

ence possibly to a baker's not always getting his *bake* safely out of the oven. More probably from the provincial English *bakes*, marbles of baked clay or porcelain.

Bakester (Winchester), one who bakes—that is, a sluggard, an idle fellow who is fond of lying down doing nothing. (Provincial), a cognomen for a baker.

Baking-leave (Winchester), permission to “bake”—that is, to sit in a study or “pigeon-hole.”

Baking-place (Winchester), a sort of couch or sofa, an important article of furniture for those who delight in *baking*, that is, doing nothing.

Bākro, bokro (gypsy), a sheep or lamb; *bakengro*, a shepherd.

Bāl (gypsy), a hair (Hindu, *had*). *Bālia*, *bāllor*, hairs; *bālnoi*, hairy.

Balaam-box (printing shops), used by compositors to designate the receptacle for silly paragraphs about monstrosities in art or nature; or old jokes and anecdotes kept in reserve to lengthen out pages or columns which might otherwise remain vacant. The phrase originated in the comparatively remote days when newspaper editors were sometimes at a loss to fill up the allotted space at their command. No such difficulty, however, confronts them in this age

of verbosity, when the “gift of the gab” is considered to be one of the proofs of statesmanship, and when short-hand writers supply the materials for filling and overfilling the newspapers, by full reports of the speeches of vestrymen, platform orators, members of Parliament, and worse perhaps than all, of windy barristers, doing their utmost in courts of law to make guilt look innocence, or *vice versa*, and otherwise “darkening counsel with vain words.” The disease that afflicts the printing-offices is no longer that of “atrophy,” but of flatulence in its worst and most persistent forms.

An essay for the *Edinburgh Review*, in the old unpolluted English language, would have been consigned by the editor to his *balaam*-basket. — *Hall: Modern English.*

Balaclava day (military), pay day, a survival of the Crimean war. The day on which men having got their pay took it down to Balaclava, the great base of supply, where purchases could best be made from sutlers who had their hut shops there.

Balance (American), the rest or remainder of anything. Bartlett says that it is “a mercantile word originally introduced into the ordinary language of life by the Southern people, but now improperly used throughout the United States to signify the re-