

"Have you boys seen any Indians round?"

"No—they hadn't seen any."

"Nobody's been *joshing* you, I suppose?"

"Oh no! *Joshing* them! Not much."

—*F. Francis: Saddle and Moccasin.*

For some unknown reason a *josh* is supposed, like a David, to be always a sleepy person. On the New York Stock Exchange, says Medbury in "Men and Mysteries of Wall Street" (cited by Bartlett), if a member drops asleep, "*Josh! josh!*" comes roaring from a dozen lungs, and the broker is awakened by the cry. Thackeray seems to have associated *josh* with fatness and dulness in his *Josh Sedley*. Possibly the Chinese *Josh*, or Buddha, who is the incarnation of stoutness and tranquillity, suggested the word.

Joskin. Generally used to denote a dull rustic or greenhorn. It would seem, however, to be derived from the Yiddish or German-Hebrew *joschen*, to sleep, sleepy (*i.e.*, stupid), or from *joschen*, old; *cin joschenisch*, an old man.

Josser (popular), a synonym for a "prosser" or sponge. A simpleton, a "flat."

There is a *josser's* land,

Far, far away!

Where a drink they never stand,

Far, far away!

Termed Prosser's Avenue,

Where of Pros' you meet a few.

Hundreds could much better do,

Far, far away!

Far away! Far away!

—*Catnach Broadside.*

Probably from "joskin," a lout or countryman. (Australian popular), a priest, the Chinese temples being called "joss-houses" or "josses." Australian slang designated those who ministered in them *jossers*, and then extended this term it had created to mean ministers of any religion.

The reverend *josser* . . . kept his fist in Foley fashion hammering the pulpit.
—*Newspaper.*

Joss-house (pidgin), an idol temple. *Vide* Joss.

One tim Wang he makee tlavel,
Makee stop one night in *joss-house*,
He go sleepy, by'mby wake
In-i-side all-samee *joss-house*.

—*Wang the Snob.*

Long side he *joss-house*
Stop one old mandalin.

—*The Rebel Pig.*

Joss, josh (pidgin), God, a god, an idol. This, say the authors of "Hobson-Jobson," is a corruption of the Portuguese *Deos*, God, first taken up in the pidgin language of the Chinese ports from the Portuguese, and then adopted from that jargon by Europeans as if they had got hold of a Chinese word. "I know but little of their religion," wrote Bockyer in 1711, "more than that every man has a small *joss*, or god, in his own house."

He olo fáta (father) still as mouse,
He chin-chin *joss* top-sidee house,
Allo tim he make *joss*-pidgin,
Wat you fan-kwei cally 'ligion.

—*Mary Coc.*