

stuck formerly on the sides of the bedstead to keep the clothes from slipping on either side, and which might be wielded as a stick or staff when a brute thought it necessary to chastise his better half. *Nous avons changé tout cela*, and now the improvised staff has been superseded by the poker, varied by an application of hob-nailed boots.

Bed-rock (American), to get on the *bed rock*, not to be able to go lower or to abate. Used in this instance: "What is the price of that?" "Six dollars." "Is it *bed-rock* price?" i.e., is it your lowest price. *Bed-rock* pieces, the last coins in one's almost empty purse; probably a miner's phrase.

Bee (American), a meeting, generally a merrymaking, but with a practical or beneficial object. Thus there are apple-bees for paring apples, husking-bees for husking, raising-bees to "raise" houses, and spelling-bees. Probably an abbreviation of the old word "bidding," or the Dutch *bied*, influenced by *bee* as a type of industry. "Bidding," pronounced *bec-ding*, meant an invitation a century ago.

Harry cum paary, when will you marry?
When apples and pears are ripe.
I'll come to your wedding without any bidding,
And stay with the bride all the night.
—*Mother Goose's Nursery Rhymes for Boys and Girls* (Standard Edition).

A "chopping-*bee*" is thus described in a western magazine: "Once a clearing was attempted on a large scale. It was for the site of a public institution. The inhabitants within a radius of ten miles were invited to a "chopping-*bee*." Each one brought his axe and day's provisions. No spirituous liquors were allowed. The work was ordered by an elected marshal of the day. The front rank of trees, ten rods in width, were chopped partially through on either side, then the succeeding ones in like manner for a space of perhaps twenty rods. Then the last rank was felled simultaneously by the united force, when, with a crash increasing to a thundering volume, it bore down on the next, till all lay prostrate. And thus for three days did this volunteer war against the forest progress."

Bee-bee (Anglo-Indian), Hindu, from the Persian *bi bi*, once applied to English ladies, who are now called Mem Sahib. It is still often used by native servants in addressing European maid-servants. — *Anglo-Indian Glossary*.

A Hindu concubine.

But the society of the station does interfere in such cases, and though it does not mind *bee-bees* or their friends, it rightly taboo's him who entertains their white rivals. — *William Howard Russell: My Diary in India in the Year 1858-59*.

(Gypsy), an aunt. Sometimes applied respectfully and