

STAINING, *ppr.* Discoloring; spotting; tarnishing; dyeing.

STAINLESS, *a.* Free from stains or spots. *Sidney.*

2. Free from the reproach of guilt; free from sin. *Shak.*

STAIR, *n.* [*D. steiger*; *Sax. stager*; from *Sax. stigan*, *D. G. steigen*, *Goth. steigen*, to step, to go; *Dan. stiger*, to rise, to step up; *Sw. steg*, a step; *Ir. staighre*. See *Stage*.]

1. A step; a stone or a frame of boards or planks by which a person rises one step. A stair, to make the ascent easy, should not exceed six or seven inches in elevation. When the riser is eight, nine or ten inches in breadth, the ascent by stairs is laborious.

2. *Stairs*, in the plural, a series of steps by which persons ascend to a higher room in a building. [*Stair*, in this sense, is not in use.]

*Flight of stairs*, may signify the stairs which make the whole ascent of a story; or in winding stairs, the phrase may signify the stairs from the floor to a turn, or from one turn to another.

STAIRCASE, *n.* [*stair* and *case*.] The part of a building which contains the stairs. Staircases are straight or winding. The straight are called fliers, or direct fliers. Winding stairs, called spiral or cockle, are square, circular or elliptical.

To make a complete staircase, is a curious piece of architecture. *Wotton.*

STAKE, *n.* [*Sax. stac*; *D. staak*; *Sw. stake*; *Ir. slac*; *It. stecone*, a stake; *stecca*, a stick; *steccare*, to fence with stakes; *Sp. estaca*, a stake, a stick. This coincides with *stick*, noun and verb, with *stock*, *stage*, &c. The primary sense is to shoot, to thrust, hence to set or fix.]

1. A small piece of wood or timber, sharpened at one end and set in the ground, or prepared for setting, as a support to something. Thus *stakes* are used to support vines, to support fences, hedges and the like. A *stake* is not to be confounded with a *post*, which is a larger piece of timber.

2. A piece of long rough wood. A sharpen'd stake strong Dryas found. *Dryden.*

3. A palisade, or something resembling it. *Milton.*

4. The piece of timber to which a martyr is fastened when he is to be burnt. Hence, to *perish at the stake*, is to die a martyr, or to die in torment. Hence,

5. Figuratively, martyrdom. The *stake* was prepared for those who were convicted of heresy.

6. That which is pledged or wagered; that which is set, thrown down or laid, to abide the issue of a contest, to be gained by victory or lost by defeat.

7. The state of being laid or pledged as a wager. His honor is at stake.

8. A small anvil to straighten cold work, or to cut and punch upon. *Moxon.*

STAKE, *v. t.* To fasten, support or defend with stakes; as, to *stake* vines or plants.

2. To mark the limits by stakes; with out, as, to *stake out* land; to *stake out* a new road, or the ground for a canal.

3. To wager; to pledge; to put at hazard

upon the issue of competition, or upon a future contingency.

I'll stake yon lamb that near the fountain plays. *Pope.*

4. To point or sharpen stakes. [*Not used in America*.]

5. To pierce with a stake. *Spectator.*

STAKED, *pp.* Fastened or supported by stakes; set or marked with stakes; wagered; put at hazard.

STAKE-HEAD, *n.* In rope-making, a stake with wooden pins in the upper side to keep the strands apart.

STAKING, *ppr.* Supporting with stakes; marking with stakes; wagering; putting at hazard.

2. Sharpening; pointing.

STALACTIC, *a.* [*from stalactite*.] Per-

STALACTICAL, *a.* taining to stalactite; resembling an icicle. *Kirwan.*

STALACTIFORM, *a.* Like stalactite;

STALACTITIFORM, *a.* resembling an icicle. *Phillips.*

STALACTITE, *n.* [*Gr. σταλακτις, σταλακτις, from σταλαζω, to drop, from σταλαω, l. stillo.*]

A subvariety of carbonate of lime, usually in a conical or cylindrical form, pendent from the roofs and sides of caverns like an icicle; produced by the filtration of water containing calcareous particles, through fissures and pores of rocks. *Encyc. Cleaveland.*

STALACTITIC, *a.* In the form of stalactite, or pendent substances like icicles. *Kirwan.*

STALAGMITE, *n.* [*L. stalagmium*, a drop; *Gr. σταλαγμα, supra.*]

A deposit of earthy or calcareous matter, formed by drops on the floors of caverns. *Encyc. Woodward.*

STALAGMITIC, *a.* Having the form of stalagmite.

STALAGMITICALLY, *adv.* In the form or manner of stalagmite. *Buckland.*

STALDER, *n.* A wooden frame to set casks on. [*Not used in the U. States.*]

STALE, *a.* [I do not find this word in the other Teutonic dialects. It is probably from the root of *still*, *G. stellen*, to set, and equivalent to *stagnant*.]

1. Vapid or tasteless from age; having lost its life, spirit and flavor from being long kept; as *stale* beer.

2. Having lost the life or graces of youth; worn out; decayed; as a *stale* virgin. *Spectator.*

3. Worn out by use; trite; common; having lost its novelty and power of pleasing. as a *stale* remark.

STALE, *n.* [probably that which is set; *G. stellen*. See *Stall*.]

1. Something set or offered to view as an allurements to draw others to any place or purpose; a decoy; a stool-fowl.

Still as he went, he crafty *stales* did lay. *Spenser.*

A pretense of kindness is the universal *stale* to all base projects. *Gov. of the Tongue.*

[In this sense obsolete.]

2. A prostitute. *Obs.* *Shak.*

3. Old vapid beer. *Obs.*

4. A long handle; as the *stale* of a rake. [*Sax. stel, stcle*; *D. steel*; *G. stiel*.]

5. A word applied to the king in chess when stalled or set; that is, when so situated

that he cannot be moved without going in to check, by which the game is ended.

*Bacon.*

STALE, *v. t.* To make vapid or useless; to destroy the life, beauty or use of; to wear out.

Age cannot wither her, nor custom *stale* Her infinite variety. *Shak.*

STALE, *v. i.* [*G. stallen*; *Dan. staller*; *Sw. stalla*.]

To make water; to discharge urine; as horses and cattle.

STALE, *n.* Urine; used of horses and cattle.

STALELY, *adv.* Of old; of a long time. *B. Jonson.*

STALENESS, *n.* The state of being stale; vapidness; the state of having lost the life or flavor; oldness; as the *staleness* of beer or other liquors; the *staleness* of provisions. *Bacon. Addison.*

2. The state of being worn out; triteness; commonness; as the *staleness* of an observation.

STALK, *n.* *stalk*. [*Sw. stielk*; *D. steel*; *G. stiel*, a handle, and a stalk or stem; *Sax. stalg*, a column; *Gr. στελεχος*; from the root of *stall* and *G. stellen*, to set.]

1. The stem, culm or main body of an herbaceous plant. Thus we speak of a *stalk* of wheat, rye or oats, the *stalks* of maize or hemp. The *stalk* of herbaceous plants, answers to the *stem* of shrubs and trees, and denotes that which is set, the fixed part of a plant, its support; or it is a shoot.

2. The pedicle of a flower, or the peduncle that supports the fructification of a plant.

3. The stem of a quill. *Grew.*

STALK, *v. i.* [*Sax. stalcan*.] To walk with high and proud steps; usually implying the affectation of dignity, and hence the word usually expresses dislike. The poets however use the word to express dignity of step.

With manly mein he *stalk'd* along the ground. *Dryden.*

Then *stalking* through the deep He fords the ocean. *Addison.*

2. It is used with some insinuation of contempt or abhorrence. *Johnson.*

Bertran *Stalks* close behind her, like a witch's fiend, Pressing to be employ'd. *Dryden.*

'Tis not to *stalk* about and draw fresh air From time to time. *Addison.*

3. To walk behind a stalking horse or behind a cover.

The king crept under the shoulder of his led horse, and said, I must *stalk*. *Bacon.*

STALK, *n.* A high, proud, stately step or walk. *Spenser.*

STALK'ED, *a.* Having a stalk.

STALK'ER, *n.* One who walks with a proud step; also, a kind of fishing net.

STALK'ING, *ppr.* Walking with proud or lofty steps.

STALK'ING-HORSE, *n.* A horse, real or factitious, behind which a fowler conceals himself from the sight of the game which he is aiming to kill; hence, a mask; a pretense.

Hypocrisy is the devil's *stalking-horse*, under an affectation of simplicity and religion. *L'Estrange.*

STALK'Y, *a.* Hard as a stalk; resembling a stalk. *Mortimer.*

STALL, *n.* [*Sax. stal, stal, stall*, a place, a seat or station, a stable, state, condition;