

DIAL M FOR MIND-TICKLER

LEONARD R. N. ASHLEY
Brooklyn, New York

In these pages over the years, I have contributed to your entertainment with a series of articles on various aspects of British and American English, most often couching my material in quiz format. The answers to these quizzes have appeared at the back of the issue in which the quizzes were printed.

This time, there is no article, but instead a challenge: think of as many current words as you can which technology and other advances in civilization have rendered unsuitable, perhaps obsolescent and soon to be replaced.

Here's an example of what I mean. We are still cajoled to dial a telephone number, even when we have a pushbutton phone. And, we use **dial** or **face** even when we have a digital watch. See what I mean? Another example: should the man who just installed plastic pipe in your bathroom still be called a **plumber**? Get the lead out and think up a new word.

No jokes, please, about service in Internal Revenue Service or Postal Service, just honest-to-goodness words that no longer suit. **Suit**, for instance, ought to mean that the whole outfit is the same color or material; would you describe a person as wearing a suit whose coat and pants did not match? Even being asked to dress in a suit sounds a little strange, don't you think? So does a down jacket that contains no natural substances, especially not feathers.

Let's start wracking our wetward (computerese for brains) and send in letters or cards with your ideas. If we get enough good words, we can print a list and attribute your contribution to you. Pen the editor your ideas -- if only with a typewriter!