

Beshermengro (gypsy), one who sits, a magistrate.

Bespeak-night (common), a night in theatrical performance set apart for the special benefit of some actor or actress—a benefit in modern phraseology.

Best (common), to *best* a man, to have the better of one in any way.

And this great party, the noble army of consumers, would cry out at any attempt to raise the price of the commodity for the benefit of the producers, whom, by a curious perversion of mind, they consider their natural enemies, to be *bested* at every possible opportunity.—*Evening News*.

To cheat.

When I went to the fence he *bested* me because I was drunk, and only gave me £8, 10s. for the lot.—*Horsley: Jottings from Jail*.

(Thieves), to give in *best*, to affect repentance.

If when in the magisterial presence he contorts his countenance in affected agony, it is merely because he perceives from his worship's tone that he wishes to agonise him, and is shrewd enough to know that to "give in *best*," as he would express it, is the way to get let off easy.—*J. Greenwood: The Seven Curses of London*.

Bester (popular), one who gets the better. Also a low betting cheat, a blackleg.

Best girl (American), the preferred one; a sweetheart.

"Did you ever hear," asked my *best girl*, as we drove along Delaware Avenue, past the elegant grounds of Jonathan Scoville, "why Mr. Scoville never built that costly residence he had planned?"—*Detroit Free Press*.

Besting (running), to get the better of any one by unfair means.

Besting the pistol (running), where a runner gets the best of the starter, and is away on his journey when the pistol goes off.

Bet a seed, to (American), to bet the smallest chip or counter, *i.e.*, stake, in the game of poker.—*M.S. Collection of Americanisms*, by C. Leland-Harrison.

Be there, to (common), to be in one's element, to be knowing at a thing.

I very soon began to preach and prate,
And with the sisters played some funny pranks,
I was so good at nobbling with the plate,
They soon made me captain of the ranks;
And often when our meetings were dispersed,
With sister Jane I'd offer up a prayer,
I'd such a jolly spree when she took me home to tea,
For I know what it is *to be there!*—*Song*.

Better than a dig in the eye with a blunt stick (common). The expression is used to denote a thing of little value.

Betting round (racing), laying fairly and equally against nearly all the horses in a race, so that no great risk can be run. Commonly called "getting round."

Betty (thieves), a skeleton key or picklock, termed also tivvil, twist, screw; all *Betty*, it is all up! past recovery.