

# HOBSON-JOBSON

A GLOSSARY OF COLLOQUIAL  
ANGLO-INDIAN WORDS AND  
PHRASES, AND OF KINDRED  
TERMS, ETYMOLOGICAL, HIS-  
TORICAL, GEOGRAPHICAL AND  
DISCURSIVE

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# A GLOSSARY

OF

## ANGLO-INDIAN COLLOQUIAL TERMS AND PHRASES OF ANALOGOUS ORIGIN.

ABADA

**ABADA**, s. A word used by old Spanish and Portuguese writers for a 'rhinoceros,' and adopted by some of the older English narrators. The origin is a little doubtful. If it were certain that the word did not occur earlier than c. 1530-40, it would most probably be an adoption from the Malay *badak*, 'a rhinoceros.' The word is not used by Barros where he would probably have used it if he knew it (see quotation under **GANDA**); and we have found no proof of its earlier existence in the language of the Peninsula; if this should be established we should have to seek an Arabic origin in such a word as *abadat*, *ābid*, fem. *ābida*, of which one meaning is (*v. Lane*) 'a wild animal.' The usual form *abada* is certainly somewhat in favour of such an origin. [Prof. Skeat believes that the *a* in *abada* and similar Malay words represents the Arabic article, which was commonly used in Spanish and Portuguese prefixed to Arabic and other native words.] It will be observed that more than one authority makes it the female rhinoceros, and in the dictionaries the word is feminine. But so Barros makes *Ganda*. [Mr W. W. Skeat suggests that the female was the more dangerous animal, or the one most frequently met with, as is certainly the case with the crocodile.]

1541.—"Mynes of Silver, Copper, Tin, and Lead, from whence great quantities thereof were continually drawn, which the Merchants carried away with Troops of Elephants and Rhinoceroses (*em cafilas de elefantes e badas*) for to transport into the Kingdoms of *Sornau*, by us called *Siam*, *Passiloco*, *Sarady*, (*Savady* in orig.), *Tangu*, *Prom*, *Calaminham* and other Provinces . . . ."—*Pinto* (orig. cap. xli.) in *Cogan*, p. 49. The kingdoms named here are *Siam* (see under **SARNAU**); *Pitchalok* and *Sawatti* (now

ABADA

two provinces of Siam); *Taungu* and *Prome* in B. Burma; *Calaminham*, in the interior of Indo-China, more or less fabulous.

1544.—"Now the King of Tartary was fallen upon the city of *Pequin* with so great an army as the like had never been seen since *Adam's* time; in this army . . . were seven and twenty Kings, under whom marched 1,800,000 men . . . with four score thousand Rhinoceroses" (*donde partirão com oitenta mil badas*).—*Ibid.* (orig. cap. cvii.) in *Cogan*, p. 149.

[1560.—See quotation under **LAOS**.]

1585.—"It is a very fertile country, with great stoare of prouisioun; there are elephants in great number and **abadas**, which is a kind of beast so big as two great bulls, and hath vppon his snowt a little horne."—*Mendoza*, ii. 311.

1592.—"We sent commodities to their king to barter for Amber-greese, and for the hornes of **Abath**, whereof the Kinge onely hath the traffique in his hands. Now this **Abath** is a beast that hath one horne only in her forehead, and is thought to be the female Vnicorne, and is highly esteemed of all the Moores in those parts as a most soveraigne remedie against poyson."—*Barker* in *Hakl.* ii. 591.

1598.—"The **Abada**, or Rhinoceros, is not in India,\* but onely in *Bengala* and *Patane*."—*Linschoten*, 88. [Hak. Soc. ii. 8.]

"Also in *Bengala* we found great numbers of the beasts which in Latin are called *Rhinocerotus*, and of the Portingalles **Abadas**."—*Ibid.* 28. [Hak. Soc. i. 96.]

c. 1606.—". . . ove portano le loro mercanzie per venderle a' Cinesi, particolarmente . . . molti corni della **Bada**, detto Rinoceronte . . ."—*Carletti*, p. 199.

1611.—"**Bada**, a very fierce animal, called by another more common name *Rhinoceros*. In our days they brought to the King Philip II., now in glory, a **Bada** which was long at Madrid, having his horn sawn off, and being blinded, for fear he should hurt anybody. . . . The name of **Bada** is one imposed by the Indians themselves; but assuming that

\* *i.e.*, not on the W. coast of the Peninsula, called *India* especially by the Portuguese. See under **INDIA**.

there is no language but had its origin from the Hebrew in the confusion of tongues . . . it will not be out of the way to observe that **Bada** is an Hebrew word, from *Badad*, 'solus, solitarius,' for this animal is produced in desert and very solitary places."—*Cobarruvias*, s. v.

1613.—"And the woods give great timber, and in them are produced elephants, **badas** . . ."—*Godinho de Eredia*, 10 v.

1618.—"A China brought me a present of a cup of **abado** (or black unecorns horne) with sugar cakes."—*Cocks's Diary*, ii. 56.

1626.—On the margin of *Pigafetta's Congo*, as given by Purchas (ii. 1001), we find: "Rhinoceros or **Abadas**."

1631.—"Lib. v. cap. 1. De **Abada** seu Rhinocerote."—*Bontii Hist. Nat. et Med.*

1726.—"**Abada**, s. f. La hembra del Rhinoceronte."—*Dicc. de la Lengua Castellana*.

**ABCÁREE, ABKÁRY.** H. from P. *āb-kārī*, the business of distilling or selling (strong) waters, and hence elliptically the excise upon such business. This last is the sense in which it is used by Anglo-Indians. In every district of India the privilege of selling spirits is farmed to contractors, who manage the sale through retail shopkeepers. This is what is called the '**Abkary** System.' The system has often been attacked as promoting tippling, and there are strong opinions on both sides. We subjoin an extract from a note on the subject, too long for insertion in integrity, by one of much experience in Bengal—Sir G. U. Yule.

June, 1879.—"Natives who have expressed their views are, I believe, unanimous in ascribing the increase of drinking to our **Abkaree** system. I don't say that this is putting the cart before the horse, but they are certainly too forgetful of the increased means in the country, which, if not the sole cause of the increased consumption, has been at least a very large factor in that result. I myself believe that more people drink now than formerly; but I knew one gentleman of very long and intimate knowledge of Bengal, who held that there was as much drinking in 1820 as in 1860."

In any case exaggeration is abundant. All Sanskrit literature shows that tippling is no absolute novelty in India. [See the article on "Spirituous Drinks in Ancient India," by Rajendralala Mitra, *Indo-Aryans*, i. 389 seqq.]

1790.—"In respect to **Abkarry**, or Tax on Spirituous Liquors, which is reserved for Taxation . . . it is evident that we cannot establish a general rate, since the quantity of consumption and expense of manufacture, etc., depends upon the vicinity of principal

stations. For the amount leviabie upon different Stills we must rely upon officers' local knowledge. The public, indeed, cannot suffer, since, if a few stills are suppressed by over-taxation, drunkenness is diminished."—In a *Letter from Board of Revenue* (Bengal) to Government, 12th July. MS. in *India Office*.

1797.—"The stamps are to have the words '**Abcaree** licenses' inscribed in the Persian and Hindu languages and character."—*Bengal Regulations*, x. 33.

**ABIHÓWA.** Properly P. *āb-o-hawā*, 'water and air.' The usual Hindustani expression for 'climate.'

1786.—"What you write concerning the death of 500 Koorgs from small-pox is understood . . . they must be kept where the climate [*āb-o-hawā*] may best agree with them."—*Tippoo's Letters*, 269.

**ABYSSINIA**, n.p. This geographical name is a 16-century Latinisation of the Arabic *Habash*, through the Portuguese *Abex*, bearing much the same pronunciation, minus the aspirate. [See **HUBSHEE**.]

[1598.—"The countrey of the **Abexynes**, at Prester John's land."—*Linschoten*, Hak. Soc. i. 38.

1617.—"He sent mee to buy three **Abassines**."—*Sir T. Roe, Travels*, Hak. Soc. ii. 445.]

**A. C.** (*i.e.* 'after compliments'). In official versions of native letters these letters stand for the omitted formalities of native compliments.

**ACHÁNOCK**, n.p. H. *Chānak* and *Achānak*. The name by which the station of **Barrackpore** is commonly known to Sepoys and other natives. Some have connected the name with that of Job *Charnock*, or, as A. Hamilton calls him, **Channock**, the founder of Calcutta, and the quotations render this probable. Formerly the Cantonment of Secrole at Benares was also known, by a transfer no doubt, as *Chhotā* (or 'Little') **Achānak**. Two additional remarks may be relevantly made: (1) Job's name was certainly *Charnock*, and not *Channock*. It is distinctly signed "Job Charnock," in a MS. letter from the factory at "Chutta," *i.e.* Chuttanuttee (or Calcutta) in the India Office records, which I have seen. (2) The map in Valentijn which shows the village of **Tsjannok**, though published in 1726, was apparently compiled by Van der

1552.—“As soon as this news reached the Sublime Porte the Sandjak of Katif was ordered to send Murad-Beg to take command of the fleet, enjoining him to leave in the port of Bassora one or two ships, five galleys, and a **galiot**.”—*Sidi 'Ali*, p. 48.

“They (the Portuguese) had 4 ships as big as carracks, 3 *ghurābs* or great (rowing) vessels, 6 Portuguese caravels and 12 smaller *ghurabs*, *i.e.* **galiotics** with oars.”—*Ibid.* 67-68. Unfortunately the translator does not give the original Turkish word for *galiot*.

c. 1610.—“Es grandes Galeres il y peut deux et trois cens hommes de guerre, et en d'autres grandes **Galientes**, qu'ils nomment *Fregates*, il y en peut cent. . . .”—*Pyrrard de Laval*, ii. 72; [Hak. Soc. ii. 118].

[1665.—“He gave a sufficient number of **galientes** to escort them to sea.”—*Tavernier*, ed. *Ball*, i. 193.]

1689.—“He embarked about the middle of October in the year 1542, in a **galiot**, which carried the new Captain of Comorin.”—*Dryden*, *Life of Xavier*. (In *Works*, ed. 1821, xvi. 87.)

#### e. *Gallevat*.

1613.—“Assoone as I anchored I sent Master *Molineux* in his *Pinnasse*, and Master *Spooner*, and *Samuell Squire* in my **Gellywatte** to sound the depths within the sands.”—*Capt. N. Downton*, in *Purchas*, i. 501. This illustrates the origin of *Jolly-boat*.

[1679.—“I know not how many **Galwets**.”—In *Hedges*, *Diary*, Hak. Soc. ii. clxxxiv.]

1717.—“Besides the Salamander Fire-ship, Terrible Bomb, six **Galleywatts** of 8 guns, and 60 men each, and 4 of 6 guns and 50 men each.”—*Authentic and Faithful History of that Arch-Pyrate Tulajee Angria* (1756), p. 47.

c. 1760.—“Of these armed boats called **Gallevats**, the Company maintains also a competent number, for the service of their marine.”—*Grose*, ii. 62.

1763.—“The **Gallevats** are large row-boats, built like the *grab*, but of smaller dimensions, the largest rarely exceeding 70 tons; they have two masts . . . they have 40 or 50 stout oars, and may be rowed four miles an hour.”—*Orme*, i. 409.

[1813.—“. . . here they build vessels of all sizes, from a ship of the line to the smallest *grabs* and **gallivats**, employed in the Company's services.”—*Forbes*. *Or Mem.* 2nd ed. i. 94-5.]

**GAMBIER**, s. The extract of a climbing shrub (*Uncaria Gambier*, Roxb. ? *Nauclea Gambier*, Hunter; N.O. *Rubiaceae*) which is a native of the regions about the Straits of Malacca, and is much grown in plantations in Singapore and the neighbouring islands. The substance in chemical

composition and qualities strongly resembles **cutch** (q.v.), and the names *Catechu* and *Terra Japonica* are applied to both. The plant is mentioned in *Debry*, 1601 (iii. 99), and by *Rumphius*, c. 1690 (v. 63), who describes its use in mastication with betel-nut; but there is no account of the catechu made from it, known to the authors of the *Pharmacographia*, before 1780. *Crawford* gives the name as Javanese, but *Hanbury* and *Flückiger* point out the resemblance to the Tamil name for catechu, *Katta Kāmbu* (*Pharmacographia*, 298 *seqq.*). [Mr. Skeat points out that the standard Malay name is *gambir*, of which the origin is uncertain, but that the English word is clearly derived from it.]

**GANDA**, s. This is the H. name for a rhinoceros, *gainḍa*, *genḍa* from Skt. *gaṇḍa* (giving also *gaṇḍaka*, *gaṇḍānga*, *gajendra*). The note on the passage in *Barbosa* by his Hak. Soc. editor is a marvel in the way of error. The following is from a story of *Correa* about a battle between “*Bober Mirza*” (*i.e.* Sultan Baber) and a certain King “*Cacandar*” (*Sikandar*?), in which I have been unable to trace even what events it misrepresents. But it keeps *Fernan Mendez Pinto* in countenance, as regards the latter's statement about the advance of the King of the Tartars against Peking with four score thousand rhinoceroses!

“The King *Cacandar* divided his army into five battles well arrayed, consisting of 140,000 horse and 280,000 foot, and in front of them a battle of 800 elephants, which fought with swords upon their tusks, and on their backs castles with archers and musketeers. And in front of the elephants 80 rhinoceroses (**gandas**), like that which went to Portugal, and which they call *bichá* (?); these on the horn which they have over the snout carried three-pronged iron weapons with which they fought very stoutly . . . and the Mogors with their arrows made a great discharge, wounding many of the elephants and the **gandas**, which as they felt the arrows, turned and fled, breaking up the battles. . . .”—*Correa*, iii. 573-574.

1516.—“The King (of Guzerat) sent a **Ganda** to the King of Portugal, because they told him that he would be pleased to see her.”—*Barbosa*, 58.

1553.—“And in return for many rich presents which this *Diogo Fernandez* carried to the King, and besides others which the King sent to *Affonso Albuquerque*, there was an animal, the biggest which

Nature has created after the elephant, and the great enemy of the latter . . . which the natives of the land of Cambaya, whence this one came, call **Ganda**, and the Greeks and Latins Rhinoceros. And Affonso d'Albuquerque sent this to the King Don Manuel, and it came to this Kingdom, and it was afterwards lost on its way to Rome, when the King sent it as a present to the Pope."—*Barros*, Dec. II. liv. x. cap. 1. [Also see *d'Albuquerque*, Hak. Soc. iv. 104 seq.].

**GANTON**, s. This is mentioned by some old voyagers as a weight or measure by which pepper was sold in the Malay Archipelago. It is presumably Malay *gantang*, defined by Crawford as "a dry measure, equal to about a gallon." [Klinkert has: "*gantang*, a measure of capacity 5 *katis* among the Malays; also a gold weight, formerly 6 *suku*, but later 1 *bongkal*, or 8 *suku*." *Gantang-gantang* is 'cartridge-case.']

1554.—"Also a candy of Goa, answers to 140 **gantas**, equivalent to 15 *paraas*, 30 *medidas* at 42 *medidas* to the *paraa*."—*A. Nunes*, 39.

[1615.—". . . 1000 **gantans** of pepper."—*Foster*, *Letters*, iii. 168.]

"I sent to borrow 4 or five **gantas** of oyle of Yasemon Dono. . . . But he returned answer he had non, when I know, to the contrary, he bought a parcell out of my handes the other day."—*Cocks's Diary*, i. 6.

**GANZA**, s. The name given by old travellers to the metal which in former days constituted the inferior currency of Pegu. According to some it was lead; others call it a mixt metal. Lead in rude lumps is still used in the bazars of Burma for small purchases. (*Yule*, *Mission to Ava*, 259.) The word is evidently Skt. *kansa*, 'bell-metal,' whence Malay *gangsa*, which last is probably the word which travellers picked up.

1554.—"In this Kingdom of Pegu there is no coined money, and what they use commonly consists of dishes, pans, and other utensils of service, made of a metal like *frosyleyra* (?), broken in pieces; and this is called **gança**. . . ."—*A. Nunes*, 38.

" . . . vn altra statua cosi fatta di **Ganza**; che è vn metallo di che fanno le lor monete, fatte di rame e di piombo mescolati insieme."—*Cesare Federici*, in *Ramusio*, iii. 394v.

c. 1567.—"The current money that is in this Citie, and throughout all this kingdom, is called **Gansa** or **Ganza**, which is made of copper and lead. It is not the money of the king, but every man may stampe it that will. . . ."—*Caesar Frederick*, E.T., in *Purchas*, iii. 1717-18.

1726.—"Rough Peguan **Gans** (a brass mixt with lead). . . ."—*Valentijn*, *Chor.* 34.

1727.—"Plenty of **Ganse** or Lead, which passeth all over the Pegu Dominions, for Money."—*A. Hamilton*, ii. 41; [ed. 1744, ii. 40].

**GARCE**, s. A cubic measure for rice, &c., in use on the Madras coast, as usual varying much in value. Buchanan (*infra*) treats it as a weight. The word is Tel. *gārisa*, *gārise*, Can. *garasi*, Tam. *karisai*. [In Chingleput salt is weighed by the *Garce* of 124 maunds, or nearly 5.152 tons (*Crole*, *Man.* 58); in Salem, 400 *Markals* (see **MERCALL**) are 185.2 cubic feet, or 18 quarters English (*Le Fanu*, *Man.* ii. 329); in Malabar, 120 *Paras* of 25 Macleod seers, or 10,800 lbs. (*Logan*, *Man.* ii. clxxix.). As a superficial measure in the N. Circars, it is the area which will produce one *Garce* of grain.]

[1684-5.—"A Generall to Conimeer of this day date enordring them to provide 200 **gars** of salt. . . ."—*Pringle*, *Diary Ft. St. Geo.* 1st ser. iv. 40, who notes that a still earlier use of the word will be found in *Notes and Exts.* i. 97.]

1752.—"Grain Measures.

1 Measure weighs about 26 lb. 1 oz. avd.  
8 Do. is 1 *Mercal* 21 " "  
3200 Do. is 400 do., or

1 **Garse** 8400 " " "  
*Brooks*, *Weights and Measures*, &c., p. 6.

1759.—". . . a **garce** of rice. . . ."—In *Dalrymple*, *Or. Rep.* i. 120.

1784.—"The day that advice was received . . . (of peace with Tippoo) at Madras, the price of rice fell there from 115 to 80 pagodas the **garce**."—In *Seton-Karr*, i. 13.

1807.—"The proper native weights used in the Company's Jaghire are as follows: 10 *Vara hun* (Pagodas)=1 *Polam*, 40 *Polams*=1 *Visay*, 8 *Visay* (Vees)=1 *Manungu*, 20 *Manungus* (Maunds)=1 *Baruays*, 20 *Baruays* (Candies)=1 *Gursay*, called by the English **Garse**. The *Vara hun* or *Star Pagoda* weighs 52½ grains, therefore the *Visay* is nearly three pounds avoirdupois (see **VISS**); and the **Garse** is nearly 1265 lbs."—*F. Buchanan*, *Mysore*, &c., i. 6.

By this calculation, the **Garse** should be 9600 lbs. instead of 1265 as printed.

**GARDEE**, s. A name sometimes given, in 18th century, to native soldiers disciplined in European fashion, *i.e.* **sepoys** (q.v.). The *Indian Vocabulary* (1788) gives: "**Gardee**—a tribe inhabiting the provinces of Bijapore, &c., esteemed good foot soldiers." The word may be only a corruption of

**Rissalla**) came in and discovered to him the whole affair."—*Letter of W. Hastings, in Gleig, i. 70.*

[1781.—“The enemy’s troops before the place are five **Rosollars** of infantry . . .”—*Sir Eyre Coote, letter of July 6, in Progs. of Council, September 7, Forrest, Letters, vol. iii.*]

**RESSALDAR**, Ar.—P.—H. *Risāladār* (**Ressala**). Originally in Upper India the commander of a corps of Hindustani horse, though the second quotation shows it, in the south, applied to officers of infantry. Now applied to the native officer who commands a **ressala** in one of our regiments of “Irregular Horse.” This title is applied honorifically to overseers of post-horses or stables. (See *Punjab Notes & Queries, ii. 84.*)

[c. 1590. — “Besides, there are several copyists who write a good hand and a lucid style. They receive the *yāddāsh* (memorandum) when completed, keep it with themselves, and make a proper abridgement of it. After signing it, they return this instead of the *yāddāsh*, when the abridgement is signed and sealed by the *Wāqī’ah-nawīs*, and the **Risalahdar** (in orig. *risālah*). . . .”—*Āīn, i. 259.*]

1773.—“The Nawaub now gave orders to the **Risalahdars** of the regular and irregular infantry, to encircle the fort, and then commence the attack with their artillery and musketry.”—*H. of Hydur Naik, 327.*

1803.—“The **rissaldars** finding so much money in their hands, began to quarrel about the division of it, while Perron crossed in the evening with the bodyguard.”—*Mil. Mem. of James Skinner, i. 274.*

c. 1831.—“Le lieutenant de ma troupe a bonne chance d’être fait Capitaine (**resseldar**).”—*Jacquemont, Corresp. ii. 8.*

**REST-HOUSE**, s. Much the same as **Dawk Bungalow** (q.v.). Used in Ceylon only. [But the word is in common use in Northern India for the **chokies** along roads and canals.]

[1894. — “‘**Rest-Houses**’ or ‘staging bungalows’ are erected at intervals of twelve or fifteen miles along the roads.”—*G. W. MacGeorge, Ways and Works in India, p. 78.*]

**RESUM**, s. Lascar’s Hind. for *ration* (*Roebuck*).

**RHINOCEROS**, s. We introduce this word for the sake of the quotations, showing that even in the 16th century this animal was familiar not only in the Western Himālaya, but in

the forests near Peshāwar. It is probable that the nearest rhinoceros to be found at the present time would be not less than 800 miles, as the crow flies, from Peshāwar. See also **GANDA**, [and for references to the animal in Greek accounts of India, *McCrimdell, Ancient India, its Invasion by Alexander, 186.*]

c. 1387.—“In the month of *Zi-l Ka’da* of the same year he (Prince Muhammed Khan) went to the mountains of Sirmor (W. of the Jumna) and spent two months in hunting the **rhinoceros** and the elk.”—*Tārīkh-i-Mubārak-Shāhī, in Elliot, iv. 16.*

1398. — (On the frontier of Kashmīr). “Comme il y avoit dans ces Pays un lieu qui par sa vaste étendue, et la grande quantité de gibiers, sembloit inviter les passans à chasser. . . . Timur s’en donna le divertissement . . . ils prirent une infinité de gibiers, et l’on tua plusieurs **rhinoceros** à coups de sabre et de lances, quoique cet animal . . . a la peau si ferme, qu’on ne peut la percer que par des efforts extraordinaires.”—*Petis de la Croix, H. de Timur-Bec, iii. 159.*

1519.—“After sending on the army towards the river (Indus), I myself set off for Sawāti, which they likewise call *Karak-Khaneh* (*kark-khāna*, ‘the rhinoceros-haunt’), to hunt the **rhinoceros**. We started many **rhinoceroses**, but as the country abounds in brushwood, we could not get at them. A she rhinoceros, that had whelps, came out, and fled along the plain; many arrows were shot at her, but . . . she gained cover. We set fire to the brushwood, but the rhinoceros was not to be found. We got sight of another, that, having been scorched in the fire, was lamed and unable to run. We killed it, and every one cut off a bit as a trophy of the chase.”—*Baber, 253.*

1554. — “Nous vinmes à la ville de *Pourschewer* (**Peshawur**), et ayant heureusement passé le *Koutel* (**Kotul**), nous gagnâmes la ville de *Djouschayeh*. Sur le *Koutel* nous aperçûmes des **rhinoceros**, dont la grosseur approchait celle d’un elephant. . . .”—*Sidi ‘Alī, in J. As., 1st ser. tom. ix. 201-202.*

**RHOTASS**, n.p. This (*Rohtās*) is the name of two famous fortresses in India, viz. **a.** a very ancient rock-fort in the *Shāhābād* district of Behar, occupying part of a tabular hill which rises on the north bank of the *Sōn* river to a height of 1490 feet. It was an important stronghold of Sher Shāh, the successful rival of the Mogul *Humāyūn*: **b.** A fort at the north end of the Salt-range in the *Jhelum* District, Punjab, which was built by the same king, named by him after