

"When you have degraded yourself to the level of the lowest standard of humanity, and when you have insulted the unfortunate dramatist by every means which your paucity of brains and plenitude of lungs can devise, your *author baiting* is complete."

Av (*gypsy*), come; *avakdi*, come here. Full form *me avava*, I come. "If tute'll *av akai mandy'll del tute a horra*"—"If you'll come here, I'll give you a penny."

Av my little Romany chel,
Av along with mansar!
Av my little Romany chel,
Koshto si for mangue.

—*Borrow.*

Avails, profits or advantages, abbreviated into *avails*, is the gratuities given by visitors or guests in great houses to servants for civilities, attentions, or services rendered.

Avast (nautical), a sailor's phrase for stop, cease, stay. According to Webster a corruption of the Dutch *houd vast*, hold fast.

Some etymologists connect it with the old cant term "bynge a waste." Others ascribe its origin to the Italian *basta*, enough. This derivation seems plausible, from the circumstance that French workmen use *basta* with the same signification as English tars.

Avast heaving a minute, Tom, and we'll light our pipes and gather round and spin cuff; what do you say, lad?—*Rare Bits.*

"No satisfactory explanation of this term, which occurs

in the oldest English canting," says C. G. Leland, "has ever been offered." In gypsy, *vast* or *vast* (Hindu, *hasta* or *hast*) means a hand, and, as in English, it is intimately connected with using the hands or being ready. *Chiv a vast adoi!* means exactly in Romany, "put a hand there!" "be alert!" It is equivalent to "lend a hand!" It will be readily understood that the injunction to lend a hand might easily become a synonym for "attend there!" "observe!" or "look out!" It is to be remarked that in modern English, gypsy *hatch a wongish!* means "stop a bit!" or, literally, "stop a thumb!" *Wongish* is a corrupted form of *angustrin*, a finger or thumb, and it seems to be a synonym for a bit or small piece, because a digit forms a smaller portion of the hand. "I'll not bate a finger's breadth of it." *Vast*, meaning a hand, appears to denote a greater extent or quantity, *e.g.*, "a hand's breadth better," and is sometimes confused with *vast*, meaning a great deal. An old Yorkshire song says—

"But Tom got the best of this bargain
avast,
And came off wi' a Yorkshireman's
triumph at last."

Wright gives *vast* as meaning a waste or deserted space. In the song the actual meaning is that the victor beat his antagonist not *vastly* but by a little, or "by a hand," *i.e.*, "barely,"