In this issue, Word Ways introduces a new column which will appear from time to time under the above name, containing a variety of light-hearted wordplay sent by Louis Phillips to a circle of friends. Although in the original different genres are mixed higgledy-piggledy, here an attempt is made to present unified themes in the spirit of Mary Ann Madden’s New York Magazine column. Brief explanatory material has been added in italics by the editor.

Knock-knock jokes – the replacement of one word by another having a similar sound – have been around for a very long time, but they remain a vehicle for far-fetched puns. In the following, the formula lines 1, 2 and 5 (“Knock-knock”, “Who’s there?”, “[line 3] who?”) have been omitted for brevity, and only lines 3 and 5 (the core of the jest) saved. Ideally, line 3 should be a person’s name; however, any word can be used.

Will Durant / Will Durant be paid this month? If not, you’ll be evicted
Arthur Ashe / Arthur Ashes on the carpet?
Alec Guinness / Alec Guinness ale – do you?
Arthur Fiedler / Arthur Fiedlers coming to play for our square dance?
Ezra Pound / Ezra Pound of coffee in the house?
Walter / Walter wall carpeting is on sale – let’s go buy some
Carl Sagan / Carl Sagan With the Wind is his favorite movie
Zelda / Zelda house and let’s move to the country
Walter Pidgeon / Walter Pigeon is an obstacle; wall to eagle is no obstacle at all
Tecumseh / Tecumseh close and still lose is difficult to accept
Vida Blue / Vida Blue shirt all the time? Don’t you have any other colors?
Sarah Miles / Sarah Miles to go before I sleep
Dinah Shore / Dinah Shore after you leave the yacht
Aaron Burr / Aaron Burr is not as beautiful as hair on Bo Derek
Lew Ayres / Lew Ayres when he asserts that James Madison was the second president of the United States
John Wanamaker / John, Wanamaker happy? Show her some affection
Adenauer / Adenauer in the spring and subtract an hour in the fall for Daylight Savings Time
Oberon / Oberon the other side of the mountain is a bear
Ezio Pinza / Ezio, Pinza tail on the donkey
Dryden / Dryden wet – that’s the weather forecast
Noah Webster / Noah Webster named Daniel? Does he live here?
Hermann Hesse / Hermann Hesse a bad cold and can't stay out long
Joe Namath / Joe Namath his cat Rhubarb the Second
Nina Simone / Nina Simone? Visit your friendly loan shark
Andalusia / Andalusia the tooth is the sooner it will fall out
Distance / Distance is a waltz, but the next is a tango
Moisturize / Moisturize keep staring into mine?
Dimension / Dimension the fact that I'm here
Forcep / Forcep we're having hot dogs and beans
Afraid / Afraid Astaire movie is on TV this afternoon
Sea Urchin / Sea Urchin? It has a pretty dimple on it
Saucer / Saucer Lancelot the other (k)nigh
Thumb / Thumb people like dumb jokes like these
Pooch / Pooch your lips next to mine and kiss me tenderly
Treatise / Treatise knock-knock joke with respect
Juarez / Juarez hell, said General Sherman
Dismal / Dismalody lingers on
Mecca / Mecca my bed soon, for I'm weary of living and fain would lie down
Kodiak / Kodiak like Buffalo Bill more often
Corset / Corset's understandable why I'm late - my car broke down
Zealots / Zealots of mountains on your Swiss vacation
Madison Avenue / Madison Avenue outlook on life since he married Dolley
Smatter / Smatter with you? You take too long to open the door
Condense / Condense with me if you feel like waltzing
Papal / Papal who live in glass houses shouldn't walk around without clothes
Showboat / Showboat your hands to me because I want to be sure you've washed them
Sardine / Sardine Martin on TV the other night
Metatarsus / I never metatarsus; have you?
Hence / Hence lay eggs, but roosters don't
Alibi / Alibi a new pair of boxing gloves for his championship bout
Lasso / Lasso her laddie for palimony
Hits / Hits a bird, hits a plane, hits super-knock-knock
Abandon / Abandon the stage is playing our song
Swan / Swan, too, three, four...
Acoustic / Acoustic is what you play pool with
Mangoes / Mangoes wherever woman goes
Helmet / Helmet me at the movies the other night
Conceited / Conceited people see the stage as good as standees?
Contain / Contain [Taine, nineteenth-century French historian] write another history of England?
Fenders / Fenders keepers, losers weepers
Boat / Boat of us have been waiting for a long time
Zodiac / Zodiac was used as a beast of burden in Tibet
Brochure / Brochure angry because I said Bro's a funny name
Denmark / Denmark, den Matthew, den Luke, den John
Tibet / Tibet on horses will cause you to lose money

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Tibet / Tibet on horses will cause you to lose money
Ceylon / Ceylon Chaney for the days of the past
Ransom / Ransom five miles to get here on time
Disintegrate / Disintegrate knock-knock joke but it will have to do
Messiah / Messiah do everything myself?
Salient / Salient home right now; do you want Sally to call you when she returns?
Lampoon / Lampoon [oon, Scot. var. of on] at MacTavish's, so let's go visit
Hollandaise / Hollandaise work to speak French and English

In contrast, What's The Question seems to be a more recent invention - I first became aware of it in early Kickshaws columns by Dave Silverman. Here, the object is to infer some sort of weirdly-logical question that will elicit the answer. (Cover up the question, and see if you can guess it from the answer given.)

DIRECT HIT What did Mike Nichols do to The Real Thing?
WIRE SERVICE What is one way to get a message to the author of "The Shooting of Dan McGrew"?
THE REST IS HISTORY Can you describe Rip Van Winkle's sleep in four words?
DOGPATCH What does a leaky Snoopy use to keep from losing air?
BOX OFFICE What did Jack Dempsey do to Joe Office?
THROW THE BUM OUT What is the first rule for burlesque dancing?
PRESS REPORTS What is the best way to get the wrinkles out of newspaper articles?
MARK CLEAR Which Gospel writer is not obscure?
THE BIG SLEEP What do giants do on Sunday mornings?
PABST BLUE RIBBON How do you describe the first place memento given to the German film director of the Threepenny Opera?
HOODWINDED What did Al Capone do when he saw a pretty girl?
OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF MIND What early theory of sex has been disproved?
OSCAR BRAND What do cattle owned by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences wear?
STONEWEAR How can you best describe Medusa's wardrobe?
GOLF CLASSIC What do you do when you putt The House of the Seven Gables?
SPOTLIGHT Is Dick and Jane's dog heavy?
NO GREAT SHAKES Why did the ice-cream parlor go out of business?
TIP O'NEILL What should you do if you are waited upon by the author of the play The Iceman Cometh?
BAKE SALES What did the cannibals do when they caught Soupy?
JACK HAM How can you describe John Barrymore in two words?
TUESDAY WELD What holds Tuesday together?
NELSON RIDDLE What do you call the question "Why did Rockefeller cross the road?"
SLAUGHTERHOUSE FIVE What was the name for the butchers' basketball team?
VICEBOY What did Dale Evans tell her husband she didn't approve of?

THIS BUD'S FOR MIKE HAMMER conversation 1 NEVER PROM'p people KIM HUNTER book by RUT COLLEGE ENGLI PLEASE DO NOT make to the ERASERHEAD mistake?
SILVER STREAK the Lone Re NICK CARTER dent used i THE CELTIC TV when the m HUMPHREY CLIN PROCTOR & GA tions at the WHO'S HAPPY White and FALA LA LA FRANK SHORTE
dog eaters?
PIP SQUEAK too tightly CARBON COPY ROBERT BROWN DUNKIRK What Champion?
LAKE SUPERIOR Berger?
DIVINE INSPIR the idea to MIKE SQUIRES NANCY HANKS TOM HANKS W GOOSE BUMPS bending ou BLIND DATE the eyes of BOSTON POPS Fenway Pe STIFF-ARMED
This Bud's For You  
What did God say to Lou Costello?

Mike Hammer  
What does the CIA do to overhear a carpenter's conversation?

I Never Promised You A Rose Garden  
What slogan did the Burpee people immediately reject?

Kim Hunter  
What do you call a librarian searching for a certain book by Rudyard Kipling?

College English Majors  
Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?

Please Do Not Drive On Shoulders  
What request did Gulliver make to the Lilliputian stock-car team?

Eraserhead  
Name a horror film based on Rosemary Wood's famous mistake?

Silver Streak  
What were the headlines in local newspapers when the Lone Ranger's horse ran naked through the streets?

Nick Carter  
What did the old razor blade do when the 39th president used it to shave with?

The Celtic Twilight  
What do Boston sports fans call an evening when the moon looks like a basketball?

Humphrey Clinker  
How did critics describe a flop Bogart movie?

Proctor & Gamble  
What do instructors do during final examinations at the Las Vegas School for Gamblers?

Who's Happy Now  
What did the director ask while casting Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs?

Pala La La La  
How did FDR call for his dog at Christmas time?

Frank Shorter  
What is the most common complaint made by hot dog eaters?

Pip Squeak  
What happens when you squeeze the Ace of Hearts too tightly?

Carbon Copy  
Why did the math teacher give John Carbon an F?

Robert Browning  
What is Redford doing on the beach?

Dunkirk  
What does the bill collector do to the star of the film Champion?

Lake Superior  
Is Veronica Lake as good an actress as Candace Bergen?

Divine Inspiration  
What did critics call it when John Ford got the idea to cast Andy as the guard in Stagecoach?

Mike Squires  
What advice did the CIA give King Arthur?

Nancy Hanks  
What do you call tissues for sissies?

Tom Hanks  
What do you call tissues for male turkeys?

Goose Bumps  
What did the vice-president do when Ms. Bumps was bending over the water fountain?

Blind Date  
What do you get when you poke your fingers into the eyes of a fig?

Boston Pops  
What do you answer when Willie Stargell asks where Fenway Park is?

Stiff-Armed  
How do you describe a corpse with a gun?