COLLOQUY

HAROLD JACOBS suggests using the four Cs in “forces” in Will Shortz’ Sam Loyd puzzle. The word TAKE could mean “undertake the forces” or “the forces overtake”.

JIM PUDER suggests “Over TAKE THE ENEMY on THE C’s”, i.e., “Overtake the enemy on the seas”, or possibly “Overtake the enemy on the high seas”.

ARTHUR SCHULMAN says “I’m embarrassed to report a mistake – I hope it’s the only one – in my “Find the Literary Titles”. NO, I MAY PUKE has no F, and so can’t lead to MEIN KAMPF. It should have been FUN? NO, I MAY PUKE. Otherwise, the February issue looks like an especially fine one.”

ANIL notes: “Shulman’s Literary Titles was a neat idea but ridiculously hard as a puzzle, better as an article – or a better quiz if he could have made more of the clues actual clues like #s 1 and 28, and several others to a lesser degree. There was an error in #5: the clue didn’t contain an F.

There was also arguably an error in Kahan’s Word Questionnaire for lack of a hyphen: the “smallest number name” with all five vowels (Q. #2) could mean smallest number or smallest name. I got one thousand five as the smallest-number name but then realized that five thousand is the smallest (shortest) number-name. So punctuation is important! 

JIM PUDER adds: In an article elsewhere in this issue, I opine that charades in palindromes are probably a recent development, but this is incorrect. As I have belatedly remembered, several pairs of complete palindromic charade sentences were presented almost 40 years ago by James Rambo in an article in the November 1977 Word Ways and in the February 1977 “Kickshaws.” Here are two of his better examples:

LIVE DASTARD, I DRAT SAD EVIL.
LIVED, A STAR DID? RATS — A DEVIL!

EROS’ ERA SPINS TILL IT SNIPS ARES’ ORE.
EROSE, RASP “IN STILL, ITS NIPS ARE SORE.”

Rambo was undoubtedly the first person to craft palindromic charade sentences, and he is still, so far as I know, the only person to do so. In his article, he attempts to present a step-by-step method for their composition.
DON HAUPTMAN writes: In the previous issue of Word Ways (February 2016, page 7), I wrote about what I dubbed “occupational rhyming trios.” These are invariably mischievous or sarcastic, such as “drill, fill, bill” for the dental profession. I cited a few other examples I’ve encountered serendipitously over the years. But additional members of this species are difficult or impossible to search online and I know of no one else who has collected them. So I sent out a call for more.

Alexander D. MacPhail, an Episcopal priest in Roanoke, Virginia, informed me that three important functions of the clergy are traditionally called “hatch, match, and dispatch.” That is: birth, marriage, and death. (The phrase is the title of an Australian TV series that debuted this year.)

Though somewhat disrespectful, “flag ’em, tag ’em, bag ’em” is deployed by coroners, hunters, competitive gamers, and others. The first term can apply to ceremonial funerals for members of the uniformed services.

Finally, writers and other creative types are often advised to “keep it light, tight, and bright.”

Again, if you’re aware of any specimens I’ve overlooked, either above or in my February article, please send them to donhauptman@nyc.rr.com. I may revisit the subject in a future issue.

TRISTAN MILLER remarks: I was pleased to see Darryl Francis's two articles in the November 2015 issue devoted to typewriter words using some regional and alternative keyboard layouts. From the introductory text, it seems he may have overlooked a recent contribution of mine -- "Dvorak Typewriter Words", which appeared in the November 2013 issue. Nonetheless, congratulations are in order, as he bested my record for the longest word typeable on a single Dvorak row (INSTANTANEOUSNESSES, 19 letters) with his UNOSTENTATIOUSNESSES (20 letters).