

used as a euphemism for "bloody." Of the same class are "darn it!" "by golly!" "great Scott!"

"Oh, that's b— rot!" quoth the disdainful Chiderdoss, who by way of a change had both backed and tipped the right 'un. "Who interfered with him?"

"Why, the *bally* winner, of course! Didn't he get in front of him?"

And then sundry sad and silent men faded away into the Rainbow, and got in front of several drinks.—*Sporting Times*.

**Ballyrag** (Oxford University), a free fight in jest. This is an old word that has been in use at least a hundred years—spelt also bullarag. The conclusion of a big "wine" (*vide WINE*), is often a whole-sale *ballyrag* or *mêlée*, always carried on in good temper (personal violence in a quarrel is practically unknown at Oxford). To *ballyrag* a man is to mob him and play practical jokes upon him, to hustle him. To *ballyrag* a man's rooms is to turn them upside down, to make "hay" of them.

Dear Muriel,—I always was rather a toff; but when I tell you that this blooming house has become *perfectly beastly*, I know you will pity the poor old bouncer. I have been rotting all day in the library, but even *ballyragging* has lost its charm. A sweep or a smug would be a relief, but there is not so much as a plunger to be seen nor a mug to speak to. Under these circumstances I miss you most awfully, and I write to say that if you would come to my dizgings for a little while it would be perfectly rippin.—Your affectionate uncle,  
G. E. C.

P.S.—That's where the j-ke comes in.—*The Culture of the Misses: The St. James's Gazette*.

(Common), to bully, to make a kick up or riot.

None of your flaring up, and *ballyragging* the people about.—*Edmund Yates: The Rock Ahead*.

The word is a corruption of *bullyrag*, to threaten, bully, hustle. "Bully" is a provincialism for a riot. It may be noted that in Yiddish *balhe* and *rag* mean a riot, a fight, and rage. *Bahle-rag* would, in fact, be a roaring row.

**Balm** (old), a falsehood.

**Balmy** (common), sleepy, from *balmy* (lit., soothing) sleep; weak-minded, dull, easily imposed upon, mad.

The people in our alley call me Salvation Sally,  
Since I have been converted, but I try to bear the load,  
They say I must be *balmy* to go and join the Army,  
That leads you to salvation in the White-chapel Road.

—*Salvation Sally*.

The expression is much in favour with thieves.

I had hardly got outside when he came out like a man *balmy*.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

Among convicts to "put on the *balmy* stick" is to feign insanity.

There was always a number putting on the "*balmy* stick"—or, in plain terms, feigning insanity. Nobody in prison believes in brain disease. Every lunatic is accused of "putting it on," and is punished for it. There are always a dozen or so in the *balmy* ward.—*Evening News*.