between two persons or things: coll.: late C. 19–20. Baumann, 1887. A jocular manipulation of tell one from the other.


toher-sider, or as one word. A convict: coll. of Victoria, Australia: ca. 1860–1905. With reference to Sydney, where stood the earliest penal settlement: also Sydney-bird or -sider. The rivalry between Melbourne and Sydney, esp., now takes, and has long taken, the form of an exchange of our 'Arbour and stinking Yarra' — 2. One from the other side of Australia, esp. a Westerner: late C. 19–20: Australian coll.: 1925, S.E.

toherum. A preparatory school; a private school: Charterhouse: late C. 19–20. I.e. the other one (one's former school). Cf. tother school, q.v.


tots, the Old. The 17th Lancers; military: from ca. 1870; ob. Perhaps ex the regimental badge of skull and crossbones, which certainly engendered the synonymous Death and Glory Boys. toter. See tot, n., 5.


touch

To receive (money), draw (it): mid-C. 17–20: S.E. until C. 19, then coll.; in C. 20, s. Cf. Fr. toucher de l'argent. —1. Hence, to steal: c.: late C. 19–20. Holman, 1786, "I could not go abroad without her, so I kept her closet." In C. 200, often v., "to make a haul or bring off a coup" (Charles E. Leach). Cf. sense 4. —3. To approach (a person) for money, to get from (a person) the money one asks (for) ; coll.: 1760. C. Johnston, 1760, "I am quite broke up; his grace has touched me for five hundred," O.E.D. In late C. 19–20, for things other than money. —4. To rob (a person ; for, of the article concerned) ; c.: mid-C. 19–20. Price, in Australian a. or low s. (— 1904), to act unfairly towards, to cheat, to swindle. F. & H.—6. The sense "to arrest," ca. 1780–1850, may, as the O.E.D. has it, be S.E.; or it may, as Grose, 1st ed. implies, be coll. or s.—7. To rival, compare with, equal (in ability) ; coll.: 1838. Dickens, "Wasn't he always top-sawyer among you all? Is there any one of you that could touch him, or come near him?" Ex touch, to reach, get as far as.

touch bone and whistle. "Any one having broken wind backwards, according to the vulgar law, may be pinched by any of the company till he has touched bone (i.e. his teeth) and whistled," Grose, 2nd ed. Often in the imperative. From late 1780’s to mid-C. 19.

touch bun for luck. See bun.


touch for. See touch, v., 3, 4. To get, incur, catch (gen. something unpleasant) : from ca. 1910.


touch me. A shilling : from ca. 1880; ob. Abbr. touch me on the nob, a 'bob,' rhyming s. of ca. 1870–90. F. & H., 1904, has touch-my-nob, a bastard or composite form. The touch-me forms are recorded in a Ms. note in the B.M. copy of H., 5th ed.

touch of Caruso. 'A turn or two astern on the engines': nautical (officers) : from ca. 1910; ob. Ironic ex the great singer.

touch of the tar-brush, a. A pejorative c.p. applied to 'the naval officer who is primarily an efficient seaman': mid-C. 19–20. Bowen. Ex the constant use of tar on a ship.


touch-trap. The penis : low coll. opp. touch-hole, q.v.


Touch with a pair of tongs, not to. (Gen. I., etc., would not.) To touch on no account ; coll. : from 1630's. Clarke, 1639; Fuller, 1732; 1876, Blackmore. (Apperson). Cf. . . with a barge-pole.


touched, (slightly) insane, is, despite gen. opinion, S.E. It abbr. touched in the head, ex S.E. touch, to affect mentally, to taint.—2. (Of vegetables, fruit) beginning to go bad; defective : green-grocers' coll. (— 1887). Baumann.

toucher. A(n instance of) close contact, a tight fit : dial. (— 1828) >, by 1840, coll. Thus to a toucher, exactly. E.D.D.—Hence, 2, as near or nigh as a toucher, almost, very nearly : 1840, J. T. Hewlett (O.E.D.); H., 1st ed. Slightly ob. Orig. a touching term, ex touching without disaster : H., 5th ed.


Dot, Dorothy, or ex tottie, y, a little child : perhaps influenced by titty, q.v.

Tottie all-colours. A brightly dressed young woman (of the streets) : low London (— 1909). Ware. Cf.:

Tottie one-long. 'An asthmatic, or consumptive young person who, for good or bad, thinks herself somebody' : low urban (— 1900). Ware. See Tottie, 19, 3.

totting. See tot, n., 5.—2. See tot, v., 3. Also totting-up: ibid.


Totty. See Tottie.

touch. Anything that will, at a stated price, interest customers at (about) that price ; from ca. 1710; coll. >, in mid-C. 19, s. Swift, 1712, 'I desire you to print in such a form, as in the booksellers' phrase will make a sixpenny touch' ; Sir Erasmus Philips, in his Diary, Sept. 22, 1720, 'At night went to the ball at the Angel. A guinea touch' ; H., 3rd ed. (1864). 'Sometimes said of a woman to imply her worthlessness, as, "Only a half-crown touch' " Lit., something that will touch, appeal to.—2. At Eton (— 1864), a present of money, a tip : H., 3rd ed. Cf. sense 6.—5. A theft, esp. by pocket-picking: low s. bordering on c. : 1888. 'Rolf Boldrewood'. O.E.D. (In C. 20 c., an illicit haul).—4. Hence, the obtaining of money from a person, e.g. by a loan : from ca. 1890.—5. Hence, the sum of money obtained at one time, e.g. by caddying or theft: low: C. 20.—6. Manner; mode; fashion ; C. J. Dennis: Australian coll. : C. 20. Cf. sense 1.—7. Cognate is the English low s. sense (— 1923), 'sort of thing,' as in 'Don't come that touch on (or with) me!' Manchester.—8. 'In these rounds or . . . 'walks,' we have our 'touches' —regular places of call where we pick up letters and, in certain cases, leave them, from 'You're in My Bag!' by a Postman, in The Passing Show, Dec. 24, 1932.

TOTTIE. All-Colours. -- 903 --

TOTTIE ALL-COLOURS.
touche, v.t. To support, bear, face up to (esp. a difficulty, a hardship): Canadian: from ca. 1905. John Beames, An Army without Banners, 1930. Prob. ex U.S. tough it, to rough it.

tough, v.t. To raise difficulties; take excessive pains: coll.: late C. 19-20; ob.
tough as a jockey's tail-end—old Nick—as shoe-leather. Anglo-Irish phrases (the first, s.; the other two, coll.) applied to a person who is a 'hard case'; resp. C. 20, late C. 19-20, and mid-C. 19-20.
tough gut, or tough-gut. A tough, i.e. hardy, fellow: Canadian men's (— 1932). John Beames.
tough-yarn. A long story. Egans's Grove: c. (— 1823); † by 1890, by which it meant a 'tall story': nautical (Bowen).

Toughs. See Old Toughs, the.

tour; also touze, tower, towre. To watch closely; spy on: c. of ca. 1565-1650. Harman, 1657. Prob. unconnected with S.E. twire (v.i. only), to peer, peer. Possibly—as Grove (1st ed., at touning) suggests—cognate with later c. tout, v.i. and t. (q.v.); more prob. with tower, to fly up, as a hawk does, in order to (have the advantage of and then) swoop down on the prey.
tout. (Also touze; touze, c. 15-16.) The posteriors or rump: C. 14-20: S.E. until C. 15, then †; used by Thoburn, Thos. Sheperd, Th. Witherby (v.1955). Obs. except as a spy (C. 20: c.). Ex tout, v., 1—3. Hence, 'a look out house, or eminence', Grove, 1st ed., c. of ca. 1780-1850.—4. As a solicitor of custom for tradesmen, etc., and 5, as a racing tooter, tout is mid-C. 19-20: both may orig. have been s. or coll., but the former was S.E. by 1850, the latter by 1910, at latest. See R. L. (1812) ob. Vaux, 'A strong tout, is strict observation, or eye, upon any proceedings, or persons.' Exp. in keep tout (— 1812) or, occ. keep the tout (1834, Ainsworth: O.E.D.), to keep watch, esp. in an illicit activity. Ex sense 3.

tout, v.t. To be on the look-out, to watch very carefully: c. of mid C. 17—mid-19, and in C. 19 only in literary revival. Coles, B.E., Grose. Ex C. 15—17 S.E. tout, to peer or peer. Cf. tour, q.v.—2. V.t., to watch, spy on: mid C. 17—20: c. until C. 19, then low s. until mid-C. 19, then s. with esp. reference to a racing tout's activities. Coles, B.E., Vaux.—3. The racing sense (from ca. 1812) may have been s., but is gen. considered as S.E.; the same applies to tout, v.t., to seek busily for trade (from ca. 1790). O.E.D.
tout, keep (the) and tout, strong. See tout, n., c. tout droit. See hit of.—toute. See tout, n.
touter. A thieves' look-out man: c. or low s.: 1844, Dickens (O.E.D.); ob. A rare variant of tout, n., 2, q.v.
touting (or footing)—ken. A tavern, a beer-shop; a tavern-bar: c. (— 1796); † by 1850. Coles, B.E., Grose. Ex tout, tout, to drink copiously. (O.E.D.)
touzery or towzery gang. the. Mock-suction swindlers: London low: from ca. 1870; ob. H., 5th ed. 'They hire sale-rooms, usually in the suburbs, and advertise their ventures as . . . 'Important Sales of Bankrupts Stock', etc.; F. & H. Perhaps ex touse (— toe), horse-play, a 'row', or touse (— toe), to abuse or maltreat.
tow out. To decoy; to distract the attention of (a person) and thus assist a confederate in robbery: c. of ca. 1810—50. Vaux.
tow-Pows, the. The Grenadier Guards: military (— 1864); ob. H., 3rd ed. Ultimately ex the busbies they wear.
tow-rag. The female breast: West Yorkshire s. (— 1805), not dial. E.D.D.
tow-street. To 'get (a person) in a line', i.e. to decoy him: c. (— 1823); † by 1890. Egans's Grove. toward you, I looks. See looks towards.
towel (rare); oaken towel. (Esp. rub one down with an oaken towel, to cudgel or beat him.) A stick or cudgel: resp. 1766 (Trotterly) and 1789. Ob. Ex tout, v. 2. Lead (bashfully) lenient. Towel. A bullet: 1812, J. & H. Smith, 'Make Nunkly surrender his dibs, Rub his pate with a pair of lead towels'; ob. by 1900, virtually † by 1930.
towel, v. To cudgel; to thrash: J. Dunton, 1705 (O.E.D.). For semantics, note the gen. ridiculed dry-rub etymology of drub.
towel, sky the. See sky the towel.
towelling. A 'drubbing or thrashing': 1851, Mayhew, 'I got a towelling, but it did not do me much good.' Ex preceding. Cf. towel, n., q.v.
tower. Clipped money: c. of C. 18—early 19. A New Canting Dict., 1725; Grose, 1st ed. Ex, and gen. in, they have been round the Tower with it, 'that Piece of Money has been Clips', B.B.; a late
C. 17–early 19 c.p. of the underworld. App. Tower Hill and, in fact, the whole neighbourhood of the Tower of London were rough, for cf. Tower-Hill play.

*tower, towre, v. See tour.

Tower Bridge, the. 'The huge pit-head mine structure at Loos': late 1915–18. F. & Gibbons. Ex a fancied resemblance to the Tower Bridge in London.

Tower Hill, preach on. To be hanged: C. 16. Skepton in Magnificence. Tower Hill was long the place of execution in London. Cf. Tyburn phrases.

*Tower-Hill play. 'A slap on the Face and a kick on the Breech', B.E.: c.: late C. 17–18. Grose, 1st ed. Cf. tower, n., q.v., and:


town or Town, as in go to, leave, t. or T. London: coll.: C. 18–20.—(town.) A halfpenny: rhyming s. (—1909) on brown, n. Ware.

*town, in; town, out of. See in town and out of town.

town-bull, a wench, is rather S.E. than coll. or s., but perhaps as lawless as a town-bull (a notable wench: late C. 17–early 19) and roar like a town-bull, to bellow (late C. 18–mid-19) are coll. (B.E.; Grose.) Cf. Ray, 1678, then the town-bull is a bachelor, i.e. 'as soon as such an one', Apperson: a c.p.t. by 1850.—2. A harlot's bully: low (—1929). Manchon.

town-lout. A scholar living at home in the town; Rugby School: from ca. 1860; ob. H., 3rd ed. Cf. town(e)y.

town red, paint the. See red.

townier. A s. variant of S.E. townes: ca. 1855–1916. F. & H.


towns and cities. See thousand pities.—towne. See towre.

towre. See towr.—towery gang. See towery gang.

tox. To intoxicate, gen. in pl.pladj., toxed, tozing: 1830's. Heywood. O.E.D.


*toy. A watch: c. (—1777); slightly ob. Horsey, Jottings from Jail, 1877. Hence, togeth., putting, a watch-snatcher (Arthur Morrison, 1896: O.E.D.), watch-stealing; toy and tackle, a watch and chain (see tackle, n.): a red toy is a gold watch (see red, c. adj.), while a white toy is a silver one.


toy-time. Evening preparation: Winchester: from ca. 1860. Ex:

toy. A bureau, esp. in the form of desk and bookcase combined: Winchester: from ca. 1860. Ironically ex toy, a trinket or knick-knack.

tra-la-la ! Good-bye!: s.p.,—slightly contemptuous and not too polite,—of ca. 1830–90. Ware. 'The phrase took its rise with a comic singer named Henri Clarke, whose speciality was imitating Parisians.' This being so, Clarke almost certainly knew the Fr. s. sense of tra-la-la (the posterior): cf., therefore, kiss my —.

traces, kick over the. See kick.

treachitis. Incorrect for trachitis: from ca. 1840. O.E.D.


track. Sol. for (a) track; likewise for t'rack, v.—2. (Also trag.) A quart: back s. (—1859). H., 1st ed. Thus: trauq > traq > trag or trak > track.

*track, v. See preceding. 1.—2. track up the dancers, to go, esp. if quickly, upstairs: c. (—1771); † by 1850. Head, B.E., Grose. Ex † S.E. track, to go.

track, inside. The truth: sporting s. > coll.: from ca. 1860; ob. Cf. have the inside running, i.e. an advantage, and inside information, valuable 'tipe':


tracile. Tractive: catchareshis: 1839. O.E.D.


trade-mark. A scratch on the face; esp. in draw, leave, or put one's trade-mark on one or one's ace or down one's face, to claw the face. Chiefly of women: (low) coll.: from early 1870's. Anon. music-hall song, Father, Take A Run /, ca. 1875.

trader. A harlot: ca. 1680–1820. Radcliffe, 1682, she-trader, a variant. Also trading dame, as in Cotton, 1678. Cf. the trade at trade, n., 2.

Trades Union, the. The 1st Dragon Guards: military: ca. 1830–1914. At one time many of the officers were—horrible dictu—sons of tradersmen (cf. the snobbery and arrogance of temporary gentlemen in G.W.). F. & Gibbons, however, derive it 'from the K.D.G.'s being constantly employed in suppressing Trade Union disturbances in Lancashire and the Midlands between 1822–34'.

trading dame. See trader.

trading justices. Such low fellows as, 'smuggled into the commission of the peace', live 'by fomenting disputes, granting warrants and otherwise retailing justice', Grose, 3rd ed.: coll.: ca. 1785–1840.


traf. A whore: c. of late C. 16–early 17. Greene, 1691 (traffique). Ex the large amount of business she plies.—2. Wireless messages sent or received: wireless operators' (esp. at sea) coll.: from ca. 1926. Bowen.

Trathy. The Trafalgar (ship): naval (—1909); ob. Ware.

trag. See track, n., 2.

tragedy Jack. A heavy tragedian; pejorative theatrical: from ca. 1875; ob.

trail. A befouling; rare coll.: 1847, C. Brontë (see next entry); ob.

trail, v. To quiz or befool: coll.: from ca. 1845. C. Brontë, 1847, 'She was (what is vernacularly
termed) trailling Mrs Dent; that is, playing on the ignorance; her trail might be clever, but... decidedly not good-natured'; Couslon Kernahan, 1900, 'To see the Ismamites "trail" a sufferer from "swelled head" is to undergo inoculation against that fell malady.' Ex trail, to draw (a person) out or on.


.trailly. Slovenly; weak, languid: dial. (<1851) >, by 1860. coll. O.E.D.

.train. To consort: coll.: from ca. 1850; slightly ob. Cf. tag about (with) and the C. 17 S.E. train, to walk in a notable's retinue.—2. Also train ft. To travel by train: coll.: (<1887). Baumann (train 4); 1888, The Pall Mag. Gazette, April 2 (O.E.D.).

trains | go and play | also... with yourself! Also run away and play trains! A derisive c.p. of dismissal: C. 20. Cf. run away and play marbles! q.v.

traipse. See trapes.

trai tors at table, there are. A c.p. applied to a loaf of bread turned the wrong side upwards: mid-C. 17—19. Ray, 1785: 'Are there traitors at the table that the loaf is turned wrong side upwards?'


tram-lines. The 4½ ft.-wide area on each side of a (double) lawn-tennis court; sporting: from ca. 1929. Esp. down the tram-lines, i.e. more or less along this strip of the court.

tramp. A journey on foot; a long, tiring, or arduous walk or march; a 'hike': coll.: 1786, Burns; 1898, J. Hutchinson, 'Exhausted by a long tramp in hot weather'. O.E.D. Ex tramp, to walk, to walk steadily.

tramp, v. To go on a walking excursion, a 'hike': coll.: mid-C. 19—20. Also tramp it—2. To proceed as a tramp: coll.: (1891). The Century Dict.—3. To drive out of or into some stated condition by tramping, vigorous walking; coll.: 1863, Kane, 'Tramping the cold out of my joints', O.E.D.—4. To make a voyage by tramp steamer; coll.: 1899 (O.E.D.)—5. Hence, v.t., to run (such a steamer): coll.: 1899, likewise in Cutillofe Hyne (ibid.)—6. To run over (e.g. an animal); to smash (e.g. a gate): South African coll. (<1919) >, by 1950, 'standard'. Influenced by the Cape Dutch trap, to ride or drive over', Pettman.

tramping the ties. Trespassing on the railways: Canadian: late C. 19—20. O.E.D. (Sup.). The ties are the sleepers of a railway track.


transfer. To steal: Society: ca. 1895—1915. Ware. On convey. Cf.:
me, has failed; it's no go! a c.p. of ca. 1870-1910. Ex trap, i. g.v., with an allusion to the fallen door of a trap for birds, etc.

**trap stick.** The penis: ca. 1670-1000. Cotton; 'Burlesque' Bridges. Ex the lit. sense.--2. In pl., the legs; esp. thin legs: ca. 1750-1850. Grose, 1st ed., 'From the sticks with which boys play at trap ball.'

*trap; trapan; trapan* in these senses is rare and not earlier than ca. 1850. 'He that draws in or hoodwicks a Cull, and Bites—"swindles"—him,' B.E.; c, of ca. 1640-1830. Prob. ex (to) trap, with a c. disguise-suffix (cf. *mans*).--2. Hence, a deceitful or fraudulent trick or stratagem: (orig. low) s.: ca. 1860-1830.


trapes; occ. trapse; often trapes. A slavonly or slatternly fashion; to coll. and (in late 18, 19-20, nothing but) dial. ca. 1673, Cotton, 'I had not car'd [If Pallas here had been prefer'd]; But to bestow it on that Trapes, It made me;' the other two forms, 19, 20-20, though *trapse* is almost †. Ex *trapes*, v., 1, q.v.—2. (Samo origin.) A going or wandering in listless or slavonly fashion; a wearisome or disagreeable tramp; coll. and dial.: 1852, Mrs Henry Wood, 'It's such a toil and a trapes up them two pair of stairs.'

trapes; trapse. (In C. 18-20, occ. trape). Dial. has many variants, varying from *trapse* to *trapse* and *trapses*. To walk untidily, listlessly, aimlessly; gad about: coll.: 1593, Bulson implies it in 'This trapeing to and fro,' O.E.D.; 1710-11, March 2, Swift, 'I was traping to-day with your Mr Sterne,' ilid. Perhaps cognate with *trapse* (to walk idly to and fro), which prob. derives ex medieval Dutch *truppen*, to tread (O.E.D.).--2. Hence, to trail, or hang, along or down; coll.: from ca. 1770; from late 19, only in dial.—3. (Ex sense 1.) V.t., to tramp over, tread or tramp (e.g. the fields): 1885, Hall Caine. O.E.D.

**traping, traping*; traping. n.: see trape, v., 1—2.

Adj., 1760, Foote, *traping*; idem.

**trapezhedron.** Incorrect for *trapezohedron*: 1828, Webster. O.E.D.

trapeze; trapez; slatternly: coll.: C. 18. Rowe, 1705 (O.E.D.). Ex *trapes*, n., 1, q.v.

*trapper.* A horse used in a 'trap' (q.v., sense 3); coll.: from early 1880’s. 'Of *swanner, busser, barber*, etc., on the model of "hunter";' F. & H.


*trappy.* Treacherous; trickily difficult; i.e. lit. or fig. containing a trap or traps: coll.: 1882, *The Daily Telegraph*, Nov. 13, 'The fences might have been increased in size, however, without being made trappy'; in cricket, of the ball: 1887 (Lewis).

**trapa.** Personal effects; belongings; baggage: coll.: 1813 (O.E.D.). Abbr. *trappings*.—2. Hence, in Australia, a 'swag' (q.v.); from late 1850’s. H., 2nd ed

*trapa.* See *trapes*.

*trash.* (Contempvously: cf. *dross, filthy lucre*.) Money: ca. 1590-1830. Greene, ca. 1691; 1809, *et al.* As the O.E.D. remarks, Shakespeare’s *Who steals my purse, steals trash* was prob. an operative factor.

**travelling money.** Felsted School: late C. 19—20.

**travelling.** To admit of, to bear, transportation: coll.: (Dec.) 1852, Bock’s *Florist*, 'Not ... good plants for exhibition, as they travel badly', O.E.D.—2. To go, move, fast; coll.: 1834, of a dog: *How he travels*, *K.D.D.*; 1904, F. & H. 'The motor travelled along, and no mistake.

**travelling on one’s props.** To leave luggage with the railway company as security against the travelling facilities granted, money lacking for the fares and freight, by the company: theatrical: late C. 19—20.

**travelling out of the record.** To wander from the point: coll.: from mid-1850’s; ob. Dickens in *Little Dorrit*. Cf. *off the map*.


**traveller, tip the.** See tip the *traveller*. (Oc. put the *traveller*: Manchon.)

**traveller’s tale or talent.** Exaggeration; romantic: ca. 1820-90. Ex preceding.

**travelling circus.** A group of machine-gamers moving from point to point; a staff tour of inspection of the trenches: military: 1915-18. F. & Gibbons. Cf. circus, q.v. [*Travelling language* is a C. 18 term—it occurs, e.g. in *Bampfyde-Moore Carew* for the s. of vagabonds and, to a less degree, of criminals.]

**travelling piquet.** A. coll. name, ca. 1785-1840, for 'a mode of amusing themselves, practised by two persons riding in a carriage, each reckoning towards his game—[app. 100 points]—the persons or animals that pass by on the side next them, according to the following estimation', which ranges from 'a man or woman walking'; 1 to 'a person riding a grey horse, with blue furniture; game.' Grose, 3rd ed.


**travelling Timkers, the.** The. 30th Regiment (Lancashire): military (—1909). Ware.

**traverse.** See cart, traverse this, and Tom Ox’s traverse—travista. See *come the travista*. 

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**TRAP-STICK**

907

**TRAVESE**

*tre-moon. An occ. variant of tree-moon.

*trey, trey. Three, whether as number or set: c. >, ca. 1910, low s.: from mid-1890's. Ex trey, trey, the 3 at dice or cards.—2. Hence (also trey, trey-bit), a threepenny piece: low: 1907 in O.E.D.; but prob. several years earlier.—3. trey soddy miles, threepence halfpenny; Partyarse and low London: late C. 19-20. Here, soddy = 1s. addi (see salary) and mits = 1s. mezzo, a half (see madina). — In pl. (trays), infantrymen: military: 1915; ob. F. & Gibbons. Ex their usefulness for carrying things. Cf. something to hang things on and Christmas tree. — 5. See tree-moon.

trey bon for the troops. (Very) good of a girl, attractive: military: 1915. B. & P. Ex Fr. tres bon; see also trey boes.


treacle. Thick, inferior port: from ca. 1780. Ex thick sediment.—2. Love-making, as in treacle moon, a honeymoon: coll.: 1815, Byron; ob. Ex sweetness.


tread, chuck a. (Of the male) to colt: low: from ca. 1860. Cf. treadle.

tread on the gas. See gas, step on the.

treader. (Gen. pl.) A shoe: low: from ca. 1900.


treasure-monger. A dynamiter: political: 1885-86. Ware.

treasure. (Of a person) a ‘gem’ or ‘jewel’: coll.: 1810, Lady Granville (O.E.D.). A certain lady calls all her maid-servants, irrespective of quality, ‘treasures’.


Trelie X's, the. The 30th Foot Regiment >, ca. 1890, the 1st Battalion of the East Lancashire Regiment: military: mid-C. 19-20; ob. Ex *XXX* in Roman numerals. Also The Three Tens and the Triple X’s.


treadle. See treacle.

*tree. Only as in treewings and tree-moon, q.q.v.

tree, v. To put in a difficulty; drive to the end of one’s resources: orig. (1818: Thornton) U.S., anglicised in the 1850’s as a coll. >, by 1880, S.E. Henry Kingsley, 1859, ‘It’s no use ... you are treated,’ O.E.D. Ex treeing an animal. Cf. tree, up a tree, bark up the wrong. See bark.


tree, up a. Cornered; done for; in a serious difficulty; penniless: coll.: U.S. (1825), anglicised ca. 1840, Thackeray in 1839 having ‘Up a tree, as the Americans say.’ Ex a hunted animal taking refuge in a tree. Also up the tree (Baumann) and up a tree for tempeuse.

*treemoon. Three months’ imprisonment: c.: mid-C. 19-20. ‘No. 747’ ( = year 1845). Also trey (or tray) of moones, often in C. 20, abbr. to tray or trey.

Tree of Knowlege. ‘The tree under which books, etc., are piled in the interval between morning school and [lunch].’ F. & H.: Charterhouse: from ca. 1800; ob. by 1900, † by 1920. Punning the lit. sense.

treer. ‘A boy who avoids organised sports, but plays a private game with one or two friends. [Presumably because played at the trees by the side of the ground]’ F. & H.: Durham School: ca. 1850-90.

trewins. Threepence: c.: late C. 17-20; ob. B.E. Cf. treewings, q.v. Ex *trin n.

trew. To depart: from ca. 1890: coll., orig. and mainly South African. Ex trek, to journey by ox-wagon, hence to migrate, — itself ex Dutch.

trebble, (all in a or all of a) (on) the trebble. Trembling, esp. with emotion: coll.: resp. 1719, ca. 1760 (Henry Brooks); 1800 (Lamb). O.E.D.

trembly. Tremulous; quivering: coll.: 1848, Dickens, ‘So trembly and shaky’, O.E.D.

tremendous. As a mere hyperbole or intensive (= astounding; immense): coll.: 1812, Southey, ‘A tremendous change has been going on.’ O.E.D. Cf. awful, terrible.—2. Extraordinary as regards some quality stated in the context: from ca. 1830, George Eliot, 1866, ‘A tremendous fellow at the classics’. O.E.D.


treemoror. A bed-pan: military: from 1915. B. & P.

* trepan. See trapan.


Trew John. See Traitun.
trey. See tray,—*trey(n) (=treyning-), treyning-cheat. See tren, v., &i, and treyning.

Triangle Dinks, the. See Diamond Dinks.

triangles; gen. the triangles. Delirium tremens: low (coll.); very ob. H. 3rd ed. A perversion of tremens, prob. on the trembles and perhaps also with an allusion to the percussive musical instrument; H., however, suggests that it is because, during 'd.t.'s, one sees everything 'out of the square'. Of heeby-jeebies, *jim-jams, jitters, and willies.


*treb. A prison: c.: late C. 17–early 19. Abbr. tribulation, as remarked by B.E., who implies a more gen. sense in 'He is in Treb. . . . he is laid by the Heels, or in a great deal of trouble.' Grose, 1st ed. Cf.: tribulation. 'The condition of being held in pawn'; ca. 1690–1780. Dryden. (O.E.D.)


*trick. A watch: c. of late C. 18–mid-19. Tufts, 1798 Ex trick, a small, esp. if cheap, toy or ornament, a trinket.—2. A person, esp. a child, that is alert and amusing: Australian and New Zealand coll.: late C. 19–20. trick, to the. To effect one's purpose, do what is necessary or desirable: coll. (—1812) >, by 1870 or so, S.E. Vaux; Egan's Grose.—2. Hence (absolutely), to get a woman with child: low coll.: from ca. 1830.


tricks, bag of. See bag of tricks.

tricks, been playing. Pregnant: euphemistic coll.: C. 19–20; ob.

tricks?, how's. How are you; how are things going?: C. 20. (Michael Harrison, 1935.) Ex cards.


*trier; *tryer (try-er). A player that perseveres in the attempt to win: cricket s. (1890) >, ca. 1905, Grose, 4th ed., *Century Dict.*

*trifa. See triphs.—trifing. See trifing.

*trig. A piece of stick or paper left in the front door; if still there the next day, it practically shows that the house is unoccupied. The act is, to trig the jigger (door): c. (—1612). Vaux. Ex trip, brake, a sprawl.—2. A hurried walk, a tramp from ca. 1880; dial. and coll. Cf. v., 1, q.v.—3. Trigonometry: coll., esp. schools' and universities': from not later than 1908 and prob. from mid-C. 19.

trig. v. Grose, 2nd ed., 'To trig it, to play truant': from late 1780's; slightly ob. Ex (S.E. > dial.) trig, to walk quickly: whence also trig, n., 2, q.v.—2. See trig, n., 1.—5. V.t. To pull the trigger of a camera in taking a snapshot: from ca. 1925. Collinson.

trig-hall. Open house; Liberty Hall: late C. 18–20; dial. and (low) coll., the latter t. by 1900. Grose's * Provincial Glossary; F. & H. Ex North Country dial. trig, to stuff, to cram, to fill up (esp. the stomach). (E.D.D.)

trigging, lay a man. To knock him down: ca. 1785–1850. Grose, 3rd ed. Perhaps ex the v. of trig of nippers; or ex trig, v., 1, q.v.

trigonometry; gen. commit t. Trigamy: jocular: C. 20.—2. Occ. bigamy (cf. eternal triangle).


trike. A tricycle; to ride a tricycle: (low) coll.: 1885 (O.E.D. Sup.); 1901, The Pall Mall Gazette, May 15, 'The commercial "trike" is, perhaps, the least supportable of the various tyrannies on wheels which it is the perambulating Londoner's lot to endure.' On bike, q.v.; cf. Fr. and English tricycle. Hence, trike, the rider of one, and triking, such cycling: coll.: from late 1880's. Barriere & Leland.


trilithonic. Trilithic: erroneous form; from the 1830's. O.E.D.


trim one's jacket. To trash a person: coll.: 1748, Smollett (O.E.D.). An elaboration of S.E. trim, to trash, with perhaps an allusion to trim, to decorate (a hat) or dress (hair): cf. dress down, q.v.

*trim the buff. (Absolutely.) To deflower, or merely to coit with, a woman: 1772, Bridges, 'And he . . . has liberty to take and trim | The buff of that bewitching brim,' i.e. harlot; ob. Ex buff, the human skin; and cf. trim one's jacket.

trimmier. A person who, a thing which, *trims or thrashes, lit. or fig.: e.g. a stiff letter, article, review; a strict disciplinarian; a redoubtable competitor, fighter, runner (human or animal); a severe fight, blow, run, etc.; an especially well-dressed ball at cricket; coll.: 1776, Foote, of a severe leading article; 1804, Nelson, of a letter—-as, in 1816, Scott; 1827, The Sporting Magazine, of a bound; 1832, P. Egan, 'At least a trimmer Dick sent down.'
—cf. 1890, 'Clean bowled by a trimmer'; F. & H.; O.E.D.; Lewis. Cf. the adj. in:

trimming, n. See trim, v.—2. Adj. Excellent, 'rattling'—coll.: 1778, the Earl of Carlisle, 'Such trimming gales as would make...a landsman...stare'; 1825, The Sporting Magazine, of a run with hounds; slightly ob. Cf. preceding entry. O.E.D.

trimmings. To a notable extent; excellently; coll.: 1789, A. C. Bowers, 'I had the gout trimming from O.E.D.; ob. Ex trimming, adj., q.v.; cf. trimmer.


*trim*; Tuabus: c. of mid-C. 17—18. Coles, 1876. Ex sense 2 of:

*trime.* To go: c. of C. 17—mid-19. Fletcher 1622; Scott. A survival from S.E. trine, to go, to march (C. 14—16), itself of Scandinavian origin. (O.E.D.)—2. V.i. and t., to hang: c. of ca. 1650—1840, but, like sense 1, ob. as early prob., as mid-C. 18. Harman, B.E., Groso. Also tryne, C. 16—17, and treyn(e), C. 17. Perhaps, as the O.E.D. observes, ex a shortening of trime to the cheats, to go to the gallows, to be hanged. trimgam tranqum, tringham tranqum. See trimkrum—trankum.

*trimming, trining, tryning.* An execution by hanging; see trine, v.—2.


trinity (or Trinity) kiss. 'A triple kiss—generally given by daughters and very young sons, when going to bed, to father and mother': Society ca. 1870—80. Ware.

trinkety; incorrectly trinkety. Of little importance or value: (rare) coll.: 1817, Scott. O.E.D. trimcum. See trimcum.

trimkmum—trankum; also tringham tranqum, tringham tranqum. A trinket (C. 18—20): a whim or fancy (late C. 17—early 19): s. >, early in C. 19, mainly dia. B.E., trimkmum—trimkmum, 'a Whim, or Maggot'; 1702, Steele, tringham tranqum, as adj.: 1718, Motteux, trimkmum—trimkmum. Reduplicated trimkmum (see at trimcum). Mostly O.E.D.


*trip.* Utter nonsense; very inferior writing, singing, acting, etc. etc.: from ca. 1890: coll. verging on S.E. Crockett, 1895, 'A song...worth a shopful of such "trip"', O.E.D. Ex the tripes as typical of inferior food, etc.—2. See tripes.—3. An occ. abbr. of tripes—bound, I. F. & Gibbons.—4. Tissues for microscopic examination: medical students (—1938). Slap, p. 193. Also meat.


*tripes*; 'blooming six feet of (or six blooming feet of),

A tall, solid policeman: low urban: from ca. 1880; ob. Ware.


tripes, up to. Worthless; thoroughly objectionable: lower classes: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Ex *trip.*


triper is an East London corruption (—1909) of *tripla*, q.v. Ware.

*tripes; tripe.* (Very rare, after C. 18, in the singular.) The intestines; the paunch containing them: mid-C. 15—20: S.E. until mid-C. 18, then coll.; in mid-C. 19—20, low coll. Grose, 1st ed. (tripes; tripes implied); Hood 1834, 'I'm as marciful as any on 'em—and I'll stick my knife in his tripes as says otherwise.'

*tripes and trillibubs or trullibubs.* A jeering nickname for a fat man: ca. 1780—1880. Grose, 1st ed. Lit., the entrails (of an animal). Cf. *frpe, bag of,* and Tripes, Mr Double, q.q.v.; see also tripes.

trihps or tria, ritually unclean (opp. kosher), is Hebrow; it can be considered as s. only when it is loosely applied by Gentiles to things other than food.

*triple tree.* A gallows: c. of ca. 1630—1750, then only archaisically. Randolph, ca. 1824; Brome, 1841; T. Brown, ca. 1700. Ex the three parts.

Triple X's, the. See *Treble X's, the.*

*tripy, come from.* To vault, tumble; perform spiritedly: s. (—1847); † by 1890. Halliwell. Ex performances of Moorish dancers.

*tripos.* The intestines; the paunch: c. (—1877). Baumann. On tripes (see tripes).

*tripos pup.* An 'undergrad' Cantab doing Honours: Cambridge undergraduates (—1887); ob. Ware.

triper. An excursionist: coll.: 1813, 'Trippers to the seaside for a week'. Also *cheap triper,* one who goes on a cheap trip: coll.: 1872. O.E.D.


*tripping—up.* The criminal practices in tripper—up, 1 and 2, q.q.v.

*tripquist.* A 'tripper' (q.v.): coll.: 1792 (O.E.D.); rare in C. 20; virtually † by 1930.

*tristem's knot,* Sir. A halter; esp. in the Sir Tristrem's knot, to hang: coll.: † C. 17—18. F. & H.

trichias, —s; or T. See triochia.—*tritrace. See troll.


*treco, the.* The *Trocadero* for the Music Hall now (1904) Restaurant, F. & H.; orig. and mostly London: from late 1890's. Cf. *the *Cf., the *Pav,* q.q.v.

trochulus, trochus are incorrect for *trochilus.* C. 18, C. 17—20. O.E.D.
troy. See trophy, 2.

Troyan. A roysterer, boon companion, a dissolute: C. 17-mid-18. Kemp, 1600; adumbrated in Shakespeare, 1588. Ex the fame of Troy.—2. Hence, a good fellow: coll.: from ca. 1660, though adumbrated in Kemp (as in 1); ob. Butler, 1683, 'True Trojans'; Scott, 1827, 'Trusty as a Trojan', true and trusty being the usual epithets: cf. trusty troth, q.v. O.E.D.—3. A brave, plucky, or energetic person (rarely of a woman); gen. in like a Trojan, very pluckily or, in C. 20 to 90, gen. energetically: coll.: 1838 (in Fraser's Magazine; 1841, in book form), Thackeray, 'He bore ... [the amputation] ... like a Trojan'; 1855, Dickens, 'He went on lying like a Trojan about the pony' (Apperson). Cf. like a trooper (at trooper).

*troil occurs in four phrases in Awdelay, 1661, as c. of ca. 1580-80—troll and troll by, one who, esteemed by none, esteems nobody;—perhaps ex C. 14-17 troll, to saunter or ramble; troll hazard of trace, one who follows his master 'as far as he may see him',—cf. trace = track(s), n.; t. h. of tritrace, 'he that goethgaping after his master', in reference to troy-trace, of obscure origin but connected, allusively, with try-to-trace; and troll with, one who, a servant, is not to be known from his master.—2. See trowl.

trollop. A woman, respectable, or otherwise: Oxford University and underworld coll.: from ca. 1923.

trollwag. Trousers: low: from ca. 1870; very ob. ? on bags, q.v.


troop. To march, walk, pass, in order: late C. 16-20: S.E. until mid-C. 20, then coll., though only just coll., as the O.E.D. makes quite clear. Troop away, off, etc. To depart: coll.: 1700, T. Brown, 'I thought 'twas time to troop off to an eating-house,' O.E.D.

*trooper. A half-crown: c.: late C. 17-early 19. B.E.; Grose. (? a 'brave' coin, or because it frequently formed part of a trooper's pay.)

trooper, like a. Much; hard; vigorously: coll.: 1727, swear like a trooper, the most frequent use; the O.E.D. records east like a trooper in 1812, lie ..., in 1852 but out, swear is ob. Cf. Trojan, 3, q.v., and see also swear like a cutler.

trooper's horse, you will die the death of a. A jocular c.p. = 'You will be hanged': ca. 1780-1850. Grose, 1st ed., 'That is with your shoes on'.

troops, the. We, us; I, me: military: from 1914. Esp. in that's the stuff to give the troops, that is what I (we) want or enjoy.

troozen. A col. spelling of trouzeau: late C. 19-20. (Francis Beeding, The One Sane Man, 1934.)


tropical. (Of language) blasphemous; obscene; from ca. 1920. Ex tropical, very hot.


troos; troos. Sort: back s. (-1859 in form trooseno: H., 1st ed.). Thus trooseno, lit. 'one sort', is used for a 'bad sort' (of day, coin, etc.), as also is dabbro, the more precise form of 'bad sort'.


*trot. A child learning to run: coll.: 1854, Thackeray, 'Ethel romped with the ... rosy little trots.' (Cf. toddles.) Hence, in late C. 19-20, trottle, a toddling child.—2. Hence, a small and/or young animal: coll.: from 1890's.—3. A walk; e.g. do a trot: from ca. 1875: London lower-classes' coll. >, ca. 1910, gen. Ware.—4. A succession of heads thrown at two-up: Australians' and New Zealanders': late C. 19-20. I.e. trot = a run.—6. See trots.

*trot. 'To steal in broad daylight': c.: from ca. 1860. F. & H.—2. To walk with short, quick steps in a small area: coll.: 1863, Mrs Cowden Clarke, 'She ... will keep her husband trotting,' O.E.D.—3. See trot out—round (or to)—and up. Trot, lie as fast as a dog can. To be a persistent liar: coll.: C. 19-20; ob.

trot it out! Lit., show it: to see, next sense 1.—2. Hence, speak: confess! from ca. 1890. Cf. speli it out / and cough it up /

trot out. To bring out (a person, hence an opinion, etc.) for inspection and/or approval; hence, to exhibit: coll.: 1838, Lyttton (O.E.D.); 1888, Christie Murray, 'They would sit for hours solemnly trotting out for one's other's admiration their commonplaces. Ex the leading out of a horse to show his paces.—2. Hence, to spend, as in trot out the pieces: (low) coll.: mid-C. 19-20.—3. Cf. trot out a song, to sing one: from ca. 1870. This trot is generic for do and it occurs in such phrases as trot out a speech. Equivalent also is trot it out / (q.v.), where the connexion with sense 1 is obvious.—4. To walk out with (a woman), lover-wise: 1888, 'John Strange Winter' (O.E.D.). Esp. trot out a judgy: low s. See judy. Cf. the analogous trout round.—6. trot out one's pussy (or feed it), to receive a man sexually: low: mid-C. 19-20. See pussly.

*trot round. To. To escort or conduct round or to a place: from the middle 1890's. 'Seton Merriken, 1898, 'Perhaps you'll trot us round the works,' O.E.D. Prob. a development from trot out, 4, q.v.

trot the ugly, Pope o' Rome. To side-track or dismis one's wife or other woman: low urban (mostly London): late C. 19-20. In transposed s., ugly is judgy (woman, girl), while Pope o' Rome is rhyming s. for home. (Ware.)


trot up. To bid against (a person), run up (a price): auctioneers' s. (-1864) >, ca. 1910, coll. H., 3rd ed. Cf. S.E. tro, to draw a person out, or on, in conversation in order to make him a butt.

trots. (Very rare in singular.) Feet: low London (-1909). Ware. Ex trooters.—2. (Rare in singular.) Policeman: lower classes': mid-C. 19-20; slightly ob. Because so much 'on the go' or trot. Ware.


trotter-boxes, gen. cases. Boots; shoes: low: mid-C. 19-20; 1820, Hood (O.E.D.), and Dickens in 1838—bozes is vouched for by F. & H.; both are
trotter. The human feet: jocular coll. verging on S.E.: late 17-20. B.E. has shake your trotters i., be gone! C. 19-20 variants are move your trotters i., and, nautical, box your trotters, but the earliest remains gen. Cf.: trotters at Beilby’s ball, shake one’s; sometimes with addition of where the sheriff pays the fiddlers. To be put in the stocks: low, bordering on c.: ca. 1780-1840. Grose, 1st ed., “Perhaps the Bilboas’ ball, i.e. the ball of fetters: fetters and stocks were anciently called the bilboes.” At Beilby’s ball, however, see another interpretation.

trot. See trot, n., and, trotty—trotting-cases. See trotter-boxes.


trouble. Imprisonment; arrest. Mostly in (be) in trouble, (be) in gaol: coll. in C. 19, s. in C. 19-20: recorded ca. 1560 (in Cavendish’s *Wolsey*), but app. then rare until C. 19. Cf. get into trouble, to be fined, arrested, imprisoned, transported: from ca. 1820. Prob. euphemistic.—2. As, certainly, is trouble, unmarried pregnancy: coll.: 1891, Hardy (O.E.D.)

trouble. To trouble oneself; to worry: coll.: 1890, Justin McCarthy; W. G. Smith, 1884, ‘Don’t trouble to bring back the boat.’ O.E.D. Ex trouble oneself, to take the trouble.

trouble and strife. A wife: rhyming s.: late C. 19-20. Cf. the C. 16 proverb, he that hath a wife hath strife.

troubled with corns, that horse is. I.e., foudered: c.p.: C. 19-20; ob.

troubled with the slops. (Of swimmer or boat) defeated: aquaticas (— 1909). Ware.


trouser, v. To put (money) into one’s trouser-pocket, hence to pocket (it): from ca. 1890.—2. Hence, to earn: cabiner’s (— 1892). *Labour Committee Glossary*, 1892. O.E.D. Cf. put down south, which trouser, 1, may have suggested.

(trousers) I, not in these. See boots I, not in these.

trouses. Trouser: sol.: mid-C. 19-20. Baumann. (Implied in round my or the houses.)

trout. Orig. and gen., truty (ca. 1681) or true (1832) trout, a good fellow (coll. Trojan, 2), a trusted servant or a confidential friend; Shadwell has your humble trout, your humble servant. S. of ca. 1600—1830: extant, however, in old trout, q.v. B.E.; Grose; O.E.D. Contrast (poor and queer) fish. Perhaps suggested by the alliteration of true Trojan (later, true Troyan).


trouer. See trouser, n.


“truck, v.; frequent as vb. n., trucking. Of obscure meaning; I hazard the guess that it signifies: I am going to, to keep buying things with more or less the same coins; or, to steal certain more useful or valuable articles while getting change for the purchase of lesser articles. C. of mid-C. 19-20; † by 1910. ‘No. 747.’
TRUMPET MOORE

Trumpet Moore. Moore the poet, who blew his own. Dawson.

trumpeter as an endearment = 'dear boy'. (Low) coll. of ca. 1870-1900. Baumann.

trumpeter, King of Spain's or Spanish. A braying ass: ca. 1780-1850. Grose, 1st ed. (K. of Spain's t.). Ex the pun, Don Key = donkey. Cf.: trumpeter, for he smells strongly, he would make a good. A c.p. applied to one with-fish breath, for he smells strongly being om. omitted: ca. 1785-1850. Grose, 2nd ed., where the second member is for he has a strong breath. Ex the pun, strong breath: good lungs. Cf. preceding.

trumpeter is dead, his (her, etc.). A c.p. applied to a person boasting or to a confirmed braggart: from ca. 1725; ob. Franklin, 1729; Grose, 2nd ed., in the orig. form, his . . . dead, he is therefore forced to sound his own trumpet, which supplies the 'stymology': but cf. also trumpeter, King of Spain's, q.v.

trumpetly, Trumpet-like; blaring; coll.: 1822, The Examiner. O.E.D.


truncheon. Stomach: West Yorkshire s. (- 1905), not dial. E.D.D., 'He filled his truncheon.'

trundle, the ob. coll. n. (1869; Lewis) of:

trundle, v.t. and i. To bowl; cricket coll.: 1849; cf. trundler, bowler, 1871, and trundling, n., bowling, 1861. Lewis. 'Orig. the ball was trundled along the ground.' Cf. wheel'em up and contrast trundling bowler.—2. See let'em trundle! trundler. See preceding.—2. In pl., peas: c. ca. 1670-1830. Coles, 1876; B.E.; Grose, 1st ed. Presumably because they roll along the ground. Cf.: trundling. See trundle, v.—2. trundling bowler: one who, bowling fast, makes the ball bound three or four times: cricketers' coll.: 1851; ↑ by 1890. Lewis.

*trundling-cheat. A wheeled vehicle, esp. cart or coach: 1630, Jonson; ↑ by 1700. Ex trundle, v.i., to roll along, + cheat, chetes, q.v.


trunk, how fares your old. A c.p. a jester at a bignosed man: ca. 1690-1850. B.E.; Grose, 1st ed. In allusion to an elephant's trunk.

trunk, shove a. 'To introduce oneself unasked into any place or company', Grose, 1st ed.: low: ca. 1780-1850.


trunkmaker's daughter,—all round St Paul's, not forgetting the. A book-world c.p. applied to unsaleable books: late C. 18—early 19. The Globe, July 1, 1890, 'By the trunkmaker was understood . . . the depository for unsaleable books,' O.E.D.; and St Paul's, then as now, was famed as a book-selling district.

trunks, live alone's. 'To be at a place for so short a time that it is not worth while to unpack; to live in a confined space, esp. a ship's cabin: coll. (—1831). Lyell.

Trunks. See trunk, 2.

trusted alone, he may be. He is very experienced or shrewd: ca. 1820-50. Egan's Grose. Rather sarcastic, the implication being that he may be so trusted to go anywhere without danger to himself.

trustee. An overcoat: Anglo-Irish coll.: 1804, Maria Edgeworth. I.e. trustworthy garment.

trusty Trojan. See Trojan, 2.—trusty trout. See trout.

try. An attempt; an effort: coll. verging on S.E.: from ca. 1830.

try, v.t., with across, after, in, etc.; also v.t. To search (a place) to find (e.g. game): coll.: v.t., 1810, The Sporting Magazine, 'He bid the other defendants try across the Six Acres'; v.t., late C. 19-20. O.E.D.

try a fresh needle! 'Shut up!' Charterhouse: from ca. 1910. Ex gramophones: cf. snatch off! try and (do something). To try to do something: 1686, J. Sergeant, 'They try and express their love to God by thankfulness,' O.E.D.: coll. now verging on S.E. (see Fowler).

try back! A c.p. addressed to a person boasting: ca. 1820-60. Bee.

try it on. To make an attempt (to outwit, to impose on a person): from ca. 1810 both in this s. sense and in c., where it = to live by theft. Vaux. Both as v.t., the more gen., and as v.t. (Thackeray, 1849, 'No jokes . . . no trying it on me,' O.E.D.). Hence, cases that or who try it on, professional thieves: c.: from ca. 1812.—2. See next two entries.

try it on a, gen. the, dog. To experiment at the risk or expense of another, c.p. a subordinate or a wife: from ca. 1805— theatrical s. (as in The Daily Telegraph, Feb. 4, 1897) >, ca. 1905, gen. coll. Ware. Ex matinée dog (q.v.), though ultimately ex experimenting with meat on a dog or with poisons on animals. In the film industry, it = to put a picture (not yet publicly shown) into a programme unannounced in order that its effect on the audience may be noted by the producers, who afterwards may make any alterations they think advantageous: coll.: from ca. 1920. Prob. ex the theatrical sense (C. 20), to take a new play to the provinces before London production: likewise coll.

try it on with. The usual v.t. form of try it on in s. sense: from ca. 1820. Esp. try it on with a woman, to attempt her chastity: 1823, 'A darling of a Don Juan'; try-on. An attempt, orig. and gen., to 'best' someone; e.g. an extortitionate charge, a begging letter: from ca. 1820. Bee, 1823; II, 5th ed. Ex try it on, q.v.—2. Whence up to the try-on: see up to the cackle.


tryer. See t'ier—tyre. See t'ire.

tu quoque. The female pedant: late C. 18—early 19. Grose, 2nd ed. Possibly suggested by put(dendum) and tuat; or a disguising of the latter.

tub. A pupil: from ca. 1640 (O.E.D. records it in 1643): coll. >, ca. 1850, S.E.; ob. Whence the coll. (verging on a.) terms, tub-drubber (ca. 1703, T. Brown; very ob.), -man (ca. 1640-70), -pounder (rare: ca. 1820-1910), -preacher (1643; very rare in C. 19-20), and, the commonest, thumper (ca. 1860; Grose, 1875, 'a Presbyterian parson'); also tubeter: coll. (ca. 1680-1720). Likewise, tub-thumping (app., not before ca. 1860: H., 1st ed.), etc. Ex the tub from within which popular, and esp. Nonconformist, clergymen used, in the open air, to preach, but also, and in several instances, independently ex the humorous likening of a pupil...
to a tub. F. & H.; O.E.D.—2. A bath; the practice of having a bath, esp. on rising: coll. : 1849 (O.E.D.); 1886, The Field, Feb. 20, 'A good tub and a hearty breakfast prepared us for the work of the day.' Ex tub, a bath-tub.—3. A seatless carriage, an open truck: (low) coll.: ca. 1840–70. H. S. Truax, Autobiography, 1886 (O.E.D.).—4. 'A chest in Hall into which dicepops (v. to) not taken by the boys were put', F. & H.: ca. 1840–70. Perhaps rather j. or s. or coll., as prob. also are tub-mess and prefect of tub: see Farmer's Public School Word-Book.—5. A (very) fat person: low coll.: from mid-1880's. Cf. tubby, q. v.—6. A cask or keg of spirit, holding about four gallons: smugglers' a. (-1835) >, by 1880, coll. ob. O.E.D. Ex tub, a varying measure of capacity.—7. An omnibus: c. (-1933). Charles E. Leach, On Top of the Underworld.—8. The Tub. See Academy, the. The allusion is to the tub of Diogenes.

**tub**, t.v. To wash, bathe, in a tub: coll.: 1610. Jonson.—2. Hence, v. i., to bathe in a tub, esp. on rising: coll.: 1867 (O.E.D.).—3. To train (oarsmen) in a tub, i.e. a fool-proof practice boat: rowing, oarsmen, etc., & then, the two older universities: 1883; the v. i., to practise rowing in a 'tub', dates from 1882. (Dates, O.E.D.) Whence tubbing, vbl. n. to both v. t. and v. i. (from 1883) and get tubbed, to be thus coached.—4. (Of a tug) to make (a ship—esp. a big ship) fast to a buoy: nautical coll.: late C. 19–20. Bowen.

tub, in the: See in the tub.
tub-brother, -man. See tub, n., 1.
tub-men. 'Landsmen employed during the second, or secret, period of smuggling to receive the contraband from the jugs and carry it inland': ca. 1830–80: s. >, by 1860, coll. See tub, n., 6. (Bowen.)
tub-mess. See tub, n., 4.
tub-pounder, -preacher, -thumper, -thumping. See tub, n., 1.
tubbichon. A non-cultured corruption of Fr. tibre-bouchon, the lone corkscreen ringlet of back hair worn in front of the left shoulder (a fashion introduced by the Empress Eugénie): 1880's. Ware. Cf. French tibouchon.
tube. The tunnel in which runs an underground electric train: coll.: from ca. 1895–2. Hence (often the Tube), abbr. tube-railway: coll.: 1900.—3. Hence, the Twopenny Tube, the Central London Railway (opened in): 1900: coll. (The inclusive fee (of the Paris Métro) was abolished not later than 1915.) O.E.D.
tube, v.i.; also tube it. To travel by 'tube': coll.: 1902 (O.E.D.). Ex n., 2.
tube-train. A shell passing high overhead and making heavy thumping sound: military; 1916; ob. F. & Gibbons.
tuber. A race-horse with a tube inserted in the air-passage: turf: 1922 (O.E.D. Sup.).
tubates. See tub, n., 1.
tuck. A hearty meal, esp. (orig. and mainly in schools) of delicacies: 1844, J. T. Hewlett. Also, in C. 19 more gen., tucked-out, 1823; occ. in C. 19, very often in C. 20, tuck-in, 1850, H., 1st ed. (Cf. tucker, q. v.) F. & H. and O.E.D. *ex tuck a fold or pleat: tuck-out, the earliest form, suggests a meal that removes a tuck or a crease from one's waistcoat or trousers-top; but prob. imm. ex the v., 2 and 3, q. v.—2. Hence, food; esp. delicacies (e.g. pastry, jam): orig. and mainly school s.: from the 1830's. Halliwell.*
tuck, v. To hang (a person): c. of later C. 17–19. B.E. But gen. tuck up: from mid-1730's: c. rapidly > (low) s.: in C. 20, ob. Richardson, 1740, 'The hangman asked the poor creature's pardon, and ... then calmly tuck up the criminal.' Ex tuck, to put away in a safe place.—2. To eat, occ. to drink: v.t., 1784, Bage, 'We will ... tuck up a bottle or two of claret'; hence, v.i., eat a lot or greedily, 1830, EX tuck-in; tuck into occurring in 1838 in Dickens. (Mostly O.E.D.). The simple v. is less frequent than the prepositional combinations. Etymology: prob. as in sense 1.—3. Ex 2, v.i. sense: to distend (another or oneself) with food: 1824, 'Comfortably tucked out', O.E.D.; † by 1900. Rare, esp. in simple form.—4. Prob. ex sense 1: to hang (a bell) high in the stock: 1860 (O.E.D.): bell-makers' and bell-ringers', perhaps rather coll. than s. Abbr. tuck high (in the stock). Gen. tuck up.
tuck-em fair. An execution: o. (—1700) >, in mid-C. 18, low s. B.E.; Grose. Parker, 1789, 'We went off at the fall of the leaf at Tuck'em Fair,' Ex tuck, v., 1. Also Tuck-up Fair, q. v.
tuck-hunter. An amissful feast-seeker: 1840, A. Bum. Ex tuck(-out), n., 1.
tuck-in, tuck in; tuck-out, tuck out. N.; v. See tuck, n., 1; v., 2.
tuck-shop. A (mainly school) pastry-cook's shop: from mid-1850's. Hughes, 1857, 'Come ... down to Sally Harrewell's ... our schoolhouse tuck-shop.' Ex tuck, n., 2.
tucked-up. (Of dog or horse) thin-flanked from hunger or fatigue: from early 1840's: dial. and s. Ex tuck, a pleat.—2. Hence, exhausted: dial. >, by 1890, s. Kipling, 1891 (O.E.D.). Cf. U.S. tucked out (see Bartlett or Thornton).—3. Cramped, hindered, for lack of space or time: coll.: 1857 (O.E.D.) Ex tuck, a fold.
tucker. Rations, orig. of gold-diggers: Australian, hence from ca. 1860, New Zealand: 1858, The Morning Chronicle, Aug. 31, 'Diggers, who have great difficulty in making their tucker at digging'; slightly ob.—2. Hence, by ca. 1870, food, as in Garnet Walsh, 1874; Australian >, by 1876 or so, New Zealand.—3. Hence, earn (1883) or make one's
tucker, to earn either merely or at least enough to pay for one's board and lodging: orig. Australian, then New Zealand. Like 1 and 2, it is in C. 20 fairly gen. Colonial. Ex tuck, n., 2, or v., 2. Cf. grub and scoff, q.v.

**tucking-in**, vbl.n. See tuck, v., 2.

**tufall, -fold.** Incorrect for to-fall (n.): 1846, onwards: mid-C.17—mid-19. O.E.D.

tuft. A titled undergraduate: 1755, in tuft hunts. one who, at Oxford or Cambridge, toadies to the young nobleman; t.l.-gen. and S.E. in mid-C. 19; tuft is very ob. Ex the tuft or gold tasseled worn on their caps by aristocratic students. Whence tuft-hunting: from 1780's; by 1850, S.E.


tug, adj. Stale, vapid; common, ordinary: Winchester: from ca. 1880. The origin is mysterious, unless perchance it is cognate with the dial. terms mentioned in tug, n., 1.—2. Whence tug-clothes, one's everyday clothes; tug-jaw, dull talk; and tugs, stalo now.

**Tug-Button Tuesday.** See Pay-Off Wednesday.

**tug-mutton.** A whoremonger: C. 17. 'Water-Poet' Taylor. Ex mutton, q.v.—2. A glutton: provincial s. (—1847); ob. Halliwell. The rhyme is prob. accidental.


tugger's. College at Eton; esp. in *try for tugger*, to try to pass on to the foundation at Eton as a King's Scholar: Eton (—1883). Brinley Richardes, *Seven Years at Eton*, 1883. Ex tug, n., 1.

tugs. See tug, adj., 2 and n., 4.


Wrench. On remi.

tulip. A bishop's mitre, or the figure of one: from late 1670's; by 1930, coll. Ex the shape. O.E.D.—2. My tulip (H., 1st ed.), my fine fellow, particularly my <->, my Bell. London street-ruffian c.p. of the 1840's—50's. F. & H.: 'An echo of the tulipomania of 1842'. Note, however, that tulip has since C. 17 been used of a showy person.

tulip-sauce. Kissing: a kiss: cheaply jocular (—1904); very ob. Punning *two lips*.

***tullibon.** See toloben.

tum (1888, W. S. Gilbert); tum-tum (—1904). Variants of tummy, q.v.: coll., esp. nursery. (O.E.D. Sup.; F. & H.)

tum-bat. See tile.


tumble, v.t. To move stumblingly or hastily, rush, roll along: late C. 16—20: S.E. until C. 19, then coll. E.g. Lever, 1843, 'Tumble into bed, and go to sleep as fast as you can,' O.E.D. See also *tumble in* (v.) and *tumble up*.—2. To understand, perceive, something not obvious, something hidden; v.t. with to: low: from ca. 1850. Mayhew, 1851, of long or highfalutin' words, 'We can't tumble to that barrikin.' Either, as W. suggests, ex *under-stumble*, to understand, or perhaps, as the O.E.D. implies, ex *tumble on, chance on (a thing)—5. (Always tumbling to.) Hence, to assent to, agree with, form a liking for: from early 1880's. Mayhew. Rather rare and, after G.W., slightly ob.—4. (Of values, prices, stocks.) To fall rapidly in value: 1886 (O.E.D.): commercial s. >, ca. 1920, coll. Ex lit. sense (fell to the ground)—5. Abbr. (C. 20) of *tumble down the sink, q.v.* J. Phillips' *Dict. of Rhyming Slang*, 1931.

tumble, do a. (Of a woman) to lie down to a man: low: C. 19—20. S.E. *tumble* to handle, with rough indolency.


tumble along. See tumble, v., 1.

**Tumble-Down Dick.** See Queen Dick, 3. Because Protector for less than a year. Dawson.

tumble down the sink. A drink; to drink: rhyming s.: late C. 19—20. B. & P.

tumble-in. An act of copulation; to copulate: low: C. 19—20.—2. Also, to go to bed: coll.: from ca. 1840. Ex *tumble into bed*: see quotation in tumble, 1.

tumble to, v.t. To set-to vigorously: coll.: mid-C. 19—20; slightly ob. See tumble, 1—2. V.t., to understand; see *tumble* v., 2.—3. See *tumble* v., 3.

tumble to oneself, take a. To take oneself to task; to realise one's own faults: low (—1904). Ex tumble, 2, v.q.—2. To go steady, be cautious: from ca. 1906.

**tumble to pieces.** To be brought to bed with child and to be safely delivered of it: low: from ca. 1870. H., 6th ed.

tumble up. To rise in the morning: coll.: from ca. 1840. Prob. ex.—2. To come up on deck: nautical coll.: from ca. 1830. Ex tumble, 1.


**tumbling down to grass**, n. and adj. Breaking up, falling, going to the bad: non-aristocratic: 1884—ca. 90. Ware 'From the fact of land going out of cultivation, 1875—85' (shades of 'Peter Porcupine'!)


former s.; the latter, coll.—3. ‘A chronic though perhaps slight abdominal pain’ (Slang, p. 193): medical (— 1933).


turn. A tippler: low: mid-C. 19–20; ob. Abbr. Lushington, q.v.; but also punning tumb, a slang ex.

turd; tunder; tundping. To beat (a boy) with a stick, as punishment (1871); he who does this (1876); such a beating (1872): Winchester School: from ca. 1870. Punch, ca. 1890, Confession by a Wykehamist, ‘I like to be tund ping a day, and wished three times a week.’ (Dates: O.E.D.) Ex L. tundere, to beat.

tune; gen. tune up. To beat, thrash: from ca. 1780; C. 19–20. Both slightly ob. Grose, 2nd ed.: ‘His father tuned him delightfully: perhaps from fetching a tune out of the person beaten, or... the disagreeable sounds on instruments when tuning.’

tune the (old) cow died of, the. A grotesque or unpleasant noise: jocular coll.: 1836, Marryat. Ex an old ballad. Apperson adduces Fuller’s that is the old tune upon the bag-pipe, 1732.—2. Hence, advice or a homily instead of ams: from ca. 1880; ob. F. & H.


tunloppery. See tune-loppery.


‘No. 747.’


Tunnels, the. The Opéra-Comique Theatre: theatrical: 1885–ca. 90. Ware, ‘From the several subterranean passages leading to this under-ground theatre’. (It was ‘swept away by Strand improvements.’)

tuny. See tuney. Hence, tuniness: coll.: C. 20. O.E.D.

tun. A young bullock; Smithfield and drovers’ term. says H., 3rd ed.: an error that had disappeared by the 5th ed.—2. But a stray tun on the looses, a man questioning for a woman, is s. (— 1904). F. & H.—3. So is sentinon out of Tun Park, mutton: late C. 17–mid-18. B.E.

tun. Arrested; in gaol: low London, esp. in the Woolwich district (— 1909). Ware. Ie. ‘locked up’.

tuppence. Twopence: C. 17–20; S.E. until C. 19, then coll. So the adj. tuppenny (with which cf. twopenny, q.v.).


tuppenny, n. See twopenny.

tuppenny-halfpenny. Inferior; insignificant: urban coll. (— 1906). Ware. The S.E. form (tupenny-halfpenny) is much earlier.

Tupper. ‘A commonplace honest bore’: Society coll.: ca. 1843–90. Ware. Ex the Proverbial Philosophy (1838–42; revised and augmented up till 1867) of Martin Tupper (1810–89).


turd, he will ne’er sh*t a seaman’s. He will never make a good seaman: nautical: from ca. 1790; very ob. Grose, 3rd ed.


turd for you! a. ‘Go to hell and stay there,’ F. & H.: low: mid-C. 19–20. Cf. the low turd in your teeth (Jonson, 1614; anticipated by Harman, 1567), and the late C. 16 insult goodman Turd. See turd.


*turds for dinner, there were four; gen. amplified thus: stir t., hold t., tread t., and must t. ‘To wit, a hog’s face, foot, and chitterlings, with mustard’; Turd, 3rd ed.: a low late C. 18–early 19 rebus-ep.


turf, v. To send (a boy) to bed at bed-time: Derby School: from ca. 1880. Perhaps cognate with sense 3, q.v.—2. To chastise: Marlborough School: from ca. 1880. Cf.:—3. turf out. To kick out; to expel: from ca. 1912. Manchon. Perhaps pregnant for put out on the turf, i.e. outside.—4. See n., 4.

*turf, on the. Adj. and adv. applied, from ca. 1890, to a harlot: low: H., 2nd ed. Because, as a race-horse the turf, so she walks the streets.


turkey. A Royal Marine Light Infantryman: naval: from ca. 1870; ob. Ex the scarlet tunic. (Bowan.)

* turkey head, over. See head over turkey.

turkey-buyer. A ‘toff’ (sense 1), a banker, an important person: Leadencott Market: late C. 19–20. Ware, ‘Because it requires more than twopence to buy gobblers’.

turkey-cook, turn (or go) as red as a. To blush violently: coll., mostly provincial and Colonial: from ca. 1860.

turkey-merchant. A driver of turkeys: late C. 17–mid-18. B.E. A pun on Turkey merchant, one trading with Turkey (and/or the Levant).—2. Hence, a poulterer: mid-C. 18–mid-19, though it survived till ca. 1880 (see H., 1st–5th edd.). Grose, Ist ed.—3. Ex senses 1, 2; a chicken-thief: o.: 1837, Dissraeli, in Venetia; ob.—4. A dealer in...
TURKEY OFF


turkey to market, be driving. To be unable to walk straight: semi-proverbal coll. (—1859). W. Carew Hazlitt.


Turkish medal. A button undone or showing on one's fly: Eastern Front military: 1914; ob. B. & P. After Abyssinian medal.

Turkish Shore, the. Lambeth, Southwark, and Rotherhithe: low London: late C. 17—early 19. B.E.; Grose, 1st ed. Ex the barbarous treatment likely to be had there: cf. S.E. Turkish treatment, sharp dealing, and young Turk.


turn-tyne. Turpentine: C. 15; termystyne, C. 16; corrupt forms. O.E.D.

turn. A hanging from the gallows: rare coll.: C. 17—18. Shakespeare in Measure for Measure, IV, ii, 62: "Hudibras" Butler. Abbr. turn-off. (Not o., as F. & H. states; the O.E.D. considers it S.E.)—2. A momentary nervous shock of fear or other emotion: coll. (nowadays rather proletarian—not that it's the worse for that!): 1846, Dickens, "What a hard-hearted monster you must be, John, not to have said so, at once, and saved me such a turn." Ex turn, an attack of illness or faintness.—3. An act of copulation: low: C. 19—20. (Cf. C. 17 E.S.E. turn-up, a whore.) "Hence," says F. & H., "to take a turn (or to turn a woman up) = to copulate: see ride; also to take a turn among the cubbies, up one's petichocks (or among one's frills), in Abraham's bosom, in Low Lane, Bushey Park, Cock Alley, Cupid's Alley, Cupid's corner, Hair Court, on Mount Pleasant, among the parsleys, through the stubble, or a turn on one's back (of women): one's Cupid phrases may be literary euphemisms; Bushey Park and Mount Pleasant are confined to London.—4. See turn.

turn, v. See turn down, in, on, out, up, turned over.

turn a horse inside out. To school a bucking horse by 'slinging up one of his legs, and lunging him about severely in heavy ground": Australian coll.: ca. 1850—80. The Rev. J. D. Merewether, 1859. Morris at buck-jumping.

turn an honest penny. To be a pimp, a harlot's bully: low (—1923). Manchon. Ironical.

turn copper. See copper, come.

turn down. To toss off (a drink): coll.: from ca. 1780; very ob. Henry Brooks. Lit., turn it down one's throat.—2. To reject (an application); curtly say no to (a request, suggestion, invitation); refuse to accept (a suitor for one's hand): U.S. (from ca. 1890), anglicised, esp. in the Dominions, ca. 1900.

turn-in. A night's rest: coll.: from ca. 1830. (O.E.D.) Ex:

turn in. To go to bed: 1865, Congreve: coll., nautical till mid-C. 19, then gen. Theodore Hook, 1837. "Jack 'turned in', as the sailors say, O.E.D. Ex turning into one's hammock. Cf. turn out, v.—2. V.t. To abandon, to desert from doing: C. 20. ? Ex turn (i.e. hand) in one's resignation, where turn in may represent yet a third sense: coll. and dating from late C. 19. Cf. turn up, v., 1.

turn it in. To die: military: from 1914. F. & Gibbons. Ex turn in, v. 2. Cf. turn it up. See turn up, v.

turn on. To put (a person) to do something: coll.: from early 1890's.

turn-out. An interval: theatrical coll.: 1851, Mayhew, "The Delphi was better than it is. I've taken 3e. at the first turn-out! " F. & E. until C. 19, then turn out, v.t. To rise from bed: coll.: 1805, W. Irving (O.E.D.); R. H. Dana, 1840, 'No man can be a sailor ... unless he has lived in the fo'castle with them, turned in and out with them.' Prob. suggested by turn in, q.v.—2. V.t., as in turn out one's hand, to show it, esp. at cards: coll.: (—1804). F. & H. Ex turn out, to empty (e.g. one's pockets).

turn over. 'A book to dip into rather than read': journalistic coll.: 1885, The Saturday Review, Dec. 26; but Ware dates it from 1880. —2. 'A transference of votes from one party to another': political: 1895 (O.E.D.)—3. V., see turned over, be.—4. To cross-question, examine severely: o. (—1930). O.E.D. (Sup.).

turn-round pudding. Porridge or a 'slop' pudding much stirred: lower-classes' coll. (—1900). Ware. Cf. stir-about pudding.

turn the best side to London. See side to London, turn one's or the.

turn the corner. (Gen. as vb.ln. turning ...) To round the Grand Banks on the trans-Atlantic passage: nautical coll.: C. 20. Bowen.

turn the tap on. 'To be ready with tears': lower-class urban: 1883, The Daily Telegraph, Feb. 8 (Ware).


turn up, v.t. To renounce, abandon (person or thing), cease dealing with (a tradesman), throw up (a job) from ca. 1690; S.E. until C. 19, then s. Vaux; Holten, 1859, 'I intend turning it up, leaving my present abode or altering my course of life.' Frequently turn it up = 'oh, stop that,' 'stop doing that' or 'talking.'—2. Whence, v.i., to quit, to abscond, to run away: low (—1859). H., 1st ed., " Ned has turned up," i.e. run away. Esp., to throw up one's job. (Gen in passive.)—3. To acquit, discharge or release (an accused or imprisoned person): low s. o. or, more prob. (at first, anyway): o.: from ca. 1810. Vaux. Ex S.E. turn up, to turn (esp. a horse) loose.—4. To stop and search; to arrest (a criminal): o.: from ca. 1890. H., 3rd ed. (Cf. turned over, 3.) Perhaps ironic ex preceding.—5. To chastise: Marlborough School: from ca. 1880. Ex lit. sense, the punishment being on the posterior.—6. See turn in, n., 3.—7. To hang out a share of stolen goods: o.: mid-C. 19—20; ob. "No. 747." turn up a trump. To have a piece of monetary luck: coll. (—1812). Vaux.

turn up crabs. See crabs, come off.—turn up one's toes or one's toes up. See toes up, turn one's.

turn up sweet. As in to turn up a flat sweet, to leave a 'pigeon' in good humour after 'plucking' him: o.: from ca. 1810. Vaux.
**TURNED OVER, BE**

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tuskin. A country ploughman or ploughman, Grose, 1st ed.: either c. or provincial a. (— 1830–1840). Cognate with, possibly ex., dial. tusk, the broad part of a ploughshare, and tush, v.t., to drag or trail (E.D.D.). tussele. To argue (v.i.): coll. (— 1859) >, somewhere about 1890, S.E. H., 1st ed. Ex tuskle, to struggle.
tussocker. A 'sundowner' (q.v.): New Zealand: from mid-1880's; slightly ob. V. Pyke, 1889, in Wild Will Endery (Morris). Prob. because he loitered in the tussocks, till dusk (perhaps also operative).
tutoring. 'Trench-instruction to new troops' (B. & P.): 1915–18; military coll. verging on j.
tuz I. 'Bags I!,'
'tusasite: ', q.v.:—V.t., q.v.:—V.t.;—Ex Vtue, to—Ex tussule, to tussle (E.D.D.). tusvummy ;—Ex tussul-muszy (or as one word). The female pudend: from ca. 1710: (low) s. >, early in C. 19. dial. Ned Ward, 1711; Bailey; Grose, 2nd ed.; Halliwell. Ex t.m., a posy, nosegay, or garland. O.E.D.; F. & H.
twachylle; —Ex twachylle; —Ex twachylle. The pudend: mid-C. 17–early 19. App. a diminutive of twaet, q.v., influenced by twachylle = twachylle, a passage.
twaddle. (S. of ca. 1780–5 for) 'perplexity, confusion, or anything else,' Grose, 2nd ed. As in Grose, 1st ed., in the Preface. Ex twaddell, proxy or gabbling nonsense,—itself recorded only in 1782 (O.E.D.) and prob. ex. twadell, idle talk. Cf. bore, n., which it for a while succeeded.—2. 'A diminutive person: † ca. 1820–80. F. & H., the sole authority. † cognate with dial. twaddle, to walk feebly.
twait. See twat.
twang. To coit with (a woman): a. (— 1832). Baumann.
twanger. Anything very fine or (e.g. a lie) large: dial. and s. : from ca. 1870; very ob. as a. For semantics, cf. twanging entries.
twang(e)ly. A tailor: North Country: ca. 1780–1850. Grose, 1st ed. † a musical pun, or a phonetic relative of stang(e)ly, q.v.
twanging. Excellent: coll. 1809, Jonsen (O.E.D.). † by 1700. Cf. twanger and:
twanging, go off. To go well: C. 17 coll., as is as good as ever twanged, as good as may be: resp. Masoning and Bay. The latter phrase, with complementarily the worst that ever twanged, arose, however, ca. 1840. Cf. go off with a bang of great success.

**TURNED over, be.** To be acquired for lack of evidence: c. : from ca. 1820. Cf. turn up, v., 3, q.v.—2. Whence, to be reminded: c. : from ca. 1830.—3. 'To be stopped by the police and searched', F. & H.: c. : from ca. 1850. H., 1st ed.; Horace, Jottings from Jail, 1877, 'What catch would it be if you was to turn me over ?' Cf. turn up, v., 4, q.v.
turning-tree. A gallowes: either c. (F. & H.), s., or even coll.: ca. 1540–1600. Hall, in his chronicle of Henry VIII, ca. 1548, 'She and her husband ... were apprehended, arraigned, and hanged at the foresayd turning tree.' Cf. later S.E. turn off, to hang.
turnip. An old-fashioned, thick, silver watch: 1840. E. Fitzgerald (O.E.D.). Ex its resemblance to a small turnip. In Anglo-Irish, it means—since ca. 1920, at least—a five-shilling Ingersoll. Also called a frying-pan; cf. warming-pan, 2.—2. An affective tone of address, gen. old turnip: coll. (— 1923); ob. Manchon. Cf. old beans

turnip, tickle one's. To thrash on the posteriors: late C. 18–mid-17. There is a pun on turn-up. O.E.D. Cf. turnips, give one, q.v.
turnip-pate, -pated. White or very fair-haired: coll.: late C. 17–18 (B.E.); late C. 18–20 (Grose, 1st ed.); ob. Ex colour.
turnip-top, cut. To steal a watch with its chain and adjuncts: c. (— 1887). Baumann. Ex turnip, q.v.
turnips, get or (k)nap; give turnips. To abandon (a person), heartlessly or unscrupulously; to be thus abandoned: c. (— 1812) >, ca. 1830, low s.; extremely ob. Vaux (guise and nap). Punning turn-up in its lit. sense: cf. turnip, tickle one's, q.v.—2. Whence to get turnips, to be jilted: from ca. 1830. On Suffolk dial., give, or get, cold turnips, to jilt, to be jilted.

**turnips, straight off the.** Applied to one who is a country bumpkin or very green: New Zealanders (— 1832).
turnover. Incorrect for turnour, a turner or small copper coin: C. 17. O.E.D.

**turnpike-man.** A parson, because the clergy collect their tolls at our entrance into and exit from the world,' Grose, 1st ed.: ca. 1780–1850.


**turnipis is a variant (Ware) for turnips, 2.**
turpentine, talk. To discuss painting: coll.: 1891, Kipling (O.E.D.); slightly ob. Ex painters' use of oil of turpentine (ostacastically: spirit of turpentine: mid-C. 17–20) in mixing colours.
turps, Turpentine: from ca. 1820: coll., workmen's and painters >, ca. 1860, gen. (e.g. photographer's, horse-keeper). By aber. — a, collective. O.E.D. (Contrast terps and Tipps, q.v.)
**twankey.** Gin: from late 1890's: tea-trade. Ex *twankey*, green tea. O.E.D.

'twas. It was: C. 17-20: C. 17-18, coll. and S.E.; C. 19-20, dial. and archaic. (O.E.D.) But when emphasised violently, it is still coll., as in "It wasn't there at all."—"Twas, I tell you!"

twat; in C. 18, occ. *twait*. The female pudend: mid-C. 17-20: perhaps always a vulgarism; certainly one in C. 18-20: very far from being †. H. Fletcher, 1666; Tom Brown, ca. 1704 (O.E.D.); Bailey. Ballowing, in *Pipe Plasses*, by a hair-raising misapprehension, the literary world's worst 'brick'. Origin obscure, but cf. *twachylle* = *twichel*, a passage, and dial. *twich*, to mend a gap in a hedge.—2. As v., erroneous for *treat*, to bellow; † by 1800. O.E.D.

*twat-faker; twat-masher.* A prostitute's bully: resp. c. (— 1923) and low s. (id.). Manchon.


twitchel. See *twitchel*.

twattle; *twatting*, p.p. adj. To sound; sounding: a vulgarism: C. 17-18. Florio, 1611 (the adj.); Cotton, 1664 (the v.). Ex *twattle*, to talk idly, to babble.—2. Whence *twatting strings*, a vulgarism for the *spinher ani*; mid-C. 17-18. Implied in Cotton (as above). O.E.D.


twee. Dainty; chic; pleasing: coll.: 1905 (S.O.D.); ob. Ex *tweet*, affected or childish *sweet*: coll.: late C. 19-20.

*tweedle*. 'A Brunnagom ring of good appearance used for fraudulent purposes', F. & H.: c.: late C. 19-20.—† ex *tweedledum* and *tweedledee*.


tweeker. See *tweeker*.


tweer. See *twise*. See *twee*.


twelve, alter. Adv. and adv.l.n. From noon to 2 p.m.: Eton coll. (— 1801) > 1.

twelve, more than. See seven, more than.

twelve apostles; or T.A. The last twelve in the Mathematical Tripos: Cambridge University: from ca. 1820; ob.—2. Hence, the first twelve students: Stonyhurst: from ca. 1880.

*twelve godfathers*. A jury: c. (— 1864) > low s.; ob. H., 3rd ed., 'Because they give a name to the crime . . . Consequently it is a vulgar taunt to say: You will be christened by twelve godfathers some day before long.'

twelve o'clock! It's time to be moving: artisans' c.p.: ca. 1890-1914. Ware. Ex noon, break-off time.

twelve-pound actor. A healthy child born in 'the profession': theatrical (— 1909). Ware.


twenty-two and twenty-two. Football: Winchester School coll.: ca. 1880-1910. This was the variety played with 22 a side.

twerp. An unpleasant or objectionable or foolish or 'soft' person (rarely female): from ca. 1910. F. & Gibbons; Percy Brown, *Blind Alleys*, 1934.

*twibill*. A street ruffian: c.: C. 17. F. & H. Ex *twibill*, a two-edged axe, perhaps suggested by the obvious pun, 'doubly sharp'. (Perhaps an error.)

twicen. A hash-up of fish and potatoes: low (— 1864); ob., except as nautical s. H., 3rd ed.; Bowen defines it as 'any sea dish that is cooked for the second time' and derives it ex *'the old name for rope made of the best yarns of an old rope*. '

twicen. A printer working, or professing to work, at both press and case: printers' pejorative: from ca. 1880. Jacobi, 1888.—2. One who goes to church twice on Sunday: late C. 19-20. (The O.E.D.'s quotation of 1679 is either a non-use or connotés rarity.)—3. Something doubly, hence very, forceful or valuable: low: 1827, Mayhew, 'He expressed his delight . . . 'Here's a start a regular twicen!"'; ob. O.E.D.—4. One who asks for two helpings; hence, one who persistently tries to get more than his due: Australian: C. 20; esp. in G.W.—5. Hence (?), a cheat, a liar: mostly commercial: C. 20.—6. A widow or widower re-marrying: lower classes': C. 20. F. & Gibbons. —7. See:


twicest (pron. *twijest*). Twice: sol.: C. 19-20. Also *twict* and *twicel*.

Twickenham. A torpedo: naval: C. 20. Bowen. Did this arise in some pun about *tavig-* 'em or *tweetting* 'em?'

*twiddle-diddles*. Human testicles: low: from ca. 1786; ob. Grose, 2nd ed. A reduplication of *twiddle* (v.) with a pun on dodle (v.).


twig. Style, fashion, method: low s. (— 1811). *Lex. Bal.* Esp. in *twig*, handsome or stylish; cleverly (Vaux, 1812). Often in good or prime *twig* (both: Vaux). Hence out of *twig*, disguised, esp. in *put (oneself or another) out of twig*: out of knowledge: low s. (— 1812). Vaux. *etymology*. Perhaps ex v.l. *twig*, to do anything vigorously or violently. Hence, condition: settle; spirit: low s.: ca. 1820. Randall's *Diary*, 'in search of lark, or some delicious gig.' The mind delights on, when 'tis in prime *twig*': ca. 1840-70, very gen. in the boxing world. Both sets of senses were ob. by 1860. † by
1900.—2. The Headmaster: Marlborough. ca. 1850–90. Ex twig, the rod or birch.

*twig, v. To disengage; to sunder: c.: ca. 1720–1840. *A New Canting Dict., 1725, has *twig the darbies, to knock off the irons or handcuffs. Prob. cognate with *tweak.—2. To watch; inspect: 1764. "Foote. 'Now, twig him; now, mind him; mark how he hawis his muscles about'; slightly ob. Possibly suggested by *tweak, to beat, to reprove, but more yon..., as W. suggests, cognate with dial. *twick, to pinch (esp. in a sense, to arrest), to nip (cf. S.E. *tweak).—3. Hence, to see, recognise, perceive: 1796. Holman, 'He twigs me. He knows Dicky here.'—4. Hence to understand: 1815. "Zeluca' Moore, "You twig me—eh t?", O.E.D.—5. Hence, v., to comprehend: 1833. Michael Scott (O.E.D.); 1853. Reade, 'If he is an old hand he will twig.' Cf. *tweegies-vous, q.v.

*twig, hop the. See hop.—hog, in and out of. See *tweegies vous, n. 2, 1.


twig and berries. A child’s penis and testicles: lower-class euphemism: C. 20. Cf. pencil and *tossed.

twig the fores (or the main). ‘To look over the fore-mast (or main) to see that all the sails are furled and the yards properly squared’: nautical: late C. 19–20. Bowen. Ex twig, v., 2, 1.

*twigger. An uneahate, even a lascivious person; esp. a whore or near-who: ca. 1690–1720. Marlows & Nashe in *Dido, 1694 (O.E.D.); Motteux, 1694. Prob. ex *tigger, (of a) a ewe; the progeny, itself ex twig, to act vigorously.—2. Hence, a wench: C. 17, and much less gen. F. & H. *tweegies-vous? Do you understand?: coll.: ca. 1800; virtually †. Kipling, in *Stalky & Co., "‘*Twigger-vous?’ ‘*Nous tweegsons.’" (But *nous tweegsons, we understand, has not ‘caught on.’) Ex twig, v., last sense, on Fr. *comprenz-vous, do you understand: Coll. *squatez-vous, q.v., and *compree: resp. for form and for sense.

*tiggy P; *twiggy-vous. Variants of the preceding. Pre-War, says Collinson.

*twiggs, hop the. To walk with crutches: nautical (−1923). Manchon. Contrast hop the twig (at hop).

*twine. To give false change: c.: late C. 19–20. Ex (S.E. > dial.) *twise, to twist, wring, with a pun on *wring.


*twinkling. See bed-post.


*twirls. A chamber-pot: ca. 1777–1830. Anglo-Irish. Richard Twiss (1747–1821) published in 1776 his *Tour in Ireland in 1778, which, understand..., was very unpopular in Ireland: whereupon there were manufactured some of these utensils with his portrait at the bottom, which bore the rhyme, ‘Let everyone —— [On lying Dick Twiss,]’ (Earlier in the century, Sourcewell had been similarly execrated.)

*twist. A drink of (gen.) two beverages mixed: late C. 17–20; ob. In B.E., tea and coffee; by 1725, also brandy and eggs; by 1785, brandy, beer and eggs (Grosee); by 1823, *gin-twis, gin and hot water, with sugar and either lemon or orange juice (’Jon Bee’); in 1827, ‘Dusange Anglick defines *twist as brandy and gin; but from ca. 1860, by far the commonest is *gin-twist. Ex one thing twisted in with another.—2. An appetite, esp. a hearty one: from early 1870’s; slightly ob. Grose, 1st ed. Ex *twist, v., 1, q.v.—3. ‘A stick spirally marked by a creeper having grown round it: also *twister’, F. & H.: Winchester School coll.: from ca. 1860. Perhaps ex a *twist of tobacco.


*twist one’s sleeve-liming. To change one’s opinions or attitude: tailors: late C. 19–20.


*twistical. Rather twisted; fig., tortuous, devious: coll.: 1815. D. Humphreys (O.E.D.); ob. except in U.S. Ex twist, v., e.g., compound.


*twite, Two: c. (−1856); † by 1860. Grose, 1st ed. By perversion of two.

*twitzer. ‘Either a lady-like young man, or a man-like young woman’: low London (−1909); slightly ob. Ware. Cf. *twee(eny). Ex betwixt and between.

two. O.E.D.—2. Hence, v.t., to rotate; to shape by twisting: dial. (—1854) >, ca. 1885, coll. 'My friends . . . began twizzling up cigarettes,' C. Keene, 1887. O.E.D.

twist. Cf.: two.

twist adj. Only as in two fools, exceedingly foolish, is it coll. Donne's: 'I am two fools, I know,' For loving, and for saying so [In whining poetry] is not an example,—for he means that he is two different kinds of fool or a fool on two different counts—but it is relevant, for it supplies the semantic link. (Lit., doubly foolish.)

Two and a Hook, the. The 29th Foot (now the Worcestershire Regiment) military: C. 19. F. & Gibbons, 'Suggested by the numerical figures'.

two and a kick. See kick, n., 2.

two-backed beast, the; do the . . . Two persons in colts; to colt: low coll.: C. 17-18. E.g. in Othello, L. i, 117; Urquhart's Rabelais, 1653.

two brothers alive and one married (i.e. as good as dead!). A music-hall's c.p. of 1897-8. Ware.

two buckle horses. Tuberculosis: 'stables' jocular (—1900) >, ob. Ware. See by-three."

two. Cf.: two.

two end the middle of a bed lot. (Of a person) utterly objectionable: middle classes' (—1906) >, ob. Ware. Perhaps ex preceding.

two-eyed steak. A (Yarmouth) blaster: low: 1864 (O.E.D.). Cf. Glasgow maigrate. The O.E.D. has the rare variant (now †), t.-e. beefsteak.

two feet one yardback. A jocular middle-class c.p. applied to very large feet: C. 20. Punning 'Three feet (make) one yard.'

two-fisted. Clumsy: coll. and dial.: from late 1850's. Cf. two-handled, 2, q.v.—2. 'Expert at fighting', H., 1884, is a coll. variant of two-handed.

two-fisted put. The art of being 'armed': military coll.: from ca. 1912. F. & Gibbons. The crime-sheet was officially known as Form 252.

Two Fives, the. The 55th Foot Regiment; from ca. 1881, named the Border Regiment: military; C. 19-20; ob. F. & Gibbons. Cf. Two Fours. two-foot rule. A fool: rhyming s. (—1859).

H., 1st ed.

Two Fours, the. The 44th Foot Regiment; from ca. 1881, the 1st Battalion of the Essex Regiment: military; C. 19-20; ob. F. & Gibbons. See Two Sevens.

two Fr., the. A fringe (on the forehead) and a follower (or followers) worn by maidservants: middle classes’: ca. 1880-95. Ware.


two hearts in a pond. Two bullocks' hearts in a two-sectioned dish: lower classes' (—1909). Ware.

two inches beyond upright. A non-aristocratic, non-cultured c.p. applied, ca. 1900-14, to a hypocritical liar. Ware, 'Perversion of description of upright-standing man, who throws his head backwards beyond upright.'

two ladies on bikes. The figure of Britannia on the obverse of the two pennies: two-up players: see New Zealanders': C. 20. I.e. when both turned up tails; the 'heads' better call them the two bastards on bikes.

two-legged tree. The gallows: low: C. 19. two-legged tympany or tympany with two heels, a baby, is rare except in have a t.-l., to, be got with child, and be cured of a tympany with two heels, to be brought to child-bed: coll.: ca. 1879-1860. Tarlton, 1960, Ray. (O.E.D.; F. & H.) Ex tympany, a tumour.


two-o. See three-o.

two of that. Something much better, esp. in Hugh Walpole, Vanessa, 1933, '[Mr. Childers] had forestalled the Conservatives, . . . but Gladstone knew two of that': coll.: late C. 19-20 Abbrev. a trick worth two of that.

two-pip artist, merchant, or wallah. A first lieutenant: military: from ca. 1915. B. & P. Lit., a fellow with two stars. A 2nd lieutenant is a one-pipper.

two poll one. Swindled by two confederates: c. (—1812); † by 1850. Vaux. Perhaps poll = upon.

two pun ten. See two upon ten.

Two Red Feathers, the. A variant of the Red Feathers, q.v. (F. & Gibbons.)

Two Sevens, Sixes, Tens, Twos, the. Resp., the 77th Foot Regiment, from ca. 1881 the 2nd Battalion of the Duke of Cambridge's Own Middlesex Regiment; the 66th Foot, from ca. 1881 the 2nd Battalion of the (Princess Charlotte of Wales') Royal Berkshire Regiment; the 20th Foot, from ca. 1881 the Lancashire Fusiliers; and the 22nd Foot, from ca. 1881 the Cheshire Regiment: military; C. 19-20; very ob. Nicknames on numbers are common in the Army: of Two Fours, Two Fives, and the vocabulary of the game of House. (F. & Gibbons.)

two shoes (or T.-S.) or. gen. little t.-s. (Gen. in address to) a little girl: nursery coll.: C. 19-20, though I find no earlier record than 1858, George Eliot in Mr Giff's Love Story, 'He delighted to tell the young shavers and two-shoes . . . ' Ex the heroine of The History of Little Goody Two-Shoes, 1768.

Two Sixes, the. See Two Sevens.—two slips for a tester. See three slips for a tester, give.


two Sundays come together, when. See Sundays come . . .

Two Tens, the. See Two Sevens.

two thieves beating a rogue. 'A man beating his hands against his sides to warm himself in cold weather; also called Beating the Booby, and Cuffing Jemps', Grosse, 2nd ed.: coll.: ca. 1780-1850.

Two-to-One, Mr. A pawnbroker: low (—1823); † by 1890. 'Jon Bee.' Cf. next two entries.

two to one against you. Very much against your
getting your pledge back: lower classes' c.p. of ca. 1800–1916. Ware. Ex the pawnbroker's sign: two balls over one. Cf.: two-to-one shop. A pawnbroker's: ca. 1780–1840. "Alluding to the arrangement of the three blue balls, [in] the sign of that trade, or perhaps from its being two to one that the goods pledged are never redeemed." Cf. preceding two entries.

two-topmaster. A "fishing schooner or coaster with both masts fitted with top-masts. As a rule the main top-mast only is carried" (cf. bald-headed): Canadian (and U.S.) nautical coll.: late C. 19–20. Bowen.

two turns round the long-boat... See three turns...

two twos, in. In a moment; immediately: s. (1838, Haliburton: O.E.D.) >, ca. 1890. Lit., in the time taken to say two twos.

Two Twos, the. See Two Sevents.

two-up school. A gambling den or group: (low) Australian: late C. 19–20. C. J. Dennis. See school, two: itself, a, ex toss-up two coins or the 'heads' and 'tails' of one coin.

two upon ten, or two pun ten. Abbr. two eyes upon ten fingers, this is a trade c.p. dating from early 1800's or late 1850's. H., 3rd ed., "When a supposed thief is present, one shopman asks the other if that two pun' (pound) ten matter was ever settled... If it is not convenient to speak, a piece of paper is handed to the same assistant bearing the to him very significant amount of £2: 10: 0." Cf. John Orderly and Sharp'y, Mr., q.v.

two white, two red, and (after you with the blacking-) brush; hence, after you (miss), with the two two's and the two b's! A London streets' c.p. directed at the excessive use of cosmetics: 1860's. Ware. I.e. two dabs of red, two of white, and a brush to make up the eyebrows.

two with you! A c.p. suggesting a twopenny drink: ca. 1850–60. Ward. Ca. 1800–40, part of one of the London prisons was thus named. Johnson, 1605, Eastward Ho, V, i, 'He lies in the twopenny ward.' Perhaps two penny here, as it certainly did from 1560 (O.E.D.), = 'worthless'; or perhaps the initiation fee was twopenny.


Twofold, my (his, etc.) name is. I know (he knows, etc.) nothing of the matter: a semi-proverbial c.p. of ca. 1690–1830. Motteux, 1694,—Charles Whibley refers to this in his essay on Rabelais; Fuller, 1732. Apperson. For origin, see the Addenda.

[Tyburn. The Tyburn phrases are on the border-line between coll. and S.E.: the status of all such allusive topographical terms cannot be determined arbitrarily. The following are the chief.—Tyburn blossom, a young thief, who will prob. ripen into a gallowa-bird (ca. 1785–1840; Grose, 2nd ed.); T. check, a halter (ca. 1620–80; Skelton); T. collar, 'the fring of beard worn under the chin', H., 2nd ed., 1860 (ca. 1860–80). Synonymous with Newgate frill or fringe. Cf. T. top); T. coltop (v. c. 16); T. face, a hangdog look (Congreve, 1695); T. fair (jig, show, stretch), a hanging (mid-C. 16–early 19); T. tippet, a halter (mid-C. 16–mid-19; Latimer; Egan); T. top or fore-top, 'a wig with the foretop combed over the eyes in a knowing style,' Grose, 2nd ed. († by 1850), with variant Tyburn-tonned wig (1774, Foote); T. Tree, the great Tyburn gallows (1727, Gay; † by 1860). Also preach at T. cross, to be hanged (1767, Gascogne), with such variants as dance the T. jig (1698, Farquhar) or a T. hornpipe on nothing (late C. 18–mid-19)—cf. dance the Paddington freight, —fitch a T. stretch ('Tusser, 1779), dangle in a T. string (1882, J. Walker; 'literary'); put on a T. piccadill ('Water-Poet' Taylor) or wear T. tiffany (1612, Roundlaws). Tyburn gallows, the place of execution for Middlesex from late C. 12 till 1753, stood where the present Bayswater and Edgware Roads join with Oxford Street; from 1783 until 1903, the death penalty was exacted at Newgate Prison. F. & H.; O.E.D. Cf.:]

Tyburnia. A name given, ca. 1880, 'to the district lying between Edgware Road and Westbourne and Gloucester Terraces and Craven Hill, and bounded on the south by the Bayswater Road, and subsequently including (Hotten [3rd ed.]) the
Portman and Grosvenor Square districts: facetiously divided by Londoners'—on Arabia Felix and Arabia Deserta— into "Tyburnia Felix", "Tyburnia Deserta", and "Tyburnia Snobbica": it soon fell into disuse, F. & H.: it was still current in 1874 (witness H., 5th ed.), but † by 1880. See preceding entry.

[*tye; in late C. 19–20, always, and often thus much earlier, tie. A necktie: according to H., 1st ed. (1859), it was, ca. 1820, a († rather coll.); but the evidence of the O.E.D. rather belies this ranking.]

"*tye, v. See tie it up—tyke. See tike—*tyler. See tiler and Adam Tiler (or †.).

tym; occ. tump. A tympanist, whether a drummer or a player of the tympan: musical: late C. 19–20.

tympany, two-legged or with two heels. See two-legged tympanum.

typo, tyh; occ. ty-o(h), tie-o(h). Tired: children's and lovers' coll: C. 20.

type has, since the G.W., been increasingly used very loosely for 'kind', 'category', 'character', 'nature'.


typewriters (no singular); typewriting. Machine guns; their fire: New Zealanders': in G.W. Ex the crisp tapping.


typhus, 'not to be confused with typhoid fever', Dr Charles Singer, The Observer, May 6, 1935.


*tying-*zing. Excellent; 'A1': low: ca. 1880–1900. † ex chin-chin!, q.v.
unclut. See wooden ulster.
ultramarine. ‘Blue’ in its s. senses: ca. 1890-1914.
unialation. ‘First night condemnation by all the gallery and the back of the pit’: journalistic: ca. 1875-90. Ware.
un. See un-.
urn. Thum: C. 17-20: S.E. until ca. 1790, then coll.—increasingly less and increasingly rare— and dial. Cf. 'em, q.v. See what-d'y-see-call-'em.
number: cum-stumble. To understand (thoroughly): lower classes (— 1908). Ware. Ex under-come-stumble, q.v.
umber, umbrella, been measured for a new. Dressed badly; hence, embarkd on a course of doubtful wisdom: c.p.: from ca. 1890; ob. Only his umbrella fits.
umpire, how's that. What do you say to that?: what price —?: coll. from ca. 1890; ob. Ex the appeal at cricket.
um:p:teen, umpty, nn.: um:p:teenth, umptyth, umptieth, adj. An undefined number; of an undefined number: C. J. Dennis, (and heard by editor in) 1916: G.W. military, to disguise the number of a brigade, division, etc.; orig. signallers’s, says F. & Gibbons. Whereas umpty, umptyth, are ob. and were never very gen., um:p:teenth(4) is still common, though rather in the sense of 'of a considerable number', as in for the umptieth time, a change of sense implicit from the beginning. Ex um, a non-committal sound aptly replacing an unstated number, +-teen: the later umpty, -eth, ex the same um + -ty as in twenty, thirty, etc. Possibly um represents any. Perhaps cf.: umply iddy, feel. To feel indisposed: military: from 1916. F. & Gibbons. Perhaps a perversion of feel ‘any old way’.
umply poo. Just a little more: military: 1915; ob. Ibid; Ex Fr. un petit peu.
un, unness (or U-). The ‘boss’: tailors: C. 20. See, e.g., The Tailor and Cutter, Nov. 29, 1923. Cf. hinesis, q.v.
un- is properly prefixed to words of Germanic origin. In C. 18 the C. 14-17 (sep. C. 17) vacillation between um- and un- (im-) before words of Latin origin was terminated in favour of the more logical in- (im-) before such words, un- disappearing altogether or being retained to convey a sense different from that of an accepted in- (im-) form; a number of absolutely synonymous doublets, however, remain (e.g. unalienable, inalienable), though the literate tendency is to discard the un- form; note that able, uncurious, etc., have not been changed, largely because these words have ‘passed through old French’ and, perhaps, partly because, in that transition, their Latinity has > less obvious. (Mostly O.E.D.)
unan. Unanimous: (mostly) upper classes': C. 20. (John G. Brandon, West End, 1933.)
unattached. (Of a member of the legislation) whose vote can never be counted on by any party: Parliamentary coll.: mid-C. 19-20. Ware.
[Unattached participles:—See Fowler.]
unauthor. See author.
unboiled lobster. See lobster, unboiled.
unbounded assortment of gratuitous untruths. ‘Excessive systematic lying’: a Parliamentary op. of late 1885–mid-86. Ware. ‘From speech (11th Nov., 1885) of Mr Gladstone’s at Edinburgh’.
uncle; gen. my, his, etc., uncle. A pawnbroker: 1750, Toldery (O.E.D.); Grose, 1st ed.; Hood; Dickens. Hence, uncle’s, a pawnbroker’s shop: Grose, 1st ed. (mine uncle’s). Prob. Ex the legeno of rich or present-giving uncles.
uncle, Dutch. See Dutch uncle.
uncle, he has gone to visit his. A op. applied to ‘one who leaves his wife soon after marriage’, Grose, 1st ed.; † before 1900.
uncle, my. See uncle.
uncle (or U.) Antony to kill dead mice, helping. Wasting one’s time; idling: coll. C. 20. C. Lee, Our Little Town, 1909. (Apperson.)
uncle over, come the. A variant of ‘come the Dutch uncle’ (q.v.).
Uncle Sam. The U.S. government or people: ‘usually supposed to date back to the war of 1812’ (F. & H.), this coll. nickname has, in C. 20, > S.E. Perhaps facetiously ex the letters U.S. Thornton; Albert Matthews; F. & H.
uncle Three Balls. A lower-classes’ variant (— 1887) of uncle, q.v. Baumann.
uncle’s, mine or my. See uncle.—2. A privy or w.o.: ca. 1780-1850, aunt (q.v.) succeeding. Cf. the Fr. chez ma tante used also in sense 1.
unoling. See go undling.
uncommon. Uncommonly, very much: (C. 20; low) coll. and dial.: from ca. 1780.

Uncrowned King, the. Parnell: political nickname: 1881–91. "Ware, 'The crown...that of Ireland, from one of whose kings, like most Irish leaders, C. S. Parnell [1849–91] was descended.'"

unction. See blue unction.


under. Under. (the influence of) a narcotic: medical coll., now verging on S.E. (R. Blaker, Night-Shift, 1934.)


under-duber or -dubsmen. A wader other than the chief wader: o.: C. 19. Lex. Bal. See duber and dubsmen.

under-grounder. A bowled ball that does not rise: cricket coll.: 1873; ob. Lewis.

under. One. Do to it all at one 'go': low (- 1887). Baumann.

under or over. 'Under the grass': dead, or 'over the grass'; alive, but devoured or being devoured: Society, esp. Anglo-American: ca. 1860–1914. Ware. (Applied to widows in reference to their husbands.)

under-petting-coat, go. To go whoring or copulating: low: ca. 1870–1920.

under-pinner. The legs: coll.: from late 1850’s; ob. Cf. understandings.


under-shell. A waistcoat, as upper-shell is a coat: o.: C. 19.

under the arm. See arm, under the.

under the belt. In the stomach: coll.: 1815. Scott.

under the crutch. See crutch, under the.

under the influence. Tipsy: coll.: C. 20. Abbr. under the influence of liquor.

under the screw, be. To be in prison: o. (- 1894); ob. H., 3rd ed.


under-orno- or -orum-stumble; under-stumble. To understand: illiterate or jocularly persevering coll.: resp. (low) coll. and dial., mid-C. 19–20, ex dial. underoomestand; ca. 1580, Anon., Macounus. 'You undor[n]s'tumble me well, sir, you have a good wit,' with stumble substituted for stand. Cf. tumble, v., 2, q.v., and ombre-um-stumble, q.v.

underbona. (Of complexion) pale or pasty: ca. 1890–1915. Ware. It partly superseded doughy, q.v.


undergraduate. A girl 'undergrad': s. >, by 1930; coll.: 1911. The Observer, Nov. 23, 'The audience was chiefly composed of undergraduates and undergraduettens,' W.

under-hoof. To fail to land at the intended spot: Royal Air Forces': from 1932.


undertake. v.i. To be a funeral-under-taker: coll. (- 1891). Century Dict.

under-taker's squad, the. Stretcher-bearers: military: 1915; slightly ob. F. & Gibbons.

undies. Women's, hono. children's, underclothes: (orig. euphemistic) coll.: 1918, 'Women's under-wear or undies as they are coyly called', Chambers's Journal, Dec. (O.E.D.): 1934, Books of To-Day (Nov.), 'I like my daily paper, [But one] thing gets me curt'ld, [And that's the morning caper] Of London's 'undie world,—with which cf. the quotations at brief and Naahie-set. Perhaps on nighties or, more prob., frillies, q.v.; cf. the ob. S.E. unders, in same sense.


*undub. To unlock, unfasten: o. of ca. 1810–50. Vaux. See *dub up.

undy. The rare singular of undies: 1928, A. P Herbert (O.E.D. Sup.).

unearthly hour, time. A preposterously early hour or time: coll.: 1865 (O.E.D.).


unfledged. (Of persons) naked: jocular coll. (- 1923). Manchon. Extended from 'featherless'.

Unfortunate Gentlemen. The Horse Guards, 'who thus named themselves in Germany', Grosz, 1st ed., where a topical origin is alleged: military: ca. 1780–1840.

ungrateful man. A parson: ca. 1780–1830. Grosz, 1st ed. Because he 'at least once a week abuses his best benefactor, i.e. the devil'.

ungasty. Incorrect for ugly (adj. and adv.): C. 15–early 16. O.E.D.


ungrumpy. (One's) hungry home: lower classes' coffee-houses' sol. (- 1880). Ware.


ungrummed. Disrated or reduced in rank; dismissed; superseded: military: 1915; ob. F. & Gibbons. Ex Fr. démommé. Also unstuck.—2. See unstuck, come.

unhealthy. (Of area) exposed to gun-fire; unsafe. G.W. military coll. W.; B. & F.

unhistorable. See unmentionables.


unhung for unhanged (of persons) is in C. 20 considered almost a sol.


unicorn. A carriage (or coach) drawn by three horses, two wheels abreast and a leader: s. (- 1788) >, by 1820, coll. >, by 1890, S.E.; ob. Grosz, 1st ed. Ex the unicorn's single horn compared with the leader out in front.—2. Hence, a horse-team thus arranged: from ca. 1860; coll. >, almost imm., S.E.; 3. Hence, two men and a woman (or vice versa) criminally leagued: o.: from ca. 1870; ob.
Union, the. The workhouse: lower classes' coll. (— 1887). Baumann.

Union Jack. The Union Flag: coll. (C. 19-20) >, ca. 1930, S.E. (W., in 1921, could still describe it as 'incorrect').


university is often catastrophically used to mean excellent(y)?' C. 19 (18-20).

United Kingdom of Saus Coudi and Six Souz. 'Riddance of cares, and, ultimately, of sixpences', Egan's Grose: Oxford University: ca. 1820-40.


unload, v.i. and t. To drop (bombs) on the enemy: Air Force jocular coll.: from 1915. F. & Gibbons.

unlocked, to have been sitting in the garden with the gate. To conceive (esp. a bastard) child: a virtual c.p.: late C. 19-20; ob. With a pun on garden.—2. To have caught a cold: ca. 1890-1910.

unmentionables. Trouser s: coll.: U.S., anglicised, as a coll., in 1836 by Dickens; slightly ob. The chronology of these semi-suffixisms (all ob. in C. 20) is: inexpressibles, prob. 1790 or 1791; inexpressibles, 1794; inexpressibles, prob. 1790 or 1791; indescribables, 1794; also inexpressible; indescribable, 1830; uneffectables, 1823; unmentionables, 1830; unexpressibles, 1836; unwhisperables, 1837; inexpressibles, 1840; indescribables, 1841; unmentionables, 1843; unmentionables (— 1904). Calverley satirised the group when, in his Carmen Seculare, he described the garment as crurum non exaurit, a leg-covering that cannot be told ' (W.).

unmonkeyable. (Of a person or thing) that one cannot play tricks with: coll. (— 1923). Manchon.

*unpalled. Single-handed: o.: ca. 1810-90. Vaux. Lit., without a 'pal', v.q. (But only of one who has been deprived of his pals). See unpall.

unparliamentary. Obscene: coll.: from ca. 1870. H., 6th ed. (Other nuances, S.E.)


unpleasantness, the late. The war of 1914-18: from Dec., 1918: a mildly jocular utterstatement that some consider S.E., and others (including myself), coll. It may be noted that it was employed in U.S. as early as 1868 in reference to the American Civil War: O.E.D. (Sup.)

unreg. To undress: Yorkshire and Gloucestershire s. (— 1905), not dial. E.D.D. Ex unreg, q.v., on rags, clothes.

unrelieved holocaust. A Society c.p. of 1883 applied to even a minor accident. Ware. Ex the phrase used by a writer in The Times to describe the destruction, in 1882, of the Ring Theatre in Vienna and of a circus at Berdichev in Russia, both accompanied by a heavy loss of life. [unreg, to undress, is a coll. verging on, prob. achieving the status of, S.E.: late C. 18-20; in late C. 18-20, dial. except where jocular.]

unruff his life-line, he (has). He is dead, he died: nautical coll. (— 1893). Clark Russell.

*unshap. To disconnect, unfasten, unbutton: o.: ca. 1810-50. Vaux. See slour and cf. unbetty and undub.


unstuck, v.i. To leave the ground as one begins a flight: Air Force: from 1916. F. & Gibbons.

unstuck, come. The vbl. form of unsgumped (q.v.) or unstuck. B. & P.—2. Hence, to go amiss; to fall: from ca. 1919. E.g. Dorothy Sayers, The Five Red Herrings, 1931, 'The plan came rather unstuck at this point.'

unsweetened. Gin; properly, unsweetened gin: low: from ca. 1890; ob.

unwhisperable; unwhisperables. To rob of one's watch; thus robbed: o.: ca. 1810-80. Vaux. See throttle.


unutterables; unwhisperables. See unmentionables.

unyn. Unnecessary for onion, except when pronounced un-yun'. Baumann.

up, v. To rise abruptly, approach, begin suddenly or boldly (to do something): coll. and dial.: from ca. 1830. Lover, 1831, 'The bishop ups and he tells him that...' From ca. 1890, gen. up and —, as in 'You have the... insolence to up and stand for cap'n over me!' O.E.D.—2. See up with. —3. See upped (Addenda).

up, adj. Occurring; amiss: as in 'What's up?', 'What's the matter', or when up is emphasised, What's wrong? Mid-C. 19-20: coll. rather than a. Albert Smith, 1849 (O.E.D.); Jeaffreson, 1863, 'I'll finish my cigar in the betting room and hear what's up.' Prob. ex up to (as in 'What are you up to now, you young rascal?'). A C. 20 variant is (it's all) up the country (with a person): Manchon.

up, adv. At or in school or college; on the school or college roll; in the capacity of pupil or student: coll.: from mid-1840's. Gen. implies residence, but often as in 'X was up in your time—1925-8.' Prob. abbr. up there.—2. On horseback; riding: 1860, H. Dixon (O.E.D.); 'Sydney Howard Up in the Derby' was a cinema title in 1853-4.

up, preposition. In cotition with (a woman): low: late (? mid-C.) 19-20.—2. See 'Westminster School slang.'

up-a-dais, up-a-daisy(e). See ups-a-daisy.

up a tree. See tree. A proletarian intensive (mid-C. 19-20; ob.) is up a tree for tenpence, penniless (Ware).

up against. Confronted by (a difficulty): coll.: U.S. (1896, George Ade: O.E.D. Sup.) >, by 1914, anglicised. Esp. in the phrase up against it, in serious difficulties: 1910, Chamber's Journal, April, 'In Canadian phraseology, we were "up against it" with a vengeance!', O.E.D. See also Fowler. Cf.: up against a (or the) wall. Sentenced-to death: military: from 1918. F. & Gibbons. (It was there usually, that such a soldier was shot.)

up against you? What do you say to that? coll.: late C. 19-20.

up and —. See up, v.

up and do 'em. To begin spinning the pennies; two-up players' coll.: C. 20.
up-and-down job. An engineer’s, a trimmer’s job in a reciprocating-engined, as opposed to a turbine, steamer; nautical coll.: from 1904. Bowen.


up-and-down place. ‘A shop where a cutter-out is expected to fill in his time sewing’, F. & H.: sailors: from ca. 1870; ob. Ex up-and-down, fluctuating, changeable.


at second school, be. ‘To go to any one for work at 10 or 11 o’eck’, F. & H.: Harrow School (–1904); coll.: >.

up-foot. (To get or rise) to one’s feet: low coll. (–1867). Beumann, [†] up-foot and told him.

up-hander. A soldier surrenders: military coll.: 1016; ob. Manchon. Ex the gesture of surrender

up. Well informed on, clever at, practised in: coll.: 1839, Dickens: 1855, Anstey, ‘I did think Potter was better up in his work.’ O.E.D.

up in Annie’s room. See Annie’s room.


up in the stirrups. Having plenty of money: low (–1812); ob. Vaux, ‘In swell-street’:—see swell street. Ex riding.

up jib or the stacks or (the) stick(s). To be off; pack up and go: from ca. 1860; ob. Ware. The first is nautical, the others non-aristocratic. H. Kingsley, 1865, ‘They made up their sticks and take me home.’ Cf.:


up on oneself, be. To be concocted: mostly Cockney: late C. 19–20.

up one’s sleeve, it is (was, etc.) six pots. He (etc.) is (was, etc.) drunk: mid-C. 19–20; ob. Ware. Ex up or down.

up or down. Heaven or hell; lower and lower-middle classes’ euphemistic coll.: mid-C. 19–20. Ware.

up School. Upper School (‘the great school-room, Ware’): Westminster School coll.: mid-C. 19–20.—2. up-school, detention, may be coll. rather than j.: see ‘Westminster School slang’.

up-stage. Haughty, supercilious; conceived: theatrical coll. (from ca. 1920) >, by 1933, gen. S.E. (O.E.D. Sup.) Ex play up-stage, a foremost role.

up-stairs. Up in, up into, the air: aviators’ coll.: from 1818. Ex up-stairs.

up-tails all. See up-tails all.—up the country. See up, ad—up the pole. See pole, up the.—up the spout. See spout.—up the stick. See stick.—up the tree. See tree, up the.—up the weather, go. See weather, go down or up the.—up there. See want it.

up to. Before, as in Trollope, 1862, ‘She told me so, up tony’s face’, O.E.D.; coll.: ob. ‘I ex looking up to.—2. Obligatory (up)on; (one’s) duty; the thing one should, in decency, do; coll.: U.S. (1869, George Ade the inimitable; O.E.D. Sup.), anglicised ca. 1910. The East London Dispatch (South Africa), Nov. 10, 1911; C. J. Dennis, 1916; Hugh Walpole, 1933. Orig. in poker, as Greenough & Kittredge remark.
upper ten, the — garret), empty-headed, a nit-wit, — a phrase given by Grose, 2nd ed., as his upper storey or garret [is] are unfurnished; wrong in his upper storey, however, indicates lunacy (H., 5th ed.).

upper ten, the. The upper classes; the aristocratic classes (orig. U.S.) and in the form the upper ten thousand (1844); in England the longer form (ob. in c. 20) is recorded in 1861, the shorter a year earlier. 'Usually referred to N. P. Willis' — an American journalist well known in England— and orig. applied to the wealthy classes of New York as approximating that number', F. & H. Cf. upper crust, q.v.—2. Hence upper-tendons, the world of the upper classes: orig. (1860) and mainly U.S.: likewise coll.—Also, 3. upper ten set, servants employed by 'the upper ten'; these servants' (— 1909). Ware.

upper works. See upper storey.

uppers, (down) on one's. In (very) reduced, in poor, circumstances; occ., having a run of bad luck: U.S. (—1891) coll., anglicised ca. 1900. Orig. on one's uppers; down being, app., unrecorded before 1900 (F. & H.). Ex shoes so worn that one walks on the uppers.

uphill. Having, at the time, plenty of money: ca. 1873–1720. B.E. The earliest sense of the word, which is otherwise, despite Swift's condemnation of the 'cock-a-hoop' sense, S.E.

uppy. (Of a stroke) upship: cricketers' coll.: 1851; † by 1900. Lewis.

upright, A drink of beer strengthened with gin: 1796. The Sporting Magazine (O.E.D.): ob.—2. The sexual act performed standing, a 'perpendicular': late c. 18—20. See threepenny bit.

upright, go. A c.p. (late c. 17—early 19) defined by B.E. as 'Said by Tailors and Shoemakers, to their Servants, when any Money is given to make them Drink and signifies, bring it all out in Drink, tho' the Donor intended less and expects Change or some return of Money'. 

upright man, the leader of a band of criminals or beggars: c.; mid-c. 16—early 19. Awdeley, 1651; Middleton; B.E. 'Having sole right to the first night's Lodging with the Dells' (q.v.); Grose, 1st ed., 'The vilest stoutest rogue in the pack is generally chosen to this post.' Perhaps because he carries a short truncheon. See esp. Grose, P.


up-S-a-daisy! up-S-a-daisy! — up-S-a- 

up-S-a-daisy! sleepy, sleepy, sleepy, but properly upyey Fre(e)se, i.e. Fries; hence upyey Dutch; hence upyey English. After the Friesian, Dutch, English fashion, orig. and esp. of modes of drinking: late c. 16—17; perhaps orig. coll., but gen. considered S.E. Ex Dutch op ziet, on his, in his (so fashion). O.E.D.; F. & H.]

upset the apple-cart. See apple-cart.—upsidey.


up sides with (a person), be. To be even or quite with; to be (more than) a match for: (orig. Soots; from mid-c. 19; also English) dial. and coll.: from the 1740's. O.E.D.; E.D.D.—2. Hence, on a level with: coll.; from ca. 1880. Variant, be up sides of, to be alongside of: 1894 (O.E.D.).

upstairs. (For the adv., see up-stairs.) A special brand of spirits: London public-house; late c. 19–20. Because usually kept on a shelf. The brand, etc., varies with the house. F. & H., 'A drop of upstairs' .


upstairs, kick (a person). To thrust (e.g. an unpopular statesman) into a higher office: political coll. (—1887). Baumann.

upstairs out of the world, go. To be hanged: jocular coll.: late c. 17–18. Congrove, 1896, 'By your looks you should go,' etc.

up-S-a-daisy. See up-S-a-daisy.

up tails (up-tails) all, play at. To coll.: ca. 1840–1750; coll. rather than s. Herrick. Ex the name of a song and its lively tune.


up wards of, correct as 'rather more than', is catachrestic (and dial.) when = 'rather less than': late c. 19–20. Esp. E.D.D.


Urialities. The 3rd Battle Squadron of the Grand Fleet: naval officers': 1914; ob. Bowen. Is there a pun on striking all of a Uriah Heap'? No; the reference is to that Uriah whom David, with sinister intent, set 'in the forefront of the battle' (F. & Gibbons)

Urizen, of the Planets, the, Ireland: literary coll.: late c. 19–mid-19. B.E. 'Because of its frequent and great Rains, as Heidelberg and Cologne in Germany, have the same Name on the same Account'. Cf. England's umbrella, q.v.


us. We: a frequent sol. in mod. English. Cf. we use, q.v.—2. In the predicate, after some part of the v. to be, it is, however, merely coll. and dial.; if any emphasis is laid, it is almost S.E.: C. 19 (prob. earlier)–20. 'Who's there?' 'It's us': is coll., but 'It wasn't you': 'It was us, we tell you' ' borders on S.E.—3. Me; to me: dial. and (low) coll.: recorded in 1828, but prob. considerably older.

[use, the. Ware's definition is incorrect, the term, moreover, is S.E.]

use at (a place). To frequent: o.: from mid-1870's. Horne, Jottings from Jd., 1877, 'I got in company with some of the wildest people in London. They used to use at a pub. in Shoreditch.' Ex dial. use about, round.

use for, have no. To consider superfluous or
Valoose. Money: soldiers' (Eastern front and Egypt) : c. 20; esp. in G.W. Ex Arabic. B. & P., "The soldiers' usual reply to beggars and touts in Egypt was 'Hafish, valoose.'
VALLY - Varsity


vamos, vamos, vamoose, vamoose, vamoose, vamoose, vamoose, vamoose. To depart, decamp, disappear: U.S. coll. (ca. 1840), anglicised as a: S. 1844, Selby, in London by Night, 'Vamoose—scared—fly.' The forms vamoose (C. 20), vamous (H., 1st ed.) and vamoose (1862) are rare, while vamoose (Baumann) or vamush (Manchon) is illiterate, and vamous or vamoose is incorrect, but was after the 1860's. Ex Sp. vamoose, let us go. - 2. As v.t., to disappear from, the word has not caught on in England.


*vampier. A thief; esp. one of a gang frequenting public houses and picking quarrels 'with the wearers of rings and watches, in hopes of getting up a fight, and so enabling their "pals" to steal the articles', H., 3rd edd., 1864. Cf. vamp, n., 1.-2. (Gen. in pl.) A stocking: c.: late C. 17-early 19. B.E.; Gros, 1st ed.; 'Perhaps an error for vamps or vampye': O.E.D. Cf. vamps q.v.


vampo. The clown (see vampire, 1); id.: id.: c. 1686. Ex lingua Franca. See switchel.

vampo(o)se. See vamos.


*van-dragger. 'One who steals parcels from vans' (David Hume) c.: c. 1820.

van John. A s. corruption of vint-ay-us: orig. and N.A. Amer. coll.: 1833, 'Cutthert John,' ' "Van John" was the favourite game; ob. Van Neck, Miss or Mrs. 'A large-breasted woman', Gros, 2nd ed.: low: late C. 18-early 19. Because she is well to the fore.

vandemonianism. Rowdymail: Australian coll.: ca. 1890-90. Morris. Ex Vandemonian, an inhabitant of Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania), esp. as applied to a convict resident there in early C. 19; suggested partly by der. van.


vardi or -is. See vardy.

var. A waggon: vardo-gill, a waggoner: c. (-1812); ? by 1900. Vaux. Ex Romany varde (or wardo), a cart. (Sampson's vardo). - 2. Hence, a caravan: grafters: from ca. 1880. (F. Allingham, Cheepjack, 1934.)

vardo, v.t. To see, look at, observe: Parly rare and low London (ca. 1859). H., 1st ed., 'Vardo the casey [gen. casey, casey, casey], look at the house'; H., 5th ed. (1874). This is by low Cockneys gen. pronounced vardy.' Cf. deke, q.v.; perhaps ex Romany vardo, v.t., to watch; note, to that since in Romany v and w are nearly always interchangeable, there may be a connection with wad (esp. in watch and wardo).


various. A variose veins; (collectively with pl. v.) one's various veins: coll.: C. 20.

varjus. Verjuice: Cockney (ca. 1823); ob. 'Jen Bee.' Cf. clargy and service.


varment, varmint, adj. See n. 2 and 3.-2. Knowing, cunning; clever: dial. (ca. 1829) soon > s. in C. 20, only dial. Trelawny, 1851 (O.E.D.). Ex varment, a fox.

varmentish; varmentey. The adj. and n. of varment, n., 1 and esp. 3: ca. 1811-30. The Sporting Magazine, 1819, 'Nothing under four horses would look "varmentish",' O.E.D.


*varnisher. A coiner of counterfeit sovereigns: c. (-1864); ob. H., 3rd ed. Because this finishing touch often gave an effect of varnish.


varity, V.; *variety. V. University College, Oxford: Oxford University coll.: mid-C. 19-20.- 2. Orig. university coll., now gen. coll. for university: from ca. 1845. Dorothy Sayers, in The Passing Show, March 25, 1933, 'Nobody says "undergrads" except townies and journalists and people outside the university... Stick to "University"'. 'Variety' has somehow a flavour of the nineties,' - 3. As adj.: 1863 (O.E.D. Sup.): 1864, Tennyson. Whether as n. or adj., the term, in its wider sense, has not always been approved at the two older English universities. Ca. 1860-1700, Varsity: likewise coll. W.; O.E.D. - 4. variety th. See tit. 4.

vast of, a. A great amount (e.g. of trouble) or number: dial. (1794: E.D.D.) > also, by 1900, proletarian coll. Manchon.

vatch. (To) have: back s., esp. butchers: late C. 19–20.

Vauhan, the. The School Library: Harrow coll.: late C. 19–20. Ex Dr Vaughan (1816–97), the famous headmaster of Harrow.


ve. Have: coll. (he've, e.g., is sol.): C. 19–20. Rather rare in the infinitive, as in A. Fielding, Death of John Tarl, 1932, ‘My road sense seems to’ve deserted me for the time being.’ Often intrusive: see of v., and have, v.


Vein-Openers, the. The 29th Foot Regiment, from ca. 1881 the 1st Battalion of the Worcestershire Regiment: military: late C. 18–20; very ob. F. & Gibbons. ‘The first to draw blood’ in the American War.

velvet. (The tongue: ‘especially the tongue of a magician’, H. 5th ed.: in gen., late C. 17–20, c. >, by 1800, low s. (B.E., Grose); in particular sense: from ca. 1870, low s. Ex its texture. See velvet, tip the.

velvet, on. In an easy or advantageous position: 1769, Burke (O.E.D.): S.E. rapidly > sporting coll., Grose, 1st ed., having ‘to be upon velvet, to have the best of a bet or match’; esp. as sure to win. Hence the next two entries.

velvet, play on. To game with winnings: gaming (as C. 20, coll.): from ca. 1890. Ex velvet, on, q.v.; perhaps influenced by:

velvet, stand on. ‘Men who have succeeded in their speculations, especially on the turf, are said to stand on velvet’, H., 5th ed., 1874.


[velvet,] to the little gentleman in. This C. 18 Anglo-Irish Tory and Roman Catholic toast vogue on the coll., the little . . . velvet being that ‘mole which threw up the mound causing Crop (King William [III]’s horse) to stumble’ Grose, 3rd ed.]


Venedian cramps. ‘Peculiar and ritualistic variation of cramps’ used in various bedroom cures: ‘Venedian School, from before 1900. Anon., Dict. of Bootham Slang, 1925.

vengeance. See whip-belly.


ventilator. ‘A play, player, or management that empties’ a theatre: theatrical (— 1904). F. & H. Neat wit on the lit. sense.

ventually. Eventually: (low coll. or) sol. (— 1887). Baumann.

venture-girl. A poor young lady seeking a husband in India: Anglo-Indian: ca. 1830–70. Ware.

venture it as Johnson did his wife, and she did well,—I’ll. A semi-proverbial c.p. implying that it sometimes pays to take a risk: ca. 1670–1800. Ray, 1678; Fuller, 1732. Apperson.

Venus is oc., used catachrestically for Venice: C. 17–20. E.g. Venus sumach. O.E.D.

Veranda(h), the. The gallery of the old Victoria Theatre: London: late C. 18. Ware.


Verey. See Very.


Verry. See Very.


Versity. See varsity.

vert; ‘vert. A pervert or convert to another religion (esp. Roman Catholicism): coll.: 1804, The Union Review, May number. V., however, thinks that it may have originated, ca. 1846, with Dean Stanley.—2. Occ. as v.i.: coll.: 1888.


vertical breeze or gust. See wind vertical.

vertical care-grinder. A treadmill: c. (— 1859); almost †. H., 1st ed. Known also as the everlasting, horizontal, or universal exercise.

vertical is a C. 17 incorrectness for vertical, n. and adj. O.E.D.

very at end of phrase or sentence is coll. (— 1887). Baumann, ‘And when it is faded, it looks ugly, very.’

Véry or Vérey; Verey; Verry. Incorrect for Very (flare, light, pistol): from 1915.

very cheese, the; the very ticket. Correct; requisite: Glasgow: C. 20. Ex the cheese, the ticket.

very millionaire. Characteristic of the patronage shown by rich men: Society: 1870’s. Ware. Ex familiar + millionaire.

very froney. Very pronounced; vulgar: Society: ca. 1870–1905. Ware. Ex trés français, very French.

very ‘oh my!’ Smug: Glasgow (— 1934).
very well. An intensification of well, adj. (q.v.).

Ware.


vest, lose one's. To get angry: low: ca. 1890-1910. A mere elaboration of get one's shirt out, q.v.; cf. thirty.


vet, v. To cause (an animal) to be examined by a vet: (q.v.): coll.: from ca. 1890. Ex vet, n. 1.—2. Hence, to examine, occ. to treat, (a person) medically: coll.: 1898, Mrs Croker (O.E.D.).—3. Hence, to revise (a manuscript): a book-world coll., orig. and mainly publishers: from ca. 1910.—4. Also, to sound, or ask questions of (a person), in order to discover his abilities or opinions: coll.: from ca. 1920. Richard Keverne, The Havering Plot, 1928, 'I brought you here so that I might vet you. I do things like that—and then trust my instinct.'

vex. (So much the) worse, as in vex for you: Christ's Hospital: from ca. 1890. Perhaps ex L. pejus (pronounced—one may presume—pedajus), but more prob. simply an abbr. of vexing or vexation.


Vic, the Old. This coll. for the Old Victoria Theatre has, since ca. 1925, been virtually S.E.

vicar of St. Fools, the. (Imlying) a fool: a semi-proverbal coll.: mid-C. 16—17. Heywood, 1662; Nashe, 1598; Howell, 1659, and Ray, 1670, omit the St. (Apperson.) So Church; by putting 'topography'.

vice-admiral of the narrow seas. See seas.

vice (or Vice), the. The Vice-Chancellor, President, etc.: coll. (—1887). Baumann.

Vice-Chancellor's court. 'Creditor's last shift', Egan's Grose; Oxford University: ca. 1820—50.


Viceroy, the. Sarah Jennings, 1st Duchess of Marlborough. Ex her influence with Queen Anne. (Dawson.)

Vice, the. A variant of the Queen Vice, q.v. (F. & Gibbons.)


victualling department or office. The stomach: boxing > gen. s.: resp. 1878 (O.E.D.) and 1781, Smollett; both are ob. By a pun on that Government office which virtuals the Navy. Cf. bread-basket and dumpling-depot.

*view the land. To examine in advance the scene of a crime: (— 1887). Baumann.

viewy. Designed, or likely, to catch the eye; attractive: 1851, Mayhew; ob. Hence, viewiness, display: theatrical (— 1929). Manchon.

vigilance. 'A crude periscope consisting of a mirror affixed to the top of a staff: military: late 1914; ob. B. & P.


vile, adj. As a mere intensive (cf. foul) = ' unpleasant', ' objectionable': coll.: C. 20.


village blacksmith. A performer or actor not quite a failure, his engagements never lasting longer than a week: music-halls and theatrical (—1909); ob. Ware. Ex Longfellow's poem, 'Week in, week out, from morn till night ...


villain as ever scuttled a ship, I'm as mild a. A c.p. applied to oneself in jocular reproach: coll. (—1904). Prob. on S.E. I'm a bit of a villain myself, but —

*ville. See ville.


vin. Wine; Australian soldiers': in G.W. Ex Fr. vin blanc.

vin blink. French white wine; New Zealand soldiers': 1918—18. Ex Fr. vin blanc.


vincent's (or V.) law. The art and practice of cheating at a betting game, esp. bowls or cards: c.: same period and history as preceding; Greene; Grose, 1st ed. Here, law = lay = line of criminal activity.

vindgar. A cloak: c.: late C. 17—early 19. B.E.; Grose, 1st ed. Perhaps because it is worn in
sharp weather. Cf. the semantics presumably operative in:—2. 'The person, who with a whip in his hand, and a hat hold before his eyes'—cf. the man that, in a public conveyance, pretends to sleep while women are strap-hanging—'keeps the ring clear at boxing matches and cudgel playings'. Grose, 1st ed.: sporting: ca. 1720–1840. A New Cauting Dict., 1725.


violently. Showily, 'loudly' (e.g. dressed).

violet; garden-violet. An onion; gen. in pl. as = spring onions eaten as a salad.—2. Pl. sage-and-onion stuffing. Both, proletarian-ironic: from ca. 1870; slightly ob.

violet, Brita's. An East African campaign term of 1917–18, as in F. Brett Young, Jim Redlake, 1930: 'Doomed horses... fed till they dropped, and became, in their noisome end, what the soldiers called "Brita's violets"'. Brita commanded a contingent of Boers in German East Africa.

virgin. See man-trap.


virus, Mary's (Body-guard, the. The 7th Dragoon Guards: military: mid-C. 18–20; ob. 'They served under Maria Theresa of Austria, temp. George II', F., H. & See also Strawbots.

viret. The Lump, the. See Lady of the Lump.


viret, bus, the. The last bus running from Piccadilly Corner westward: lower classes' ca. 1870–1900. Ware. Its chief patrons were prostitutes.

virgin's dream, the. See maiden's prayer.

virtue. 'Smoking, drinking, whoring. When a man confesses to abstention from tobacco and intoxicating liquors he is perversely said to have no virtue,' F. & H.: non-aristocratic: ca. 1890–1916.


wise. Angry; cross: Christ's Hospital: from ca. 1850. Abbr. vicious in this sense. It superseded passey (abbr. passionate), q.v.

violation. An over-long visit or protracted social call: coll.: 1819 (O.E.D.). Ex the length of ecclesiastical visitations.


vitty. Fitty, i.e. fitting, suitable; neat: late C. 18–20: S.E. until C. 18, then s. († by 1900) and dial. (O.E.D.)


voodoo. Money, cash; booty: c. : from ca. 1930. James Curtis, The Gift Kid, 1936. This has the appearance of being a rhyming fantasy on dough, money, possibly suggested or influenced by Romany vongar, money.


voker, v.t. To speak: tramps' c. and low s. (— 1859); ob. H., 1st ed. This is the orig. form of rockeier, q.v. Cf. L. vocare.

vol, adj. Voluntary: Harrow School (— 1904). F. & H.


volunteer knee-drill. 'Abject adulation': Society and middle classes' (— 1909; † by 1920). Ware, 'Outcome of volunteer movement'.

vou. One: see 'v for w'.

vote. To propose, suggest: coll.: 1814, Scott (O.E.D.). Only with that...

vote for the alderman. See alderman, vote for the.

vote khaki. To plump for the Liberal Unionists: 1900–1. Ware.

voucher. An assertion or formal statement: C. 17–20: S.E. until C. 19, then coll.: ob. (O.E.D.)


voucher, force the. To elicit money from the betting public and then abscond: sporting (— 1874). H., 6th ed.

voulez-vous que vous ayez vous? Will you sit down? theatre gods': from ca. 1820. 'Started by Grimaldi', says Ware. Cf. tuvages-vous.

vowel. To pay (a winner; indeed, any creditor) with an I.O.U.: C. 18–19. Steele, 'I am voweled by the Count, and cursedly out of honour', O.E.D. Ex either spoken formula, or written statement of, 'I.O.U.'


voyage, Hobbe's. An act of cotion: late C. 17–18. Vanbrugh, 1697, 'Matrimony's the spot... So now I am in for Hobbe's voyage; a great leap in the dark'. Ex some lost topical allusion, unless it be a j ear at Hob, a country bumpkin.

voyage of discovery. 'Going out stealing': o. (— 1857); † by 1920. 'Ducango Anglicus'.

*vow-case. A brothel: c. (prob.) late C. 17–mid-19. F. & H., who app. deduce it, justifiably (I think), from B.E.'s case-fro, 'a Whore that Plies in a Bawdy-house'. Ex Dutch vrou, a woman, + case, case, a house, shop, etc.

[vulgariization. See Fowler.]


Van O'Clock. See General One O'Clock.
[Under w. F. & H. has admitted the following ineligibles; ...]

[Text continues...]

W

W.F.'s. Wild cattle: Tasmania: c. 1840-80. Fenton, Bush Life in Tasmania Fifty Years Ago, 1892. 'The brand on Mr William Field's wild cattle'.

W.G. Dr William Grace (1840-1915), the great cricketer; cricketers' nickname. See esp. Bernard Darwin's delightful biography.

w.h. or W.H. A whore: euphemistic coll. (—1887); ob. Baumann.

W.H.B., the. The 'Wandering Hand Brigade', those who are apt to take liberties with women: late C. 19-20.

W.M.P. We accept the invitation: naval coll. verging on: late C. 19-20. I.e., with much pleasure.


W. Two; W.2. 'Satirical description of the Emperor William II...on his telegram to... Kruger on [Jan. 1] 1896': only in that year.


Waa. A member of the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps: coll.: 1917, The Times, Nov. 19. (O.E.D.) Sup.). Cf. Wraf and Wren, q.q.v. Also spelt Wack: which is perhaps a wabbler. See foot-wabbler and wobblower.—wack. A mainly dial. form of whack, q.v.—Wack is also a variant form of Waa, q.v.


waddle; orig. and gen. waddle out; often extended to waddle out lame duck or w.o. of the Alley. To become a defaulter on the Exchange: Stock Exchange: 1771, Garrick, 'The gaming fools are doves, the knaves are rooks, Change-Alley bankrupts waddle out lame ducks!': Grose, 1st ed.; 1806, Peacock (waddle off, rare); † by 1900. See lame duck.


wads. A gunner: naval, esp. as a nickname: from ca. 1890. Bowen. Ex the use he makes thereof.—2. (Very rare in singular.) Buns, occ., small cakes sold at a canteen: military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Ex shape; also ex 'What doesn't fatten, fills.' Hence, tea and a wad = a snack, esp. that at the 11 a.m. break: Royal Air Force's (—1935).

waffle. Nonsense; gosseping; incessant or copious talk: printers' (-1888). Jacobi. Ex dial. waffle, a small dog's yelp or yap. Cf. waffles and:

waffle, v. To talk incessantly; printers': from ca. 1890. Ex waffle, to yelp. -2. To talk nonsense: from ca. 1890: Durham School >, by 1910 or so. gen. Perhaps ex sense 1; cf., however, the n. -3. See waffle.

waffles. A loafer; a sauntering idler: low (-1904); ob. F. & H. Cf. waffle.


wag, n. See wag, hop the. -2. V., to play truant; often wag it: mid-C. 19-20. Dickons, 1846 (O.E.D.). Ex. -3. wag, to go, to depart: late C. 16-20: S.E. until C. 19, then coll. -4. V. t., gen. in negative. To stir (e.g. a limb): late C. 16-20: S.E. until mid-C. 19, then coll. F. Harrison, 'I . . . declined to ask him . . . to wag a finger to get me there,' O.E.D. Cf. -5. V. l., to move one's limbs: C. 13-20: S.E. until mid-C. 19, then coll.; ob. Whyte-Melville, 1860 (O.E.D.).

wag, hop the; play the wag; play the Charley-wag. To play truant: 1861, Mayhew, the first two; 1876, Hindley, the third, which is very ob. Ex wag, v., 1, q.v.—perhaps with a pun on lit. sense of play the wag, to be amusingly mischievous, to indulge constantly in jokes. In C. 20, often wag it (Manchon).

wag one's bottom. To be a harlot: mostly Cookney: late C. 19-20.


Wagga-Wagga Guards, the. See Tichborne's Own. Wagga-Wagga in N.S.W. was frequently mentioned at the trial. F. & Gibbons.


waggery! O(oh) agony! lower Society: 1890's. Ware. The pun is specifically on Wagner, much ridiculed in that decade.

waggle. To wield (a bat, stick, oar); jocular coll.: C. 20. Ex lit. sense. -2. To overcome; low (-1904); ob. except in U.S. F. & H. Cf. 1.

wagley; gen. waggly. Unsteady; having frequent irregular curves: coll.: 1894, E. Banks, 'Even in [the path's] most waggy parts', O.E.D. Lit. wagging.

waggon. *'In the old guardships, the place where the supernumeraries alung their hammocks'; naval: ? ca. 1840-90. Bowem.—2. A bunk (bed); ships'steward's (-1935).-3. An omnibus; busmen's: from ca. 1928. The Daily Herald, Aug. 5, 1936.

wagon, on the. See water-wagon.

*wagon-hunter. A brothel-keeper's tout visiting the inns at which the stage-coaches stopped: o. ca. 1780-1840. O.E.D.

wagon-day. 'Waiting in the street to rob waggons going out or coming into town, both commonly happening in the dark', Grose, 3rd ed.: o. late C. 18-19-mid. 19.

wagon. See waggon.
WALK INTO ONE'S AFFECTIONS

936

WALLOP

Wallop. —See Low, v.

WALLOP. —See Low, v.

WALLOP. —See Low, v.

WALK OUT INTO ONE'S AFFECTIONS. To win a person's love or affection effortlessly and immediately: coll.: 1868 (O.E.D.).—2. Jocularly for walk into, 1 and 2, q.v.: 1868, H., 1st ed.; also for walk into, 3 (Baumann, 1887).—3. Hence ironically, to get into a person's debt from ca. 1860; ob. H., 3rd ed.


walk, knave, walk! A coll. c.p. taught to parrots: mid-C. 16-17. 'Proverbs' Heywood, 1646; Lyly; 'Hudibras' Butler; Roxburgh, Ballads, ca. 1685. (Apperson.)

walk one's chalks. See chalks, walk one's.

walk out, v.t. and p.p. (To have) an affair: Society: from ca. 1930. (Evelyn Waugh, A Handful of Dust, 1934.) Ex dial. v.l. walk out, to take one's fiancée out.

walk out with the bat. To achieve victory: Society: ca. 1880-1900. Ex a cricketer 'carrying' his bat. (Ware.)

walk round. To prepare oneself to attack or be attacked: lower classes (—1899). Ware. Ex dogs' circling.—2. See walk around.

walk spoken. See chalks, walk one's.

*walk the barber. To lead a girl astray: c. (—1869). H., 1st ed. (Anatomical.)

walk the chalk. 'To walk along a chalk line as a test of sobriety': military (—1823) >, by 1850, gen. 'Jon Bee.' See also chalk, able to walk a.—2. Hence, by 1845 at latest, to keep oneself up to the moral mark.

walk the pegs. In cheating at cribbage, to move one's own pegs forward or one's opponent's back: low s. >, ca. 1870, s. >, ca. 1900, coll. > 1920, S.E. 1816 (O.E.D.). Lit., to make walk:

walk up (against) the wall. See wall, crawl... walk up Ladder Lane and down Hemp Street. To be hanged at the yard-arm: nautical: C. 19. Cf. note at hemp, hempen. (—1923). Manchon.

walk away, off, be. To be led to prison: proletarian (—1923). Manchon.

walk out, the lamp (has). The lamp has gone out, went out: jocular (—1887); ob. Baumann properly Hooky Walker! 'Signifying that the story is not true, or that the thing will not occur', Lex. Bal., 1811; Walker is recorded by Vaux in the following year. —2. Hence, be off: late C. 19-20. —3. As n., in, e.g., 'That is all (Hooky) Walker': late C. 19-20. Ex sense 1, which derives perhaps ex 'some hook-nosed person named Walker', O.E.D.


Walker, my (or his, etc.) name's. I'm (he's, etc.) off: late C. 19-20. Ex Walker, 2, q.v.

walker, that's a. A C. 20 variant of Walker, 1.

Manchon.


walking cornet: An ensign of foot: military (—1785); by 1890. Grose, 1st ed.

*walking distiller. See distiller.

walking-go. A walking-contest: coll. C. 19-20; very ob. O.E.D.


walking Moses! See Moses!


walking poulterer. One who hawks from door to door the fowls he steals: c. of ca. 1785-1840. Grose, 2nd ed.


walking stationer. 'A hawkers of pamphlets, &c.', Grose, 2nd ed., 1788: (1 orig. c. >) low s.; ob. by 1870, t. by 1900.

walking-stick. A rifle: Anglo-Irish: 1914; ob. (Orig. either euphemistic or secretive.)

wallist. A walker: sporting (esp. athletics) coll. (—1887); ob. Baumann.

wall, crawl or walk up the; in Lex. Bal., 1811, also as walk up against the wall. 'To be scored up at a public house', Grose, 1st ed.: public-house (—1780); by 1850. Ex the mounting bill written up, in chalk, on the wall.

wall, up against the. In serious difficulties: military: from 1916. F. & Gibbons. Ex up against a wall, q.v.

wall and it will not bite you I, look on the. A jeering c.p. addressed to one whose tongue has felt the bite of mustard: ca. 1850-1910.

wall as anyone, see as far into a brick. See see as.

wall-eyed. Inferior, careless (work); irregular (action): from the 1840's; ob. by 1890, virtually t. by 1930. Halliwell, 1847. The C. 20 equivalent for 'inferior' is cock-eyed. Ex wall-eyed, squinting.

wall-prop, be a; make wall-paper. C. 20 variants (Manchon) of (be a) wallflower, q.v. below.

wallabies; W. Australians; coll.: from ca. 1908. Mostly in sporting circles and esp. of teams of Australians. O.E.D. (Sup.).

wallaby, on the. On tramp: Australian s. >, ca. 1910, coll.: 1889, Marcus Clarke. Abbr. on the wallaby-track. In the 'bush', often the only perceptible track. Morris.

[wallah, in Anglo-Indian (hence in Army compounds—e.g. competition wallah,—is simply a chap, a fellow: late C. 18-20. Only in certain (mostly, jocular) compounds (e.g. smart-wallah, base-wallah) is it eligible; these will be found in their alphabetical place. Ex Hindustani -walla, connected with. See esp. Yule & Burnell.]

walled. (Of a picture) accepted by the Royal Academy: artists: 1882; ob. Ware.

wallflower. A second-hand coat, exposed for sale: low London: 1804 (O.E.D.).—ob. For semantics, cf. next sense.—2. Orig. and gen., a lady keeping her seat by the wall because of her inability to attract partners: coll.: 1820. Præsid, 'The maiden wallflowers of the room! Admire the freshness of his bloom.'—3. Hence, any person going to a ball but not dancing, whatever the reason: coll.: from 1890's. The Free Lance, Nov. 22, 1905, 'And male wall-flowers sitting out at dances! Will reekon up their matrimonial chances.'

wambling (or, C. 18, wamble-)cropped or -stomached. Sick at the stomach: resp. mid-C. 18–20, but in C. 18–20 only U.S. and until mid-C. 18, S.E.; C. 16–7, so prob. not late enough to be eligible. See wamble, 1; cf.:


wan'. Wasn't: sol.: late C. 19–20. 'Bout five to ten, 'wan it, Sam?' *Time and Tide* Nov. 24, 1934.


wand. Incorrect for wain (sail of windmill): mid-C. 18–20. O.E.D.

wander. To lead astray; fig., to confuse, be wilder: coll.: from mid-1890's. (O.E.D.)

wander! Go away! ca. 1890–1905. Ware, who classifies it as street.


wangle, v.t. To arrange to suit oneself; contrive or obtain with sly cunning, insidiously or illicitly; to manipulate, to 'fake': printers s. (—1888)>, before or by 1911, fairly gen.; in G.W., a very common soldiers' word; since G.W. very gen. indeed. Jacobi, 1888; esp. B. & P. Esap. wangle a job, wangling leave (of absence).—2. Hence as v.i.: 1920 (O.E.D.Sup.).—3. To persuade (one) to do something: 1926 (ibid.). Possibly ex dial. wangle, to shake, as W. suggests; perhaps (O.E.D.) ex wapple; in either case, perhaps influenced by wanky, q.v.

wangler. One who 'wangles' (see preceding): from ca. 1910. Edgar Wallace, in Private Selby, 1912, 'A wangler is... a nicker, a slirker, a grous'er—any bloomin' thing that talks a lot an' don't do much work,' W.—2. Hence, from ca. 1915, a schemer (cf. wangle, n.).

wangling. The n. ex wangle, v. (q.v.): from ca. 1915. Cf. wangler.

wank. See wonk.


wann't; warnt (q.v.). Was not: coll. (1702, Vanbrugh)>, in mid-C. 19, low coll.; also dial. Via wasn't.

want an apron. To be out of work: workmen's (—1899); ob. Ware, 'The apron off.'—want doing; it will: 1930; it wants or wanted doing. It will, does, or did need doing: mid-C. 16–20; B.E. until late C. 19, then coll. 'Seton Merriman,' 1898, 'Roden is a scoundrel... and wants thumping,' O.E.D.

want in; want out. To wish to enter; to wish to go out: from ca. 1840: coll. of Scotland,
Northern Ireland, and U.S. Abbr. want to go in or out. (O.E.D.)

want it, it's up there (with a tap on one's forehead) you; or that's where you want it. You should use your brains; a lower-class and military c.p.; from ca. 1908. B. & P.

want-to-wash'er, n. and adj. (An athlete or a pugilist) hopeful but past his prime: Canadian: C. 20. John Beames.

ward-room, n. A wanted person (whether advertised for in the Situations Vacant, or sought by the police) : coll. : 1793. W. Roberts, 'I design to publish a list of WaANTEDs, solely for the use of your Papier,' O.E.D. In the police sense, the adj. app. arises ca. 1810—Vaux has it; comparatively rare n., 1903 (O.E.D.)

wants his liver scraping! Applied, as a c.p., to a superior in an evil temper: military: from 1914. B. & P.


*warp-pace, mort. A woman experienced in copulation: o.: late C. 17-early 19. B.E., Grose. See warp and cf. the c.p. if she won't warp for a win, let her trine for a make, 'If she won't Lie with a Man for a Penny, let her Hang for a Half-penny,' B.E.; same period.


wapper. See whopper.—wapping. See wapping.


waps(e), waps(e). A warp: sol. and dial. : C. 18-20. Esp. in pl., owing to the difficulty of pronouncing wapses.


war I, (it's a great. An ironic military c.p.: G.W. (not before 1915).

war and strife. Rare for trouble and strife, q.v. (B. & P.)

war 'awks! war orks! warrock(s) (orcks)! See warrols!

war-baby. An illegitimate born during the G.W.: late 1916; ob. Ex the S.E. sense, a child that is born, during a war, while its father is on active service.—2. A young soldier, esp. if a subaltern: military: 1917-18. F. & Gibbons.


war-cry. A mixture of stout and mild ale: taverns': 1882-ca. 86. Ware derives it from The War Cry, the periodical of the Salvation Army, which 'spoke stoutly and ever [1] used mild terms.'

war-hat or -pot. A spiked helmet: military (—1904); ob. by 1915, † by 1918.

War House, the. The War Office: General Staff's and Generals': 1915; ob. B. & P.


warbler. A singer that, for pay, liquor, or other benefit, goes to, and sings at meetings: low: from ca. 1820; ob.

warbling on the topmost bough, be left. To be left with one's stocks and shares and unable to sell them: Jocular Stock Exchange (—1923). Menchon.

ward-room joints as lower-deck hash. 'Officers' conversation or information which finds its way forward': naval: C. 20. Bowen.

ware skins, quoth Grubber, when he flung the louse into the fire. A semi-proverbial c.p. of ca. 1670-1770. Ray, 1678; Fuller, 1732 (Grub for Grubber, skins for skins. Apperson.


warm. An act of warming, a becoming warm: mid-C. 18-20; S.E. until mid-C. 19, then coll. Esp. in get or have a warm, give a warm.


warm as they make them. Sexually loose: coll. (—1909). Ware. Cf. hot stuff and:

warming-belt. Such a woman: low: 1880; slightly ob. Ware.

warm corner. 'A nook where birds are found in plenty,' Ware, who by birds means harlots: sporting and Society (—1900). Funning S.E. sense.

warm flannel. Mixed spirits served hot: public-house (—1823); † by 1900. Cf. hot flannel.

warm member or 'un. A whore; a whore monger: low: mid-C. 19-20; ob. Ex warm, amorous, prone to sexual desire and practice.—2. (Only w. m.). A very energetic, pushful person; ca. 1885, Keep it Dark (a music-hall song), 'Dr Kenealy, that popular bloke, 'That extremely warm member, the member for Stoke.'


warm-lined. (A ship, a fort) mounting heavy batteries: naval coll. (—1804). F. & H. Because such a ship can supply a warm reception.

warming sun, out of God's blessing into the. See out of.

warming the wax of one's ear. To box a person's ear; low: ca. 1860-1915. H., 3rd ed. An elaboration of warm one's jacket (see warm, v.).

warm with, adj. and n. (Spirits) warmed with hot water and sweetened with sugar: coll.: 1840, T. A. Trollope (O.E.D.), the n.: 1836, Diokens, the adj. Contrast cool without.

warming-up cold, feel like a. To feel half-dead: low (—1923). Menchon.


warming-pan. A female bed-fellow: from the Restoration; ob. Esp. a Scotch warming-pan; see
WASHING


warming the bell. 1 Having one's relief turned out early; nautical: late C. 19—20. Bowen. (The bell that rings the hours.)

wart. See w.a.n.t. But also 'were not'.

warocks or warrocks!; war ocks!; war hawks! Ware hawks!, i.e. look out for yourself: sol.: mid-C. 19—20. Baumann.


warrigal. A worthless man: Australian bush slang (—1896). Ex Aboriginal for 'wild' (orig. 'a dog') Morris.

warrocks! See warrocks!

wars, have been in the. To show signs of injury, marks of ill or hard usage: coll.: 1850, Scovestay (O.E.D.). Ex a veteran soldier's scars.


Warwicks. (At cards) aixies: Regular Army: late C. 19—20. F. & Gibbons. The Warwickshire Regiment used to be the 6th Foot.

Warwickshire Lads, the. The 6th Foot—after 1881, the Royal Warwickshire—Regiment: military: late C. 18—20; ob. F. & Gibbons. Partly ex the song, 'Ye Warwickshire Lads and Lasses'.

wash. A frequent sol.: cf. is for are. See esp. O.E.D. at be, p. 717, coll. 2.

was-hird. A 'has been': C. 20. Cf. wenser.—2. Hence, an elderly man eager to enlist: G.W. (F. & Gibbons.)


wash, v. To bear testing or investigation; prove to be genuine: coll.: 1849, C. Bronte, That won't wash, Miss', O.E.D. 'As good fabrics and fast dyes stand the operation of washing', F. & H.—2. To punish, to 'rag' (a fellow workman for falseshood or misconduct) by hanging type-cases on his desk, or (among tailors) by swearing and cursing loudly: printers' s. (—1841) >, by 1900, gen. craftsmen's. Savage's Dict. of Printing. Presumably ex the notion of purification. Among tailors, there is, in C. 20, a secondary nuance, gen. as v.b.n. washing, a reprimand by the 'boss' (as in The Tailor and Cutter, Nov. 29, 1928).—3. To do or practise 'wash' as in n., 2. Stock Exchange: as v.t., app. unrecorded before 1883, but as v.i. implied in the vbln. as in: 1870, Medbery, Men and Mysteries of Wall Street, col.: C. 20. Bowen. Warrant you, I or I'll. I'll be bound: coll.: late C. 18—20.

warrantee. Guarantee: cathachrestio: mid-C. 17—20; ob. (O.E.D.)


wargill. A worthless man: Australian bush slang (—1896). Ex Aboriginal for 'wild' (orig. 'a dog'). Morris.
and water.—water, hot. See hot water.—water, over the. See over the water.

water, make a hole in the. To drown oneself suicidally: 1853, Dickens (O.E.D.).

water, the mail's above the. He is drunk: semi-proverbial c.p.: ca. 1670-1770. Apperson. Cf. the proverbial and equivalent the mail is above wheat with him (mid-C. 16–early 19).


water-can, Jupiter Pluvius has got out (or put, or turned, on) his. A coll. c.p. for 'It is raining'; applied mostly to a heavy shower. From ca. 1870, ob.

water-carnival, the. 'Cleaning down a warship after coaling': naval: C. 20. Bowen.

water-cart, v.i. To weep: 1921, W. de Morgan (O.E.D. Sup.); ob. Ex the n.

water-cart, on the. An occ. variant of water-waggon, on the, q.v.

water-colours, wife in. See wife.—water-course. See water-box.


water-funk. A person shy of water: schools': 1809, Kipling; now coll.

water-gap, — gate. See water-box.


Water-Gunners, the. The Royal Marines: military: ca. 1870–1914. H., 6th ed. Because they are 'amphibious'.

water in one's shoes. A source of discomfort or annoyance: C. 18 coll. North, ca. 1740, 'They carred his lordship . . . and talked about a time to dine with him; all which (as they say) was 'water in his shoes'.'. Abbr. as welcome as water in one's shoes, very unwelcome: mid-C. 17–20 coll. till late C. 19, then dial. only. Apperson.


water of life. Gin: from early 1820's; ob. Egan's Grose; H., 2nd ed. App. on Fr. eau-de-vie (brandy).

water one's horse at Highgate. See Highgate.—water one's nag. See nag.

water one's plans. To weep: jocular coll.: ei
WATER-PAD 941 WAY FOR, BE OUT OF THE

1840–1880; in C. 19, dial. only. Udall; Lyly; Swift. On S.E. water one’s eyes, to weep. (Apperson.)

*water-pad. A thief operating on the water, esp. on the Thames: o.: late C. 17–early 19. B.E.; Grose. The S.E. (nautical) variant is water-rat (Clark Russell).

water-scrier. A doctor who prescribes from inspecting the water of his patients), Grose, 3rd ed.: late C. 18–early 19. A scriber is presumably scribe (or scryer), one who (de)scribes. Cf. ↑ S.E. water-caster.

water-smack, the. ‘Robbing ships ... on a ... river or canal, ... generally in the night’: o. of ca. 1810–90. Vaux.—2. Hence, water-smock-man, such a thief: o. (—1823); ↑ by 1900. Egan’s Grose.

water the dragon. See dragon: cf. nag, water one’s — up. See water, v., 2.

waters, the. Testimonial for the time being: U.S. (—1804), anglicised by 1808. From ca. 1815, often on the waggon.


Wateries, the. The Naval Exhibition at South Kensington: coll.: ca. 1886–1910. Cf. the Col-in-deries and the Fisheries, q.v.

Waterings, the. ‘The Spital stands too nigh St Thomas a. Copious weeping sometimes produces an illness: proverbial o.: late C. 16–17. This place, near a brook used for watering horses, stood near London, and on the Canterbury road, and, as it was the Surrey execution-ground until the C. 17, the name is often employed allusively in C. 16–mid-17, as in Jonson, 1630, ‘He may perhaps take a degree at Tyburn ... come to read a lecture’ Upon Aquinas at St Thomas & Waterings, & And so go forth a laureat in hemp circle.’

waterloo (or W.). A halfpenny: London: ca. 1830–75. Ware. Ex the former toll (a halfpenny) paid to cross Waterloo Bridge.

Waterloo day. Pay-day: military: from ca. 1870; ob. Cf. Balaclava day.

waterman: (not in 2, 3) waterman. A blue silk handkerchief: o. or low (—1839); very ob. Because worn (light or dark) by friends of Cromwell and of the Stuarts, the word was anglicised. —2. An artist in water-colours: 1888 (O.E.D.): s. >, by 1920, coll.—3. One possessing (expert) knowledge of boating: coll.: 1912 (O.E.D.).


waters, watch one’s. ‘To keep a strict watch on any one’s actions’, Grose, 3rd ed.: coll.: late C. 18–early 19. Ex urinoseption.

water’s man, waterman. See waterman, 1.


warm’d(s). An illiterate form of wounds: C. 17–18. (O.E.D.)

wave a flag of defiance. To be drunk: low: ca. 1870–1915.


wave in the syll. ‘Imperfect in one’s lines’: theatrical (—1904); ob. F. & H. Lit., unsteady in one’s syllables (cf. syl-slinger, q.v.).

wave navy, the. The Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve: C. 20. Bowen, ‘Seldom heard aloft’.

wavv'y rule, make. To be rolling-drunk: printers: from ca. 1880. Ex the rule or line that waves thus: —

wax. A rage: esp. be in a wax: 1854, ‘Cuthbert Bede’, ‘I used to rush out in a fearful state of wax’, O.E.D. † ex waxy, q.v., or, as W. suggests, ‘evolved ex archaic to wax worth’.

wax, close as. Extremely mean or secretive: 1772, Cumberland (O.E.D.): coll. >, by 1850, S.E. Because impermeable to water and perhaps because sticky.

wax, lad or man of. See lad of wax.

wax, my cock of. A shoemakers’ term of address (—1823); ob. ‘Jon Bee.’

wax, nose of; gen. have a, to be very impressionable: London (—1823); ↑ by 1900. ‘Jon Bee.’

wax-pot. A person apt to be ‘waxy’ (q.v.): coll. (—1923). Manchon. Ex waz, q.v., or fusa-pot.

waxed, be (well). To be (well) known: tailors: from ca. 1870. ‘So-and-so has been well seeded, i.e. we know all about him,’ F. & H.

waxed, have (a person). A military variant (G.W. and after) of have someone cold (F. & Gibbons.) And Cookney: E. Pugh, 1906. Ex the preceding.

warness; waxy. Angeriness, proneness to rage; angry: resp. (—1904 and 1853, Dickens. Although waxy is recorded earlier than wax, the latter may have arisen the earlier; yet, semantically, the transition from lit. waxy to fig. waxy is not difficult: cf. sticky, adj.—2. waxy is also a nickname (ob. in C. 20) for a cobbler: 1851, Mayhew (O.E.D.). Ex his frequent use of wax.—3. A saddler: military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons.


way, in a kind or sort of. A modifying tag: coll.: mid-C. 18–20.

way, in the (e.g. fish). Engaged in (e.g. the fish-trade): lower classes: coll.: late C. 19–20; slightly ob. Manchon. ‘He’s in the grocery way.’ Now, way is gen. replaced by line.

way, pretty Fanny’s. See pretty Fanny’s way.

way, that; gen. a little, or rather, that way. ‘Approximating to that condition’: coll.: mid-C. 17–20. Dickens, 1837, ‘I’m afraid you’re wet.’ ‘Yes, I am a little that way’, O.E.D. Cf.

way, the other; gen. all, quite, very much the other way: Diverging from a stated condition: coll.: mid-C. 19–20. Trollope, 1858, ‘They are patterns of excellence. I am all the other way,’ O.E.D. Cf. way, that.

way down, all the. See all ...

way for, be out of the. To be in hiding from police wishing to arrest one for (such and such an offence): o. (—1812); ob. Vaux.
... way of, (being, doing, etc.), by. In the habit of, giving oneself out as, having a reputation for, or making an attempt (esp. if persistent or habitual) at (being or doing something): coll.: 1824, Miss Ferrier, 'The Colonel was by way of introducing him into the fashionable circles'; 1891, The Saturday Review, July 18, concerning by way of being, ... And this with an implied disclaimer of precise knowledge or warrant on the speaker's part.' O.E.D.—2. In C. 20, the phrase is often used almost as if = as it were, 'ix a sort of way'; and, in post-War days, is (or are, etc.) by way of being, is only too often, a careless or an affected synonym of is or are (etc.).

way of all flesh(, gone the), Dead: lower and lower-middle classes' coll. (—1909). Ware. Contrast with the S.E. sense—as in 'Erowhon' Butler's novel.

way of life, the. The Prostitution: low London (—1823); ob. 'Jon Bee.'

ways about it (or that), no two. (There can be) no doubt of it: U.S. coll. (1818: Thornton) Anglicised ca. 1840; by 1880, S.E.
ways for Sunday, look both or nine or two. See look...


Wax(za) or, loosely, Waxzer, the battles of the. Two Australian brushes with the police, in 1916, in the Wazza, a low, native quarter of Cairo: Australian military: 1916; ob. B. & P.

we. Us: C. 16–20; S.E. until C. 18, then sol. We do see life! A C. 20 c.p., with which cf. this is the life. Adopted, in 1931, as a title by the Rev. Desmond Morse-Boycott. Often we ain't got no money but...

we had one and (or but) the wheel came off. A military c.p. (C. 20) expressive of feigned helpfulness or droll regret or 'gamin' comment on words not understood.


weary in the arm(, if it's). A public-house c.p. (—1909); applied to a 'half-pint drawn in a pint pot': Ware.

weaken it. It's a great life if you don't. A military c.p. of 1915–18.

weenie. —y. See weeny. (Influenced by dial. weenie, a young child.)


wear a straw in her ear. See straw in her ear.


wear the bands. To be hungry: low a.: ca. 1810–40. Vaux.

wear the broad arrow. To be a convict: c. —1909. Ware.

wear the head large. To have a headache from alcoholics excess: lower-middle class (—1909). Ware.

wear the look. To be Welsh: lower and lower-middle classes' (—1909): coll. rather than a. Ware.

weary. Drunk: proletarian: ca. 1870–1920. Cf. dial. weary, sickly, feeble. (Curiously enough, the Old High Ger. wuorog, drunk, is cognate with A.-S. wēwar. W.)


weasel, be bit by a barn. To be drunk: ca. 1870–1700. Head.


weather, go up the; go down the wind. To prosper; to fare ill, be unfortunate: coll.; resp. early C. 17 and C. 17–20; in mid-C. 19–20, dial. only. Breton, both; Pepys; Bertha, 1754; Scott, 1827. Also, go down the weather, to become bankrupt: C. 17. O.E.D. and Apperson.

weather-breeder. A fine, bright day: nautical (—1887). Baumann.


weather-scraper. 'It is an old joke at sea', writes Clark Russell, in 1883, 'to advise a greenhorn to get a handsip and hold it down hard in the weather-scrappers to steady the ship's wild motions.' Coll.: slightly ob.


*weaving. 'A notorious card-sharpening trick, done by keeping certain cards on the knee, or between the knee and the underside of the table, and using them when required by changing them for the cards held in the hand', H., 3rd ed.: 1803 (O.E.D.); prob. c. > gaming a.

weaving leather aprons. An evasive c.p. reply to an inquiry as to what one has been doing lately: low (—1864). H., 3rd ed., 'See newspaper reports of the trial for the gold robberies on the South-Western Railway.' (Similarly, to an inquiry as to one's vocation, I'm a doll's-eye weaver: low (—1874). H., 5th ed.) Equivalent c.p. replies are making a trundle for a goose's eye or a whim-wham to bridge a goose: low (—1864). H., 3rd ed.

weazing. The act of depriving a comrade of his tip: low (—1923). Manchon. Ex that pleasant creature, the weasel.

web-foot. (pl. web-fooths.) A dweller in the Fens: coll. nickname: from ca. 1700; very ob. (O.E.D.)


wedding. The 'emptying a necessary house': London (—1785); † by 1850. Grose, 1st ed.

wedding, you have been to an Irish. A c.p. addressed to one who has a black eye: ca. 1785–1860. Grose, 2nd ed., '... Where black eyes are given instead of favours'.
WEDGE, FLASH THE

1st-5th ed.—2. the wedge, the last student in the classical tripos list: Cambridge University (—1852): coll. > j. Also the wooden wedge. On *wooden spoon, the last man in the mathematical tripos, + T. H. Wedgwood, who, last in the classical tripos in 1824, was to be a famous etymologist. O.E.D., F. & H.—3. A Jew: back s. (—1859). H., 1st ed. Lit., wej.

*wedge, flash the. To 'fence the swag,' to deposit stolen goods with a receiver: c.: mid-C. 19–20. See "wedge 1."

*wedge-bobb. The same as wedge-lobb, q.v. *Ducange Anglicus": but w.obb I suspect to be a misprint.


Wee Free Kirk, the. The Free Church of Scotland minority after the majority, in 1900, joined with the U.P. Church to constitute the United Free Church. Hence, from 1904, Wee Free and, from 1865, Wee Kirkers, the members of that minority. Coll. nicknames. O.E.D.

wee-jee; wejee. A chimney-pot: ca. 1804–90. H., 3rd ed. Etymology obscure: the word may be a perversion of wezee, a gag, though this origin fits only sense 3, which is perhaps the earliest.—2. Hence, a (chimney-pot) hat: late C. 19–early 20; lower classes', as are senses 1 and 2–3. Anything extremely good of its kind; esp. a clever invention: from ca. 1860; ob. H., 3rd ed.—4. Hence, a hand pump: N.E. Coast colliers': late C. 19–20, Bowen.

Wee-Wee. See Wl-Wl.

wee-woe. A urination; esp. do a wee-woe: nursery coll.: late C. 19–20. Perhaps ex water on pet.—2. Also, in C. 20, as v.i.


*wedge, v. To pilfer or steal part of, or a small amount from: c. (—1811); slightly ob. Lex. Bal. Vaux. Hence, weed a lob, steal small sums from a till; weed a swop, to abstract part of the spoils unknown to, or fore the division of that spoil: both in Vaux. Ex weed, to remove the weeds from. Cf.: "weeding dues are concerned. An underworld o.p. (ca. 1810–80) used when a process of 'weeding' (see weed, v.) has been applied. Vaux.


week, knock into the middle of next. To knock

out (lit. or fig.) completely: pagustie a. (1821, Moncrieff) ‡, by 1900, gen. coll. O.E.D. week, parson's. See parson's week.

week, when two Sundays come in a; also (in) the week of four Fridays. Never: coll.: C. 19–20; mid-C. 18–early 19. H. Brooke, 1760 (O.E.D.)


weekly-accompts. The small square white patches on the front, to right and left, of a middy's collar: ca. 1815–70. Vaux, 1819 (O.E.D.); Bowen. Now mark of the beast, q.v.

week's (or month's) end, an attack of the. Lack of funds, according as one is paid one's wages or salary every week or every month: jocular coll.: ca. 1860–1915. F. & H.

weel, wees, we'll. See weel.

weelkillas. Sausages: Glasgow (—1934).

weesie, weezy; weesny (rare) and weens (C. 18 dial. only). Tiny; dial. (—1790) ‡, by 1890, coll. Ex we on teeny.—2. (Rarely other than weeens/) A telegraph clerks' warning that an inspector is coming: C. 20. F. & H., 1904. ‡ ex warning.

weep Irish. To shed crocodile tears; feign sorrow: coll.: late C. 16 mid-18. Fuller, 1660; Mrs Centlivre. Ex the copious lamentations of the Irish at a keening. Apperson.

weep. (Gen. pl.) A long and flowing side-whisker, such as was 'sported' by 'Lord Dundreary' in the play Our American Cousin: coll.: from ca. 1860; ob. Ex Dundreary weepers (1869), later Piccadilly weepers. E. A. Sothern played the leading part; in 1858, the piece was hardly a success; in 1859–60, it was the rage.—2. (Gen. pl.) An eye: late C. 19–20. Cf. peeper.—3. A sentimental problem-novel: journalists': from ca. 1825. Neil Bell, Winning Road, 1934.

Weeping Cross (or weeping cross), return (home) or, more gen., come home by. To fail badly; be grievously disappointed: from early 1560's; ob. Bullein (1564), Gosson, Lylly, playwright Heywood, Gros, Spurgeon, William Morris (1884). Ex a place-name employed allusively. Nares, F. & H., O.E.D., Apperson.

weeping willow. A pillow; rhyming s.: late C. 19–20. E. & Gibbon—"weeze. See wheese, n. 5; weesy, see wheesey, adj.

Weg. Gladstone: political nickname: 1885–6. Ware. Ex his initials and 'given in memory of Mr Wegg ([Dickson's] Our Mutual Friend), who was a great sayer of words': o tempora, o ordores / *weigh. See weight, let him . . .


*weigh out. To give in full (one's share): c.: late C. 19–20. Ware cites The People, Jan. 6, 1895,
and derive the term from 'the distribution of stolen plate melted down to avoid identification'.

**weigh up.** To appraise; coll.: 1894 (O.E.D.). Cf. weigh, to consider.

**weighed off, be.** 'To be brought up before an officer and punished': military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons.

**weighing the thumb, n.** 'Cheating in weight by sticking down the scale with the thumb': low (— 1868). Ware.

**weight, (a bit) above one's.** (A little) beyond one's class, too expensive, fashionable, highbrow, or difficult; coll., orig. (ca. 1910) racing. Ex a horse's handicap of weight.

**weight, let him alone till he weighs his.** A police c.p. to the effect that a criminal is not yet worth arresting, for his offences are so small that no reward attaches to them, whereas a capital crime will produce a big reward: ca. 1810–40. Vaux, who notes that weigh forty (of a criminal) is to carry a $240 reward for capture.

**weight about, throw one's.** To boast, swagger, unduly stress one's authority: military: from ca. 1910. F. & Gibbons. Prob. ex boxing or circus.

**weird (frequently, by the way, misspelt wierd).** Odd; unusual; wonderful: from the middle 1920's, and mostly upper classes'.

Welch, welcher, welching. For these three terms see Welsh,—welcome, and. See and wel come.—welcome as water in one's shoes. See water in ... Cf. S.E. welcome as snow in harvest and contrast welcome as the eighteen trumpets, very welcome indeed: coll.: ca. 1810–40. Apperson.

**we'll; we'll[0].** We will; coll.: resp. C. 17–20; late C. 16–17. In late C. 16–early 17, occ. weel. we'll, weel. O.E.D.

**well.** To pocket: low (— 1860); virtually †. H., 2nd ed.; id., 5th ed., 'Any one of fair income, and miserly habits is said to "well it"'. Lit., to put as into a well: cf. put down South. But imm. ex. 2. c. well, to put (money in the bank): 1845, in 'No. 747'. Ex.—3. well = put in the well, q.v.: o.: from ca. 1810; slightly ob. Lex. Bal. (In late C. 19–20, low s.)

**well, adj.** Satisfactory, very good, capital: Society coll.: ca. 1860–1900. Ware. "well, put (one) in the garden or the. To defraud (an action may) of part of the booty forming his share: c. (— 1812); ob. Vaux. Cf. preceding entry. A variant is put (one) in a hole. A person down a well is at a disadvantage.—2. Hence, to inconvenience or get the better of: mid-C. 19–20; ob. (except ... hole).

**well away, be.** To be rather drunk: coll.: C. 20. Lyell.—2. To prosper, be doing splendidly; coll.: from ca. 1912. He's well away with that girl. Orig. sporting: ex a horse that has, from the start, got well away.

**well down in the pickles.** (Of a ship) heavily loaded: sailing ships' coll.: late C. 19–20. Bowen. The pickles is 'the briny'.

**well-gone.** Much in love; fatally or very severely wounded: New Zealand coll.: resp. from ca. 1913 and from ca. 1915.

**well i*ed & far from home.** See Barney's bull.

**well hove!** Well played!; well done!; proletarian coll. (— 1923). Manchon.

**well-hung.** (Of a man) large of genitals: low (— 1823); ob. Egan's Grose.

**well in.** An Australian variant of well off, well to do: 1891, 'Rolf Boldrewood': coll. >, by 1910. S.E.

**well-to-dos, the.** Those who are well to do: coll.: C. 20. The equivalent S.E. is the well-to-do.


**well to live, be.** To be rather drunk: coll.: ca. 1810–1700; then dial. Ray. 1878. Ex well to live (in the world), prosperous.

**well under.** Drunk: Australian: from ca. 1916. Prob. an abbr. of well under water.

**'well, well,' quoth she, 'many wells, many buckets.'** A proverb c.p. of C. 16 (Heywood, 1548) that may have suggested the C. 20 catch, 'Have you heard the story of the three wells?' 'No; what is it?' 'Well, well, well!'

**well, you said you could do it! A c.p. reply to a 'grouse': Army officers' : G.W., and after.

**welly.** Almost: C. 17–20; coll. till C. 18, then dial. Ex well nigh. O.E.D.

Welsh, welsher, welshing; in C. 19, often -ch-. To swindle (one) out of the money he has laid as a bet (orig. and properly at a race-course); he who does this; the doing; racing s., >, ca. 1880, coll. >, ca. 1900, S.E.: resp. 1857, 1860, 1857 (O.E.D.). Perhaps ex the old nursery-rhyme, Tuffy was a Welshman, Tuffy was a thief: W.; my Words / Welsh bait. A foodless, drinkless rest given a horse at the top of a hill: coll.: C. 17–20; very ob. T. Powell, 1603 (O.E.D.). Ex baut, food. For pejorative Welsh, see Words / at 'Offensive Nationality'.

**Welsh Camp.** The late C. 17–early 18 nickname for a field between Lamb's Conduit and Gray's Inn Lane, where, late in C. 17, 'the Mob got together in great numbers, doing great mischief', B.E.

**Welsh comb.** The thumb and four fingers: coll. or s.: ca. 1785–1840. Grose, 2nd ed. Contrast Jew's harp.


**Welsh ejection.** By unroofing the tenant's house: ca. 1810–60. Lex. Bal.


**Welsh mile, long and narrow,—like a.** Either thus or as like ... mile, applied to anything so shaped: coll.: ca. 1780–1850. Grose, 2nd ed. Ex Welsh mile, a mile unconscionably long; cf. the equally S.E. Welsh acre.


**Welsh parsley.** Hemp; a halter: coll. or s.: ca. 1620–50. Fletcher. O.E.D.

**Welsh rabbit.** This dish, incorrectly spelt W. rarebit (Grose, 1785), is recorded by that eccentric poet John Byrom (O.E.D.) in 1725: orig. coll., it had, by 1820, > S.E. Even in C. 18 (see Grose) the Welsh were reputed to be fervid cheese-fanciers. For semantics, cf. Somerset's naught.

**Welshman's nose, turn (something) like a; make a W. h. of; make like a W. h.** To suit the meaning of (a word, etc.) to one's purpose: coll.: ca. 1620–1600. Skelton.

**welsher.** See Welsh.

welter. Anything unusually big or heavy of its kind: dial. (—1865) >-, by ca. 1890, coll. Kipling, 1899. ' He gave us eight cuts at once—welters—for —taking unheard-of liberties with a new master.' O.E.D. loc, H. Ex wel, to thrust.

wench, from Old English wænc, a child, is facetious and university-witted where once it was serious but used only in addressing an inferior (as in Shakespeare's The Tempest. 'Well demanded, wench') and where, orig., it meant simply a girl: the facetious usage is coll., whereas the other two are S.E. A similar degradation of words is seen in damsel and the French maîtresse, amie, and fille.

wet, adj. 1. Inland, interior, and unconnected trade. occurred. C. For coll. e.g. perhaps C. late 1700, C. coll. 1704, C.

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"I was in a frightful whack . . . I thought I was blotto."—8. Hence, a rage; a bad state of nerves: from ca. 1925. David Frome, "The Body in the Turf," 1935.

whack, v. To strike with sharp, resounding vigour: coll. and dial. : 1721, Ramsay (O.E.D.). Also as v.i., esp. in whack away (mid-C. 19–20), as in The Daily Telegraph, Feb. 21, 1886, "The Flagganers and the Murphys paid no heed to him, but whacked away at each other with increasing vigour." Prob. echoin; cf. whack, n., 1.—2. Hence, to defeat in a contest or rivalry: coll.: from 1870's.—3. To bring, get, place, put, etc., esp. in a vigorous or violent manner: from C. 17'teens: dial. >, in late C. 19, coll., as in Kipling, 1897, "They whacked up a match," O.E.D. Prob. ex sense 1.—4. To share or divide: o. (— 1812) >, by 1860, a. >, by 1910, coll. Vaux, who spells it whack; J. Greenwood, 1888, A Converted Burglar, "The sound, old-fashioned principle of "sharing the danger and whacking the swag"." Also whack up. Ex whack, n., 3, q.v.—5. To sell illicitly: military: from ca. 1910. Prob. suggested by the synonymous flag.


whack at, have or take a. To attempt; to attack: coll.: U.S. (1891) >, before 1904, anglicised. F. & H. Perhaps ex tree-felling.

whack it out, v.i. To defend or support successfully: proletarian (— 1923). Manchon.

whack it up, v.i. To poft: low: mid-C. 19–20; o. ob. Cf. whack, v., 1, 3, 4.—2. v.t. To deal severely with (a prisoner): o. (— 1933). G. Ingram, Stir.

whack one's own donkey. See donkey, whack one's own.

whack out. To distribute (e.g. rations) equitably: military: C. 20. B. & P.


whack up, v. See whack, v., 3 and 4, q.v. : coll.: from ca. 1890.—3. See whack it up and whack up to. To cause a ship to attain such and such a speed: nautical coll. (— 1923). Manchon. Cf. whack, v., 3.


whacker. Anything unusually large; esp. a 'thumping' lie (cf. whooper, q.v.): coll. and dial. (— 1825). The Sporting Times, in 1828, describes certain fences as whoackers, as T. Hughes does caught fish in 1861. Ex whack, v., 1. (O.E.D.)


whacks, go. See whack, n., 3.

whacky. A person acting ridiculously or fooling about: tailors' (— 1904) F. & H. Ex Yorkshire dial. whacky, a dolt.

WHALE, GO AHEAD LIKE A

Royal Military Academy: from ca. 1870. Because so small.—3. (Always in pl.) Anchovises on toast: rather proletarian; from ca. 1880. Cf. sense 2.

what, go ahead like a. To forge ahead; act, speak, write vigorously; coll.: from 1890's. F. & H. Ex the majesty of a whale's movements.

what, old. See old whale.

whale I, very like a. A c.p. applied to an im-probability, esp. a postposterous assertion: from 1890's. O.E.D.; in 2nd ed., very like a whale is a teacup. Ex Polonius's phrase when, in III, ii, 392-394, he is doing his best to approve Hamlet's similes.


whale of a ... a. 'No end of a ...' coll.: U.S.—(1913), partly anglicised ca. 1918. Ex the whale's huge size.

whale on ... a. Greatly liking, having a great admiration for; expert at: coll.: 1893, Justin McCarthy, 'He was not ... a whale on geography,' O.E.D.; rather ob. For semantics, cf. procoding entry. Also, occ., whale at and for.

whaler. A sundowner: Australian coll.: ca. 1890-1910. The Sydney Morning Herald, Aug. 8, 1893, 'The nomad, the whaler, is who will find the new order hostile to his vested interest of doing nothing.' (He didn't.) Ex his cruising about. (Morris.) He who travels up and down the banks of the Murrumbidgee River is a Murrumbidgee whaler, which some authorities consider to be the ironic original.

whales. See whale, 3.


whang. A 'whanging' sound or blow: dial. (—1824) and, from ca. 1860, coll.: Ex: whang, v.t. To strike heavily and resoundingly: coll.: C. 19-20. Ex dial. (C. 17-20). Echoic.—2. V.i. (of, e.g., a drum), to sound (as) under a blow: coll.: 1875, Kinglake (O.E.D.).

[whangam, whangoodle. An imaginary animal; rather nonce-words than coll.]


whap, whapper (Grose, 1st ed.). See whop, whopper.


wharp is incorrect for warp (sult. n.): C. 18-20. O.E.D.


what! (more precisely what?) ; occ. oh what! A questioning interjection or expletive, gen. at the end of a phrase or sentence: coll.: 1785, Mme D'Arblay, [George III] said, 'What what! \( {\text{what meaning ... is not possible. Do you think it is not possible?}} \)'; in a letter written before mid-C. 19; 1914, Nell Lyons, 'It's a bit too literary for me. What? ... You had it at school, I dare say. What?'; O.E.D. This enclitico what is an infallible characteristic and hallmark of the upper-middle and upper class (males much more than females) and it is confined to Great Britain; the lower and lower-middle classes, and all Colonials and most Americans, find it very odd, affected, and, at first, a little discourteous (esp. in the explosive form common among, e.g., Army officers) in its app. senselessness; actually, it is a modifier (often deliberate) of abruptness, insolence, or audacity. Cognate with, and perhaps ex the next term.—2. Abr. what cheer (1.v. at cheer !, what?): Cockneys: from ca. 1850. H. W. Nevinson, Neighbours of Ours, 1895. what? What is it? ; what did you say? ; coll.: recorded by the O.E.D. for 1837. Dickens, 'What's your name?' 'Cold punch,' murmured Mr Pickwick ... 'What?' 'demanded Captain Boldwig ...; but prob. a half, even a full century earlier. Arising naturally ex what connoting 'ellipsis, esp. of the remainder of the question,' as in 'I'm so frightened!' 'What at, dear!—what at!'; Dickens, 1837 (O.E.D.).

[what, and the Lord knows, marches between coll. and S.E. Cf. what all.]

what, but. But that; that ... not: coll.: from ca. 1560. Googe, 1563 (see quotation at what's what); Arthur Murphy, 1753, 'There hardly arose an Incident, but what our Fellow-Traveller would repeat twenty or thirty Verses in a Breath.' Almost always with actual or implied negative; in late C. 19-20, mostly not but what. O.E.D.—2. Except what; which (occ. who ... not; as in Charlotte Smith's 'Not one of these insinuations but what gathered something from malevolence', 1796. O.E.D. Cf. what, than; q.v.

what I, I'll tell you, as prefacing a proposal, is coll.: mid-C. 19-20. 'I'll tell you what, we'll row down,' 1872 (O.E.D.). Ex the same phrase as — let me tell you!

what P, or, used as a final, yet wholly indefinite, 'alternative in a disjunctive question': mid-C. 19-20; mostly, and in conversation nearly always, coll. Edward Fitzgerald, in a letter, 1842, 'Have you supposed me dead or what?' O.E.D.

what, than. The what is a sol. and dial. redundancy when it is used after that than which ushers in a clause: C. 19-20. Scott, 1818, 'I think I laughed heartier than what I do now.' O.E.D.


what a many. How many: sol.: mid-C. 19-20. Baumann cites 'If you knew what a many they're of them from J. Greenwood.

what a tail our cat's got! A lower classes' c.p. directed at a girl (or woman) 'flaunting in a new dress,' the rear skirt of which she swings haughtily: mid-C. 19-20; ob. Ware (tale—obviously a misprint).

what about a (small) spot? ; what is it? ; what'll you have? See how will you have it?

what all, ... and I don't know. And various others unknown or unmentioned; and, in addition, all sorts of things: coll.: mid-C. 19-20. Dickens, 1859, 'There's and ... and I dunno what all.' O.E.D. Cf. who all, q.v.


what cheer! See cheer i., what.

what did Gladstone say in (e.g.) 1885? A political hecklers' o.p. of late C. 19-20. For the most part, merely obtrusive.

what did you do in the Great War, daddy? A
WHAT'S WHAT

military c.p. (1917-18, and after) used 'acathingly in times of stress'. B. & P. Ex a recruiting-poster. In late 1917-19, the phrase had many variations, and several c.p. replies, the most popular being shat up, you little bastard! Get the Bluebell and go and clean my medals, which is devastating.


what do you think? 'What is your general opinion of things?' : a middle-class c.p. introduced in 1882 by a comic singer; † by 1915—2. From ca. 1912, it is 'Well, of course!' —3. See think, what do you?


what-d'ye-call-'em (sec. um), her, him, it: less frequently what-do-you-call-'em, etc. A phrase connoting something or person forgotten, considered trivial or not to be named, or unknown by name: coll.: C. 17-20. Shakespeare, As You Like It, 'Good even, good Master What-ye-call?'; how do you, sir,—a late C. 16-17 variant: Ned Ward; Smollett; Dibdin; Dickens; etc., etc. The Shakespearean form has an alternative in -who and a mid-C. 18-20 variant: what-you-may-call-it (Dickens, 1848). Cf. Cotton's satirical 'Where once your what shall's cal'ums—rot um! It makes me mad I have forgot um.' O.E.D. & H.

what-er. See whatter.

what ever; loosely whatever. Emphatic what? : C. 14-20; S.E. until C. 19, then coll., as in F. E. Paget, 1856, 'Whatever in the world was that? '; O.E.D.—2. Hence, as interrogative adj.: coll.: late C. 19-20. O.E.D.

what for; what for-. Trouble; a great fuss, e.g. raises what for, to 'raise Cain': C. 20. (David Frome, The By-Pass Murder, 1932) Ex what for, give one.

what (e.g., do you do that) for? : what for (by itself)? Why: coll: mid-C. 19-20.


what ho! As greeting or expletive, it is (orig. low) coll: mid-C. 19-20. Ballantyne, 1864, 'What ho! Coleman . . . have you actually acquired the art of sleeping on a donkey? ', O.E.D.; 1896, 'Pomes 'Marshall,' Where 'e let me in for drinks all round, and as I'd but a bob, I thought, 'What ho! 'ow am I juggling on?' ' (Cf. the semi-c. what cheer !) Orig. a S.E. formula to attract a person's attention.

what ho! she bounces. A satirical c.p. applied to 'any display of vigour—especially feminine': London (1899) —, by 1914, gen.; slightly ob. Ware derives it from 'a boating adventure . . . A popular song made this term more popular.


what me! 'A frequent greeting among soldiers' (B. & P.): from ca. 1912. (A c.p.)


what-o'h. A variant of what ho —2. Thus,

'She is a what-o'h', a lively or fast piece: proletarian coll. (—1923). Manchon.

what one. See what, 3.

what Patty gave the drum. A sound thrashing: orig. (ca. 1845), Irish military >, ca. 1900, gen.; ob. Ware.

what price . . . ? See price, what.

what shall we do, or go —ing? Shall we go —ing?, as in D. Sayers, The Nine Tailors, 1934, "What shall we do, or go fishing? " 'I'm on; we can but try'.


what the devil. An intensive of what: coll: C. 20. E.g. E. Phillips Oppenheim, The Bank Manager, 1934, 'What the devil concern is it of yours, anyway?'

what will you liq? What will you drink: middle-class c.p. of ca. 1906-15. Ware. Ex liquor; punning lick.


what you can't carry must drag! A nautical c.p. applied to clipper ships carrying too much canvas: late C. 19-20; ob. Bowen.

whatcher! A nautical variation of (S.E.) what cheer? Ware.

whatter. See whatter.—whatever. See what ever.

what's bit or bittig or crawling on or eating you? What's the matter?: military (1915 > , by 1920, gen. c.p. B. & P. Ex scratching forlice. (Anticipated in 1911 in U.S.)

what's-his-name, -her-, -its-, -your-, whatse-name. Resp. for a man (or boy; loosely, thing), woman (or girl), thing, person addressed, or ambiguously for any of the first three of these, with name unknown, forgotten, to-be-avoided, or hardly worth mentioning: coll.: resp. late C. 17-20 (Dryden), C. 19-20 (Scott), from 1830's (Dickens), mid-C. 18-20 (Foote), and mid-C. 19-20 (Reade); app. Marryat, in 1829, is the first to apply what's-his-name to a thing; what's-her-name (G. A. Stevens) is rare. O.E.D. Cf. what-d'ye-call-'em, q.v.


what's-o'clock, know. See o'clock. Cf. time of day and what's what.


what's the big idea. See idea ?, what's the big, what's the dynamite?, what's the lyddie? What's the 'row'?: Society: resp. 1890—9 and 1899-1900. Ware. The former ex dynamites' activities in the 1880's, the latter ex the Boer War.

what's the mat? What's the matter?: Public Schools': from ca. 1880; ob. Ware.

what's the matter with your hand? A military c.p. (from 1914) to one lucky enough to be holding an article of food. B. & P.

what's what; orig. and gen. preceded by know, tell w.w. belonging to C. 17-20, understand w. w. to C. 18-20, and guess, show and perceive w. w. to C. 19-20. 'To have [etc.] knowledge, taste, judgment, or experience: to be wide-awake . . . equal to any emergency, "fly" (q.v.). F. & H.: coll.: C. 15-20. E.g. Barnaby Googe, 1663, 'Our wite be not so base, but we know what do as well as you'. What's what in every case.' See also o'clock and time of day.
WHAT'S YER FIGHTING WEIGHT? 949

WHEN EVER

what's yer fighting weight; . . . Gladstone weight? You're my man if you want to fight! Cockney: ca. 1833-1891; 1885-6 (ex politician). Ware.


what's your poll to-day. How much have you earned to-day? printers: from ca. 1870. Ware. 'From numbers on a statement of wages'.

what's yours? See how will you have it? what'samename, what's name; occ. what's name. Smuggler (etc.).

whatsomever. Whatever, whatsoever (adj.): C. 15-20: S.E. until C. 19, then dial, and increasingly illiterate coll. The forms whatatomever, whatatomever, mid-C. 19-20, are sol.

whatter (occ. what'er or whater). a. A what, a what did-you-say: C. 20. 'Yesterday I saw a dinosaurus, Jim.' 'You saw a — a whatter, Bill.'

whatty; occ. whaty. The same as whatter: low: C. 1.8-19. Mid. Ware derives it from an anecdote about George III, whose English was not perfect.

wheeld; wheeld. As a wheeler, prob. S.E. from the beginning, but as a sharper it is prob. e.: C. 1670-1830, but ob. by 1720. Yorcherley, 1673; B.R. Whence, cut a wheeld (wheeler), 'to decoy, by Fawing and Insinuation', B.E.: of ca. 1690-1850. Ex:

wheeled, wheed(d)le (C. 17), wheeled, v. In its usual senses, it may, orig., have been a, s., as The Century Dict. suggests, ex Ger. wbolein. Blount records it in 1661. —q.2. 'Whiddle in its c. sense (V.); of which it is a variant: —s.: of ca. 1700-20. (O.E.D.)

wheeldle the tire off a cart (or cart's) wheel, can or be able to. To be extremely persuasive: non-aristocratic coll. (—1887). Baumann.


wheel, v. To 'cycle': coll.: 1884 (O.E.D.); rare after G.W. Cf. wheeler.—2. (Of the police) to convey a (‘druck’) in a cab to the police station: low (—1900); t. by 1920. Ware (at bared).

wheel, grease the. To coll: low: mid-C. 19-20; ob.

wheel, keep a cart on the. To keep an affair alive: semi-proverbial coll. (—1887); ob. Baumann. In Yorkshire dial. it is keep cart on Wheels.


wheel 'em up. To bowl: cricket coll.: late C. 19-20. Cf. trundle, q.v.

wheel-man or woman; or as one word. A cyclist: coll.: 1874 (-man); ob. Also, for the former, knight of the wheel; very ob. coll. Cf. wheeler, q.v.


wheelbarrow, as drunk as a. Exceedingly drunk: coll.: ca. 1670-1760. Cotton, 1765, where he gives the occ. variant ... as a drunk (not, as F. & H. has it, as ... the drum of a w.).

wheelbarrow, go to heaven in a. To go to hell: coll.: ca. 1616-90. T. Adams, 1618. 'In the painted glass at Fairfield, Gloucestershire, the devil is represented as wheeling off a scolding wife in a barrel,' F. & H.

wheeled, adj. or ppl. Conveyed in a cab: lower classes: late C. 19—early 20. Ware.

wheeled up, b. To be brought before an officer for an offence: military: coll.: C. 20. F. & Gibbons Cf. preceding.


wheeling, n. See wheel, v.—wheelman. See wheel-man.

wheels, grease the. To advance money for a particular purpose: coll. (in C. 20, virtually S.E.): 1809, Malkin. Thus ensuring easier running.

wheeze. A theatrical 'gag', esp. if frequently repeated: circus and theatrical s. (in C. 20, coll. and fairly gen.): from early 1850's. Ex the set of wheezing: perhaps because clowns often affect a wheezy enunciation. In Lancashire dial. as early as 1873 is the sense, 'an amusing saying; a humorous anecdote' (E.D.D.)—2. Hence, a catch phrase, esp. if often repeated; an 'antiquated fabrication' (W.): 1890, The Spectator, May 17 (O.E.D.):—3. Hence, a frequently employed trick or dodge: from ca. 1835. Like sense 2, s. >, ca. 1920. coll.—4. A 'tip' (information); gen. the wheeze, esp. in give a (person) the wheeze (cf. give the whisper, —see whisper, n.): C. 20: s. >, by 1930, low s. Cf. the v., which is the possibly imm. origin.—5. Anything remarkable: Seaforth Preparatory School: from ca. 1930 Ex sens 3, 4. Also wheeze.


wheeze, crack a. 'To originate (or adopt) a smart saying at a "psychological" moment', F. & H.: from ca. 1895; rather ob. See weezie, n. 2.


Wheezy. The French Revolution month, Vendémiaire (late Sept.—mid-Oct.): journalistic: ca. 1890—1910. Ex the colds so often contracted during this period. (F. & H.)

wheezie; occ. wheezy, adj. Remarkable, very fine: Seaforth Preparatory School: from ca. 1930. Ex weezie, n. 5.


whelpl. To be delivered of a child: low coll.: late C. 19-20; ob. Cf. pwp, which is far from being ob.

whel. To be so narrow; then, mark you! coll: (—1887). Baumann, 'When up comes a chap with a basket on his shoulder'.

when I, say. Orig. a c.p. with 'dovetail' Bob I (or bob J); by 1920, S.E. Modern Society, June 6, 1889. 'Say when,' said Bonko . . . commencing to pour out the spirit in the glass. 'Bob! replied I.' The dovetail was a t. by 1920.

when Adam was an oakum-boy in Chatham Dockyard. Indefinitely long ago: ca. 1860—1900. H., 3rd ed. Cf.:

when Christ was a child. The same: C. 20.

when ever; loosely whenever. In questions, an emphatic form of when: from ca. 1710: S.E. until
WHEN FATHER SAYS TURN

WHID, CRACK A

mid-C. 19, then coll. E.g. 'When ever did you arrive, old man?'

when father says Turn, we all turn. A c.p. of ca. 1906-8. Ex a political picture-postcard. Collinson.

when hens make holy-water. Never: coll. c.p.: C. 17. See the quotation at Never-mass.

when it's at home. A derivative tag implying contempt or incredulity: coll.: C. 20. Best explained by a quotation: Dorothy Sayers, Have His Carcase, 1932, 'Hamphillia. What in the name of blazes is that, when it's at home?'

when the (bloody) Duke (or Dook) puts his (bloody) foot down, the (bloody) war will be bloody well over. A 62nd Division c.p. of the G.W. Ex the Divisional sign, a pelican with upraised right foot. F. & Gibbons.

when you were cutting bread and jam. A variant of before you came up, q.v.

where, with from or to at end of sentence. The coll. equivalents of whence and whither: mid-C. 18-20 for both, no doubt. Henry Brooke, 1760, 'I must go suddenly, but where to?'; Dickens, 1835 (where . . . from). O.E.D.

where are you (a-going to) (—can't you) ? P I. Stop pushing: low London: from ca. 1890; slightly ob. Var. where did that one go? A military c.p. (1915-18) in reference to a shell-burst (near-by). B. & P. Short for 'Where did that one go to, Herbert? Where did that one go?', which comes from a popular War-time song.

where did you get that hat? See hat ?, where did you get that,—where do flies go . . . ? See winter-time.

where did you get the Roosa? I.e. the borrowed plumes: 1895 only. Ware. Ex a New York police trial.


where Maggie wore the beads. See Maggie.

where the chicken got the axe. See chicken . . . where the flies won't get it. (Of liquor) down one's throat: c.p.: orig. (—1900), U.S.; anglicised by 1912. Ware.

where the whips are cracking. See whips are . . . whereas, follow a. To become a bankrupt: commercial and legal: late C. 18-mid-19. Grose, 2nd ed., where also the synonymous march in the rear of a whereas.

where's. See somewheres.

where's George? A c.p. applied to any person unexpectedly absent: 1935-36. Ex Messrs Lyons' advertisement-pictures of a vacant stool, etc. where's the war? A c.p. directed at a street wrangle: London streets: 1900-1. Ex scattered fighting in Boer War. (Ware.)


wherewith; whereewithal. 'The necessary', esp. money: resp. rare coll. († by 1910) and dial.; coll., as first in Malkin, 1809, 'How the devil does she mean that I should get the wherewithal? . . . Does she take me for . . . treasurer to a charity? Wherefore correct for whereas (written whereare) = whereas, n.: mid-C. 16-17. O.E.D.

whereby-go-nimble. Diarrhoea: lower class (—1904). F. & H. If whereby is not a corruption of whereby (go-nimble), it seems almost solecism.

what. See wet, n.—what one's whistle. See whistle, wet one's,—whether-go-ye. See whither . . .


whew, the. Sir H. Maxwell, in Notes and Queries, Dec. 10, 1901, says that in C. 15 the influence was app. known as 'the Whew' just as, in C. 20, it is known as 'the Flue'. (Mainly Scots) coll. and gen. spelt Wheno.

whiblin. This C. 17 word (unrecorded later than 1623) is explained by F. & H. as a eunuch and, in c., a word; by the O.E.D. as perhaps 'thingumbob'. Perhaps ex whibble + quiblin.

which, 'in vulgar use, without any antecedent, as a mere connective or introductory particle', O.E.D.: C. 18 (and prob. earlier)-20. Often it is wholly superfluous; often, however, it is for, because; very often it is besides, moreover; and, occ., it is although. Swift, 1733, Mary the Cook-Maid's Letter, 'Which, and I am sure I have been his servant four years since October, I can call me worse than sweethearth, drunk or sober,' O.E.D.: J. Storor Clouston, 1932, 'So now they goes and dresses up as Sir Felix, which he were become a knight, and no one could tell them apart from one another,' an example less pregnant than these two in Dorothy Sayers, Unnatural Death, 1927: 'Ironsides . . . a clerk on the Southern, which he always used to say joking like, "Slow but safe, like the Southern—that's me." I believe the gentleman acted with the best intentions, 'avin' now seen 'im, which at first I thought he was a wrong 'un.' Ex pleonastic which, as in Locke's 'Provisions . . . which how much they exceed the other in value . . . he will then see' (O.E.D.).—2. Incorrectly with and, where the one or the other is unnecessary: catachresis: C. 17 (prob. earlier). 20. Gilbert White, 'This is their due, and which ought to be rendered to them by all people', O.E.D. Perhaps ex pr. idiom, through the same use to be is common also in S.E.—3. What: sol. C. 19 (? earlier)-20. E.g. Agatha Christie, Why Didn't They Ask Essex?, 1934, "You were with her some time, weren't you?" 'Were I which, ma'am?'

which way, every. See every which way.


*whid, crack a. See crack a whid.
**whid, out the (Ainsworth); out whids.** To talk, speak: c. resp. C. 19 (rare) and mid-C. 16–20. Mostly implied, as to cut whids, in cut bene whids and a queer w., q.v.

**whid, whiddle.** See whid, n. and v.

**whiddle; in C. 18, occ. wheaddle (wheedle), q.v. at v., 2, and whiddle, whiddle, and widdle; see also poaching: from the Restoration; ob. The O.E.D. records it at 1661; not gen., I think, before the 1680's or 90's; B.E.; Grose; Vaux. Perhaps ex whid, n., 1. 2. Hence, to enter into a parley, sep. if nascious: c. (— 1725). A New Caxting Dict.; H., 2nd ed.; ob.— 3. Hence, to 'hesitate with many words', H., 1st ed.; mid-C. 19–20; ob. Either c. or low s.: cf. whid, n., 3. — 4. See Oliver.

**whiddle beef.** To cry 'thief!': c. late C. 17–mid-19. B.E., Grose.

**whidler.** An informer to the police; a blabber of the gang's secrets; c.: late C. 17–20; ob. B.E., Grose. Ex whiddle, v., 1.

**whids, cut.** See whid, cut the. Mostly in cut bene (or bien) whids; to speak fairly, kindly, and courteous; and cut queer whids, to speak roughly or discourteously. To use blasphemy or obscene language: c.: resp. (c only) C. 19 and rare (1821, Scott; 1861, Reade, ' Thou cuttest whids!'); and, both bene and queer, mid-C. 16–mid-19. See whid, n., 1 and 2.

**whiff, r.i.** To smell unpleasantly: 1899, Kipling (O.E.D.). Ex corresponding n.


**whiffing, vbl.n.** Catching a mackerel with hooked line and a bright object: nautical: C. 19. Bowen. Perhaps ex whiff, a flat-fish, etc.


**whiffles.** 'A relaxation of the scrotum', Grose, 1st ed.: ca. 1780–1850.

**whiffmagig.** A trifer; a shifty or contemptible fellow: 1871, Meredith (O.E.D.); ob. A variant of whiffleg in these senses. Cf. whifflegig, q.v.

**whiffs and a spit, take two.** To smoke a little, have a short smoke, a pull; lower classes' coll. (— 1923). Manchon.

**whiffy.** See whiff, adj.

**Whig.** The opp. of Tory, q.v. In the second sense, i.e. an opponent to Tory = a Conservative, the word dates from 1868, prob. began as s. and soon > coll. and then S.E.; ca. 1860, it was superseded by Liberal. Ultimately ex Whiggamer, Whiggamore. F. & E.; O.E.D.— 2. An intemperate person; a turncoat; middle-classes': 1880–9. Ware. Ex the Whigs' temporing at that period.

**Whig College, the.** The Reform Club: political nickname: ca. 1845–1910. John Bull, April 29, 1845, 'The Whig College, commonly called the Reform Club'.


**while, quite a.** A considerable time: coll.: C. 20. Elinor Glyn, 1905 (O.E.D.).

**whiles, when not deliberately archais and

whip the devil or the old gentleman round the post. To achieve illicitly or surreptitiously what can be accomplished honourably or openly: coll.: late C. 18–20; ob. 

whip through: whip up. See whip, v. 2 and 1 resp.

whippet-in. The horse that, at any moment of the race, is running last: racing s. (from ca. 1890) >, by 1930, coll. Ex hunting. F. & H. 1904, gives whippin'-boy in the same sense.

whipping-boy. See preceding.


whips are cracking, where the. The front line: New Zealanders: in G.W. Ex the activity of cattle-mustering.

[Wharshire. Yorkshire: late C. 17–early 19. B.E. ; Grose, 1st ed. I'm not sure too that this should not, in B.E., read Wharshires and that Grose has not copied B.E., for in the former, Whirp-shire imm. follows Whirp-land.]


whisk. A whisker-snapper; (often of a servant) ' a little inconsistent improper Fellow' B.E. : ca. 1826–1830. Ford, 1028 (O.E.D.); Brome, ca. 1853; Grose. Perhaps ex whisk, a hair-like appendage.

whisker; in C. 17–18, occ. wisker. Something excessive, great, very large; esp. a notable lie: 1688, Wilkins (O.E.D.); B.E.; Grose. In mid-C. 19–20, mainly dial. Ex whisk, to move briskly.

whisker, the mother of that was a. A c.p. retort on an improbable story: ca. 1850–1900. Cf. the dam of that was a whisker, the mainly dial. synonym, applied, however, esp. to a big lie: see dam of ... 

whisker-bed. The face: 1853, 'Cuthbert Bede. ' His ivories rattled, his nozzle barked, his whisker-bed napped heavily.' Ob. in C. 20.

whisker-splitter; in C. 18, occ. wisker-. A man given to sexual intrigue: ca. 1785–1840. Grose, 2nd ed. Cf. the more gen. beard-splitter.


Whiskeries (or Whiskeries), the. The Irish Exhibition in London in: 1888: mostly Londoners. Ware quotes The Referee of June 10, 1888. On Collieries, Fisheries, etc.

whiskers. A 'whiskerando' (q.v.); often loosely of any man, as in the jocular greeting, 'Hallo, Whiskers!': mid C. 19–20; coll. whiskers, all my. Nonsense: from ca. 1920. Dorothy Sayers, Clouds of Witness, 1926, 'All that stuff about his bein' so upset ... was all my whiskers.' On all my eye.

whiskers (on it), have. (Of a story, an idea) to be well-known, known for years, old: jocular coll.: from ca. 1926. (Dorothy Sayers, Gaudy Night, 1935).

whiskery. (Heavily) whiskered: coll. (in C. 20, S.E.) ; from ca. 1890. Ex whiskers, q.v.

whiskey-. See whiskey.—Whiskyries. See Whiskeries.


whisky-trisky. Flighty; lightly lively; rare coll.: 1782, Miss Burney. Cf. whisking, 1.

whisky jack; C. 19–20, also whiskey jack; C. 18.

whiskyjack; all three may be hyphenated. A popular name for the common green Jay of Canada: Canadian coll. varying on S.E.: from ca. 1770. Also whisk(e)y john, or, as for whisky jack, with capitals. The earlier is whisky john, a corruption of Red Indian wiskatjan. O.E.D. (In all the two-word forms, the second element may be capitalised.)

whisky-stall. (Gen. pl.) A stall-seat at, or near, the end of a row, enabling the occupant to go out for a drink without inconvenience to himself or his neighbours: journalistic: 1883–ca. 1914. Ware.

Whiskyries, the. See Whiskeries.

whisper. 'A tip given in secret': esp. 'give the whisper, ... to give a quick tip to any one'; H., 5th ed., where also the whisper at the post, an owner's final instructions to his jockey: racing: from early 1870's. Cf. wheeze, n., 4, q.v.

whisper, v.t. To borrow money from (a person); esp. borrow small sums: from ca. 1870; ob. H., 6th ed. Ex the whisper with which such loans are usually begged.—2. V.t., to make water: preparatory schools': from ca. 1693; Scotch.

whisper-bed. The face: 1853, 'Cuthbert Bede. ' His ivories rattled, his nozzle barked, his whisker-bed napped heavily.' Ob. in C. 20.

whisper, in a pig's. See pig's whisper.


whispering Willie. A type of big naval gun used by the Germans: East African campaign of the G.W. (F. Brett Young, Jim Reikate, 1930.)

whister-cluster. -snefet, -neutral. A cuff on the ear or the side of the head: many coll. C. 18–mid-19 (Grose, 1st ed.), then dial.; C. 16 (Udall); C. 16 (Palsgrave: O.E.D.). Perhaps a reduplication of whister, that which 'whista' or 'puts to silence' even so. -cluster may pun clyster, an enema, while -snefet, -neutral may be cognate with the vv. enite,
WHISTLE

WHITニング breeches. Corduroy trousers: unaristocratic: late C. 19-20; ob. Ex the swishing sound that they are apt to make as one moves.

Whistling Percy. "A German 9-inch naval gun of flat trajectory, captured at Cambray in Nov., 1917—from the sound made by its shell in flight. (Whistling Willie, Whistling Walter, etc., were names similarly given to various other enemy guns and shells.)" F. & Gibbons.

whistling psalms . . . See whistle psalms.

whistling-shop. A room in the King's Bench Prison where spirits were sold secretly and illicitly: c. o. of ca. 1785-1840. Grose, 2nd ed. The signal indicative of 'open shop' was a whistle.—2. Hence, an unlicensed dram-shop: (low) a. : 1821, Moncrieff (O.E.D.); Dickens, who, in 1837, also has 'whistling gentleman' (see whistler, 3). Very ob. Whistling Willie and Sighing Sarah were Boer cannon firing on Ladysmith from Umbalwana; military: 1900. J. Mine, The Epistles of Atkins, 1902.

Whit; often Whitt, occ. Witt. Newgate Prison.—2. the whitt(.). Any prison: c. : ca. 1670-1840. Anon., A Warming for Housekeepers, 1876, 'O then they rub us to the whitt': ; Coles and B.E. (Newgate); Grose. Perhaps suggested by the git of Newgate as gen. pronounced: cf. however, Whittington's College, q.v.

white, n, only in large (or half-bull) white, a half-crown, and small white, a shilling: counterfeiters' c. (—1823). 'Jon Bee.'—2. See whites.—3. See (3) of:

white, adj. Honourable; fair-dealing: U.S. a. (—1877), anglicised ca. 1885; by 1920, coll. Ex the self-imputed characteristics of a white man. Cf. white man, q.v.—2. Hence as adv.: U.S. a. (—1900) anglicised ca. 1905; by 1930, coll. E.g. at white, use (a person) white.—3. As n., 'a true, sterling fellow,' C. J. Dennis; mostly Australian (—1916).


white-ash breeze. The breeze caused by rowing; hoisting (—1904); slightly ob. F. & H., 'Oars are given made of white ash.' Imm. ex white ash, an oar: coll. : mid-C. 19-20.


White Bear, the. The Archbishop Whately (1787-1883), very unceremonious with opponents. Dawson.

White Brahmins. 'Excessively exclusive persons': among Europeans in India: from ca. 1860; ob. Ex an extremely exclusive religious sect, variously named. —2. Also, among the educated Indians, the English: coll. : from ca. 1880; ob. Ibid.

white broth, spit. See spit white broth.

white choker. A white tie: lower-class: from ca. 1860; slightly ob.—2. Hence, a parson: id. : from ca. 1890; ob.


white eye. Strong, inferior whiskey: military (—1874); ob. H., 6th ed. Orig. U.S.; so named because its potency is believed to turn the eyes round in the sockets, leaving the whites only visible", H.

white feather, show the. To maintain 'sufficient pressure of steam in the boilers to keep a white dren's coll. : from ca. 1870; ob. H., 6th ed. Cf. puffing-billy.

whistling-breeches. Corduroy trousers: unaristocratic: late C. 19-20; ob. Ex the swishing sound that they are apt to make as one moves.

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white feather, show the. To maintain 'sufficient pressure of steam in the boilers to keep a white

white friar. A speck of white (froth, scum) floating on a (dark-coloured) liquid: from 1720's: coll. >., in C. 19, dial. Swift, 1729. O.E.D.


white-haired boy is an Australian and New Zealand variant of the next entry; late C. 19-20. Whence you must have white hairs, a New Zealand o.p. to a man getting an expected favour: C. 20.

white-headed boy; usually my, her (etc.) w.-b. Favourite; darling: 1820: coll.: orig. Irish >, by 1890, fairly gen. Molmto; Hall Caine (O.E.D.). Ex the very fair hair of babies and young children. Cf. *snowy*, q.v., and t. S.E. white (i.e. favourite) boy and son.

white horse. (Indicative of) cowardice: Anglo-Irish coll.: 18-20; ob. Ware. *From the tradition that James II fled from the battle of the Boyne on a white horse*.

white-horsed in, be. To obtain a job through influence: tailors: (— 1904). F. & H. Perhaps ex buying a 'boss' drinks at an inn, (a) white horse being a frequent sign, hence name, of an inn.

white jenny. A foreign-made silver watch, says F. & H. ascribing it to H.: but where in H. is it? *white lace. See white ribbon.


*white lot. A silver watch and chain: o. : from ca. 1860. Ex white, for centuries an epithet applied to silver. Cf. *white wool, q.v.*


white man. An honourable man: U.S. a. (1865), anglicised ca. 1887; by 1920, coll. Nat Gould, 1898, 'There goes a "white man" if ever there was one . . . That beard [is] the only black thing about him.' See white, adj.; cf. *ahib, q.v.*

white man's burden, the. Work: jocular coll. : from ca. 1920. Fumming the S.E. sense.

white man's hansom woman. A coloured mistress: West Indian; mid-C. 18-20; ob. Clearly, there is a pun on *hansom cab* and *handsome*.

White Moor; gen. pl. A Genoese; coll. nick-name: C. 17. Ex a very uncomplimentary proverb recorded by Howell in 1642: too rough on the Moors.

white nigger. A term of contempt for a white man: Sierra Leone Negroes' coll.: from ca. 1880. Ware quotes The Daily News of June 20, 1883. Cf. the American Negroes' poor white trash.

white Notting: A rough woolly cloth: tailors: ca. 1850-80. Ex poole's coat.

white port. Some kind of strong liquor, prob. gin (cf. white ribbon . . .): ca. 1750-90. Toldery, 1756. See the quotation at *slug*, n. 1.


white ribbon, satin, tape, wine, wool, also w. lace. Gin: resp. C. 19-20; from ca. 1720 (A New Lexicon, Dict., 1725); 1820 (Randall's Diary); from ca. 1780 (Grose, 1st ed.); mid-C. 19-20.—oo. merely lace or its synonym driz. H., 1st ed., describes w. satin and w. tape as women's terms, as, also, was lace. All are ob.: in fact, white wine and w. wool did not survive beyond C. 19; white assies may well endure, however, because of the trade name, White Satin Gin. See also at ribbon and tape.

white sergeant. A 'breaches-wearing' wife, esp. and orig. as in the earliest record: Grose, 1st ed., 'A man fetched from the tavern . . . by his wife, is said to be arrested by the white sergeant.'† by 1890 or soon after; H., 3rd-6th ed., has it. Ex the martial bearing of this badly less formidable 'woman in white'.


*white soup. Silver plate melted down to avoid identification: C. (— 1887). Ware.

white-stocking day. The days on which sailors' women-folk presented their half-pay notes to the owners: N.E. Coast: late C. 19. Bowen.


white tape, wine, or wool. Gin. See white ribbon. Baumann's *white tapes* is an error.


*4. A lead from a single card: card-playing coll. (— 1899); slightly ob. O.E.D. Ex Whitechapel play, q.v.*

Whitechapel beer. One who, as Grose (1st ed.) so neatly phrases it, 'dresses with a needle and thread, and undresses with a knife': ca. 1780-1840. Cf. the entries at St Giles and Westminster, and Whitechapel omer.


Whitechapel fortune. 'A clean gown and a pair of pattens': low London; 1845 in 'Gipey' Carew, 1891 (i.e. 'No. 747'); H., 3rd ed. A euphemism of Whitechapel portion, q.v.


Whitechapel province. 'A club or brotherhood under the government of a stretcher', Grose, 3rd ed.
London club life: late C. 18–early 19. Punning Roman provincial government: in C. 18 (e.g. in D’Urfey, 1719), prator was occ. used of a mayor.


*whit* pier. A pickpocket: c. from ca. 1820. Ex shilling whistling.

*whizz* n. (q. v.) Ex colour—

[whitewash, the bankruptcy v., may orig. (mid-C. 18) have been coll.]

*whitewash* n. (q. v.) Ex white paint.

[whitewash, the 61st Regiment; from ca. 1881, the (2nd Battalion of the) Gloucestershire Regiment; military: mid 19. – 20. ob. Ex liberal use of pipe-clay at the time of the Indian Mutiny. F. & Gibbons.]

*whiter-go* a. A wife: ca. 1670–1830. Ral. 1867, has how doth your whiter-go you, i.e. your wife; B. E. (misprint whither go ... ;) Gros. Ex this question so frequently asked by wives.

*whit* n. (q. v.) Ex white. See Whit.


Whittington Priory. Holloway Prison (for debt); debtors: ca. 1800–1910. Ware. Ex proximity to Highgate (associated with Whittington.)

Whittington’s College, Newgate Prison: ca. 1786–1820. Gros. 2nd ed.; in G. ’s Provincial Glossary, 1790; he has studied at Whittington’s College, he has been imprisoned at Newgate; there, G.adds that Newgate was rebuilt in 1423 by Whittington’s executors. Ex the famous Lord Mayor of that name, but perhaps suggested by Whit, q. v.

*whittle* v. To give information, to ‘peach’; to confess at the gallows: from 1720’s: c. >, by 1860, low s.; ob. Swift, 1727; II, 5th ed. A variant of whiddle, q. v.


*whiz* n. (q. v.) Ex shrewd. See Whist.

*whizz* v. To be actively a pickpocket: c. from ca. 1920. Cf. buzz in the same sense. Ex his speed. *whizz-bang* n. A shell fired from a light field-gun, e.g. from the German ’77, rarely the gun: military: from 1914. B. & P. One only just heard, if at all 1, the whizz of its flight before one heard the bang of the explosion.—2. Hence, the stereotyped field postcard (soon censored): id.: from 1915. Ibid.

*whizz-boy* A pickpocket: c. from ca. 1920. Margery Allingham, Policemen at the Funeral, 1931. Also among grafters: witness Philip Allingham, Cheapside, 1934. Cf.:

*whizz-game* n. The jostling of persons by one criminal to enable another to pick their pockets: c. from ca. 1920. (James Spenser, Limey Breaks In, 1934.)


*whoo* n. (q. v.) Ex who is, does knot. See who.


whoa, carry me out! See carry me out.

whoa, Emma! An urban lower-classes e.p. directed at a woman 'of marked appearance or behaviour in the streets': ca. 1880–1900. Ware, who gives it an anecdotial origin. 'Quotations' Benham has the form whoa, Emma! mind the paint.

—2. Whence, a non-aristocratic warning, to a person of either sex, to be careful: from ca. 1900; ob.

whoa, Jameson! A e.p. constituting 'an admiring warning against puckey rashness': non-aristocratic, non-cultural: 1896–7. Ex the Jameson Raid. (Ware.)

Whoball's children, he is none of John. 'You cannot easily make him a fool,' Terence in English, 1598: a semi-proverbial e.p. of C. 17. See whoa-Ball.

whoever. Whomsoever = catachrestic: C. 16–20.—2. In perplexity or surprise, an emphasised who, properly, two words (cf. whatever): coll.: mid-C. 19–20. R. G. White, 1881, says that it is 'mostly confined to ladies'. O.E.D.

whole boiling, hog, etc. See the nn.

whole-footed. (Of persons) unreserved, free and easy: from 1730's: s. >, ca. 1750, coll. >, ca. 1820, dial. North, ca. 1734. Ex whole-footed, 'treading with the whole foot on the ground, not lightly or on tip-toe.', O.E.D.

whole hog, so thea. See go the whole hog.

[whole-hogger is political j. rather than coll.]

wholeskin brigade. A military unit that has not yet been in action: Boer War military. Ware.

whom. See 'who and whom'.

whom else is incorrect for who else in such a sentence as this in A. Berkeley, Panic Party, 1934, 'She carried half a dozen stewards, three cooks, a pantryman, and heaven only knew whom else as well.'


O.E.D. Cf.:

whoop, v., C. 18–20; whap, C. 16, 19–20; occ. wap, wop, C. 19–20. To strike heavily, thrash, belabour: (in C. 20, low) coll.: mid-C. 16–20. Dickens, 1837, "'There's nobody to be whooped for takin' this here liberty, sir?' said Mr. Weller," O.E.D. Ex whoop (spelt whapp), to cast violently, take or put suddenly.—2. Hence, to defeat (utterly); to surpass, excel greatly: coll.: in C. 20, low coll. From the 1830's. Thackeray, 'Where [his boys] might whoop the French boys and learn all the modern languages.'


whooper; whapper; wopper; wapper. Something, some animal or person, unusually large in its kind: (in C. 20, low) coll.: from ca. 1780. Grove, 1st ed. (whapper); Marryat, 1829 (wopper);

Surtees, 1854 (wopper); Walker, 1901, '... Blime, she's a whopper!' says Billy. Ex wop, v.—2. Hence, a 'thumping' lie: (low) coll.: 1791, Nairne (O.E.D.).—3. A person that 'whopes': (low) coll.: late C. 19–20.


whore is, in mid-C. 19–20, considered a vulgarism; harlot is considered preferable, but in C. 20, archaic; prostitute, however, is now quite polite.—2. Hence, a term of opprobrium even for a man: coll.: late C. 19–20. Gen. pronounced lower or lower.

whore-pipe. The penis: low (—1791); ♀ by 1890. Grove, 3rd ed.

whore's bird than a canary bird, he sings more like a. He has a strong, manly voice: c.p.: late C. 18–early 19. Grove, 2nd ed. A whore's bird is a debauchee.

whore's curse. A piece of gold coin value five shillings and threepence, frequently given to women of the town by such as professed always to give gold, and who before the introduction of those pieces, always gave half a guinea', Grove, 1st ed.: (mostly London) coll.: mid-C. 18.

whore's get. An indivisible phrase used mostly as a pejorative term of address: nautical (—1885); ob. Ex get n., 2, on whore's son.

who's. A frequent written sol. for whom? since C. 16.


whowell. See see-Ball.

woy-c'l! A cry used by coster-class upon sight of a gaily dressed girl passing near them. Also the cry of welcome amongst London costermongers', Ware, 1909. Whence hoy!

whuff, n. and v. A or to roar or bellow (e.g. like, or like that of, a rhinoceros): coll. —1887.

Baumann.

whump. See wump.

why, for. See why.

Whyns. Members of the Y.M.C.A.; clubmen's: ca. 1882–1905. Waro. By 'telescoping of these initials'.

Wi(-)Wi; occ. Wee(-)Wee, or WeeI; etymology-isingly, Oui-Oui. Also, the singular form is often used as a pl. A Frenchman: New Zealand and hence, to some extent, Australia: 1845. E. J. Wakefield; 1859, A. S. Thomson, 'The Wewis, as the French are now called' ; 1881, Anon., Percy Pomo (Weewes). Morris. Ex the Frenchman's fondness for oui / oui! (and non / non!); cf. Des-Donk, q.v.

wibble. Bad liquor; any thin, weak beverage: (?) mainly provincial); s. or coll. (—1785); ob., except in the provinces. Grove, 1st ed.; F. & H., 1904. Cf.:

Wibbly-wobbly: Unsteady; coll. and dial.; from mid-1870's. Ex preceding.

wibbly-wobbly. Unsteady; apt to 'wibbly-wobble', q.v.; coll.: C. 20.

wibbling's witch, or W. W. The four of clubs: C. 18–19. Grose, 1st ed., 'From one James Wilbing, who in the reign of King James I, grew rich by private gaming, and who was commonly observed to have that card, and never to lose a game but when he had it not'.

*witcher-cully, etc. See witcher.

witched. Very bad, 'horrid', 'beastly'; coll.: C. 17–20. T. Taylor, 1639, 'It is too well known what a wicked number of followers he hath had'; Horace Walpole, 'They talk wicked French'. O.E.D. Cf.:


Wickham. A Wickham's fancy; coll. (anglers); from ca. 1910. (O.E.D.)


widdle. See whiddle.—widdy. See widda.


wide-awake. It verges on c.; Cf.:

wide, to the. Utterly; esp. in done or whacked to the wide, utterly exhausted; coll.: from ca. 1912. Very gen. among soldiers in G.W. (F. & Gibbons.); i.e. to the wide world: for all to see.—2. done or dead to the wide, utterly drunk: C. 20. Lyell.

wide at or of the bow-hand (i.e. the left). Wide of the mark; coll.: late C. 16–mid-17. Shakespeare, Dekker, Webster. (Apperson.) Ex archery.


widow. As title to the name: mid-C. 16–20: S.E. until C. 19, then mainly dial. and uncultured coll.—2. 'The expiring's call a widow'; The British Anti. 1740. obb. Cf. S.E. widow's fire. O.E.D.—3. (Always the widow.) The gallows: ? C. 18–mid-19. Ex Fr. la veue.—4. An additional hand dealt in certain card-games: late C. 19–20: s. >, by 1920, coll.—5. (The Widow.) Queen Victoria: military coll.: 1863–1901. Ware, 'In no way disparaging':—6. (The widow, the W.) Champagne: 1899, Guy Boothby. 'A large luncheon and a glass of the Widow to wash it down'. O.E.D.; Ware, however, states that it dates from forty years earlier. Ex Veue Clicquot.

widow, grass. See grass widow.

widow bewitched. A woman separated from her husband; coll. (1725), in mid-C. 19, mainly dial. Bailey; Mrs Gaskell. Cf. grass widow, q.v.


[widow's weeds has, in F. & H., a wholly erroneous entry.]


wife as a dog of a side-pocket, as much need of a. See side-pocket.

wife cries five leaves a penny, one's. She is in travail: a semi-proverbial c. of ca. 1707–1758. Ray, 1678. (Apperson.) I.e. she cries out, pain-racked.


wife out of Westminster. A wife of dubious morality: London coll.: C. 18–20; very ob., Ware in 1809 remarking: 'Sometimes still heard in the East of London'. Ex the proverb cited at Westminster wedding, q.v.


wifey, wifey, rarely wifey, etc. Endeavor for a wife; coll.: from ca. 1820. Properly, little wife, but gen. used regardless of size.

wiffle-wobble. An arrogant fellow: low (– 1923). Manchon. Perhaps because he gives one:

wiffles-wolles, the. A stomach-ache; sorrow; melancholy, the dumps; mainly proletarian (– 1859); ob. H., 1st ed. Cf. colly-wobles (sense), wobble-wobble (form).

willow gadget. The same as hook-me-dingly, q.v.; nautical: late C. 19–20. Bowan. See also gadget.

wily. See wivey.


wig!, dash my: my wig! See wigs.


wig, oil (a person's). To make him drunk: coll. (– 1923). Manchon.


Wigan is national joke, esp. in come from Wigan to be a thorough urban provincial: from ca. 1920: o.p.


Wiggie. See Wiggie. 
wigging. A scolding; a severe reproof, reproach, reprimand; a. (1813) >, by 1850. coll. Barham. ‘If you wish to 'scoape wigging, a dumb wife's handy.' Ex woig, n. 1.

Wiggins, Mr. 'Any mannerist of small brains and showy feather,' Bee: London (—1823); † by 1860.

wiggie. A wriggle; esp. in get a wiggie on, to hurt. Canadian: c. 20. John Beames. Ex: wiggie, v. To waggie, wriggle: c. 13-20: S.E. till c. 19, then coll.—2. Hence the n.: coll.: late c. 19-20.—3. The same applies to simple deriva-
tives.—4. See wiggle-waggie, 2.

wagglet-wagglet, adj. (1778); hence v. and n., both from ca. 1820. Vacillating; to move (v.t. and t.) in a wiggling, waggling way: coll. O.E.D.—2. To strut about: coll. (—1922). Manchon. Also woggly.

wigly; wiggly-waggly or -woggly. The adj. of wiggle, q.v.: coll. C. 20. Ex dial.


wig(s) i, dash my; wig(s) i, my. Mild imprecations: coll.: resp. 1797 (1812); 1891 (1871). Morris, 1891, 'I am writing a short narrative poem. My wig! but it is garrulous,' O.E.D. Perhaps ex dashing one's wig down in anger.

wigby. A man wearing a wig: jocular coll. (—1785). Grose, 1st ed., has also Mr Wigley; wigster occurs ca. 1820. All three were ob. by 1850, and by 1920 they were †. Cf. rudeby, a rude person, and wopannouns, q.v.

*wild. A village: tramps' c. (—1839). Brandon; H., 2nd ed. Cf. S.E. eil, c. eile, q.v.—2. the Wild. 'The extreme Evangelical party in the Church of Scotland'; nickname: from late 1820's O.E.D.

wild, adj. See 'Moving-Picture Slang,' § 6.

wild-cat. A rash projector, risky investor (1812); a risky or unsound business-undertaking (1839): U.S. coll., anglicised ca. 1880; slightly ob. —2. Hence, adj., risky, unsound (business or business enterprise); hence, reckless or rash: coll. orig. (1838) U.S., anglicised ca. 1880. Ex the American wild-cat; it dates from U.S. period of "tightened finances" (1836)—W.

wild-catter, -cating. A person engaging in, or the instance of the practice of, 'wild-cat' business: coll.: U.S. (1883), anglicised ca. 1900. See preceding entry.

*wild dell. A 'doll' (q.v.) begotten and born under a hedge: c. † C. 17—early 19.

wild-fire. Some strong liquor; perhaps brandy: ca. 1760—90. See quotation at slug, n. 1.


Wild Indians, the. The Prince of Wales's Leinster Regiment (Royal Canadán): military: from the 1870's; ob. Ex the Canadian expression of loyalty at the time of the Mutiny. F. & H.


Wild Macrae, the. The 72nd, now the Seaforth, Highlanders: from 1777, when the regiment was raised, the Clan Macrae providing the majority of the recruits. F. & Gibbons.

wild mare, ride the. See ride the wild mare.

*wild rogue. A born or thorough-paced thief: c. — late C. 17—early 19. B.E.

wild squirt. Diarrhoea: low coll. (—1785); ob. Grosz, 1st ed.

wild train. A train not on the time-table, hence 'not entitled to the track' as is a regular train: railwaymen's (—1904). F. & H.


willful murder. The card-game known as 'blind hooky': from ca. 1800; ob. H., 3rd ed.

Wilhelm II much. A bit too much of the Kaiser: Society: 1898. Ware. Ex his many activities.

wilk. See whirl.

Willie Bard's. A pack of cards: rhyming s.: c. 20. F. & Gibbons. Ex Wilkie Bard, comedian and 'card.'

will. Unemphasised 'shall' in the first person: coll., but in C. 20 verging on S.E. Discussion is here supererogatory: see eep. Fowler's Modern English Usage.

Will-o'-the-wisp. (Gen. pl.) A shell with flight difficult to follow: Arrigo officers: in g.W. will you shoot? Will you pay for a small drink of spirits?: Australian taverns: (—1900); ob. Ware.


William Bon Chrétien. Incorrect for Williams(a) Bon Chrétien (pseud): late C. 19—20. O.E.D.

Willie, a child's penis: Cumberland and Westmorland s. (—1905), not dial. E.D.D. (Sup.)


Willie, Willie, &c. A c.p. of 'satiric reproach addressed to a taradiddle rather than a flat liar': non-aristocratic: 1808—ca. 1914. Ware. Cf.: Willie, Willie—wicked, wicked! This c.p. of ca. 1900—14 constitutes a 'satiric street reproach addressed to a middle-aged woman talking to a youth.' Ware derives it ox a droll law-suit.

willies, the. (Cf. wille-waffles, perhaps its origin.) A feeling of nervousness, discomfort, vague fear: U.S. (1900), anglicised ca. 1926. (O.E.D. Sup.)

willin', willing. (Of persons or things) 'in "gusto,"' 'in heart,' 'cheerful,' C. J. Dennis: Australian coll. verging on S.E.: late C. 19—20.

will'n't; willot. Will not: coll.: C. 19. (See wash, v., 1.) Cf. won't, q.v.


willow, 'Poor, and of no Reputation,' B.E. Late C. 17—early 19. Lit. willowy.

Wilby Nim. Good whiskey: Shetland Islands s. (1897), not dial. E.D.D. Perhaps ex a well-known landlord.


willywawa. Squalls in the Straits of Magellan;
WINCHESTER GOOSE

4. Apart from their often respectable antiquity, notions also differ from ordinary school slang in that many of them are not merely the language of the boys, but are part of the official language of the school used by and to masters also. Thus in answer to a Don (master) asking a man why he was "tardy up to books at morning lines" [late in school at first lesson], it would be quite proper to reply that "junior in chambers sported a stroke" [the junior in his dormitory overslept himself instead of waking the others in time].

5. Many notions are simply old English words which have been dropped out of common use. For instance, to jirk is the notion for to send or to send away. And we find this sense ... in "Morte Arthure" ... Again, a Winchester man who says he finds it "an awful swink (hard work) to do mathematics" [is using an excellent old English word]; and should be ... pursue his mathematical labours till he got a headache, he would naturally say it works (hurts), thus using the language of ... Malory: "my hede werches so". If his head got worse he might have to go continent ... to sickhouse or a continent room. The word continent here means "keeping within doors" [as in Shakespeare]. And if he got worse the doctor might forbid him to "come abroad" (the notion for being allowed out again after "going continent"), [thus employing the language of Sir Thomas More].


These are either bodily imported into use or slightly altered or contracted ... This is a common practice of all schools, but ... particularly prevalent at Winchester, where ... the talking of Latin was [once] a regular institution.

Half-remedy, commonly half-rem." half holiday":

From remedium.

To tund, "to beat with a ground-ash". From tundo.

Semper, "always", used as an adjective.

Non-licet, "not allowed".

... A ball is still called a "pill", which is simply pilum anglicised, while the notion for a stone is a "rock" [via L. esuum: cf. U.S. usage]. ... Other Latin-formed words are evidently perpetuated from the Latin of the statutes, or early school rules. Thus to sociea, meaning to go in company with another ... is a relic of the early rule that scholars must always go in company, "sociati" ... 7. Names of people perpetuated as words ...

Barter [q.v.]

John Dee paper, a special kind of paper introduced at Winchester for mathematics by John Desborough Walford, the first regular mathematical master.

Bill Brighter [q.v.]

8. Notions surviving as names of places.

[Technicalities, those.]


[E.g. (perhaps), brock, brockster, q.v.]

"Prefects" writing-tables are still called "washing-stools" in college, because the tables were originally provided to stand basins on for washing. [This, clearly, is a technicality.]

Winchester goose. A bubo: mid-C. 16-17.

Bacon (1559), Shakespeare, Cotgrave. The brothels in Southwark were, in C. 16, under the Bishop of Winchester's jurisdiction: F. & H.—2. Hence a person infected therewith; hence, an objectionable

but also light, variable winds elsewhere; nautical:

wilt. To run away, to 'bunk': London: from ca. 1880; ob. Ex wilt, (of flowers) to fade, to grow limp. Cf. fads out, q.v., and the ob. C. 20 'gag', 'wilt thou (be my wedded wife)?' and she wilted.


*win, win, wimp, whnam(n), but gen. the first or the third. A penny: e. (— 1657): resp. C. 17-20, late C. 19-20 (mostly in Ireland and hence U.S.), C. 17-20, C. 19-20. Harman, Dekker, B.E., Grose, Vaux (Winchester; † by 1900), 'Jon Bee' (who defines as a halfpenny), H., Flynt (wimp). Perhaps abbr. Winchester.—2. (win, and for senses 3, 4.) A victory: (sports and games) coll.: from ca. 1880. (O.E.D.)—3. A gain; gen. pl. (mostly monetary) gains coll.: from ca. 1890. Perhaps abbr. winning(s).—


*win, v. To steal: c. from late C. 17. B.E., Grose. In the Army, 1914-18 (and after), a., with the extension: to gain not quite lawfully or officially. Galworthy, Swan Song, 1928, "How are you going to get the money?" 'Win, wangle, and scrounge it". Cf. (to) make, q.v., and, in Fr. c., the exactly synonymous gagner. The n. winnings may, as = 'plunder, goods, or money acquired by theft' (Grose, 2nd ed.), be c.: C. 18-20.


Mise Anna Porter, 1807. O.E.D.

*Winchester. See win, n., 1.

[Winchester College slang is the richest and most interesting of all the Public School slangs: cf. the entries at 'Eton', 'Harrow', 'Rugby' and 'Westminster'. Many terms will be found in these pages, but it is to be remarked that in the Winchester 'notions' it is extremely difficult, in many instances, to distinguish between technicalities (j.) and slang or colloquial terms. The 'focus classicus' is H. G. K. Wrench's Winchester Word-Book, 1891; the second edition—the only one possessed by the British Museum—followed in 1901. But a very good short account appears in R. Townsend Warner's Winchester, 1906, from which this abridgement:—

"Notions", or the school language... Complicated as the language of Winchester is, there is no consciousness of anything like affectation or pedantry in using it. To a new-comer, after a week of two, notions seem the only possible words for certain meanings... As they are the last forgotten, so they are the first learnt lesson of Winchester's. A new man must learn, for instance, that the article is seldom found in Winchester grammar, especially in the names of places...

2. Another tendency is the pluralization of words... Hills, meads, crocks (cricket). The last word also is an example of the fondness of strengthening vowels in the middle of words, such as croppie, meaning to "pluck" or "plough" (from creek) and rough for a rush or rapid stream of water.

3. A less ancient tendency of Winchester talk is to drop the final "ion"... lengthening the vowel then left final; thus "examined" (examinah) for "examination"... [Wrench dates it from ca. 1850.]
WIPER-DRAWER.

(0.E.D.)—3. A severe blow or reply (or taunt) to > coll: from mid-1840's; slightly ob. Cf. S.E. *wiper, a blow, a sarcasm.


wire, v.i. and t. To telegraph: coll.: 1859, *The Edinburgh Review*, April, 'Striving to debase the language by introducing the verb "to wire".', O.E.D. Cf. wire, n., l. q.v.—2. Hence, to telegraph to (a person, a firm): coll.: 1876 (O.E.D.)—3. Vi. and t., to pick pockets (of persons): c.: 1845, in 'No. 747'. Ex *wire*, n., 2.—4. See phrasal **wiring** ensuing.

wire, give (a person) the: To warn secretly: low (pre-War) and military (G.W.): ob. F. & Gibbons.

Ex wire, n., l.

wire, on the. See hanging on the wire.

wire, pull one's. See pull one's wire.

wire away (1888) is rare for *wire in, v.v.

**wire-draw**. 'A Fetch or Trick to wobble in Bubbles': c.: late C. 17-18. B.E. Ex the corresponding v., which is S.E.

wire in (-1864), rarely wire away. To set-to with a will. H., 3rd ed.; H., 5th ed., *In its original form, 'wire-in, and get your name up', it was very popular among London professional athletes, but, at the very beginning, it derives perhaps ex wiring off one's claim or one's future farm. Whence wire into. Cf.:

wire in and get your name up! Have a shot at it!: 1862-ca. 1914. Ware, 'Originally very erotic.'

wire into (a meal, etc.). To set about eagerly, vigorously: 1887, Baumann. Ex wire in.


**wire.** A pickpocket using a wire (see *wire, n., 2.): c. (1867); ob. 'Ducange Anglicus.'


wise as Waltham's call. See Waltham's.

**wise-crack**. A smart, pithy saying: U.S. coll., anglicised by 1932. Also *wisebreaker*.

**wise (to)**. Aware (of); warned (about). Esp. be (or put a person, wise (to): U.S. coll. (ca. 1900), anglicised ca. 1910. Cf.:

**wise up, v.i. To get wise': v.t., to 'put a person wise': U.S. (C. 20), anglicised ca. 1918, but 'Australianised' by 1916 (C. J. Dennis) = Buchan, 1919; Wodehouse, 1932. Ex Proceeding. (O.E.D.)


**witz**. Incorrect form, as is *wis, of wits, certain (by 16-20. O.E.D.**

**wischer**. See *whisker,—wischer-splitter. See whisker-splitter,—wist. I. See wish, I.

"Wit. See *Whit."

wit as three folks, he has as much. Orig. and often self-explanatorily he has . . . folks, two fools and a madman: o.p. of late C. 18-19-20. Grose, 3rd ed. Cf. the C. 17-18 proverb he hath some wit but a fool hath the guidance of it; cf. too the witless apocryphalised in Einstein, 'Only four persons understand Relativity; I'm not one of them; and of the other two, three are dead and the third in a lunatic asylum.'


**witcher**. occ. *wischer.* Silver: c.: mid-C. 18-19. Coles, 1876; B.E.; Grose. Hence, *witch-bubber*, a silver bowl (all three): w.-cally, a silversmith (ibid.); and w.-tiler, a silver-hilted sword (ibid.). Perhaps a corruption of silver influenced by *white.*

**with.** See throw.—2. Another South African coll. (—1913) is with as in 'Can I come with ?', i.e. with you. Ex influence of Cape Dutch *sam*, together. Pettman.

**with and without.** See *warm with*; cold without. From 1830's. (Rare alone.)

**with his hat off.** See *hat off.*

**without.** (By ellipsis of the gerund.) Not counting: 1871, George Eliot, 'My father has enough to do to keep the rest, without me,' O.E.D.—2. (By ellipsis of the object, except as opp. *with*): C. 14-20, S.E. until C. 19, then coll. Newm., 1834, 'He was afraid to tell me, and left Oxford without,' O.E.D.—3. (As conjunction.) If . . . not; unless: C. 14-20; S.E. until C. 18, then coll.; in late C. 19-20, sol. Johnson, 1755, 'Not in use, except in conversation.' (O.E.D.)

**without any.** Without liquor (for a stated period): lower classes' coll.: from ca. 1890. Ware.

**Witt, the.** See *whit.—wittles. See *w for v*—!

**Wiw.** See *Wi-Wi.*

**wizard.** adj. Excellent, first-rate; from ca. 1924. ('Ganpat', *Out of Evil*, 1933, 'A perfectly wizard week!') Ex wizard, magical.

**wobbly like a drunken tailor with two left legs.** (Of a ship) to steer an erratic course: nautical o.p.: late C. 19-20. Bowen.

**wobble-shop.** A shop where liquor is sold unlawfully: c. or low (—1857); ob. *Ducange Anglicus.* Cf. *whistler; 3. and *whistling-shop, q.v.*


**Wobbly Eight, the. The British Third Battle Squadron: naval: 1914-15. Bowen.**

**wodge, wodgy.** See *wadge.*

wode betide you (him, etc.). You'll be getting into trouble: coll: mid-C. 19-20. Ex *W.E. sense.*

**woeful, got the.** See *got the woefuls.*

WOODS


wolf, see a. (Of a woman) to be seduced: coll.: C. 19-20; ob. Ex the fig. sense, to lose one's voice.


wolf in the stomach, have a. To be famished: coll.: C. 19-20; ob. Grose, 1st ed. Cf. stomach worm, q.v. Ex the old proverb, a growing youth has a wolf in his belly.

Wolle's Own. The 47th Foot Regiment: from ca. 1881, the (1st Battalion of the) Loyal North Lancashire Regiment: military: from ca. 1760; ob. The black worm in the gold lace commemorates Wolfe. In late C. 19-20, occ. the Wolves. (F. & Gibbons.)


wolly. See wallow.


woman and her husband, a. A c.p. applied to 'a married couple, where the woman is bigger than her husband,' Grose, 2nd ed.: late C. 18-mid-19.

woman of, make an honest. To marry: jocular coll.: C 20. Ex lit. sense, to marry a woman one has seduced or lived with. (Collinson.)

woman of all work. 'A female servant, who refuses none of her master's commands,' Grose, 2nd ed.: ca. 1785-1840. [woman of the town. Orig.—witness A New Century Dict., 1725—it may have been c.]


wombly, wambly. See wamble, wambly.

won, stolen, etc. See win, v.

wonder !, I. I doubt it, can't believe it, think it may be so: C. 1850. Punch, 'What next, I wonder!,' O.E.D.

wonder !, the. Coll. abbr. of in the name of wonder: 1862 (O.E.D.)

wonder !, I shouldn't. I should not be surprised (if, etc.) coll.: C. 1836, Dickens, 'Do you think you could manage . . . !' 'Shouldn't wonder,' responded boots. O.E.D.


wonk, all of a. U pact, very nervous: 1918 (O.E.D. Sup.); ob. Ex:

wonky. See wanky.—wannner. See oner.

won't; C. 17-18, occ. wont. Will not: coll.: mid-C. 17-20. Earlier wonnot. (O.E.D.)

won't you come home, Bill Bailey? A c.p. of the first decade, C.20. Collinson. Ex the popular song:

won't run to it! See run to it, I won't.

wood. Money: London drinking s. (=1823); † by 1890. 'Jon Bee.' Ex liquor from the wood.—

2. A variant of Woods, q.v.—3. wood, the. The pulpitis: 1854. Thackeray (O.E.D.). Implicit in:


wood, look through the. To stand in the pillory: id. Ibid.


Wood in front, Mr and Mrs. A theatrical o.p. (C. 20) = a bad house, i.e. empty seats.

wood in it, put a bit of. Shut the door!: military: C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Also put a piece of wood in the hole!, which appears also in Yorkshire dial.

wood-sour is incorrect for wood-scar: C. 19. O.E.D.


Woodbines, the Packet of. See Packet of Woodbines.


Woodcock's Cross, go crossless home by. (P.) To repent and be hanged. Without crossless, the phrase appl. to repent. (Cf. Weeping Cross, q.v.) Coll.: C. 17.

woodcock's head. A tobacco-pipe: coll.: 1600, Jonson; † by 1700. Early pipes were often made in the likenesses of a woodcock's head. F. & H.


wooden doublet. See wooden surcoat.


wooden habeas. A coffin: ca. 1780-1850. Grose, 1st ed., 'A man who dies in prison, is said to go out with a wooden habea.' Cf. wooden surcoat, contrast wooden casement, and see esp. Grose, P.; cf. also dial. get a wooden suit, to be buried.


wooden overcoat. A: a variant (mostly mid-C. 19) of wooden suit, q.v.

*wooden ruff. Same as wooden casement, q.v.: c.: late C. 17-early 19. B.E.


wooden surcoat. A: from ca. 1780. Grose, 1st ed.: H., 3rd ed., † Generally spoken of as
WOODY WEDGE

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work-out

a wooden sartout with nails for buttons; ob. Cf. wooden doublet, w. habes, w. overcoat, or w. ulter, the earliest being w. doublet (1761: O.E.D.), likewise the first to disappear; the latest is w. ulter (Ware, 1909).


wooden. A bystander that beta, B.E.; c.: C. 17—early 19. Dekker, 1608, shows that he is an accomplice betting to encourage novices or fools.


wool. Courage, pluck: c. (—1860) >, ca. 1870, pugilistic s. (witness H., 5th ed.; slightly ob. H., 2nd ed., 'You are not half-woofled, term of reproach from one thief to another.' Prob. ex jocular S.E. wool: hair; see wool-topped un.


wool, adj. More squeak than. Jack. More noise than substance; much talk with little result; semi-proverbial coll. from ca. 1730; ob. (O.E.D.) On great (or much) cry and little wool (proverbial S.E.).


*wool-hole. A workhouse: tramps c. (—1859); ob. H., 1st ed.; also in 'printing' Savage, 1841, where, further, one learns that the term was orig. printers', ex a lit. and technical sense.

wool on, keep your. Don't get angry! 1890, Barrère & Leland. Cf. woolly, adj. Ex keep your hair on.

wool on the back. Money, wealth: commercial: 1909. O.E.D. (Sup.).


woollbird. See wool-bird.—woollid. See wool, n.

woollies, the. An occ. variant of the willies; esp. give (a person) the willies: Army officers: from Feb., 1935; ob.


woolly, adj. In a bad temper: from early 1860's; ob. H., 3rd ed. Perhaps the 'originator' of keep your wool on.


*woolly bird. A variant of wool-bird, q.v.: c.: ca. 1810—50. Vaux.

woolly crown. A soft-headed fellow, 'Grose, 1st ed.: ca. 1890—1850. B.E.

woolly Maria. An occ. variant of woolly bear, 2.


woozy. Fuddled (with drink); muzzy: U.S. (1897), anglicised by Conan Doyle (O.E.D.) in 1917. Ex wooldy + muzzy (or dizzy or hazy).—2: Dizzy: Canadian: C. 20.

Wop. An Italian: from ca. 1931, via the 'talkies': Ex U.S. Wop, an Italian immigrant in North America. Cf. etymology.

woop, wopper. See whoop, whopper.—wope(s). See wape(s).


work. To warn or to prime (a person): C. 20. >, ca. 1835, coll. Prob. ex give (a person) the word, to indicate the password.—2. In Australia (—1916), 'to accost with fair speech', C. J. Dunn.

work, my. Indicative of surprise or admiration: coll.: 1857, Locker (O.E.D.).

word, one . . . See one word . . .

word, the. 'The right word for the right thing': hence, the thing to be done: coll. Shakespeare, Congreve, W. S. Gilbert. O.E.D.


word of mouth, drink by. 'I.e. out of the bottle or bottle instead of a glass,' Grove, 2nd ed.: drinkers: late C. 18—mid-19. Extant in dial.


words. A wordy dispute or quarrel: coll.: late C. 19—20. Agatha Christie, 1934, 'What is called in a lower walk of life 'words'.'


work. (Exp. of a vendor or beggar) to go through or about (a place) in the course, and for the purposes, of one's business or affairs: 1834, Colonel Hawker, of a hound; 1851, Mayhew, of an itinerant vendor; 1859, H. Kingsley, of a person. O.E.D.—2. To obtain or achieve, to get rid of, illicitly, deviously, or cunningly: 1839, Brandon, Dict. of Flash. Esp. 'Can you work it? I think I can work it for you.'—3. Hence (of an itinerant vendor) to hawk: 1851, Mayhew.—4. See 'Windsor College slang', § 5.

work I, good. See good work !


work cut out, have (all) one's. To have enough, or all one can manage, to do: coll.: 1879, H. C. Powell (O.E.D.). Ex work out work for (a person), which may, orig. have been a tailoring phrase.


work for a dead horse. See dead horse.

work from magpie to mopoke. See magpie to work it (up you)! Go to the devil with it: low, mostly Australian: C. 20. Also in other grammatical moods.


work one's fists. To be skilful in boxing: pugilistic (—1874); ob. H., 6th ed.

work-out. A wholesale dismissal of employees: lower classes (—1835). Also slaughter.
*work the bulls.* To get rid of false crown-pieces: e.: ca. 1830–1910. Brandon, 1839; H., 2nd ed. *work the balls.* (Gen. as v.b.n.) To steal from half-stands, having called as a pedlar: c. (— 1935). David Hume.

**work the mark.** To handle or operate mail-bag apparatus: (mail-train) railwaymen's: from ca. 1926. The Daily Herald, Aug. 5, 1938. Ex the Government mark on the bags.

**work the oracle.** To achieve (esp. if illicitly or deviously) one's end in a skilful or cunning manner: orig. (— 1859), low s. >, by 1930, coll. H., 1st ed. See work, 2.


*work,* give (a person) the. To manhandle; to kill, esp. by shooting: e.: (C. 20) U.S. anglicised ca. 1930 as a.


**world,** Knowledge of the finer world: Society: ca. 1790–1830: John Trusler, Life, 1793, 'That ... is a proof of your want of world.—No man of Tons' ever goes to the Theatre, for the amusements of that Theatre.' Ex S.E. the world, fashionable society.

**world, dead to the.** Utterly drunk: s. verging on collo.: C. 20.

**world, tell the.** See tell the world.

**world and his wife, all the.** See wife, all the world and his, with which cf. the Fr. tout le monde et son père (W.).

**world to a Chinese orange, (all the.)** An oc. variant (— 1887) of Lombard Street to a China orange. Baumann.
WOULD I, YOU

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WRITE ONE'S NAME ON (A JOINT)

to her by night,' O.E.D. Cf. wouldn't, I, q.v. Short for I would, if I were you. See:

would I, you ; occ. he (etc.) would ! Abbr. you (etc.) would go and do that curse you / or that's the sort of thing you would do. Coll.: C. 20. Often a mere oliché or c.p.

wouldn't, I. I advise you not to: coll.: (f earlier) mid-C. 19-20. The O.E.D. instances 'I wouldn't go skating to-day; the ice isn't safe.' On would, I q.v.

wounds (e.g. by Christ's wounds !) occurs in oaths of mid-C. 14-18, and as a self-contained joculation (abbr. God's wounds !) of C. 17-early 19; occ. in C. 19, wounds !

wow, be a ; rare except in it's a wow. To be a great success or most admirable, 'really excellent': U.S. (1927), partly Anglicised by 1929, esp. in theatrical s. Prob. ex a dog's bark: cf. howling success 'and':


wow-wow !; bow-wow ! A Slade School c.p. of the late 1890's, as in R. Blaker, Her Lies A Most Beautiful Lady, 1935, "Wow—wow—wow—" she gurgled; for 'bow-wow' or 'wow-wow' was currency in her circle at that time, to denote quiet contempt of an adversary's bombast.'

wower. A person very puritanical in morals; a spoil-sport; one who neither swears, drinks (in especial), nor smokes: from ca. 1695: Australian s. >, by 1930, coll. Perhaps ex wow, a bark of disapproval, + euphonic s + agential er; cf. the Yorkshire wousey, 'an exclamation, esp. of surprise', E.D.D.

woz. See wazz.—Wozzer. See Wazzer.

wrack for rack, vv. A frequent confusion; e.g. in (nerve-)wracked for -racked: C. 16-20. As, in late C. 16-20, wrack is frequently used for rack; n.


wright(e). Incorrect for rathe (a cart-shaft): C. 19-20. Cf. wrag for rag. O.E.D. But these misuses of wr- for r- are too numerous to be profitably recorded in greater detail than (ipse dixit !) I have given here: see O.E.D. passim.


wrap-rascal. A red cloak: late C. 18-early 19. Grosz, 2nd ed. An extension of S.E. w.-r. (a loose overcoat or a surtout), perhaps influenced by roquelaire.

wrapped-up, esp. in all nicely wrapped-up, in seeming language, and not even wrapped-up, crudely expressed: coll.: late C. 19-20. Ex pack-thread, talk.

wrap; wrappable. Rapt, rapture: incorrect forms: resp. late C. 18-20; C. 17 (O.E.D.).

wrapp'd up in the tail of his mother's smock, he was. A c.p. applied to 'any one remarkable for his success with the ladies', Grosz, 1st ed.: ca. 1780-1850. (Female fondling of male children increases their latent sexuality: it didn't need Freud to tell us this: this has been folk-lore for centuries.) Ex be wrapped in his mother's smock, to be born lucky.

wrapp'd up in warm flannel. 'Drunk with spirituous liquors': Grosz, 1st ed.: ca. 1780-1830. I cf. the 'drapery' terms for gin (see white ribbon).

wreak is 'sometimes erroneously' used by mod. writers as though it were the present of wrot (see white ribbon). W., who quotes The Times, Oct. 6, 1918, 'The damage they have wreaked must be repaired to the uttermost farthing.'


wrecking. The ruining, by 'shady' solicitors, of limited companies: financial coll.: 1880-4. Ware.


wriggle navels. To cotto: C. 18-20; ob. Prob. later than and suggested by wriggling-pole, q.v.

wriggle off. To depart: Londoners': ca. 1880-90. Ware.

wriggling-pole. The penis: (late C. 17 or early) C. 18-20; very ob. D'Urfey.

Wright, Mr. A warden 'going between' a prisoner and his friends: prison c.: C. 19-20; ob. Punning wright, an artificer, and right, adj. Cf. Right, Mr. q.v.

wrinkle. A lie, a fib: c. (- 1812); ob. Vaux.

—2. A cunning or adroit trick, device, expedient; a smart ' dodger'; orig. and often gud (a person) up to a wrinkle (or two), as in Lady Granville, 1817 (O.E.D.): s. >, by 1860, coll. Of the C. 15-17 wrinkle, a tortuous action, a cunning device, a trick; the link is perhaps supplied by sense 1, or by such a repartee as occurs in Swift's Polite Conversation, I., or, most prob., by wrinkle more ... , q.v. —3. Hence, a helpful or valuable hint or piece of information: sporting n. (1818: O.E.D.) >, by 1870, coll.


wrinkle-bellied. (Gen. of a harlot) having had many children: low coll.: late C. 18-20. Grosz, 3rd ed.: 'Child bearing leaves wrinkles.' Cf. wrinkle more in one's arse, have one (or a). To get one piece of knowledge more than one had, 'every fresh piece of knowledge being supposed by the vulgar naturalists to add a wrinkle to that part'. Grosz, 2nd ed. (cf. F. 2nd ed.): low : ca. 1780-1880. Here, perhaps, is the origin of wrinkle, n., 2 and 3, previously considered so problematic. Cf. preceding entry.

*wrinkler. A person prone to telling lies: c. (- 1812); ob. Vaux. Ex wrinkle, v.


write, when not deliberately 'literary', is, in late C. 19-20, gen. considered a sol. Baumann.


write a poor hand. See sore fist.—write home about. See nothing to ... write-off. A complete aeroplane-crash: Air Force & : from 1914. F. Gibbons. The machine could be written off as useless.

write one's name across another's face. To strike him in the face: sporting: ca. 1885-1912. Ware.

write one's name on (a joint). 'To have the first cut at anything; leaving sensible traces of one's presence on it,' H., 2nd ed.: from late 1860's.
written, not enough. Insufficiently revised for style: authors' coll.: from ca. 1870; ob. Ware.
Perhaps Dutch vrouwe corrupted.

wrong end of the stick, the. See stick, wrong end . . .


[Wrong number. See esp. Fowler, Modern English Usage. See, e.g. their, above.]

wrong side, get up (occ. out of bed) on the or the.
To rise peevish or bad-tempered: coll.: C. 19-20.
To do this, lit., is supposed to be unfortunate.
Scott, 1824; A. S. M. Hutchinson, 1921. (Apperson.)

wrong side of the hedge, be or fall on. To fall from a coach; coll.: ca. 1800-80. Ware.

wrong un (or 'un). A 'pulled' horse: racing s. (1889, The Sporting Times, June 29) >, by 1910, (low) coll.—2. Hence, a welsher or a whore, a base coin or a spurious note, etc. (from ca. 1890: a, >, ca. 1910, (low) coll.—3. (Perhaps suggested by 1.) A horse that has raced at a meeting unrecognised by the Jockey Club: racing s. (— 1890): by 1920, racing coll.—4. The wrong sort of ball to hit: cricketers' s. (1897) >, by 1920, their coll. Lewis, wrong with, get in. See get in wrong with.

wrong with? what's. What's the objection to ?; why not have ?; coll.: from early 1920's.
Ronald Knox, 1925, 'I want to know what's wrong with a game of bridge ?', O.E.D.


X

X or x. 'The sign of cheancy, or Cross, which see,' Bee, 1823. Cf. X division, q.v.—2. See p.s., 2.
-x for -xerd, esp. in fix' and mix': coll.: C. 19-20.
Wheatex mix fruit pudding, an Express Dairy menu label, Feb. 4, 1936.—2. Also occurs for zif in (esp. Cokney) illeterate speech: since when? W. Pett Ridge, Minor Dialogues, 1895, ' 'Eaven bless our 'Appy 'One ' ain't so dusty for a tex'.'
X or letter X, take (a person). To secure (a violent prisoner), thus: 'Two constables firmly grasp the collar with one hand, the captive's arm being drawn down and the hand forced backwards over the holding arms; in this position the prisoner's arm is more easily broken than extricated,' F. & H.: o. and police s.: from early 1860's. H., 3rd ed.

X division. thieves, swindlers; criminals in gen.: o. (—1887). Baumann. Ex X, q.v.

wrought shirt. See historical shirt.
wrouther. In the three-card trick, he who plays the cards, the trickster being a 'broadpitcher': o.: from (? late) 1860's. B. Honyng, 1870, in his Out of the Ring, includes these terms in 'The Welshers' Vocabulary'. O.E.D. † because wrought-on: cf. wrought-up, excited.

wru. A rottor; a humbug: Public-Schools': from ca. 1875. Perhaps ex dial. (wo)roz, n., and v., (to) decay, rot.

wry mouth and a pissen (C. 19 pissed), pair of breeches, a. A hanging: ca. 1780-1850: either o. or low s. Grose, 1st ed. Cf.: wry-neck day. A day on which a hanging occurs or is scheduled to occur: o.: ca. 1780-1860.
Grose, 2nd ed. Prob. suggested by preceding.

Wuggins. See Waggins.
wump; occ. whump. A hard blow: coll. (—1931). Lyell. Perhaps a blend of whack (or wallops) + clump (or thump).
wur. Was: sol. (—1887). Baumann. More gen. were.
wurl; yurse. Defective pronunciation of well and yes, esp. in emphasis or reflection: C. 19-20. As in Ernest Raymond, The Jesting Army, 1930, 'Many casualties in the battalion? Wurl, no— not too bad.' See also yurse.
wushup, your (etc.). Your worship: C. 19-20: orig. and gen. sol., but, as often are wuss and wuufer, it may also be jocular s. Also your wush-up.
wusser. A canal boat: bargoes' (—1904).
* w. water perverted.—2. Adj., adv.; see worser.
wusserer. See worserer.
wuzzy is an occ. variant of woosy, q.v.
*wyn. See win, n. 1.—Wypers. See Wipers.


xawfully. Thanks awfully: slovenly coll.: from ca. 1919.
D. Mackail, The Young Livingstones, 1930, ' ''Good-bye, old thing. Good luck, and all that.' "Xawfully."' Xmas. Christmas: low coll. when uttered as Exmas, coll. when (from ca. 1790) written; earlier Xi(e)mas was not pron. The X = Christ (cf. scholarly abbr. Xianity), or rather the Ch thereof—Gr. X (khi).

xonalite. Incorrect for sonolite: from late 1860's. O.E.D.

x's; more gen. as pronounced—exx. Expenses: 1894, Louise J. Milin (O.E.D.). Perhaps orig. theatrical, as the earliest quotation suggests.

—2. (Often X-e.) 'Atmospheric or static interference with wireless': wireless-operator's, esp. on ships: from ca. 1926. Bowen.

X's Hall. The Sessions House, Clerkenwell: o.: mid-C. 19-20. Ware. Ex Hicks, a judge.
xymphoid. Incorrect for ziphoid: mid-C. 18-20. O.E.D.
[In y. F. & H. includes certain ineligibles; thus, S.E.:—Yahoo (or y.).] Yankee (or Y.), excellent; unrecorded yap's; yard, yards (Durham and Harrow Schools), and under one's yard; Yarnouth coat; yea-and-nay; year-(a)'s mind; unlimited yellow's; Yiddisher; yokel; yooch; York and young thing; youngfeller; youth-fellah;

... (Correctly yakka.)

To work; at: Australian 'pidgin':
Whence a., hard tool; idem: C. 20. C. J. Dennis.
yaknak is incorrect for yahmak — mid-C. 19–20.
So is yaknack. O.E.D.
yallah! Go on!: get on with it!: Eastern Fronts' military coll.: G.W. Ex Arabic. (F. & Gibbons.)
yam. Food: nautical (—1904). F. & H. Presumably ex: yam, v.i. and t. To eat; orig., to eat heartily:
low and nautical: from ca. 1720. A New Canting Dict., 1725; William Hickoy (1749–1809), in his Memoirs, 'Saying in the true Creolian language and style,' "No! I can eat 'em all.' W. H., 3rd ed., 'This word is used by the lowest class all over the world.' It is a native West African word (Seneagalese yam, to eat): W., after that extraordinary scholar, James Platt. The radical exists also in Malay.
yam-stock (or Y.-S.). An inhabitant of St Helena:
yank. Yankee (n. and adj.): coll.: 1778 (O.E.D.: in orig. U.S. sense, C. 19–20 for "(an) American"; the adj. Yankee (of the U.S.), app. not before the 1830's, as in Hurrell Froude. Abbr.: Yankee: occ. Yankee(e)y. Orig. (early 1780's) among the English, this nickname for any inhabitant of the United States (other and earlier senses being U.S.), was coll.: in C. 20, it is S.E. The theories as to its etymology are numerous (see, e.g., O.E.D. and W.'s Romance of Words): the two most convincing, —and the latter (blessed by both W. and the O.E.D.) seems the better,—are that Yankee derives ex U.S. Indian Yangees for English, and that it derives ex Jankee, Dutch for "little John" (Jan), this Jankee being a pejorative nickname for a New England man, esp. for a New England sailor.

Yank main tack, lay (a person) along like a. (Gen. as a threat.) To knock a man down: naval: late C. 19–early 20. Ware. A Yankee main tack is a direct line.

Yankee heaven; Yankee paradise. Paris: coll.: resp. ca. 1850–80; from 1880. Ware. Of († ex) the saying, 'All good Americans go to Paris when they die.'

Yankeries, the. The American and American-Indian display at Earl's Court Gardens: Londoners': 1832; soon †. Ware. On Coincidences and Fisheries.

Yankees. American stocks, shares, securities: Stock Exchange: from mid-1880's. E. C. Bentley,
...

-yearer. A pupil in his first, second, etc., year: Publio School coll.: late C. 19-20. Alec Waugh, The Bulliols, 1934, 'He was a third yearer at a public school.'

yearn. See yarn, v., 2.

yegg. A travelling burglar or safe-breaker: U.S. o., anglicised by 1852, as s., among cinema 'fans' (Irvin; C.O.D., 1934 (Sup.). Possibly ex Scottish and English dial. yark or yek, to break.


yeknod. See yerknod.

yell-play. A farcical piece ... where the laughter required to be uncessing': theatrical coll. (— 1909).War.

yeller. Yellow: illiterate (i.e. sol.) and dial.: C. 19-20. Cf. yellow, q.v.


yellow. A variant of yellow-hammer, 2, q.v.: from ca. 1870; ob. H., 5th ed.—2. See yellows.


yellow, adj. Cowardly, though perhaps not app. so: coll.: from ca. 1910. Orig. U.S.; prob. ex yellow as applied to a writer on the yellow press (1898).—2. A New Canting Dict., 1725, asserts that yellow, jealous, was orig. a c. term: this is prob. correct.

yellow, baby's. (Mainly infantine) excrement: nursery coll.: C. 19-20.


yellow-back (a cheap, sensational novel) is, by some, classified as s. or coll., but prob. it has always been S.E.

Yellow-Banded Robbers, the. The 13th Foot Regiment, later the Prince Albert's Somersetshire Light Infantry: military: C. 19-20; ob.


Yellow Cat, the. The Golden Lion, 'a noted brothel in the Strand, so named by the ladies who frequented it': Grose, 1st ed.: low: ca. 1760-80. Yellow fancy. A yellow silk handkerchief, white, spotted: pugilistic: from the 1830's. Brandon.

yellow fever. Gold-fever: Australian jocular coll.: 1861, M'Combie, Australian Sketches.—2. Drunkenness: Greenwich Hospital (— 1867); ob.

YEARS'D, TIES 970.
YES, WE HAVE NO BANANAS!

You bet.

Yes, we have no bananas! A c.p. of ca. 1924–28. Collinson. Ex the song.


Yes. See yer. Mostly Anglo-Irish, as in Maria Edgeworth.

Yif, Youndrel; (affectionately) scamp; often yin's eath, lit. son of a dog; among soldiers in Egypt: C. 20. B. & P. Ex Arabic.

Yid; loosely Yit (ob.). A Jew: orig. (—1874) and properly, a Jew speaking Yiddish. H., 5th ed., both forms. Also Yidisher, recorded by Barreire & Leland, 1890; coll. Yiddish + agential-er.

[Yiddish is technically a kind of German, not of Hebrew; but it is often, rather loosely, used as = ordinary spoken Hebrew.] Yiddisher. See Yid.


Yit. See Yid.

You, Tommy. ‘Exclamation of condemnation by the small actor [i.e. in minor theatres]. Amongst the lower classes it is a declaration of admiration addressed to the softer sex by the sterner,’ Ware, 1909. Perhaps this Tommy is related to that in hell and Tommy (see Tommy, hell and).


2. Hence, a youth: from ca. 1900. ‘Pomes’ Marshall, ca. 1897, ‘And you bet that each gal, not to mention each yob, didn’t care how much oftish it cost ‘em per nob.—3 hence, a lout, a stupid fellow (rarely girl or woman): low (orig. East End): C. 20. F. & Gibbons. Perhaps influenced by:


Yolly. A post-chaise: ca. 1840–1900 at Winchester College. Ex yellow, a colour frequent in these vehicles: cf. ↑ yellow, yellow.

Youner. See younker.—yooman. See yuman.

York. ‘A look, or observation,’ Vaux: c. or low: ca. 1810–80. Ex:

* A. to stare, impertinently at: c. (—1812); ↑ by 1880. Vaux. Perhaps ex Yorkshire bite, 1.q.v.:—2. V.i. and t., to look (at), to examine: low: ca. 1810–50. Ibid.:—3. V.i. to rain: Bootham School: C. 20. Anon., Dict. of Bootham slang, 1925. York is apt to be wet.

York Street is concerned; there is Y.S. concerned. Someone is looking (hard): c. or low: ca. 1810–60. Vaux. Cf. york, n. and v.

Yorkshire share in the Great Northern Railway: Stock Exchange (—1895). A. J. Wilson, Stock Exchange Glossary. The line passes through York and is now the L.N.E.R.

Yorkshire1 orig. implied boorishness, but the coinotation of cunning, (business) sharpness, or trickery appears as early as 1650. Variations of the latter senses occur in certain of the ensuing phrases, all of which have, from coll., >, by late C. 19, S.E. (See also north, 1.)

Yorkshire, n. Sharp practice; cajolery: mid-C. 19–20: coll. (> S.E.) and dial.

Yorkshire, v.t. ‘To cheat, to take a person in, to prove too wide-awake for him’: from ca. 1870. Ex come (or put) Yorkshire on (or over) a person. F. & H.


Yorkshire estate. Money in possession, title in Spain’; esp. in when I come into my Yorkshire estates, when I have the means: mid-C. 19–20; ob. H., 2nd ed. See Yorkshire1 and of. Yorkshire compliment.


Yorkshire Hunters, the. ‘A regiment formed by the gentlemen of Yorkshire during the Civil War’: military nickname: 1640’s. F. & H. Yorkshire, a famous hunting county.

Yorkshire on (upon), put, C. 18–20; some Yorkshire on (C. 19–20), more gen. c. Y. over, app. first recorded in Grose, 1785. To cheat, dupe, overreach, be too wide-awake for (a person). The antedote is to be Yorkshire too, which phrase, however, is rare outside of dial. (E.I.D.), though Wolsot has it in 1796 (Apperson). See Yorkshire1 and of. Yorkshire, v.


Yorkshire too, be. See Yorkshire upon, put.—

Yorkshire upon ... See Yorkshire on ...


You are another!; you’re another! You also are a liar, thief, rogue, fool, or what you will: a c.p. retort (coll., not a.s.): C. 16 (? earlier)–20. Udall; Fielding; Dickens, ‘Sir,’ said Mr Tuppen, ‘you’re a fellow.’ ‘Sir,’ said Mr Pickwick, ‘you’re another’; Sir W. Harcourt, 1886; Little urchins in the street argument. They say ‘You’re another!’ A variant, late C. 19–20 (? ob.), is so’s your father! In mid-C. 19–20, the orig. phrase is almost meaningless, though slightly contemptuous. F. & H.

You are (or you’re) slower than the second coming of Christ! A drill-sergeant’s c.p.: C. 20. B. & F. you bet. See bet and bictcher.
the Clifton Zoo much too contemptuously." The zoö has been telescoped to one syllable.—2. The Montreal immigration hall for those immigrants who wish to return to their own country; Canadian: from ca. 1929. Ex the variety of dress and language.


zoom. An abrupt hauling-up and forcing-up of an aeroplane when it is flying level; aviation. Also, and slightly earlier, a v.i. Both, 1917: The Daily Mail, July 19 (O.E.D.). Ex zoom, 'to make a continuous low-pitched humming or buzzing sound' (O.E.D.). See also B. & P.

zouave, play the. To show off, to swagger: not very gen. military coll. : 1915; ob. F. & Gibbons. Ex the dashing zouaves' fiercely military bearing.

zouch. A churl; an unmannerly fellow: C. 18. Street Robberies Considered, 1728. Perhaps ex ouch, the exclamation.

'Zounds! An oath or asseveration: late C. 16–20: coll. until C. 19, then archaic S. E. except when dial. Euphemistic abbr. by God's wounds. Cf. Zooks! Zulu Express, the. A certain Great Western afternoon express train: railwaymen's at the time of the Zulu War (1879): Ware. Prob. because it ran to 'Zummerzett'.

zylo- is incorrect for terms in zylo-: C. 19–20. O. E. D.