KICKSHAWS

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Readers are encouraged to send their own favorite linguistic kickshaws to the Associate Editor. All answers appear in the Answers and Solutions at the end of this issue.

Pan-Crashing Web III

The subject of pan-crashing word-lists has been mentioned in this department before, most recently in the last issue of Word Ways. Now Gary Crum of Louisville, Ohio has staggered us with the following list of seven five-letter words from Webster’s Third New International which, he claims, crashes with every five-letter main entry, neglecting abbreviations, in that dictionary. For the benefit of newcomers, a "crash" is an occurrence of the same letters in the same position. The list: AYOUS EOSIN I-HEAD MIAOU OUIJA SEUGH UAYER. Any reader who finds an exception will be furnished free directions to Louisville, Ohio.

A Challenge

For years we’ve thought that four letters was the record length for a word that is (1) not an isogram (i.e., has at least one letter that appears more than once), and (2) has an anagram to which it is (3) isomorphic (i.e., the two words are one-to-one cipher substitutions of each other), and with which it (4) has no crashes. (We note in passing that without the first restriction the last three conditions are relatively easy to satisfy.) AMAM - MAMA and OTTO - TOOT are two of several pairs of four-letter, non-isogrammatic, non-crashing, anagrammatic isomorphs. Last week, while browsing through Jack Levine’s "A List of Pattern Words of Lengths Two Through Nine" (a diversion that all owners of the list should find pleasant), our eye fell on the word POOPES. In the same isomorphic group was OPPOSE. So the length record is currently held by the pair OPPOSE - POOPES. Logophiles may enjoy searching for a pair of sevenners. They will also find it not difficult to prove that a pair of five-letter words can never meet the four conditions.

Another Challenge

Editor Eckler invites readers to find the minimum number of distinct letters that can be arranged in a four-by-four word square containing eight different words (and even to generalize to n-by-n squares).

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Ways: what are anagrams?

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EARL

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years)
He demonstrates (in the square on the preceding page) that it is possible to build a square with only six different letters, using words found in the Merriam-Webster Pocket Dictionary.

Attainment of the minimum for four-by-four squares will constitute a nice counterpoint to Murray Pearce's sixteen-letter four-by-four square which appeared in the August 1970 Kickshaws. Only a very poor mathematician would attempt to improve on that achievement! And if any reader can create a five-by-five square using only words found in dictionaries published in this century, and using 25 distinct letters, Kickshaws will award him the Western Hemisphere.

What's The Question?

The answer is "poetic justice." The question: What would Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. have been had he had his father's talent for writing verse?

Poker Words and Word Poker

These subjects were broached in the May 1971 Kickshaws. In connection with Word Poker, which involves two sets of Scrabble tiles, we asked if there was a group of four letters that is "safe" in the sense that no matter what three additional tiles are drawn, there will be five letters among the seven that form a word. Though we said "any" dictionary was permissible, we should have said "any and all dictionaries" since the former could be interpreted as confining the challenge to a single dictionary. Actually what we meant was "open sources" which is generally interpreted as any combination of dictionaries, thesauruses, and gazetteers published since the time of the Venerable Bede.

Several readers pointed out that, contrary to our later paraphrase of the question, the problem was not equivalent to that of finding four letters which form 26 five-letter words when properly permuted with each of the 26 letters of the alphabet. For example, since a Scrabble set has only one Q, a draw of three tiles is certain to get you at least one non-Q, using a double Scrabble set. Thus Mary Youngquist's first set (see below), using the letters A, E, R, S, meets the challenge, though it does not accommodate the Q. Mary, along with Gary Crum, went on to complete lists of 26 using the letters E, E, R, S. Murray Pearce did the job with the letters A, E, D, R. Inferred inflected forms have been used in abundance and other strange words can only be found in gazetteers. Incidentally, these lists settle a question raised by Charles W. Karns in the February 1969 Word Ways: what is the largest set of five-letter words, no two of which are anagrams, sharing four common letters? Answer: 26.

MJY (aers): areas, bares, cares, dares, erase, fares, rages, share, arise, rejas, rakes, laser, mares, nares, arose, spear, ------, rears, sears, rates, ureas, raves, wares, raxes, years, razes
MJJ (eers): erase, beers, Ceres, reeds, reese, reefs, serge, sheer, siree, jeers, reeks, leers, meres, sneer, erose, peers, geres, serer, seers, steer, reuse, verse, ewers, sexer, eyers, rezes

GC (eers): erase, beers, Ceres, reeds, reese, reefs, serge, sheer, Erie's, jeers, reeks, leers, merse, sneer, erose, peers, geres, reres, seers, steer, Eure's, verse, ewers, reze's, eyers, Ezer's

MP (ader): aread, bread, cadre, dread, eared, fared, grade, heard, irade, jader, drake, alder, dream, redan, adore, drape, qader, drear, reads, trade, adure, raved, wader, raxed, ready, razed

Ranking The Poker Words

Every five-letter word (open sources again) is a poker word. Words like WATER or EARTH, lacking the attribute listed below, are called Nothing Words, just as 2,3,4,5,7 in mixed suits is called a nothing hand in poker (unless one is playing Lowball, or Poker Misere). In increasing order of rank, the various poker designations of five-letter words are given, with examples:

One Pair (CYNIC)
Two Pairs (MAGMA)
Three of a Kind (PUpPY)
Straight (WRONG) - straights are isograms with the letters in alphabetic or reverse-alphabetic order
Flush (POURS) - flushes are isograms all of whose letters appear either in the first half or the last half of the alphabet
Full House (MAMMA) - a full house has three of one letter, and two of a second letter
Four of a Kind (yes, we have no examples)
Straight Flush (LIFED) - straight flushes are flushes which are also straights (or vice versa)
Five of a Kind (again, no examples)

With an assist by Murray Pearce and Gary Crum on straight flush words, Mary Youngquist invites the readers to improve on her candidate list for the lowest and highest word specimens in each category. Words within the same category are scored, just as with poker hands, according to the numerical ranking of their individual components, from the top down, and without regard to the component order. The letters A to Z are given their numerical equivalents, 1 through 26. GABLE and BAGEL are both flushes, and since they are anagrams they rank equally. BLAME beats GABLE because M (13) beats L (12). The pair word TRUTH beats the pair word HAPPY, since the doubled letter T beats the doubled letter P. But when pair words tie in their doubled letters, the highest undoubled letter governs; thus, TRUTH beats STATE since U beats S. Here is Mary's list (with Four, Five of a Kind omitted):

Nothing
One Pair
Two Pairs

DANCE FURZY
ADAGE MUZZY
BACCA YO-YOS

Non-Crash

In a sequence of usually non-crash target words were eleven thinking the masters to tries. Ron
abyss
Input
Murray Pe
angst
letup

The word position succeeded that
angst
ictus
This is sure words from
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Panalphabet

Another of words in
Among letters is cor
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QUACKSA.
In a recent game of Crash with Ross Eckler, we fired a long sequence of five-letter words from the MWPD which were not only mutually non-crashing (we were trying desperately for a crash with his target word), but were also all zeroes with the target word. There were eleven shot words, so that made twelve mutual non-crashers. Thinking that might be close to a record, we invited some logomasters to concoct a longer list, restricted to MWPD boldface entries. Ross Eckler produced:

abyss balmy child drown ethyl fichu gleam hence
input myrrh oxbow pukka squib twang udder zombi

Murray Pearce matched his sixteen with:

angst banjo chuck dwarf empty frown icing judge
letup nymph oxbow plebs rival stilt toxic usher

The way both lists account for all five vowels in practically every position suggested that sixteen is the maximum, but Mary Youngquist ended that conjecture with a list of seventeen. Beat it if you can:

angst bluff coypu drink ethyl fjord gizmo helve
ictus lynch oxbow psalm rumba sprig thegn udder wacky

This is surprisingly close to the eighteen mutually non-crashing words from Webster's Second Edition, given in Problem 86 (Irrelevance) of Beyond Language (Scribner's, 1967):

abysm bluff champ desks edged fichu hadji igloo known
Muntz nymph optic pschwabrowdy scrumbumber twill wreck

Kickshaws conjectures that 18 is the maximum, irrespective of dictionary.

Panalphabetic Word Lists

Another privately issued challenge was to produce the shortest list of words in modern dictionaries that together contain all 26 letters. Among lists having the same number of words, the one with fewer letters is considered superior. Thus four words using 50 letters is better than five words using only 26. Editor Eckler took a rough cut with JUKEBOX CHINTZY DwarF GlimPSE Quiver, all from MWPD, with only 32 letters. Using Webster's 3rd Ralph Beaman quickly reduced the list to four words with 34 letters: HYDROXYBENZOIC QuacksalvInG Weft Jump. Using a combination of Webster's
Second and Third, Mary Youngquist produced the current record of four words using 31 letters: JACKBOX VIEWFINDERS PHLEGMY QUARTZ.

The Word Buff, who prefers Webster's to Simenon for light reading, is simultaneously searching for a three-word list and a four-word list with fewer than 31 letters. He notes the curious fact that Mary's JACKBOX is one word in Web II but two words in Web III; conversely, her VIEWFINDERS is one word in Web III but two words in Web II.

Mary has a three-word list in which, unfortunately, the first word is not in Webster's: BENZENESULFOHYDROXAMIC QUASI-PRIVATE JAYWALKING. Murray Pearce holds the MWPD record of four words using 41 letters: AMBIDEXTROUSLY QUICK-FREEZE OVERWEIGH JUMPING. And though his four-word, 39-letter list from Web II (AMBIDEXTROUSLY QUICK-FREEZING OVERWORSHIP) is no record, it's close enough to a three-word list to make us suspect that the job can be done by The Buff, The Boys from Burial Hill, or the Bloodhound of Hounslow.

Abstemious Words

To Ross Eckler's list of MWPD words lacking the five vowels (CRYPT, GYPSY, LYMPH, LYNCH, MYRRH, NYMPH, PYGMY, SLYLY, SYLPH, TRYST and the six-letter word RHYTHM) Murray Pearce adds DRYLY, SHYLY and WRYLY. Are there others of length at least five? From the Big Web, Word Buff gives us RHYTHMS and QYRQHYZ. If we allow any dictionary (but no atlases), is seven the maximum length for abstemious words? Is six (CRWTHS) the maximum length for words lacking the six vowels AEIOUY?

Crash Variants

Ross Eckler proposes a variant of Crash in which the target word is not fixed but may be modified throughout the game to conform with the scores allotted to opponent's salvos. If a player errs in scoring his opponent's shots in such a way as to leave no legal target word, he will lose if challenged. This seems to us an even more exciting game than Crash. Let's call it Wild Crash.

We propose another variant called Uncrash. Alternately, each player adds a five-letter word from the agreed-upon dictionary that crashes with no word already in this list. First player stymied loses. Any reader who would like an opponent for Wild Crash or Uncrash should write Crash Central, c/o Mary J. Youngquist, 299 McCall Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14616.

Words, Words, Words

If the letters of the alphabet are numbered sequentially, A, D, I, P and Y correspond to the square sequence 1,4,9,16 and 25. In the last issue we ventured the conjecture that PAID is the longest square word. Philip Cohen, of no fixed abode, fired back PADDY, and Dar-
ryl Francis added DADAP, DADDA, DADDY, DIDDY, DIPPY, PAD- 
DA and PAPPY. Mary Youngquist shares the length record (PAY-
DAY) with Philip Cohen (PAPAYA).

Darryl is the record-holder for prime words (from the sequence 
A,B,C,E,G,K,M,Q,S and W) and Fibonacci words (from A,B,C,E, 
H,M, and U):

Prime Words: Assamese, baggages, beamages, cabbages, mas-
sages, messages, sackages; backgames, kawakawas; am-
Ambassadors, embassages
Fibonacci Words: Bacchae, cambuca; Amahuaca, cachucha, 
Chamacea

The record length for words that are both charitable and hospitable 
was three as of the last issue; it was shared by Murray Pearce and 
Mary Youngquist. A word such as AID, which can give up any of its 
letters and remain a word (without permutation) is charitable. A 
word such as IN which remains a word upon insertion of an appropriate 
letter in any position (FIN, INN, INK) is hospitable. Darryl now holds 
the length record (four) for words that are both charitable and hospi-
table, with the word ARES. (If you don’t accept proper names, you 
may consider it as simply the plural of a metric unit.) Its charity 
ward is ARE, ARS, AES and RES (75 per cent Latin-English, curi-
ously); its guest list is FARES, ACRES, ARSES, AREAS and AREST. 
ARES is in Partridge and other authorities, and AREST is in Funk 
& Wagnalls. If you don’t like the latter, there’s ARESE in the Oxford 
English Dictionary.

That brings us back to stingy words (they become non-words on 
the removal of any letter) and hostile words (they cannot be made a 
longer word by insertion of any letter in any position). All one-letter 
words are, by definition, stingy. And since all letters are words, no 
two-letter word can be stingy. (In fact, all are charitable.) There 
are plenty of three-letter stingies. Murray Pearce cites FRY, KYL, 
YNN, YUK and many others, no doubt, from Web II. And from MW-
PD, JAB, JAG, JAW, JET, JIB, etc.

Stingy and hostile words have an interesting property. The words 
in MWPD are a subset of the words in the Big Web. Thus, if a word in 
MWPD is hospitable or charitable, then it remains so with respect 
to the Big Web. But stingy or hostile words can be so with respect 
to MWPD but not the Big Web, and vice versa! The reason should 
be obvious.

Murray finds that J and Q are the only hostile one-letter words in 
MWPD, and there are no one-letter hostile words in Web II. Kick-
shaws will welcome reader data on two-letter hostile words from var-
dious dictionaries.

I Say Sparse, You Say Farce

On a Thursday last February, a garrulous chap, easily identified
by a predilection for long sentences and soothsaying and a predisposition towards incipient glabrosity, was seen receiving a charter membership in an exclusive club, boasting among its members the Literary Digest pollster who forecast the Landon victory in 1936, the night editor of the Chicago Tribune who scooped the nation's other morning papers in 1948 by printing the scarehead DEWEY BEATS TRUMAN, the Washington D.C. newsletter that advised all investors to go long in anticipation of the Great Bull Market of 1968-70, and the graphologists who made an "overwhelmingly positive" identification of the endorsements on those checks cashed at a Zurich bank as having been written by Howard Hughes.

Readers will have had no trouble piercing the disguise of the Kickshaws Editor, who in the last issue placed his nether limb in his oral cavity by venting his hunch that the minimum density (ratio of distinct letters to total number of letters), for words of less than ten letters, of 1/3, shared by certain six-letter words such as DEEDED and ESSEES, was the minimum for all words, irrespective of length.

Kickshaws has erred before with barely a blush to mark the slip, but this time the readers have heaped a strong brew of razzery upon us, putting the wind up our penchant for prophecy. Murray Pearce started by pointing out three seven-letter words (SOOSOS, SEESSEES, DEEDEED) with densities of 0.286. The Word-Butcher also found the first two counterexamples and wondered why we missed them, since their singular forms appear in Levine's list. (Levine's computer seems to have missed them, too.) Murray, The Pedant, and Ralph Beaman all found that the density of 1/3 can be achieved in that ukulele player's word, HUMUHUMUNUKUNUKUAPUA. (That's a fearful lot of name for such a small fish.) Damned cheek! Worse yet, Kevin Kearn and The Bloodhound taxed us for forgetting that we had used the "longest word" PNEUMONULTRAMICROSCOPICSILICOVOLCANOCONIOSIS in the May 1971 Kickshaws. The word, it seems, has 45 letters, 14 of them distinct, giving a density of 0.311. Ross Eckler prophesied that SENSELESSNESSES with density 0.267 (even the singular form has density 0.308) would cause us to eat our words. Darryl Francis had the chutzpah to list the sparsest words with lengths from 8 through 20, indicating eight distinct cases in which our hunch was proved wrong. He found the unusually sparse word KUKUKUKUKU with density 0.250, a word found also by Eckler, Pearce, and The Word Buff. The Dakota Flash found a niner that beat the best niners of Field, Kearns and Francis, viz., TAT-TAT-TAT with density 0.222, surely the record for sparseness. Surely not! The Word Buff found a good dictionary entry with density 0.143: AAAAAA (Random House Unabridged). That's exactly what we say -- aaaaaaa!

Polygrams

Those are not Western Union messages delivered by parrots. A word is a polygram if each of its letters appears at least twice. In the last issue, we asked for the longest polygram, and Darryl Francis provided TAENIODONTIDAE (14 letters), which may be the long-
est specimen (excluding tautonyms such as HULA-HULA) of what Dmitri Borgmann calls a pair-isogram, i.e., a polygram in which each letter appears exactly twice. He then improved his work with INTESTINENESSES (15 letters) and UNPROSPEROUSNESSES (18 letters), both from Web III. No dictionary was stipulated, however, and Word Buff wins the laurels with the Web II word ANTIANTHROPOMORPHISMS (21 letters). Amazing. Note that but for that extra O, Buff would have a 20-letter pair-isogram! It looks as if the prospect of beating the 21-letter polygram is bleak, but the 14-letter pair-isogram record may fall if it comes within the purview of the Dakota Flash.

The Alphabet According to John

Though the military has changed its phonetic alphabet at least three times since it began using it, the one we remember and use (in dictating telegrams or playing telephone Go Moku) is the one that spanned the era from World War II to the Korean War (World War 2.3). ABLE, BAKER, CHARLIE, DOG, etc., seem to us now to be wedded eternally to their initials in a bond that upstart alphabets cannot surnd. John Ferguson of Silver Spring, Maryland, the man who brought us OOLLY and Heads 'n Tails Words, has a different slant and offers readers the following punetic alphabet:

A for 'orses  
B for mutton  
C for yourself  
D for dumb  
E for beaver  
F for vescent  
G for police  
H for mellowness  
I for an eye  
J for hear about...?  
K for ancis  
L for leather  
M for size  
N for sir  
O for populated  
P for ty-eight  
Q for tickets  
R for loaf  
S for as I'm concerned  
T for matlon  
U for ia  
V for La France  
W for a match?  
X for breakfast  
Y for mistress  
Z for Gabors

Logoaesthetics

Everyone has his own idea of what words are "beautiful" and what words are not. In the February 1971 issue of Word Ways, we noted that Henry James considered "summer" and "afternoon" the most beautiful in the language, though probably only when they appear together in that order. It seems unlikely that "afternoon" alone would have given him an aesthetic thrill. "Dawn" perhaps, but surely not "afternoon". We can't be certain about such things, however; in the same feature we listed a score of words that Philip M. Cohen found melodious, and they included "eclectic", "shreivl" and "nimbostratus".

Ross Eckler reports that a disc jockey on radio station WNEW alleged that Wilfred Funk has declared that the ten most beautiful English words are:
If the DJ's allegation is correct, then Cohen and Funk agree on "chimes" (it is a rather lovely word, don't you think?), but Cohen's list omits "melody" and includes "rhapsody" instead.

All of this is really only a prelude (another beautiful word, we think) to what Ross calls "a limerick of unsurpassed banality", in which he has managed to insert all ten of Funk's beauties. The poem, says Ross, the assertions of Euclid and the Gestalt psychologists notwithstanding, proves that the whole is less than the sum of its parts:

Through the luminous mist I can hear
A murmuring melody near;
No more tranquil hush --
At dawn chimes the thrush,
A lullaby, golden and clear.

Hmm. Ross' poem is strongly redolent of unsolved riddle-sonnet I, which appeared in the May 1970 issue of Word Ways. Could it be that our Editor is The Mysterious Riddler of Richmond?

For Cryptanalysts Only

The transmitting agency uses a different mode of encipherment for each of its receivers, and that's one heck of a weakness, for on the same day, at approximately the same time, your agents in Erehwon, Ecalpon, and Wohon, have intercepted three different cipher-texts, which you suspect (correctly) all overlie the same short plain-text message. Once you break through and read the message, you should be able to reconstruct the modes of encipherment. If we don't receive any solutions from you by the deadline for the August issue, we'll throw in a crib or two:

1. 515-1 229-7 469-9:122-4 510-2 591-2 328-4 41-17
   17-4 173-10
2. ADYTR MUDBR MOAYP UHDSE SUALM TQMXI MVAXX
3. DEWRL TKEJY OTIST HlDEX EQLXV ZTUSH YZLBX

Out On A Limb Dept.

If Messrs. Moore, Reddick and Northway don't crack the above, then we predict nobody will.

Newsitem I

From The Wall Street Journal, February 9, 1972: "... says that railroads are suffering increasing deficits as the result of the defection of several large citrus growers to faster refrigerated trucks. In order to lower their rates competitively ... with hook-ups to all large cities from coast to coast are petitioning the Interstate Commerce Commission to permit a new rate schedule."
The poem, in Cohen's words, we tyll, in The poem, ts parts:

This was relayed to us by the Malibu Word-Botcher who adds: "If they're successful, I suggest they use the advertising slogan GET THE GROUP FREIGHT RATE ON THE GRAPEFRUIT ROUTE." The Botcher advises us that on Good Fridays he never eats fried goodnes.

Newsitem II

Key Biscayne, Fla. (UPI), January 23, 1972: "...The President, his wife Pat, and his daughter Julie, were spending a quiet weekend in the Bahamas with Nixon's old friends, C.G. (Bebe) Rebozo and Robert Abplanalp."

It was the last word that caught our eye. Palindromists could have a field day with it. BAT REBORN is not too bizarre, though it does suggest Count Dracula. One can even take liberties, and use R. (or Bob) Abplanalp, or just that fine Welsh surname alone. We can't seem to do much with it, so we pass it on to Bergerson, Borgmann, Lindon, Mercer, et al, as well as the fine palindromists who contribute to The Enigma.

Incidentally, our candidate for the all-time finest palindrome is Leigh Mercer's epitaph on General George W. Goethals: A MAN, A PLAN, A CANAL -- PANAMA!

A Pair of Games

Start with the word list APE, BUD, CAN, DAY, DIE, DOT, HOP, LIP, ONE, PUT, RAT, RIG, ROW, RUE, SUN and TIN. Players alternately take (and keep) one word from the stock remaining. There are many games possible based on the number of players, the game objective, and other modifications, but we know of only two that are viable.

By this overworked adjective, we mean "neither too complicated to play nor too trivial to bother with." We think you will enjoy playing them with friends. And if you can't find logospeliers in your own town, you can always write to Crash Central.

Game 1 (Toller vs. Spoiler): First player, designated the Toller, wins if either player gathers a tetrad, i.e., four words sharing a common letter (such as ONE DOT ROW HOP). His opponent, the Spoiler, wins if neither player has a tetrad after all sixteen words have been taken. Gary Crum has experimented with us on this deceptively difficult game, and though we haven't succeeded in "solving" it, we have a strong hunch as to which player has the advantage. Perhaps you will be the first to analyze the game. Note that ties are impossible.

Game 2 (The Oilers): First player wins if he obtains a dartet, i.e., a group of four words with twelve distinct letters (such as DAY RIG HOP SUN), before the second player does. The second player wins if he gets his dartet first, or if neither player gets a dartet after sixteen plays. This game is a simplification of one concocted by Norton Black; as of this writing we don't know if the game has been analyzed, and we're not sure, therefore, which player has the advantage.
Again, ties are impossible. The name of the game is not without significance.

Things We'd Like To See In Word Ways

Articles on (1) the meanings of the names of those of the fifty states which took their names from indigenous languages (Alaska, Hawaii, Nebraska, etc.); (2) why there are so many totally different language families among the pre-Columbian peoples of the Western Hemisphere; (3) books, both reference and otherwise, that should appear on the Compleat Logophyle's Bookshelf; and (4) anything by Mohan Lal Sharma.

Minicrypt

What foodstuff is represented by the simple substitution cipher 12334 1566377 78986 62377041? If you give up, see Answers and Solutions.

Inflammation Please

In alphabetic order are listed body organs or tissues, and you are asked to supply the name of the inflammatory disease associated with it. Our authority is Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary, and we note that there are cases in which more than one disease fits or in which the disease has more than one name. Use your own dictionary if you feel you have a correct answer that disagrees with any of those supplied in Answers and Solutions.

1. artery 11. lymph gland
2. blind gut 12. mucous membrane of nose
3. bone 13. nerve
4. eyelid 14. parotid gland
5. gum 15. pia mater
6. ileum 16. serous membrane of abdomen
7. joint 17. skin
8. kidney 18. skull cavity, opening to nostrils
9. large intestine 19. urinary canal
10. liver 20. vein

For Old-Fashioned Typists Only

Any reader who hasn't access to a pre-1960 typewriter is ineligible. The question is simply this: on the old-fashioned typewriters, whose keyboards lack such useful symbols as plus and equal signs, square brackets, etc., what have the following symbols in common?

The answer is simply that those keyboard symbols don't carry their weight. If they were dispensed with, one could add five new useful symbols to the keyboard without sacrificing any of the five above. The comma and period appear twice -- in regular, and in shift position.
Who needs a capital comma or period, when they look exactly like the lower-case versions? We agree that it's a convenience, but so would be a hyphen in both regular and shift positions; the point is that it would displace another symbol. The semicolon is easily made by typing a colon, backing up, and typing a comma. The upper-case oh is indistinguishable on old-fashioned typewriters from the zero. And the cents symbol can be made with a slash and a lower-case c.

We call these symbols, which can be duplicated exactly without using the roller to adjust vertical alignment "superfluous". Any additional superfluous symbols that you find will be appreciated and passed along by Kickshaws. If you find "expendable" symbols, please send them, too. These are capable of exact duplication, using the space bar, the backspacer, and the roller. If the duplication is not exact, but still unambiguous, e.g. $ for $, we'll call them "semi-expendable". Send them along, too.

Rebuses

For those unfamiliar with them, AM is a rebus of the phrase "Top of the morning to you" and not a very good one either. You'll see much better rebuses, as well as other wordplays, every month in The Enigma, the monthly publication of the National Puzzler's League edited by Mary J. Youngquist. However, our attention has been drawn particularly to an excellent Enigma rebus by Murray Pearce, contributed under the pseudonym Merlin:

ABCDEFGHJKLMNPPQRSTUWXYZO

The answer to this is an eleven-letter word. (The rebus originally came with a helpful verse; the risk involved is that sometimes the verse makes the solution too easy, and sometimes it is so obscure as to provide no help at all.)

Can one find a word or phrase that permits two (or more) complete different "enrebusments"? Yes, here is an alternate rebus leading to Merlin's eleven-letter word:

N POLE
W POLE
S POLE

If you can't interpolate the answer from the two rebuses, check Answers and Solutions.