

Fire-ball, a meteor; a luminous globe darting through the atmosphere; also, a bag of canvas filled with gunpowder, sulphur, pitch, saltpetre, &c., to be thrown by the hand, or from mortars, to set fire to houses.

BALL, *n.* [Fr. *bal*; It. *ballo*; Sp. *bayle*, a dance; It. *ballare*, to dance, to shake; Gr. *βαλλω*, to toss or throw; or *παλλω*, to leap.] An entertainment of dancing; originally and peculiarly at the invitation and expense of an individual; but the word is used in America, for a dance at the expense of the attendants.

BALL, *v. t.* To form into a ball, as snow on horses' hoofs, or on the feet. We say the horse's *balls*, or the snow *balls*.

BALLAD, *n.* [It. *ballata*, a ball, a dance, a ballad; Fr. *ballade*, a song, and *baladin*, a dancer. See *Ball*.]

A song; originally, a solemn song of praise; but now a meaner kind of popular song.

BALLAD, *v. i.* To make or sing ballads.

BALLADER, *n.* A writer of ballads.

BALLAD-MAKER, *n.* A maker or composer of ballads.

BALLAD-MONGER, *n.* [See *Monger*.] A dealer in writing ballads.

BALLADRY, *n.* The subject or style of ballads.

BALLAD-SINGER, *n.* One whose employment is to sing ballads.

BALLAD-STYLE, *n.* The air or manner of a ballad.

BALLAD-TUNE, *n.* The tune of a ballad.

BALLAD-WRITER, *n.* A composer of ballads.

BALLARAG, *v. t.* To bully; to threaten.

[*Not in use.*] **BALLAST**, *n.* [Sax. *bat*, a boat, with *last*, a load; D. Ger. and Dan. *last*; W. *lurgh*; Arn. *last*, a load; *bat-last*, boat-load, corrupted into *ballast*; Russ. *ballast*; Fr. *lest*; Sp. *lastre*.]

1. Heavy matter, as stone, sand or iron, laid on the bottom of a ship or other vessel, to sink it in the water, to such a depth, as to enable it to carry sufficient sail, without oversetting.

Shingle ballast is ballast of coarse gravel.

2. *Figuratively*, that which is used to make a thing steady.

BALLAST, *v. t.* To place heavy substances on the bottom of a ship or vessel, to keep it from oversetting.

2. To keep any thing steady, by counterbalancing its force.

BALLASTED, *pp.* Furnished with ballast; kept steady by a counterpoising force.

BALLASTING, *pp.* Furnishing with ballast; keeping steady.

BALLASTING, *n.* Ballast; that which is used for ballast.

BALLATED, *a.* Sung in a ballad.

BALLATOON, *n.* A heavy luggage boat employed on the rivers about the Caspian Lake.

BALLATRY, *n.* A song; a jig.

BALLET, *n.* [Fr. *ballet*; It. *ballo*. See *Ball*, a dance.]

1. A kind of dance; an interlude; a comic dance, consisting of a series of several airs, with different movements, representing some subject or action.

2. A kind of dramatic poem, representing some fabulous action or subject, in which several persons appear and recite things under the name of some deity or personage.

In *heraldry*, ballets or balls, a bearing in coats of arms, denominated according to their color, bezants, plates, hurts, &c.

BALLIAGE, or more correctly *ballage*, *n.* [Fr. *baile*, a town.]

A small duty paid to the city of London by aliens, and even by denizens, for certain commodities exported by them.

BALLIARDS. [See *Billiards*.]

BALLISTER. [See *Balluster*.]

BALLISTIC, *a.* [L. *balista*, an engine to throw stones, or shoot darts, from Gr. *βαλλω*, to throw or shoot.]

Pertaining to the *balista*, or to the art of shooting darts, and other missile weapons, by means of an engine.

BALLISTICS, *n.* The science or art of throwing missile weapons, by the use of an engine. The *balista* was a machine resembling a cross-bow.

BALLOON, *n.* [Fr. *ballon*, a foot-ball; Sp. *balon*; It. *pallone*; W. *pelhen*, from *pel*, a ball. See *Ball*.]

1. In general, any spherical hollow body.

2. In *chemistry*, a round vessel with a short neck, to receive whatever is distilled; a glass receiver of a spherical form.

3. In *architecture*, a ball or globe, on the top of a pillar.

4. In *fireworks*, a ball of pasteboard, or kind of bomb, stuffed with combustibles, to be played off, when fired, either in the air, or in water, which, bursting like a bomb, exhibits sparks of fire like stars.

5. A game, somewhat resembling tennis, played in an open field, with a large ball of leather, inflated with wind.

6. A bag or hollow vessel, made of silk or other light material, and filled with hydrogen gas or heated air, so as to rise and float in the atmosphere; called for distinction, an air-balloon.

7. In *France*, a quantity of paper, containing 24 reams. [See *Bale*.]

8. In *France*, balloon, ballon or ballot, a quantity of glass plates; of white glass, 25 bundles of six plates each; of colored glass, 121-2 bundles of three plates each.

BALLOON, *n.* A state barge of Siam, made of a single piece of timber, very long, and managed with oars.

BALLOT, *n.* [Fr. *ballotte*; Sp. *balota*, a little ball. See *Ball*.]

1. A ball used in voting. Ballots are of different colors; those of one color give an affirmative; those of another, a negative.

2. A ticket or written vote, being given in lieu of a ballot, is now called by the same name.

3. The act of voting by balls or tickets.

BALLOT, *v. t.* To vote by ballot, that is, by putting little balls of different colors into a box, the greater number of one color or the other determining the result.

2. To vote by written papers or tickets.

BALLOTADE, *n.* [In the *menage*, a leap of a horse between two pillars, or upon a strait line, so that when his fore feet are in the air, he shows nothing but the shoes of his hind feet, without jerking out. In a *caprie*, the horse yanks out his hind legs. *Farrier's Dict.*]

BALLOTATION, *n.* A voting by ballot.

BALLOT-BOX, *n.* A box for receiving ballots.

BALM, *n. bim.* [Fr. *baume*, a contraction of *balsam*, which see.]

1. The sap or juice of trees or shrubs remarkably odoriferous or aromatic.

2. Any fragrant or valuable ointment.

3. Any thing which heals, or which soothes or mitigates pain.

4. In *botany*, the name of several plants, particularly of the genus *Melissa*. They are aromatic and used as corroborants.

Balm of Gilead. A plant of the genus *Amirys*. Its leaves yield, when bruised, a strong aromatic scent; and from this plant is obtained the *balm of Gilead* of the shops, or balsam of Mecca or of Syria. It has a yellowish or greenish color, a warm bitterish aromatic taste, and an acidulous fragrant smell. It is valued as an odoriferous unguent, and cosmetic, by the Turks, who possess the country of its growth, and hence it is adulterated for market.

BALM, *v. t.* To anoint with balm, or with any thing medicinal.

2. To soothe; to mitigate; to assuage.

BALMY, *a.* Having the qualities of balm; aromatic.

2. Producing balm; as the *balmy* tree.

3. Soothing; soft; mild; as *balmy* slumbers.

4. Fragrant; odoriferous; as *balmy* wines.

5. Mitigating; easing; assuaging; as *balmy* breath.

BALNEAL, *a.* [L. *balneum*.] Pertaining to a bath.

BALNEARY, *n.* [L. *balnearium*, from *balneum*. Syr. *balna*, bath.]

A bathing room.

BALNEATION, *n.* The act of bathing.

BALNEATORY, *a.* Belonging to a bath or stove.

BALSAM, *n.* [Gr. *βαλσαμον*; L. *balsamum*.]

An oily, aromatic, resinous substance, flowing spontaneously or by incision, from certain plants. A great variety of substances pass under this denomination. But in modern chemistry, the term is confined to such vegetable juices, as are liquid or spontaneously become concrete, and consist of a resinous substance, combined with benzoic acid, or capable of affording it by decoction or sublimation. The balsams are either liquid or solid; of the former, are the balm of Gilead and the balsams of copaliba,