

**Cake** (American and provincial English), a man without much sense, or one wanting in ideas; not so much a fool as a mere nothing. A weaker form is expressed by saying, "He's a *cake* only half-baked." This expression is most frequently heard in Philadelphia.

"To take the *cake*," to surpass, excel, to be first in anything. This coincides oddly, though entirely accidentally, with a conjectured meaning of the origin of Pretzel (*q. v.*).

He's always up to doing folks,  
He's always on the wake;  
He's after profit when he jokes,  
On that "he takes the *cake*."  
—*Quercr Bits*.

**Cakey** (popular), soft, foolish, or empty-headed; from the provincial English "cake," a foolish fellow.

**Cakey-pannum-fencer** (street), a street pastry-cook.

**Calaboose** (American), from the Spanish *calabozo*, the common name for a watch-house or prison, especially in New Orleans.

I went on board de oder day,  
To hear wot de boatmen had to say,  
Den I let my passion loose,  
An' dey jammed me fast in de *calaboose*.  
—*Negro Song*.

**Calculate, to** (American). Although it cannot be denied that many people in New England often use the word *calculate* as a synonym for "guess," to

express every form of thought, such as "to esteem, suppose, believe, think, expect, intend," &c., this is far from being universally the case. Calculation sets forth a more deliberate action of the mind, and is more associated with thought. A Yankee will generally *calculate* the chances of anything, when he would not guess them. *Calc'late*, which is nothing but the result of rapid conversation, may be heard in England as in America.

**Calf** (common), an idiotic or stupid person; *calf*-headed, cowardly.

She had a girlish fancy for the good-looking young *calf* who had so signally disgraced himself. — *Hamilton Aidé: Morais and Mysteries*.

**Calf-clingers** (popular), explained by quotation.

^ Knee-breeches were just going out of fashion when I was a little boy, and *calf-clingers* (that is, trousers made to fit the leg as tight as a wor-ted stocking) were "coming in." — *J. Greenwood: The Little Raganuffins*.

**Calf's-head** (popular), a white-faced man with a large head.

**Calico** (common), weak, lean.

In such a place as that your *calico* body had need have a good fire to keep it warm. — *Nathanael Bailey: Colloquies of Erasmus, Translated*.

How a shrewd, down-east Yankee once questioned a simple Dutchman out of his well-fed steed, and left him instead a vile *calico*-mare in exchange. — *Salu: The Seven Sons of Mammon*.