

china, plate, pictures, horses or houses. . . . They do not interfere with the sale, as is sometimes supposed. They let the general public bid as much as they please, and then is the opportunity for them to display their judgment. Knowing what the article is worth in the trade—which, if the property is valuable, will fetch more than the general public will give—they can outbid the last public bidder, and secure the property to themselves. They may be a band of six, ten, or twenty individuals present, who, after numerous bargains are secured, betake themselves to their favourite 'public,' and there settle, in the most business manner possible, who is to become the ultimate possessor by a 'knock-out auction.' The article, say a picture, is put up at the purchased price by any one party, acting as auctioneer, and the original cost of, say ten pounds, may terminate by bidding up to twenty or thirty. The amount above the cost is placed in a bowl to form a fund to be equally divided amongst all present. . . . Property bought in this manner from an original public bid of a small amount, has often reached to a hundred pounds."

**Knock the spots off, to** (American). This was current in America as long ago as 1850. It means to surpass, confound, go backwards, beat.

After inviting their friends, they poleaxed the prize victims, cooked them as baked, boiled, and roast in their best style, and held a Jubilee banquet which *knocked spots off* anything of the kind ever held before.—*Modern Society*.

**Knock the stuffing, wadding, lining, filling, insides out, to** (American), to eviscerate, to empty, to knock daylight out of anybody.

**Knock, to** (popular), to make a great impression, to be irresistible.

Didn't he *knock* 'em! didn't he *knock* 'em!  
Awfully comical didn't he seem?

Didn't he *knock* 'em! didn't he *knock* 'em!  
Didn't he make the people scream?

—*Music Hall Song: Didn't he Knock 'em.*

"That *knocks* me," that is too much for me.

**Knofka** (theatrical), a prostitute; also "nofgur," which see.

**Knout** (public schools), a piece of wax on the end of a string, used as an instrument of chastisement by prefects on duty.

**Knowing blokes** (military). The term is applied in the army to individuals, found principally among the older soldiers, who appear to be continually suffering from chronic thirst, and who are constantly seeking to satisfy it at the expense of young soldiers.

The general in command . . . not unfrequently cautions the young soldiers particularly to "beware and not allow themselves to be influenced and led away by old soldiers with badges." . . . Numbers of these *knowing blokes*, as they are called,