

# DIALECT NOTES

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VOLUME I



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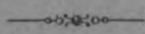
# DIALECT NOTES.

## PART VIII.

Published by the American Dialect Society.

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# DIALECT NOTES.

## PART VIII.



### IN GENERAL.

THE increase of public interest which followed the 1894 circular and the newspaper work, as stated in the Secretary's report for 1894 (p. 402), has been fully maintained. Our membership is now 258. Much material has been sent in, and the latest received has generally been better selected and better arranged than earlier contributions. The Secretary has spent on an average something like an hour a day in answering various communications. Many have asked for more definite instructions for collecting and sending material, and the Executive Committee have decided to issue a circular to meet this demand, which is reprinted herewith, and will be sent to all members, in the same way as the 1894 circular, for distribution. It is particularly desired that any members who can bring the matter to the notice of the press shall make efforts to have the circular, or parts of it, widely reprinted and circulated in that way. Our work has a good deal of interest for the newspaper reader, and the editors of almost any paper will give us space if the matter is properly presented to them. For instance, we received through a clipping bureau more than fifty notices or articles in consequence of the meeting in New York mentioned below. We are just now at a point where a large increase in membership is possible, if our members will bear the matter in mind and proselyte vigorously. Such an increase would place money enough at our disposal to pay for the clerical work necessary to keep our material in good shape, and to branch out somewhat, for instance, in the way of sending circulars like Professor Hempl's. There is a great deal of work in sending circulars, tabulating results, etc., which any intelligent typewriter or library hand can do, under proper supervision, just as well as a college professor whose time is much more valuable. The money spent

## TENNESSEE MOUNTAINS.

This collection contains words and usages from the mountains of Tennessee and the adjoining regions of Kentucky and North Carolina. Nearly all of it comes from Rev. H. A. Edson, who spent a year on Roan Mountain, near the line between North Carolina and Tennessee. A considerable collection by Miss Edith M. Fairchild, of Berea, Ky., has been incorporated with his, and a few scraps have been added from other sources. The two principal collections, made independently, agree almost without exception on each word which appears in both.

Professor Fruit's collection in Part II shows much similarity of usage to this neighboring dialect, and in fact some things sent by Mr. Edson had already appeared in that collection. Others are at work in this region, and no doubt we shall have much more interesting material from them.

**alm**: intend. "She *aims* to go to-morrer."

**ambuscades**: disagreements. "Him an' me had several little *ambuscades*."

**anent**: opposite. "It was *anent* two houses."

**antic**. clown, joker. "Ab Deel's a *natchul* (natural) *antic*."

**apast**: beyond. "I don't put that shootin' any *apast* him." [Cf. "apass," vb. Cent. Dict.]

**appearanced** (part. adj. from *appearance*). "She is very good *appearanced*."

**battle**: to beat.

**battling-stick**: with which clothes are beaten by the washwoman. [Cent. Dict., Murray.]

**beatenest**: for *strange* or *remarkable*. (229.) "Well, I wish I may never, ef you ain't the *beatenest* boy ever I see (saw)."

**blinky**: sour. "The vinegar is *blinky*." [Elsewhere apparently used only of things spoiled by souring, as milk. (p. 384.)]

**a body**: commonly used for *one*, *a person*; as "*a body* can't git along here." [Common elsewhere; cf. the Scotch song "Comin' thro' the Rye."]

**bold**: freely, plentifully. "The spring don't flow as *bold* as it did."

**brought on**: not home-made. "The clothes you have on I see are *brought on*."

**bussy**: sweetheart. "Ef you'd a ben thar you mout (might) a got a *bussy*."

**cappin'**: hulling. "Hit's mighty slow, pickin' an' *cappin'* berries."

**chaw**: hold, attachment. Of a flirt: "She's tryin' to git a *chaw* on a feller."

**clamber** (verb trans.). "*Clambering* the mountains." Cf. Shak. *Cor.* II, 1; *Rasselas*. [See Murray for other citations.]

**clatterments**: belongings, accoutrements. "Sam, what did you do with all the *clatterments* that belong to the mowin' scythes and the harness?"

**clinkers**: insects. "The *clinkers* are mighty thick in this yere cabin."

**coast**: region. By a mountaineer: "I live on yon *coast*."

**come by**: visit. "Come *by* and stay to supper." [See p. 385 s.v. *by*.]

**come on**: for *do*. (Most common salutation.) "How do you *come on*?"

**come through**: to be converted. "Here's a mourner just *come through*, an' wants to give his experience before the church."

**confidential** (adj.): trusty. "Oh, that mule won't hurt you. He's a *confidential* mule." — (adv.) = honestly, well. "They will do your work *confidential* and right."

**corn-shucking**: corn-husking. (The latter I did not hear once among the mountains. — H. A. E.)

**crave the benediction**: *pronounce* the benediction. "Brother Johnson, will you *crave* the benediction."

**cuckold**: "She *cuckold* 'em" — of an unscrupulous but pretty woman, who made fools of neighbors' husbands.

**devilng**: bothering. "Johnny, quit *devilng* the cat."

**disremember**: do not remember. (58.) "I *disremember* to have heard any one call."

**don't guess**: do not think. "Don't *guess* I will go out to-day."

**dreggy**: turbid. "The water's *dreggy*."

**drugs**: *sequelae*, dregs. "The old woman has the rheumatiz; I reckon hit's the *drugs* of the fever."

**eats**: tastes. Of woodchuck: "It *eats* like bar (bear)."

**expose**: suppose. "I *expose* it's about a mile."

**favorites**: friends. "Me an' Abernathy is great *favorites*."

**favors**: resembles. "It *favors* awfully a wild-cat hide" (of the drum of a banjo).

**fist**: a small dog.

**fisty**: low, mean. "I'm not so *fisty* as that." (H. A. E.) = cross. "That cow is *fisty*." (E. M. F.) (64.) [See etymology in Cent. Dict., s.v. *fise-dog*, etc. Also De Vere.]

**fitified**: subject to fits. "He's very *fitified*."

**folkse**: folks, people.

**forrard**: early. "I've got some *forrard* peaches." [N. E. in sense of *ahead of season*.]

**frazzled out**: tired out.

**frog-stools**: toad-stools.

**funeralizing**: conducting a funeral service for. "The bereaved parents whom we are *funeralizing* to-day." [Bartlett and De Vere give the impression that only the deceased is "funeralized."]

**furriners**: persons not living in the vicinity.

**gawmed up**: covered with litter. "They're gitting the floor *gawmed up*." [In the dictionaries generally with somewhat different meaning.]

**givey**: unsteady. "That table's *givey*."

**glut**: wedge. (In common use.)

**a good few**: many.

**gum**: bee-hive. "Folks is goin' into church to-day like bees into a *gum*." [See Bartlett, *bee-gum*.]

**hang up**: quit work. A mower, when rain was coming on: "I reckon we'll have to *hang up* for all day."

**hant**: ghost. (65.) "There is a *hant* in the mill."

**hardness**: ill feeling. "There's a right smart of *hardness* between them two boys."

**head** (adj.): best, chief. "That's the *head* trick I ever see."

**heap sight**: good deal or much. "I'd a *heap sight* rather stay than go."

**hit**: set fruit. "The peach trees didn't *hit* this year"—a late frost destroying the fruit.

**holler**: hollow, inside cavity. "I 'low it struck the *holler*." (Of a deep cut.)

**house**: room. This grew up from the custom of having houses of one room, or two connected by a porch, each of which rooms was called a *house*.

**Howdy!** The universal substitute for "How do you do?"

**humans**: people. (Note the very frequent use.) "*Humans* aint got no business up this yere creek." ["American."—Bartlett. "Frequent in Chapman's Homer."—Cent. Dict.]

**ill**: cross. "It's an *ill* creature" (of the woodchuck). "Them's *ill* bees." "The cow is *ill* when she is pestered." [Cf. the proverb "It's an ill wind blows nobody any good."]

**Júberous**: timid. "He was *juberous* about crossing the stream." [A book in Georgia dialect, *Major Jones' Courtship* (1843), has the form *jubous*.—C. H. G. (382, 390.)]

**knack**: familiarity, habit of staying near. "Ef them pigs gits a *knack* 'round the house, we'll hev to git shet of 'em."

**lasty**: enduring. "They's the *lastiest* blossoms in the gyarden."

**layin'**: lying in ambush. "He's a *layin'* to kill him."

**let go**: say. "The road is back yander, *let go* about a mile."

**the lêver** is the common expression at Roan Mountain for *hand-car*.

**little bit**: at all. "I don't care a *little bit*."

**long sweetning**: molasses. (In distinction from *sweetning*, q.v. below.) "Will you have some *long sweetning* from this jug?"

**love**: like. "I *love* it splendid." "Would you *love* to buy some eggs?"

**'low**: for *presume*. (68, 71, 234.) "I 'low the crops won't be good this year."

**A lumpin'** bargain: including the whole business.

**main**: very. "I seen a *main* big rabbit to-day." "Hit's the *main* biggest rabbit ever I see."

**make a beginning**: ask the blessing. "Brother Morin, will you *make a beginning*?"

**make-do**: make-shift. "These 'ere *make-dos* are no 'count."

**manful**: vigorous(ly). "The engineer'd whistle *manful* ef he'd see us on the track."

**meet up with**: meet. "I *met up with* him a while back." "I never *met up with* a kinder hearted man."

**misery**: pain. [Common elsewhere in South and West. De Vere and Bartlett.] "I've got a *misery* in my back." Of a man suffering with scrofula: "It takes a heap o' *misery* to git the bones out of your laig (leg)."

**molasses** is usually treated as plural. "They's all gone" — the molasses. "We've only got a few" — molasses. [De Vere gives this as "Western."]

**name**: mention. "If you see him, *name* it to him."

**ninfidel**: infidel. "A *ninfidel* is worse than a hoss thief."

**nôrâte**: advertise. "We will *norate* the preaching" (i.e. announce the services to be held).

**old Christmas**: January 6th. (The day is remembered by those who never heard of Twelfth Night or Epiphany.)

**old man**: invariably and respectfully used for *husband*. "My *old man* is plowing."

**old woman**: wife, in same way as **old man** above.

**on**: for *of* or *from*. "I won't take it *on* him." "To-morrow's *on* a Saturday."

**one** seems to be superfluous or else 'or the other' is omitted. "I will see you or send word, *one*."

**outen**: (1) out. "I can't get the sliver *outen*." (2) without. "I can't go *outen* my sunbunnit."

**owing**: lacking (in reckoning time). "Hit's *owin'* fifteen minutes to five."

**pack**: to carry. "I have to *pack* the corn to mill. ["Western," Bartlett.]

**patien'** (v.): content. "I never could *patien'* myself to keep pets."

**pedy**: spotted. "A sort of *pedy* cow."

**piggin**: a wooden tub with a stave projecting above the rest. [Usual meaning given in the dictionaries; but some variations are reported from elsewhere, and comparisons are wanted.] "The *piggin* is full of water."

**plum**: (1) very, (2) excellent, (3) wholly. (1) "He ought to be here *plum* soon," (2) "Ef I hed your gun, I'd hev *plum* fun," (3) "I'm *plum* done out."

**poke**: bag. "He had a *poke* of peanuts."

**pone**: hard swelling. "He's got a *pone* in his side. I reckon ef it busts inside, he'll die right now."

**popular**: stylish. "It is too bad your clothes are spoiled, for you are going among right *popular* people."

**post-an-railin'**: a kind of fence. "Won't you light an' hitch to the *post-an-railin'*?" ["A kind of open wooden fence for the protection of young quickset hedges, consisting mainly of posts and rails." — Cent. Dict.]

**pukes**: nausea, attack of vomiting. "The baby has the *pukes*."

**put yourself level on a chair**: a hospitable invitation to be seated. "Right glad to see you, come in and *put yourself level on a chair*."

**powdering**: powder. "She has got *powdering* on her face."

**prong**: branch. "I come down the other *prong* of the creek."

**protracts**: protracted meetings. "Are you going to the *protract* to-night?"

**proud**: for *happy*. "She will be *proud* to have her tooth stop aching."

**quench the spirit**: resist the Holy Ghost. "They ain't got no religion where they don't shout—they *quench the spirit* till he don't come no more."

**rest your hat**: take off your hat. "Won't you come in and *rest your hat*?"

**right smart little bit**: considerable. "I got a *right smart little bit* of roughness in for the beastis."

**rock**: stone. "I got a *rock* in my eye." (*Grind-rock* = grind-stone.)

**roughness**: coarse fodder, hay, shucks, and the like, in contrast with grain. "The horses kin stay, but we've nothin' but *roughness* fur 'em."

**scope of land**: tract of land. "My brother has a big *scope* o' land."

**scoot**: slide.

**scribing**: writing.

**scrouge**: crowd. "Oh, we *scrouge* 'em up."

**set to**: to court. "Jim is going to *set to* his girl."

**shaller**: shallow. "She's started it too *shaller*"—of a tune pitched too high.

**shattered corn**: broken corn.

**get shet on**: get rid of. "I can't *get shet on* that dog."

**shore nuff**: certainly, without fail. "Are you going, *shore nuff*?"

**skillet**, defined as follows: "Is that a skillet?" "We call it a *fry-pan*." "What is a skillet, then?" "Why, a skillet is a *fry-pan with legs*."

**smoke wagon**: train. "Next time you come, perhaps the *smoke wagon* will bring you."

**smouch**: kiss.

**snack**: *bite* or *bit*. "Will you give me a *snack* of something to eat?"

**snack houses**: restaurants. "There's a right chance o' *snack houses* down to Bakervul (Bakerville)."

**some several**. "Are there many squirrels this season?" "Yes, there's *some several*."

**soon** (adj.): early. "We'll have a *soon* supper."

**sop**: gravy. "We like bread and *sop*."

**spraddle out**: sprawl. To a baby: "Crawl along and *spraddle out*."

**squander** (v. intrans.). "They jes *squandered* and lit out." (Cf. Introduction, *Rob Roy*, p. 11.)

**stepped back**: retreated. Of a soldier: "He never *stepped back* once, 'less the officers ordered it."

**study**: talk, discuss, consider. [Also reported from Md.] "I *studied* about her hair to my man when I got home."

**sunrise water**: water flowing from the east.

**sweetening**: sugar. "Will you have *sweetening* in your tea?"

**sweltersome**: sweltering.

**talkenest**: most talkative. "She is the *talkenest* woman I ever saw."

**talkin' to**: courting. "Judge Jackson's son has been *talkin' to* my daughter nigh on a year."

**this he(r)-way and that-a-way**: for *this way and that way*. [Familiar to the editors. Evidently from *this here* and *that there*.] "Ef the world's as big every way as she is *that-a-way*, she's a whopper."

**tolerable** (pron. always *toləbl*): rather. "It is a *tolerable* hot day."

**tooth-brush**: snuff-stick (used in "dipping").

**uses**: lives, makes his home. "That's whar the bar *uses*." "These chickens *uses* round the place."

**varmint**s: wild animals. "He lay out among the *varmint*s" — of one hiding from recruiting officers during the war.

**way yander**: very much, exceedingly. "Do you 'low ef we know'd all we know now, an' hed all the book-larnin' o' them folks on the hill, thet we'd be up with 'em?" "Yes, I do. I reckon if we know'd all we know now, an' hed all the book-larnin' them folks has, we'd be ahead of 'em *way yander*."

**weddlins**: the bride and groom, with the wedding party.

"**what fer of country** is it?" — a question to one returning from the Far West. (70.) [Of here may be simply *a*. The pronunciation is likely to be *hɔt fərə* in both cases; and in trying to pronounce carefully *hɔt fərəv* might be used through a misconception.]

**wreck** (v. intrans.). "The bed *wrecked*" — fell down in a heap. (Of a mishap in a mountaineer's cabin.) [Cf. Milton, *P. R.* II, 228.]

**you alls**: for *you*. "*You alls* come by and see us."

### Pronunciation.

Several general features of the pronunciation are indicated by the examples above. Present participles are in *n*, instead of *η*, as in other dialects. The front variety of *g* and *k* are used as in other parts of the South, giving the pronunciation represented by *kyah*, *gya(r)den*, etc. From some of the examples it would appear that *r* after vowels is, at least sometimes, pronounced. Short *e* is lengthened in many words like *leg*, *fresh*, etc. The most interesting thing (reported by both collectors as a special feature) is the use of a vowel in plurals and the third singular of verbs, giving such forms as *costes*, *vestes*, *postes*, *nestes*, etc. No examples were sent of this usage except after *t*.

Some other words reported individually are the following: —

**Afeard** (not strictly a case of pronunciation), **Babtlist**, **Bakerv!**<sup>1</sup> (= Baker-ville; so **Knoxvl**), **banjer** (banjo), **bed-kivers**, **chimley**, **contráry**, **currantses** (currants), **difficulty**, **ef** (if), **epitap**, **frail** (flail), **gñeral**, **git**, **hev**, **hótel**, **jes** (just), **Kerliny**, **mounting** (mountain), **onct**, **twiet**, **pianer**, **pore** (poor), **purty**, **quille** (coil), **settlemént**, **summons** (for *summonsed*), **summoned** (to court), **sunthin**, **thar**, **turcles** (turtles), **Ténnessee**, **whelts** (welts).

<sup>1</sup> **!** = syllabic *l*.

*Grammatical Forms, etc.*

Most of these are known elsewhere, but are given to show what is in this dialect, and to call out comparisons.

**ary** and **nary** = *any* and *none* (*e'er a* and *ne'er a*, according to Cent. Dict.). *Ary other* shows how completely the old sense has been lost.

**as**: for *than*. "I would rather see you **as** him."

**chee**, singular; **cheese**, plural.

**come**: for *came*, pret.

**fotch**: for *fetched*.

**growed**: for *grew*.

**haint** is used for *am not*, and *is not*, as well as for *have not*.

**heap o'** = many.

**hit** = *it*. Sometimes used with almost the force of a demonstrative; e.g. a native, on seeing a trolley car, points first to the car and then to the trolley, and asks, "Does *hit* run *hit*, or *hit* run *hit*?"

**help** (pron., generally *hōp*) = helped (68, 71, 234).

**must** = shall. (Invariably used for questions.)

**prize** = *pry*. (Very general.) [An interesting word. See the dictionaries.]

**scringe** = cringe.

**seed** = saw.

**slep** = slept.

**squez** = squeezed.

**swinge** = singe.

**swole** = swollen.

**taken** = took (pret. and p.p.; invariable use. — E. M. F.).

**them** = those.

**throwed** = thrown.

**went** = gone.

A few specimens of exclamations and the like, quoted by Mr. Edson, are added as specimens of the dialect.

"Law sakes! I wish I may never."

"I never seen nary 'thout that wasn't one."

"Where's that boy? He went off and never said dog."

"I'll be dad gummed if I tech that!"

"Gee buck! See all them bees drowned in the honey!"

"Daoust them oxen."

"Drat their hides!"

"Well, if it ain't the purtiest critter ever I seen!"

"You measure your miles with a coon's hide, the tail throwed in every time."

"Sickness is mighty interruptin'."

- “O! that did tickle me so good.”  
 “I’m the-fellow-that-got-cut’s brother.”  
 “We’ve ben havin’ a gosh wet spell.”  
 “Hit’s too-my-goodness cold!”  
 “Nealy’s ben cryin’ the tales to me” (telling tales).

NEW BRUNSWICK, NOVA SCOTIA, AND NEWFOUNDLAND.

This list contains words collected by Prof. W. M. Tweedie, of Sackville, N. B. He sent in a very long list, some of it very interesting as reports of usages which are attributed to other regions; but in pursuance of our plan to publish only new matter in this number, we have left the rest to be entered on our cards and published later along with other reports on the same words.

After Professor Tweedie’s list was in type, he sent us a copy of a casual publication issued at St. Johns, containing a collection of Newfoundland words made by Rev. William Pilot, a clergyman resident there. There is much good material in the collection, though in a rather chaotic condition, and we have taken the liberty to incorporate about 50 words from this list. Mr. W. A. Hervey has been kind enough to sift the matter in the article, and put it through the dictionaries.

**Abito, bito, aboldeau** (abidô): A word used in connection with the dikes of the Tantramar marshes in N. B. and of the Grand Pré in N. S. It means a sluice through a dike so arranged that the water can run out of the creek at low tide, but a valve automatically closes the passage when the tide is coming in. Of obscure origin. (See a letter by S. E. Dawson in *Montreal Star*, Aug. 9, 1889.) [Def. in *Cent. Dict.* is too general.]

**admiral**: applied to the oldest man of a settlement. [“The recognized chief commander of a mercantile fleet, as one of fishing vessels off Nfld.” — *Cent. Dict.*]

**auntsary**: a kind of catamaran turned up at both ends. [Variant of “Aunt Sarah.” Cf. “Aunt Sally,” the name given to an athletic game in vogue among the English country folk.]

**barber**: the vapor rising from the water on a frosty day.

**belly flounder**: *belly bumper*, etc., in coasting. (49, 60, 212, 214, 235, 340.)

**bet**: pret. of *beat*. (Sir Walter Scott used this form. See Lockhart’s *Life of Scott*, chap. 82.)

**billet**: wood cut up for burning. (Collective.) (Nfld.) [“Obs.” in Murray.]

**blindlers**: used for the whole bridle.