

Cant (pugilistic), blow, a “*cant* on the chops,” a blow on the face. (Tramps), explained by quotation.

We broke one window because the house was good for a *cant*—that’s some food—bread or meat, and they wouldn’t give it us.—*Mayhew: London Labour and the London Poor.*

Also a gift, as a “*cant* of togs,” a gift of clothing. In these senses, from *cant*, to divide, as used by Jusser, p. 278. Hence *cant*, a sham.

(Thieves), to *cant* the cues, to explain a matter, to tell a story.

“But *cant* us the cues. What was the job?” “A pinch for an emperor’s slang. We touched his leather too, but it was very lathy.”—*On the Trail.*

Canteen (South African), a roadside tavern; natives often call all kinds of drink *canteen*.

Canteen medal (army), a good conduct stripe which is gained by absence from the defaulters’ book. The illusion implies that the bearer owes his stripe rather to a strong head than good resolution to keep away from the canteen.

Canticle (old slang), a parish clerk.

Can’t say National Intelligencer (American), equivalent to saying “he is drunk,” it being held that no one who is not sober can pronounce the name of this very old and respectable Washington newspaper. There is a

story in which the phrase originated—or which originated from it, to the effect that a father in Washington who had a dissipated son, always obliged him when he returned home at night to submit to this test. If he said *Nacial Intelligencer*, he was obliged to sleep in the hay-loft of the stable.

Canuck (American), a Canadian. The origin of this word appears to be unknown. The derivation from *Connaught*, an Irishman, is far-fetched and doubtful. It may be possibly the first syllable of *Canada*, with an Indian termination, but this is mere conjecture. *Uc* or *uq’* is a common Algenkin ending to nouns. It is probably an Indian word modified.

Canvasseens (nautical), sailors’ canvas trousers.

Canvas town (popular), the portion of Wimbledon Common occupied by the flags of the riflemen when encamped there—within the flags.

Cap (thieves), a false cover to a tossing coin. To *cap*, to assist as a confederate, especially of cardsharps. See **CAPPER** (Universities), to *cap* the quadrangle, to cross the area of the college, cap in hand, in reverence to the “fellows” who sometimes walk there.

Cape cod turkey (American), salt fish. In the same way a “Yarmouth capon” is a bloater.