KICKSHAWS

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Readers are invited to send their own favorite linguistic kickshaws to the Associate Editor. Correspondents who wish a quick acknowledgment should provide a self-addressed postcard (a stamped card is requested only if the contribution is filled with calumny, hauteur, scorn and invective). Unless questions are posed as Challenges (a euphemism for problems that the Kickshaws Editor was either too lazy or too inept to solve), their resolutions will be found in the Answers and Solutions section at the end of this issue.

One Million Couplets (or How to Reduce The Muses' Work Factor)

Pick any number less than a million. If it has fewer than six digits, add an appropriate number of zeroes at the left (thus, 2643 would become 002643). Reading down the A, B, C, D, E and F columns (on this page and the next) successively, accept your own private Kickshavian couplet, selected from our stock of a million. (2643 results in the enchanting poem "Oh, the locusts hit the hay when Great Grandma made that play".) Actually, there are four million rhyming couplets here since any of the four orders ABCDEF, AECDBF, ABFDEC and AEFDBC will work equally well.

The idea was pilfered from Martin Gardner's Mathematical Games department in the December 1974 issue of Scientific American, where among other oddities and curiosities he exhibits a similar four-column table, a giveaway of Honeywell Incorporated, which generates ten thousand different sentences of purest technical jargon, called SIMP for Simplification.

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zes readers hours c Dictionary to TEE. He su TRAUNGER stranger, in words, he p and SLOCKIS bettered by ISM, the lat tion. Source: book in English.

As for de canal letter is ATE: TEA, SPICA: PIC/
SIMP for Simplified Integrated Modular Prose.

The idea is worth expanding, and we invite all readers to participate in the IMPACT (Integrated Modular Poetry - Analytic Choice Table) Project. By having nine option columns with ten choices apiece, you will have the chance to compose a billion quatrains using any meter and rhyme scheme you wish. We recommend some simple format such as: He followed her to school one day / That was against the rule / It made the children laugh and play / To see a lamb in school. But in case you find this too confining, expand at will.

The best two IMPACT formats will be featured in the August 1975 issue with generous prizes to be announced in the May issue. The staff is considering offering a week's paid vacation in Philadelphia as first prize with second prize two weeks' paid vacation in Philadelphia.

Shiftwords and Double Shiftwords

Ron Jerome of Berkshire, England, well-known to Games & Puzzles readers as a contest-winner par excellence, has spent several hours combing through the dense undergrowth of the Oxford English Dictionary to find longer worthy shiftwords than EMANATE - MANATEE. He suggests GRIDELIN - RIDELING and the even longer ESTRAUNGER - STRAUNGERE (variant spellings of estranger and stranger, in case you didn't recognize these). For unworthy shiftwords, he proposes the apt SWORDSMANSHIP - WORDSMANSHIPS and SLOCKING-STONE - LOCKING-STONES, but these efforts are bettered by Dmitri Borgmann's EXHIBITIONISMS - SEXHIBITIONISM, the latter from the American Thesaurus of Slang, Second Edition. Sources are open on all shiftword challenges, i.e., any wordbook in English, including dictionaries, thesauruses and glossaries. The two component words need not come from the same source.

As for double shiftwords, which also form words when the terminal letter is moved to the front, Dmitri improves somewhat on our ATE: TEA, EAT with EVIL: VILE, LEVI; MITE: ITEM, EMIT; SPICA: PICAS, ASPIC; MASSA: ASSAM, AMASS; LEASE: EASEL,
Late Review

We finally found a copy of a book that got by us nearly a decade ago. It took six months, which is about par these days for out-of-print books, but it was worth it, and we’d like to recommend to you Richard Armour’s Punctured Poems (Famous First & Infamous Second Lines), ably illustrated by Eric Gurney and published by Prentice-Hall in 1966. Of the eighty-odd couplets that make up the book, a collaboration between Armour and some of the finest poets throughout the ages, here are a few of our favorites:

Marlowe: Was this the face that launched a thousand ships? No wonder there are keel marks on her lips.


Blake: Tiger! Tiger! burning bryte, What hath caused thee to ignyte?

Congreve: Music hath charms to soothe the savage breast; That’s why I keep a flute tucked in my vest.

Thomas Brown: I do not like thee, Doctor Fell. The reason is you charge like hell.

Browning: I sprang to the stirrup and Joris and he; I sat upon Joris, the third guy on me.

Fitzgerald: The moving finger writes and having writ, Is badly stained with ink, you must admit.

Milton: When I consider how my light is spent, I’m glad utilities come with the rent.

When we brought up the topic of punctured poems to the Poetaster, he expressed regret that, unlike the limerick, the clerihew, and even the double dactyl, the punctured poetical form has, alas, simply not taken off. "Why, I have at least fifty of my own" said he, and proceeded to rattle them off while we searched vainly for a tactful way of stopping him so that we could resume the business of the day. We remember only four of his -- collaborations, respectively, with Keats, Still, Spenser and Landor. We trust that Kickshavians can supply us with enough better examples than the Poetaster’s to generate a good kickshaw.
My heart aches and a drowsy numbness pains
My back; I always get this when it rains.

I cannot eat but little meat;
Which rises with the cost of wheat.

Me seems the world is runne quite out of square,
With naught but cattes and hippies everywhere.

I strove with none, for none was worth my strife;
Besides, I leave the fighting to my wife.

Partial Digest

Kevin Kearns sent us a copy of the September 1973 Reader's Digest, calling our attention to a quiz on page 90 called "How well-lettered are you?" The first question, reprinted from a quiz by Mickey Porter that appeared in the Akron Beacon Journal, was: Can you name ten parts of the human body (no slang words) that have only three letters?

All right, that lets out ASS, BUM, CAN, DOG, GAM, NUT, PAW, PIN, POT, WIG and a dozen or more other slang terms. Let's agree to stick with main entries in Webster's Collegiate. That bars certain obsolete or archaic terms such as COD. Even so, the average ten-year-old ought to have little difficulty finding the Digest's ten terms (although the Digest claimed that few people are able to think of more than seven). We came up with the following twenty:

ARM GUM HIP LEG MAW RIB TOE
EAR GUT JAW LID PAP SAC VAS
EYE HAM LAP LIP ROD TIT

(Yes, we know LAP is a bit questionable, since it's a part that vanishes when its owner stands up.) The Dayton Demon points out that three additional body parts are possible if two-word terms are allowed: VOICE BOX, TASTE BUD, PIA MATER. Diving into the Big Web, he adds COR (in medicine, the heart), CUP (the socket in which the hip-bone turns), PAD (the ball of the thumb), PAN (the cranium) and REN (in medicine, a kidney). If you really want to stretch it, he suggests FAT (not so much a part as a condition), PIT (of the stomach), TIP (of the finger or tongue) and TOP ("from top to toe").

The second question in the Digest quiz, submitted by Ethel H. Blackledge, involved a sequence of pronouns increasing in length from one to ten letters. One example listed in the Digest was I, HE, YOU, THEY, THEIR, MYSELF, HIMSELF, YOURSELF, OURSELVES and THEMSELVES. Can you extend the sequence?

Buried Dogs

The Boys from Burial Hill came up with the following bit of canine thanatology. Ask any person much under 50 years old for the most
famous movie dog and you will probably get the answer LASSIE. Now, "lassie" is in Webster's Third buried in, for example, the word classier. On the other hand, anyone much over 50 would reply RIN-TINTIN. Can you find where "rintintin" is buried?

**The Big Challenge**

Only one reader, Faith Eckler, responded to the challenge that appeared at the end of this department in the November 1974 issue, but the response was so overwhelming a tour de force, that we have decided to hold the challenge open just to see if it can be topped. The task was to select any ten letters of the alphabet and come up with the maximum possible double-fivers, i.e., divisions of the ten letters into two groups of five, each group anagrammed into a word. Faith chose the letters AELINOPRST. Not content to find a single pair of words for each possible division, she searched out all the anagrams as well -- for example, SNAIL SLAIN NAILS SALIN vs. TOPER REPOT PROTE PORET POTER. Restricting herself to boldface entries in Webster's Second (plus inferred forms), she found pairs of words for 90 of the 126 possible divisions, plus more than 400 additional anagrams. Lack of space prevents us from giving the anagram variations, but the 90 pairs (plus a few single entries) are listed below.

Our prior challenge had the rather inane requirement that each word appear as a main entry in some dictionary, but Faith wisely modified the rules to allow all entries, including combining forms, below the line words, reformed spellings, dialect variants, etc. Sources are, therefore, open and include all words appearing explicitly or by inference in any dictionary published since 1900 or in any non-reference work (novels, poetry collections, magazines, etc.) published since 1950. (Oh yes, Dmitri, they must be in English.) However, to encourage readers to use common words when available, we propose the following scoring system: 4 points for words in Webster's Pocket Dictionary (use the new 1974 edition); 3 points for words in Webster's Second or Third; 2 points for words in other dictionaries such as Oxford, Random House, Chambers, Funk & Wagnalls; and 1 point for non-dictionary entries. Using this system, Faith scored 645 points (asterisked words in the Pocket Dictionary), a total we think will be hard to beat. If it is bettered with another letter-group, the holder of the record as of November 1975 will receive the 12-volume set of Chadwick's Guide for the Wordsmith, consisting of alphabetical, reverse-alphabetical, isomorphic, anagrammatic, syllabary, rhyming and other convenient listings for English words, subdivided by word lengths from one letter to twenty.

### Letters

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### Reversals

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Reversals

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AELNP plane* torn* AELNP plain* store* ALNOR laron spire*
AELNR learn* posit* AELNR larin poets* ALNOS loans* tripe*
AELNS lanes* oerlit AELNS snail* toper* ALTIN prost* ALNOT talon* spire*
AELNT laten spiro AELNT altin prose* ALNPR sotie

RAGER

AELOP paleo- snirt AELOP poal* s tern* ALNPS plans* Torie*
Aelor orale pints* AELOR -orial spent* ALNPT plant* osier*
AELOS aloe* print* AELOS aliso prent* ALNRS snarl*
AELOT snirp AELOT Italo- nerp* ALNRT poise*
AELPR pearl* sinto AELPR pilar stone* ALNST slant*

AELPS lapse* nitro* AELPS pails* tenor* ALOPR polar* inset*
AELPT plate* irons* AELPT plait* snore* ALOPS aslop inert*
AELRS laser* point* AELRS rails* netop ALOPT ploat rinse*
AELRT later* spion AELRT trail* peons* AORS solar* inept*
AELST least* oprin AELST tails* prod* ALORT Rotal spine*

AENOP paeno slirt AINOP piano* ALOST sloat riper*
AENOR split* AINOR noria spelt ALOPS largs tenio
AENOS AINOS ALPRS pratl noise*
AENOT atone* pirls AINOT anito lerps ALPST plats* norie
AENPR arpen toils* AINPR rapil stoe* ALRST slart opine*

AENPS aspen* litro AINPS pains* lerot ANOPR apron* stile*
AENPT paten* rolls* AINPT paint* loser* ANOPS liter*
AENRS snare* pilot* AINRS rains* ploe ANOPT panto riles*
AENRT antre spoil* AINRT train* slope* AROS arson* pite
AENST antes* pirol ANST stain* prole* AROTT trona pilres*

AEOPR opera* lints* AIOPR aston peril* AOST toile
AEOPS apose AIOPS ANPRS pants* orel*
AEOPT poeta snir* AIOPT patio* ANFRT rants* olepi

AEOST asote AOST ostia AOPRS sapor inlet*
AEPSRE spare* Nilot AIPRS pairs* leno AOPRT aport* lines*
AEPRPT tape* lions* AIPRT tapir* elson AOPST stops liner*
AEPSPT paste* AIPST spait enrol* AORST roast* plea
AEIRST stare* pilon AIRST stair* pelon APRST strap* olein

Reversals

SERUTAN, a laxative, was a trade-name coined with the reversal in mind. Not so with TUMS (a stomach acid neutralizer) or BOLS (a liqueur). Would EMBARGO be an acceptable name for a brassiere?