

STRANGE CONNECTIONS, ODD ETYMOLOGIES

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There are two ways to try this little teaser: either match the definitions in the left-hand (numbered) column with the words in the right-hand (lettered) column, or (if you really want a difficult challenge) attempt to guess the words whose origins are given, covering up the right-hand column and working without its help. The latter is rather tough to accomplish, for we have much mangled (Anglo-Saxon **mankel**, frequentative of **manken**) old English and foreign words over the centuries. By determining the etymologies of words, however, we often get new insights into unsuspected connections, learning that

- * Sheer **Tuesday**, an old name for Maundy Thursday, used to be clean (Icelandic **skíri-pórsdagr**, a day of purification)
- * moderns who **do drugs** are just availing themselves of them (Anglo-Saxon **dow**)
- * **dewsiers**, the discarded valves of a pig's heart in Wiltshire dialect, are not "Jew's ears" but entrails (Old French **jusiers**)
- * the **sept** of a clan is just a tail (Latin **secuta**) or following, resembling **sect**

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| 1. a gum from Sumatra | a. sepoy |
| 2. mud to rub on | b. instep |
| 3. a pledge marked by a gift | c. gooseberry |
| 4. soldier armed with bow and arrow | d. gutta percha |
| 5. a ball of alabaster | e. nickname |
| 6. King Louis's badge | f. windlass |
| 7. hairy berry | g. shuttlecock |
| 8. beet or leek soup | h. pureé |
| 9. house servant | i. menial |
| 10. a cork batted back and forth | j. alley |
| 11. a woollen band | k. salve |
| 12. dragon herb | l. fleur de lys |
| 13. an added name | m. lanyard |
| 14. a winding pole | n. tarragon |
| 15. a bend in the foot | o. wedlock |

For answers, see Answers and Solutions at the end of this issue.