

## BRIT WIT: A SLANG QUIZ

LEONARD R. N. ASHLEY  
Brooklyn, New York

The wit and wisdom of the common people often are preserved in slang words and phrases which can sometimes be a little baffling or require insider knowledge, as when a Cockney says, "I wouldn't like to be a pawnbroker's sign on a night like this." (A really cold night can "freeze the balls off a brass monkey," and a pawnbroker's sign has, of course, not two but three balls.) Less crude and less complicated, but as amusing perhaps, are the following words and expressions from British slang. How many can you decipher? The best of British luck to you!

1. dead sow's eye
2. the old woman's picking her geese
3. spaghetti junction
4. put the blacksmith on someone
5. honey-do day
6. barking-dog navigator
7. retreat from Moscow
8. Kerbstone Mixture
9. fat as a hen in the forehead
10. pneumonia truck
11. Harpic
12. spoil her shape
13. tar and maggots
14. vacuum cleaner
15. woman-who-diddery
16. I don't want to be a sergeant-pilot anyhow
17. like a whore at a christening
18. block ornament
19. my answer's in the infirmary
20. clanker-napper
21. do as my shirt does
22. camp as a row of tents
23. if you've got the money
24. larks in ther night
25. palmistry

Answers can be found in Answers and Solutions at the end of the issue.