

Vidya



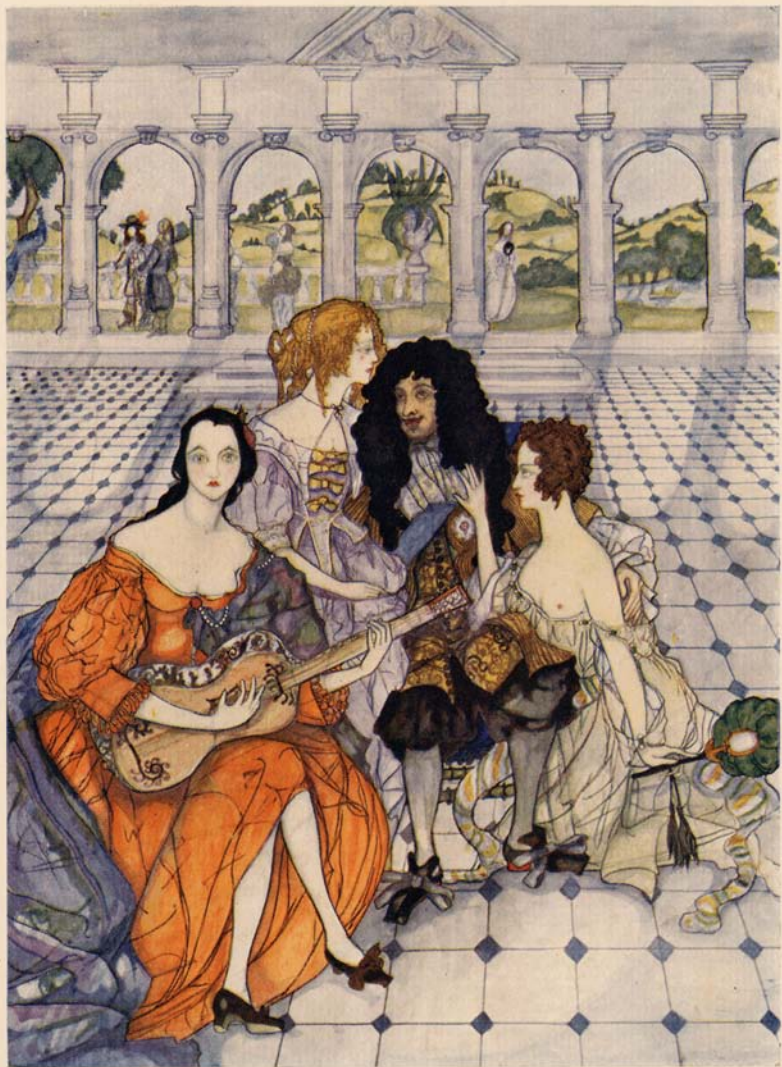
The Journal of Triple Nine Society.

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Puzzling Matters.

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Charles II, Nell Gwyn, Duchess of Portsmouth and Duchess of Mazarin.

Frontispiece



“And to the women’s shift, where Nell was dressing herself, and was all unready, and is very pretty, prettier than I thought.”

Page 44

What we were reading, 1924. See page 34

CRUCIVERB.com is a Web site congenial to both observers and crossword puzzle makers, who call themselves *cruciverbalists*.

“CRUCIVERB.com Crossword Constructors Community Center,” as the site styles itself, is by today’s Web site standards a bit dated a site, based as it is on “open source” Webware, providing Users a non-searchable, but quite low-volume, mailing list, with one or two queries from puzzle makers a day.

US\$25.00 a year provides a year’s “Gold Membership” at CRUCIVERB, and material support for this service, whose membership includes true luminaries of cruciverbalism, as seen in the documentary motion picture, “Wordplay,” which is now both a Netflix “rental,” and an inexpensive buy as one of Netflix’s “previously viewed” DVDs, selling for US\$7.99, plus First Class postage.

American “family newspaper” publishing conventions limit crossword puzzle makers’ creativity to inoffensive words cleverly arrayed, and rather explicitly “clued” when such words are not a crossword puzzle’s “theme words.”

One gathers American crossword puzzles are intended to provoke smiles while alleviating boredom, and the continuing popularity of what was the fresh new national American craze of 1924 - 1925 suggests success doing that millions of times each day.

Suggestions that crossword puzzles promote literacy might be viewed with readily available alternatives. Will one hour given to completing a living contemporary’s word game yield benefits approaching one hour’s involvement with a Bertrand Russell Reader?

Cruciverbalism as a skill is tilted to favour puzzle makers over their clients, as puzzle makers can avail themselves of today’s personal computer technology to do drudge work well beneath human dignity.

A crossword puzzle maker may begin by artfully arraying “theme” words in an experimental 21-by-21 cell puzzle “grid,” then deploy a robust crossword puzzle making program drawing upon an extensive word list to fill in the blanks. That might have taken not one full minute to do, both yielding some felicitous non-theme words and hinting at overall improvements in a crossword puzzle in progress, but the most accomplished cruciverbalists appear to dismiss computer programs as novice tools, relying instead upon their individual, and truly admirable, skills.

**RAPID
MATH
TRICKS
AND
TIPS**

**30
DAYS TO
NUMBER
POWER**

Edward H. Julius

**OVER 2,000
PRACTICE
PROBLEMS
INSIDE**

**INCREASE
YOUR
CALCULATING
SPEED**



Selected from
*Rapid Math Tricks and Tips:
30 Days to Number Power*

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Trick 7: Rapidly Square Any Number Ending in 5

Strategy: The trick is one of the oldest in the book, and one of the best! To square a number that ends in 5, first **multiply the tens digit by the next whole number**. To that product, **affix the number 25**. The number to affix (25) is easy to remember, because $5^2 = 25$. Although a calculation such as 7.5×750 is technically not a square, it too can be solved using this technique. This trick will also work for numbers with more than two digits. Read on to see how this marvelous trick works.

Elementary Example #1: 15^2

Step 1. Multiply: $1 \times 2 = 2$.

Step 2. Affix 25: 225 (the answer).

Thought process summary.

$$\begin{array}{r} 15 \\ \times 15 \\ \hline \end{array} \rightarrow \begin{array}{r} 1 \\ \times 2 \\ \hline 2 \end{array} \rightarrow 225$$

Elementary Example #2: 65^2

Step 1. Multiply: $6 \times 7 = 42$.

Step 2. Affix 25: 4,225 (the answer).

Thought process summary.

$$\begin{array}{r} 65 \\ \times 65 \\ \hline \end{array} \rightarrow \begin{array}{r} 6 \\ \times 7 \\ 42 \\ \hline \end{array} \rightarrow 4,225$$

Brain Builder #1: 450^2

Step 1. Disregard the zero, and think, “45 squared.”

Step 2. Multiply: $4 \times 5 = 20$.

Step 3. Affix 25: 2,025 (intermediary product).

Step 4. Apply Test of Reasonableness: For each zero initially disregarded in a squaring problem, two must eventually be affixed to obtain the product.

Step 5. Affix two zeroes to the intermediary product, producing the answer 202,500.

Thought process summary.

$$\begin{array}{r} 450 \\ \times 450 \\ \hline \end{array} \rightarrow \begin{array}{r} 45 \\ \times 45 \\ \hline \end{array} \rightarrow \begin{array}{r} 4 \\ \times 5 \\ 20 \\ \hline \end{array} \rightarrow 2,025 \rightarrow 202,500$$

Brain Builder #2: 7.5×750

Step 1. Disregard the decimal point and zero, and think, “75 squared.”

Step 2. Multiply: $7 \times 8 = 56$.

Step 3. Affix 25: 5,625 (intermediary product).

Step 4. Apply Test of Reasonableness: A quick estimate puts the answer in the 5,000s. The intermediary product of 5,625 is therefore the answer.

Thought process summary.

$$\begin{array}{r} 7.5 \\ \times 750 \\ \hline \end{array} \rightarrow \begin{array}{r} 75 \\ \times 75 \\ \hline \end{array} \rightarrow \begin{array}{r} 7 \\ \times 8 \\ \hline 56 \end{array} \rightarrow 5,625$$

Brain Builder #3: 115^2

Step 1. Multiply: $11 \times 12 = 132$.

Step 2. Affix 25: 13,225 (the answer).

Thought process summary.

$$\begin{array}{r} 115 \\ \times 115 \\ \hline \end{array} \rightarrow \begin{array}{r} 11 \\ \times 12 \\ \hline 132 \end{array} \rightarrow 13,225$$

Elementary exercises.

Don't be confused by the two ways these squaring exercises are presented.

1. $35 \times 35 =$

2. $85 \times 85 =$

3. $95 \times 95 =$

4. $25 \times 25 =$

5. $55 \times 55 =$

6. $75 \times 75 =$

7. $45 \times 45 =$

8. $15 \times 15 =$

9. $65^2 =$

10. $95^2 =$

11. $85^2 =$

12. $35^2 =$

13. $25^2 =$

14. $55^2 =$

15. $75^2 =$

16. $45^2 =$

Brain Builders

1. $105 \times 105 =$

2. $3.5 \times 350 =$

3. $750^2 =$

4. $0.85 \times 85 =$

5. $65 \times 6.5 =$

6. $150 \times 15 =$

7. $11.5^2 =$

8. $5.5 \times 550 =$

9. $0.45 \times 0.45 =$

10. $950 \times 9.5 =$

(See solutions on page 60)

Mathematical Curiosity #1

$12,345,679 \times 9 = 111,111,111$

$12,345,679 \times 18 = 222,222,222$

$12,345,679 \times 27 = 333,333,333$

$12,345,679 \times 36 = 444,444,444$

$12,345,679 \times 45 = 555,555,555$

$12,345,679 \times 54 = 666,666,666$

$12,345,679 \times 63 = 777,777,777$

$12,345,679 \times 72 = 888,888,888$

$12,345,679 \times 81 = 999,999,999$

$12,345,679 \times 999,999,999 =$

$12,345,678,987,654,321$

Crossword Puzzling.
Please puzzle responsibly.

The New York Times
Thursday, December 11, 1924

CROSSWORD MANIA BREAKS UP HOMES.

*Neglected Cleveland Wives Said to Plan Divorces
from Stricken Husbands.*

Cleveland, Ohio, Dec. 10th.—Homes in the city are now threatened by cross-word puzzles. The innocent little white and black squares have fascinated so many husbands that legal aid organizations are being swamped with requests to solve the enigma or to start divorce proceedings.

The dire state of affairs was disclosed today by the manager of one of the legal aid organizations, who said that his office was receiving an average of ten letters a day from wives who have to remain home these evenings just because their husbands are suffering from “cross-word puzzleitis.”

All of the letters correspond in almost every detail. One of them is as follows:

“We were happy until recently, then my husband became absorbed in cross-word puzzles. Since then he has had no time even to look at me or the children. He no more than gets his hat off than it is cross-word puzzles.

“If I talk to him he gets angry. If we do go out for the evening he takes a magazine or newspaper with him and it is a cross-word puzzle.

“Morning, noon and night it is cross-word puzzles. It is breaking up our home, for I have no time for them. He will either have to give up cross-word puzzles and spend some time with his family or I will obtain a divorce.”

The New York Times
Sunday, January 11, 1925

A Serum for the New Disease.

To the Editor of The New York Times:

A new disease has sprung up in our midst—crossworditis. It is an inflammation, perhaps of the coverings of the brain, perhaps of the cortex of the brain—the seat of the intellect. As yet the pathology has not been clearly outlined, but that it is a disease that should enlist the close attention of all laboratory workers cannot be denied.

And why laboratory workers? The answer I simple. Quinine cannot cure it, calomel is ineffective, arsenic is futile, strychnine is no obstacle to its continuance in a severe form. A serum might be effective; and since all diseases, even the most stubborn, are amenable to serums, let us hope that in the near future one of the laboratories will turn out s serum that will stop the epidemic.

That it is a disease that needs attention on the part of our scientific researchers is very evident. The unknown germ enters the system in a stealthy manner—through the skin, in case there is a “break,” or through the mucous membrane. A man be sitting in his room reading a light work of fiction or some ponderous treatise on medicine or literature or philosophy, when all of a sudden the thought will occur to him that there must be a cross-word for “graminiferous” or “Mycenaean tin” or “an Algerian bird in four letters.” Directly this thought assails him he might as well close his book, for the germ has entered his system and is journeying to the coverings of his brain to be finally lodged in the seat of intellect; and his peace of mind for serious work other than cross-word puzzles is destroyed.

This happens so often that to doubt this statement would be foolhardy. And unfortunately the disease is communicable long before the victim is aware that he is a menacing carrier of

the affliction.

Laboratories have worked assiduously in the past on the why and wherefore of cancer, and up to date have failed to affix the badge of glory to their investigations. Why continue to waste time when a new disease, much more prevalent than cancer, is with us?

The charge has repeatedly been brought against the laboratories of the world that months and sometimes years elapse before a worth-while discovery is made. There are some harsh critics who even say that of all the laboratories throughout the world only one or two have been productive of good to mankind. Here's a chance for some laboratory to cover itself with glory—and to make a lasting reputation over night. These painfully normal people who are being bedeviled by the thousand and one diseased members of the human family because they refuse to allow themselves to be infected—the wearing of plugs in the ears, rubber undergarments, and a mouthpiece of gutta percha have proved adamant against the disease—demand that the hour has struck for one or another laboratory to institute a research that will result in the making of a serum which will put to shame the marvelous qualities of the “truth serum.”

Philip Skrinka.
New York City, Jan. 5, 1925.

The Washington Post
Sunday, January 11, 1925

Puzzle-Solving Adds To Typists' Efficiency.

Chicago, Jan. 10th.—Cross-word puzzles “are a blessing in disguise to those employers who feared their distracting influence when they first appeared,” according to Albert M. Johnson, president of the National Life Insurance Company of the United States, who said that so far as his organization was concerned the puzzles were responsible for increasing the

efficiency of his stenographers 25 per cent.

Rather than being a distraction to the office girl, the mental labor of solving them has made her faster and more accurate in her work, Mr. Johnson found.

“Noticing a marked improvement in the speed with which our several hundred stenographers were handling the correspondence to 100,000 policyholders, I inquired the reason and found that we had the cross-word puzzles to thank,” Mr. Johnson said. “I discovered our stenographers were cross-word enthusiasts and that their idle hours spent over the dictionary had improved their spelling and recognition of words to a startling extent.

“All our executives reported that the stenographers were taking dictation far more rapidly; that they were recognizing and handling words they used to stumble over. We have encouraged our employes to play the game as it widens their minds and improves their speech, as well as increasing their office efficiency.”

The Washington Post
Wednesday, January 14, 1925

The “Cross-Word” in Prison.

Add to the horrors of the penal system. They are now doing cross-word puzzles feverishly in all the best jails. This is no more and no less than the exact truth.

“I give you my word of honor,” said Warden Hanley today at the Tombs, “that only the other day I saw a man in a cell on one of the upper tiers. He had a piece of newspaper folded across his knees and a little bit of a stub pencil in his hand. He was all bent over, crunched up, you know.

“Well, I went a bit closer and got a good look at him. And you can believe it or not, but he was doing a cross-word puzzle. And what’s more, he was doing it in Yiddish. No, I’m not kidding you. I would know better than that, wouldn’t I? I tell

you this paper he had was one of those Hebrew papers. I could see the printing on it and it was Hebrew printing. Kosher printing, if you know what I mean.

“And this bird was sitting there all absorbed, as you might say. No, of course it isn’t against the rules. The boys here get newspapers every day if they want ‘em. Why not? And most of all the newspapers are printing those things nowadays. So there you are. Some of the papers are offering prizes for doing puzzles. Why wouldn’t the boys be doing them?”

“If you should ask me, I think they might be a great influence for moral reform. What I mean is, now a man in here has a lot of spare time on his hands. Well, maybe if there’s nothing else for him to do he’ll sit down and figure out some new kind of hellery to get into when he gets out, if you see what I mean.”

The Washington Post
Sunday, November 30, 1924

Cross-Word Puzzle with Two Solutions Sought.

Princeton, N. J., Nov. 29th.—The cross-word puzzle wave has swept across faculty and students of Princeton university to the department of philosophy here. Prof. Warner Hite has offered a prize to the student who can devise a puzzle capable of two separate solutions. Such a problem, Prof. Hite asserts, could have great psychological value.

Prof. Robert K. Root, of the English department, recently announced his willingness to adopt the puzzles as part of the term work in some of his courses, provided someone could be found to construct puzzles for the test at the end of the term.

The Washington Post
Monday, November 24, 1924

The Cross-Word Craze.

No sooner do we emerge from the strife of a bitter national political campaign than we find ourselves confronted by another perplexing situation, namely, the cross-word puzzle crisis. Never before, as a nation, have we been so universally puzzled, says Harry Daniel, in Thrift.

On every hand throughout the length and breadth of our fair land, people find themselves suffering from sudden and serious attacks of white spaces. Everywhere from Maine to California and return our citizens are face to face with words that are too long, or, what is equally alarming, with words that are not long enough.

Knots of people gather on street corners, staid business men suddenly excuse themselves from important conferences, barbers desert perplexed patients reclining in operating chairs with faces covered with lather, and crying babes are left lying unspanked in their cribs.

What the people are asking themselves up and down this broad domain is what word of exactly nine letters did Demosthenes employ the day his sister-in-law was vaccinated? Also, what word of thirteen letters is used frequently as a term of endearment for the hairless dog of Mexico? What word of four letters, when heated to 250 degrees Fahrenheit, equals twice the sum of its own common denominator. What is the Russian colloquialism for "Attaboy?" Answer with a word of 97 letters.

In order to excel as a cross-worder it is advisable to be equipped with a general knowledge of all trades and industries; a post-graduate course in law, medicine and theology; and at least a cursory familiarity with Egyptology, anthropology, pedagogy and the post-office business. It is also well to be provided with a very acute and quick-witted lead pencil.

The Washington Post
Saturday, November 1, 1924

Cross-Word Puzzle Fan Talks of Bomb Blast.

New York, Oct. 31st.—His pockets filled with cross-word puzzles clipped from newspapers, Richard O'Hara, a Jersey City driver, was questioned today by detectives after O'Hara had confessed and then withdrawn the statement that he drove the little red wagon that carried the bomb into Wall street four years ago.

O'Hara rushed into police headquarters early today and demanded his own arrest, declaring he was tired of eluding the police. He insisted he set off the Wall street bomb. Later he refused to answer questions and informed police officers that they would have to prove the case against him.

Bellevue physicians who examined him say O'Hara is suffering from alcoholic poisoning. They fear also he may have become unbalanced trying to find a four-letter word meaning "hand grenade."

The Los Angeles Times
Sunday, December 21, 1924

Cross-Word Craze is Contagious.

"Think of a five-letter word meaning 'shed,' please," comes a sudden petition from the bent head.

"Cross-word puzzles, my dear," we remark with an air of finality, "are a social disaster," and we put "Nell Gwyn"¹ down on the table.

" 'Porch,' 'hutch,' 'cover,' won't do. The first letter must be 's'."

"They are a fad, bearing only a fugitive relation to life and literature."

"But I must find the word."

“Of course you must—now that you have begun.” We are a little irritated. “Broadly speaking, cross-word puzzles are insidiously like life. That is their greatest appeal. They promise victory at the end. They present mystery at the beginning and along the way. Each new word found is the lure which leads one to the next. Interest in the moment, in the now, is the force which carries us to the end. But the cross-word victory is an empty, useless victory. Get back to sterner interests, books, novels, biographies, literature.”

“There, one of the letters is ‘i.’ Now please, what is a three-letter word ending in ‘i’ that means Japanese sash?”

“‘Obi,’ of course. But, my dear, I must finish this book.”

“I have ‘s,’ I have ‘i;’ now what word can have those letters that means ‘shed?’”

“Cross-word puzzles are like shoddy novels. They are, for the time being, more insidious than shoddy novels, because they drag one into their activity. In novels, one is hero in fancy, in cross-word puzzles, one is hero in fact. The phrase ‘reading creatively’ takes on an emphatic meaning. But they are a fad. They are ephemeral. Consequently, it seems—”

”Ah, ‘newt’! That gives me an ‘s,’ and ‘i’ and a ‘t.’”

“—most unfortunate that even for a little while they should compete with books which aspire to literature. Cross-word puzzles are today’s best sellers. Books which are not books! On the subway trains, in the trolley cars, in railroad stations, in the theaters between the acts, what are people doing today? Solving cross-word puzzles. They consume more time—it would be interesting to know the figures.”

“There, I’ve got ‘l.’ now how can ‘s,’ dash, ‘i,’ ‘l,’ ‘t,’ possibly mean ‘shed?’ The dictionary.”

“Such puzzles hardly increase the vocabulary. The words one must search for are words one never uses. They are not conducive to the moral health of the family. They cause one to be neglectful, late, indifferent to the common duties of social

intercourse; they beggar the imagination by reducing and limiting the—”

“‘s—a,’ ‘s—b,’ ‘s—l’—I don’t believe it means ‘shed’ at all. Do you?”

We look longingly but hopelessly at “Nell Gwyn.”

“Let me have it,” we say, and alas! The contagion is upon us.

An hour passes very quickly before we learn that a conscienceless puzzle maker has given “shed” as key word for “spilt.”

“You see, my dear, they are not only insidious, but they are perfidious as well—”

“But what is a four-letter word meaning a dry wind from the Julian Alps—”

“No doubt the dictionary—but is this a new dictionary?”

“I bought it at the drug store this morning—ours is most too big.”

“They’ll be selling thesauruses at the groceries next—but what can this 37 across, two-letter word beginning with ‘i’ meaning a peacock butterfly, be?”

We are conscious of the flimsy sincerity in the words whose echo we have then so recently over at “Nell Gwyn,” abandoned, she who was so gorgeously abandoned, ourself abandoned.

“But not for long, dear lady,” we think, “or not for too long. Perhaps.”

1. *Nell Gwyn, the Story of Her Life*; Lewis Melville, 1874-1932; published by Doran, New York City, 1924.

A sensational, well-illustrated biography in its day.

Featured in a full page feature book review in *The New York Times* of Sunday, November 2, 1924. The article is titled, “Some Lovely Ladies of a Sort, Most of Whom Live in History by Grace of Royal Favor,” reviewing *Nell Gwyn, Seven*

Splendid Sinners, by W. R. H. Trowbridge; and *Lady Suffolk and Her Circle*, again by Melville. Invoking the title above pointedly mocks the pontificating anti-crosswordist's bogus sophistication, the speaker being at that moment absorbed in what was taken as a lurid biography of a courtesan. There are more recent biographies of Miss Gwyn (1650 - 1687).

In January, 2007 Melville's edition was listed by antiquarian booksellers, offered in good condition, at US\$30.

We reproduce this book's frontispiece on page one of this *Vidya*.

The New York Times
Friday, December 18, 1925

Husband Shoots Wife, Then Kills Himself When She Won't Help Do Cross-Word Puzzle.

Theodore Koerner, 27 years old, of 1616 Avenue B, Brooklyn, an adjuster for the New York Telephone Company, who had suffered two breakdowns since Summer, was at home with his wife, Louise, 25 years old, a telephone operator, yesterday when he asked her help in solving a cross-word puzzle.

"I'm tired," she answered, "and I'm going to lie down for a while."

She was on her bed a few minutes later when she heard the door of the bedroom opened and saw her husband standing at the door with a pistol.

As she screamed she heard the discharge of the pistol and felt a burning sensation on the temple. She ran, still screaming, from the house. Her husband fired another shot at her as she reached the front door and then as she was on the porch she heard a third shot.

She returned a few minutes later with Detectives James Lavelle and Robert Daly. They found Koerner lying on the

floor of the living room with a bullet in his heart, dead.

The first doctor called to examine Mrs. Koerner said she was suffering only from an abrasion of the temple, but later she became ill and Dr. Gaber of Coney Island Hospital said the bullet had penetrated her temple. She was taken to Kings County Hospital, where it was said her condition was serious.

The Washington Post
Sunday, February 15th, 1925

Science Explains Cross-word Lure.

What is the secret of the amazing, almost hypnotic lure of cross-word puzzles? Why have the people who have escaped radio, bridge, golf and even the movies, succumbed at last to a popular fad? Why is it that the solving of puzzles, which has been practiced by man since the dawn of history, should have waited until the years 1924-1925 before becoming a universal pastime?

The last question possibly is the most easily answered, write Dr. H. E. Jones and Prescott Lecky, psychologists, of Columbia University, in the March number of Popular Science Monthly. Crossword puzzles never could have flourished in the past, for the reason that the level of general education, even a score of years ago, was much lower than at present and solving the puzzles requires at least an elementary education.

Another reason for their success is that cross-word puzzles are almost the first fad of history the practice of which costs virtually nothing and requires the development of no special physical dexterity, the acquisition of no special equipment, the learning of no rules.

To the psychologist, however, readily occurs an even more potent reason for the amazing popularity of this newest fad. Successfully working out cross-word puzzles, more than any other similar amusement of recent history, satisfies a long list of the fundamental desires of human kind. Social distinction, sex, imitation, group loyalty, cooperation, competition, pleasure, play,

amusement, humor, curiosity, activity and constructiveness—all of those ingrained, instinctive wants of man are satisfied merely by printing letters in the proper squares.

Cross-word puzzles are supposed by many to increase our power of concentration to help our memory and our reasoning ability, and, by demanding decisive judgments, are even regarded as an aid to the will. It would require a whole course in psychology to present an adequate criticism of these views. Suffice it to say that we no longer believe in vague, general “faculties of the mind.” You may strengthen your biceps by pulling chest weights and find the increased strength useful in playing baseball or hoeing potatoes, but the brain does not behave in the same way. Mental habits are usually quite specific, so, though cross-word puzzles may increase your vocabulary and play a useful rôle in keeping you out of mischief, neither they nor any other single discipline can be expected to have much effect in “improving the mind.” The one reason for doing cross-word puzzles is for the fun of it. They are innocent amusement—nothing more nor less!

The New York Times
Saturday, December 20, 1924

FIGHT OVER “CELL” IN CELL.

Cross-Word Puzzle Adds to Troubles
of Pittsburgh Jail Cellmates.

Pittsburgh, Dec. 19th.—A four-letter word meaning “a place of punishment” suggested “cell” to Michael Flood, arrested on a charge of drunkenness, but to Michael Grapp, his cellmate, the last three letters were all right but the first one was wrong.

The men fought about it in their cell last night, and today Flood was sentenced to thirty days in the workhouse or a \$10 fine for striking his companion.

Both were arrested yesterday, and had hit upon the crossword puzzle as a way to pass the hours in the county jail.

The Washington Post
Sunday, March 8, 1925

Cross-Word Puzzles of 50 Celebrities.

The latest variation in cross-word puzzles is offered by Simon & Schuster in “The Celebrities’ Cross-Word Puzzle Book,” edited by Prosper Buranelli, F. Gregory Hartswick and Margaret Petherbridge, experts and editors of the original cross-word puzzle books.

Fifty puzzles by 50 famous people are gathered together in this highly entertaining volume, including the “children” of such brains as Raymond Hitchcock, Chauncey Depew, Admiral Sims, Gov. Al Smith and stars of screen and footlights, as well as the athletic world.

Every page contains a puzzle and a chuckle, the latter inspired by Herb Roth’s delightfully amusing cartoons of the celebrities whose puzzles appear.

Such talent is revealed in the creation of these brain teasers that one is led to suspect some 50 famous artists and politicians have missed their calling entirely. All these years they should have been giving the world the benefit of their rare gift as jugglers of the black-and-white squares.

To those who have not yet succumbed to the fascination of the checkered squares, it is prescribed as fatal.

[A used copy of this book listed for sale at US\$30.00 in January 2007. The Will Rogers crossword puzzle in this book is replicated in this Vidya, page 48. The book’s frontispiece, a year’s end 1924 editorial cartoon, appears on our page 58.]

The Los Angeles Times
Tuesday, September 7, 1948

Dissertation on the Merits of Crossword Puzzles.

I've read gripes and agreed many times. Now I wish to extend congratulations on a subject that I have never mentioned. I wish to thank you for the excellent crossword puzzle in your Sunday publication, *Home Magazine*, and all of the lovely pictures and articles contained therein.

I am a shut-in and the income for me is barely enough for me to live alone and not owe a penny to anyone.

I am determined to keep my mind active, even though my body is in painful torment. That little magazine has meant a lot to me for many years as well as the whole *Times*. The daily puzzles are too easy for me, but the one in *Home Magazine* is my pet. I am now on my seventh book of odd, foreign and obscure words, all tabulated, and all gleaned from crossword puzzles.

I find the crossword puzzles in London newspapers are the most difficult to solve and Hawaiian are next. Ours are rather easy to solve, as a rule, at least for me.

I love to fight to get every word correct. Of late the *Home Magazine* puzzles are much easier to solve than they used to be. I have several of them that I received in the magazine about 10 years ago. Those are much more difficult than the present issues.

I missed those in places and I have tried to do them this week, but no go, so far. I have the solutions of course. I love them difficult.

I find the Glidograms in *This Week* very easy to solve. That is a fine magazine, too. The complete *Times* is my "meat" these days, believe me.

It does me good to send this to you instead of a gripe, a grouch or a knock.

Mrs. E. Eames,
Santa Monica



Height of the Crossword Puzzle craze,
so they thought 1924 - 1925.
From *The Celebrities Cross Word Puzzle Book*, 1925.

This *Vidya* includes three crossword puzzles previously published by TNS member **Prof. E. H. Julius**, California Lutheran University, and I amused myself by running one of those puzzle’s actual words and clues against the puzzle’s replicated grid using **Crossword Weaver**, Orem, Utah, forty U.S. dollars, default setting is American English language circa 2006.¹

As regards crossword puzzle constructing, this can’t fail in theory. If **Crossword Weaver** can’t fit items from a User’s list—even a word list copied from a completed crossword grid, into the identical grid—the program draws upon its own dictionary to complete a puzzle. Can’t fail.

The User begins by employing **Crossword Weaver’s** provided grid creation page to replicate a proven crossword puzzle grid—in this instance an American-style symmetrical grid 15 cells across by 15 cells down, with 26 of those cells blacked-out, yielding an 88% open grid to be correctly “solved”—and uses the simplest word processor to compile the grid’s proven words and clues list in the ASCII format [WORD] space [CLUE] end of line, or “hard-return.”

With both a known crossword puzzle grid in place and a proven words list input, the User then clicks on **Crossword Weaver’s** “MAKE PUZZLE” toolbar icon, and seconds pass. Seconds become minutes. Minutes become quarters of hours.

Crossword Weaver begins puzzle making—or in this test instance replicating a known crossword puzzle—by immediately placing the grid’s two central words, both of which are this particular grid’s only full span 15-character words, **HESITATIONPITCH** across **PRESTIDIGITATOR**, highlighting the vertical (“down”) word in blue, the horizontal (“across”) word in red, as this program does during words placement.

But **Crossword Weaver** executes the fundamental error of placing the correct vertical word horizontally, the correct

horizontal word vertically, then, assured that both words cross at their common eighth character, “i”, cannot re-orient the paired words so as to complete the grid correctly using the word list given by User. Nor can the program, after five minutes of trials which should not require a half-minute, complete the grid drawing upon its own dictionary of words and clues.

Crossword Weaver’s native ability appears severely limited.

A user can assist **Crossword Weaver** executing known-grid completion by entering solution words—which then appear as green-coloured characters—and **HESITATIONPITCH** is entered by the User as the correct “down” word, **PRESTIDIGITATOR** as the correct “across” word.

Crossword Weaver can then proceed to correctly complete a known crossword puzzle in its native grid in less than one minute, each completion time varying with the program’s random selections from the proven word list, and the program’s installed dictionary.

Completing a User initiated, or “hinted” or “jump-started,” proven crossword puzzle is accomplished in elapsed times varying from two seconds to a half-minute, varying with the program’s success at randomized word placement and validation against not only the User-provided proven word list, but against **Crossword Weaver’s** installed dictionary.

In brief, **Crossword Weaver** fails, in the manner of a toy, to do anything genuinely useful, but may provide some novelty to persons who wish to generate crossword puzzles in which very few of their own words appear, promoting a personal interest, or amusing a specific audience.

Crossword Weaver, for one instance, may well provide novelty and conceivably value as an elementary school or home-schooling literacy device, as the program provides 150 pre-formatted puzzle grids ranging from a fully-open 5-by-5

square to a “Z” shaped grid presenting 135 open cells, the greater number of which are open to three-letter words, with no word in the “Z” more than four letters. **Crossword Weaver’s** intermediate grids include novelty shapes suggesting iconic “hearts,” space aliens, and space alien internal organs not suitable for viewing by all ages.

A **Crossword Weaver** User can proceed to design square grids up to 51 by 51 cells, or within those upper limits freeform grids testing local community decency statutes.

Users can thus compose and physically print crossword puzzles and solutions ranging from elemental to adult literacy level, providing that one accepts many of **Crossword Weaver’s** default settings, which TNS Testing Labs by the very nature of our demanding, hazardous and controversial work cannot.

While TNS Testing Laboratories cannot recommend the personal computer program **Crossword Weaver** to every adult, the program may provide good value as a young persons’ learning resource, as well as to those adults who compose instructive crossword puzzles for their students to solve.

Clint Williams,

TNS Software and Imported Beverage Testing Labs.

1. <http://www.varietygames.com>

Variety Games, Inc., 115 East 900 South, Orem, UT 84058,
USA

Crossword Puzzle no. 50 Clues

ACROSS

-
- | | | | |
|----|-----------------------------------|----|---------------------------------------|
| 1 | Sort of block-shaped | 39 | Cookie favorite |
| 9 | "I wouldn't _____ for the world." | 40 | Chemical prefix |
| 15 | Fancy flourish in handwriting | 41 | Chemical suffix |
| 16 | Hydrocarbon found in natural gas | 42 | City in southern France |
| 17 | Creator of "Gargantua" | 46 | Give up |
| 18 | Reddish-brown pigment | 47 | Coat part |
| 19 | Letters on sunblock container | 49 | Senior, in Saint-Tropez |
| 20 | California live oaks | 50 | Suffix for lemon |
| 22 | Zero-_____ game | 51 | _____ vobiscum (The Lord be with you) |
| 23 | Swampy areas | 53 | Seventh-Day Adventist, for short |
| 25 | 1999 Anthony Hopkins film | 54 | _____ Tin |
| 26 | _____ out a living | 56 | Household gods of the ancient Hebrews |
| 27 | Founder of psychoanalysis | 58 | Native of ancient Roman province |
| 29 | Steely _____ | 59 | _____ writing |
| 30 | _____ offering | 60 | Like Max Bialystock |
| 31 | Stanford-_____ IQ test | 61 | Combined with water |
| 33 | Make fun of | | |
| 34 | Expert at sleight of hand | | |
| 38 | Hebrew tribesman | | |

DOWN

-
- | | | | |
|----|------------------------------------|----|-----------------------------|
| 1 | Back of the neck | 28 | As said above |
| 2 | Shake or tremble | 30 | "Don't _____ it" |
| 3 | Suave | 32 | Never, in Nuremberg |
| 4 | Malt and hops | 33 | Yahtzee component |
| 5 | Anger | 34 | Posters |
| 6 | "_____ Get Started" | 35 | _____ reading |
| 7 | Committed hari-kari (colloq.) | 36 | Case builder |
| 8 | Satchel Paige's specialty (2 wds.) | 37 | "Mountain _____" |
| 9 | High plateaus | 41 | "I think, therefore _____" |
| 10 | "_____ a far, far better thing..." | 43 | Poor sports stroke |
| 11 | "Ain't _____ Sweet" | 44 | Salad green |
| 12 | Ancient language | 45 | Sewn together |
| 13 | Insinuation | 47 | Baxter of the NBA |
| 14 | Jimmy Hoffa, for one | 48 | Enticed |
| 21 | Sister | 51 | Actress Cameron |
| 24 | Abate | 52 | River in W. Europe |
| 26 | Large global region | 55 | Actress Carrera |
| | | 57 | Organization for Mr. Chips? |

Crossword Puzzle no. 50
Legerdemain by Ed Julius

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15								16					
17								18					
19			20				21			22			
23			24	25				26					
27				28	29			30					
			31		32			33					
34	35	36						37					
38							39						
40					41			42		43	44	45	
46				47				48		49			
50			51					52		53			
54			55				56			57			
58							59						
60							61						

www.CrosswordWeaver.com

Solution on page 58

Across

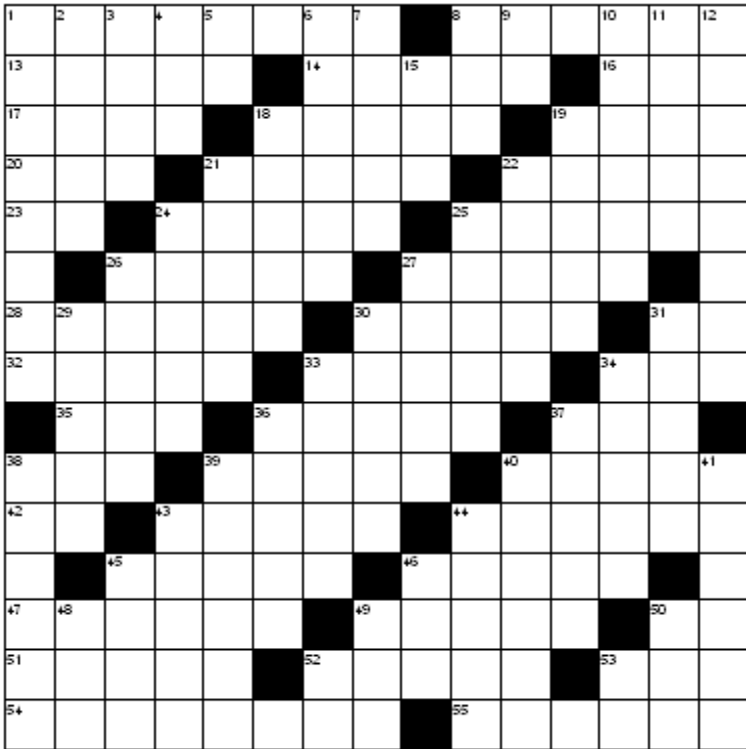
-
- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 Meritorious models | 34 Incite, urge on |
| 8 Decorated | 35 Anger |
| 13 Potato state | 36 Peels |
| 14 Make amends for | 37 Laughter, as comic outburst |
| 16 Girl's wollen hat | 38 Suffix (meaning, relating to) |
| 17 Felines | 39 Wagons |
| 18 Gazed fixedly | 40 Doves houses |
| 19 Tree trunk | 42 Pronoun |
| 20 Closing period of life | 43 Men |
| 21 Heavy stake driven for support | 44 True, square dealing |
| 22 Malignant growth | 45 Inflammations |
| 23 Pronoun | 46 Ominous bird |
| 24 Serf | 47 Apportions |
| 25 Northern sea and strait | 49 Lubricated |
| 26 Steeple | 50 Indefinite article |
| 27 Bracing medicine | 51 Rental contract |
| 28 Observe particularly | 52 Milk secreting organ in cattle |
| 30 Reception hall | 53 Lower beverage temperature |
| 31 Preposition | 54 Covering |
| 32 Rejoice, make jubilant | 55 Told |
| 33 Mental defective | |

Down

-
- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 Petty, cheap | 29 Mediterranean oil tree |
| 2 Saying, traditional wisdom | 30 Divides into types |
| 3 Proportion | 31 Monsters |
| 4 Felicitous exclamations | 33 Equine females |
| 5 Depart | 34 Consumed |
| 6 Aboriginal population | 36 Becomes white |
| 7 Old, played out | 37 Sharpened, as a razor |
| 8 Unit | 38 Thrust through |
| 9 Thing | 39 Formal challenge |
| 10 Pertaining to smallest particles | 40 Hidden, surreptitious |
| 11 Claw, as of bird | 41 Hit with rocks |
| 12 Coming out | 43 Massive antlered animal |
| 15 Metal bearing rock | 44 Takes forcibly, leads |
| 18 Lean | 45 Eastern European |
| 19 Engraver's tool | 46 Free |
| 21 A removed layer | 48 Give to use temporarily (dial.) |
| 22 Mortise partner | 49 Lyric poem |
| 24 Mean, petty cherishing of grudge | 50 Expert aviator |
| 25 Philippine weapons | 52 Directional adverb |
| 26 Fixed gaze | 53 Neutral pronoun |
| 27 Weeds | |

Ride 'Im, Cowboy!, by Will Rogers (1879 - 1935)

replicated from *The Celebrities Cross Word Puzzle Book, Fifty New and Original Puzzles by Fifty Famous Men and Women Published Here for the First Time*; Simon and Schuster, New York City, 1925



www.CrosswordWizards.com

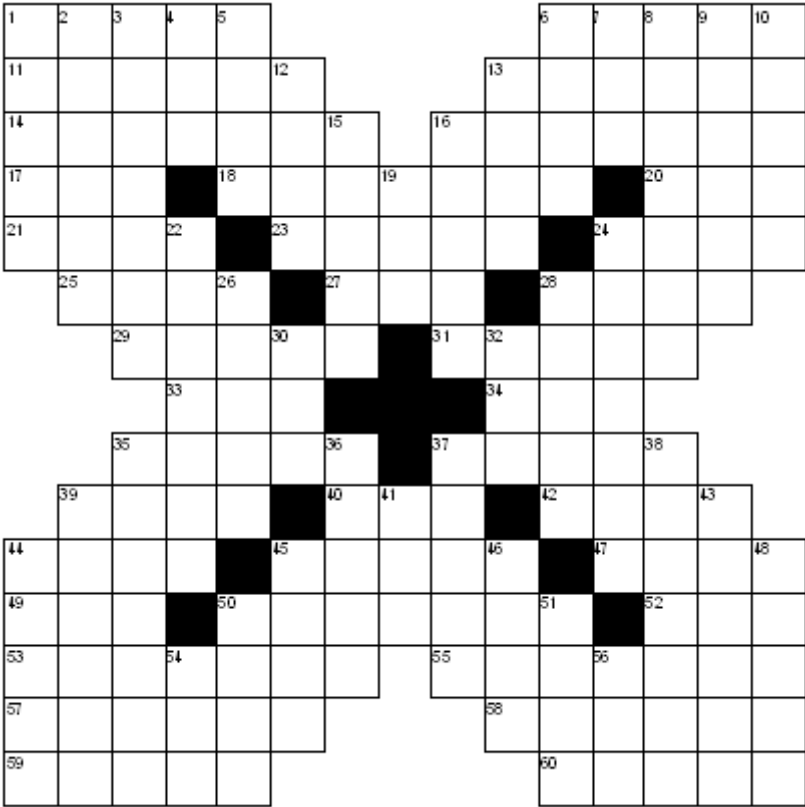
Solution on page 59

ACROSS

- | | | | |
|----|-------------------------------|----|---|
| 1 | With cause or without | 34 | Escudo |
| 6 | Arrivederci | 35 | Nuisances |
| 11 | Not digital | 37 | Turk work |
| 13 | Pitt movie | 39 | Angry |
| 14 | Bus fare | 40 | In here, in there, somewhere in
everywhere |
| 16 | Gay occasion | 42 | Holler |
| 17 | Out to sea | 44 | Halt or stanch, trunk not branch |
| 18 | French funk | 45 | _____ acid (vitamin) |
| 20 | Boy seen with Gladys | 47 | Weight loss scheme |
| 21 | Bang down | 49 | Large number |
| 23 | Scoots | 50 | Hamper |
| 24 | Ten, straight, bobby, bowling | 52 | Distant |
| 25 | Little Mermaid's love | 53 | Early |
| 27 | Ball holder | 55 | Fatty animal tissue |
| 28 | Rate, state, gait | 57 | Proper |
| 29 | Saying | 58 | Main dish |
| 31 | Horse rakers | 59 | Writings |
| 33 | Wk. day | 60 | Kate version 2 |

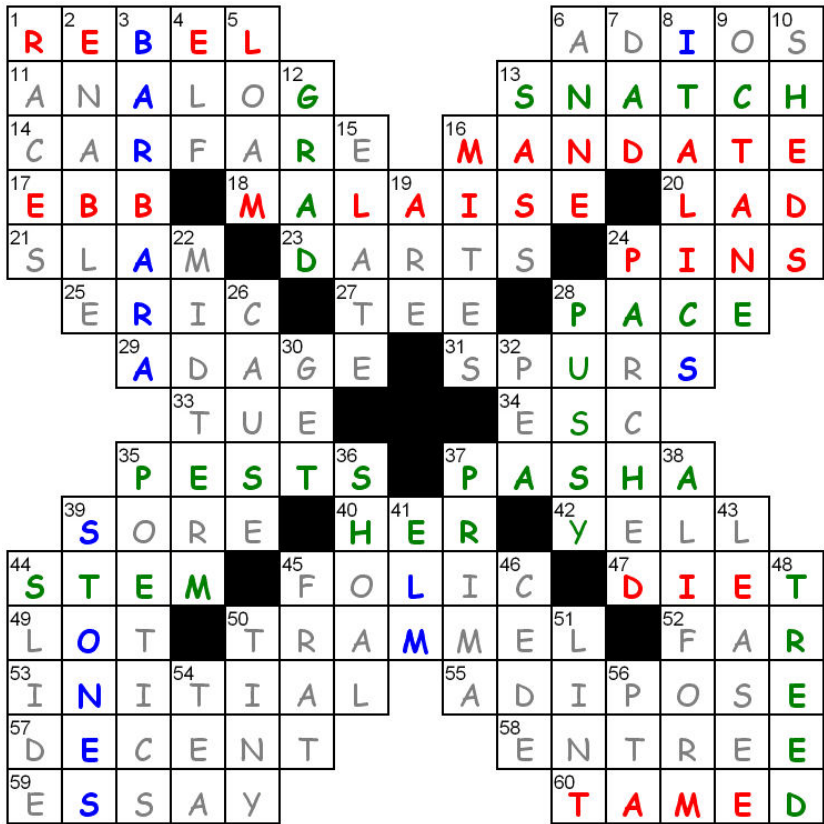
DOWN

- | | | | |
|----|-------------------|----|---------------------------|
| 1 | Heats | 28 | Kitten, willow, Bond girl |
| 2 | Render able | 30 | Collect |
| 3 | Eden, Bush, Santa | 32 | Legume |
| 4 | Imp | 35 | Study of poetry |
| 5 | Dirt | 36 | A river's shallows |
| 6 | Green gable girl | 37 | Leading |
| 7 | Father | 38 | Wing like |
| 8 | Tippy characters | 39 | Rolling rockers |
| 9 | Type of gasoline | 41 | Nightmare street |
| 10 | Gives off tears | 43 | Tenant |
| 12 | B4U8 | 44 | Chute |
| 13 | Talk back | 45 | Club |
| 15 | Thrill | 46 | Yield |
| 16 | Tiny insects | 48 | Hounded and high |
| 19 | To be | 50 | Teeny |
| 22 | Mid-semester test | 51 | Fuzz |
| 24 | Torrid | 54 | British drink |
| 26 | Effect | 56 | Rolling rockers |



www.CrosswordWeaver.com

Example crossword puzzle designed using the personal computer program *Crossword Weaver*, sold by Variety Games, Inc., Orem, Utah. The program is rated a consumer **Best Buy** by TNS Testing Laboratories. But then, so is cheap beer. *Solution on following page.*



		T	<
		R	S
	>	I	<
		P	O
>	N	L	C
	>	E	<
			Y

Above we pose a four-dimensional version of “TRIPLE NINE SOCIETY.” We begin by inscribing the phrase’s most resourceable word, TRIPLE, from which the characters T, I and E are drawn for use completing the words SOCIETY and NINE. The initial inscription in two dimensional space is TRIPLENSOCY. The two vowels of the second word of the phrase are referenced to a third dimension, while a move into a fourth dimension references the only inscribed N for re-use. Reading the word NINE thus originates in one dimension, moves to another dimension to read I, yet another dimension to read the replicated N, then falls back to I’s dimension to read E. SOCIETY is less demanding reading, moving from the first plane to only one plane higher to draw upon I, E, T. This hints at what economies might be realized by stacking characters dimensionally. Though some problems need to be worked through before releasing this innovative paper saver technology, printers in the state of Mississippi are excited about possibilities.

Sudoku is a logic-based placement puzzle. The objective is to fill the 9 by 9 grid so that each column, each row, and each of the nine 3 by 3 boxes contains the digits 1 to 9.

5	3			7				
6			1	9	5			
	9	8					6	
8				6				3
4			8		3			1
7				2				6
	6					2	8	
			4	1	9			5
				8			7	9

5	3	4	6	7	8	9	1	2
6	7	2	1	9	5	3	4	8
1	9	8	3	4	2	5	6	7
8	5	9	7	6	1	4	2	3
4	2	6	8	5	3	7	9	1
7	1	3	9	2	4	8	5	6
9	6	1	5	3	7	2	8	4
2	8	7	4	1	9	6	3	5
3	4	5	2	8	6	1	7	9

Sample Sudoku from Wikipedia

Sudoku. Two examples of today's popular grid game.

4	6			2				
		5			1	8		
	2		7				3	
	4	1		5	7	9		3
9		2				4		7
8		7	1	9		2	5	
	7				5		4	
		4	6			5		
				7			6	2

1		7				6	8	
9			3	4	8		5	
4		5	1	7			2	3
3		6				2		5
			6		7			
8		4				1		7
7	2			6	5	4		9
	4		9	1	3			2
	9	3				8		6

Solutions on page 60

Triple Nine Society Word Square

Solution on opposite page

1	2	3	4	5		6
7						
			8			
9						
10						
			11			
12						

DOWN

ACROSS

1. Kindly fasten
2. Not goier
3. XXX psychosis
4. High, low, TN
5. A container opening
6. Abduct Sister Pristina

1. Kindly pass
7. Giddy psychosis
8. Pet follower, robin leader
9. After straple streple
10. After seveineight
11. Tateti trailers
12. Devout child enclosure

¹ T	² H	³ E	⁴ S	⁵ A	L	⁶ T
⁷ H	A	P	O	P	I	A
E	L	O	⁸ C	O	C	K
⁹ S	T	R	I	P	L	E
¹⁰ N	I	N	E	T	E	N
A	E	I	¹¹ T	O	T	U
¹² P	R	A	Y	P	E	N

Puzzle no. 50

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13	14	
S	Q	U	A	R	I	S	H		M	I	S	S	I	T	
15									16						
C	U	R	L	I	C	U	E		E	T	H	A	N	E	
17									18						
R	A	B	E	L	A	I	S		S	I	E	N	N	A	
19					20			21			22				
U	V	A		E	N	C	I	N	A	S		S	U	M	
23			24		25					26					
F	E	N	S		T	I	T	U	S		E	K	E	S	
27				28		29			30						
F	R	E	U	D		D	A	N		B	U	R	N	T	
				31		32			33						
				B	I	N	E	T		D	E	R	I	D	E
34	35	36							37						
P	R	E	S	T	I	D	I	G	I	T	A	T	O	R	
38								39							
L	E	V	I	T	E			O	R	E	O	S			
40						41			42		43	44	45		
A	M	I	D	O		I	N	E		N	I	M	E	S	
46					47				48		49				
C	E	D	E		L	A	P	E	L		A	I	N	E	
50				51					52		53				
A	D	E		D	O	M	I	N	U	S		S	D	A	
54			55					56			57				
R	I	N	T	I	N			T	E	R	A	P	H	I	M
58								59							
D	A	C	I	A	N			C	R	E	A	T	I	V	E
60								61							
S	L	E	A	Z	Y			H	Y	D	R	A	T	E	D

Mr. Will Rogers' crossword puzzle



www.CrosswordWreath.com

Shaded cells of this 1925 crossword puzzle mark constructing problems professional puzzlers avoid. Two-character words are unacceptable, and single characters, “unkeyed,” or, which appear in one word only, not “crossed” with another word, are forbidden.

Today’s professional crossword puzzle composers call themselves “cruciverbalists,” word-crossers, a term derived from New Testament Latin, where it is prophesied that in the last days of Man on Earth demons will run amok tormenting The New York Times readers, even more so on Sabbath, when crossword puzzle grids contain 441 cells, as compared to the newspaper’s daily crosswords’ 225.

Cruciverbalists avail themselves of ready resources hosted by CRUCIVERB dot com, a friendly Website whose participants range from pathetically inept novices – Vidya’s present Editor – to the most accomplished crossword makers, as seen composing and competing in the genuinely engaging motion picture, *Wordplay*.

Sudoku solutions.

4	6	3	5	2	8	7	9	1
7	9	5	3	6	1	8	2	4
1	2	8	7	4	9	6	3	5
6	4	1	2	5	7	9	8	3
9	5	2	8	3	6	4	1	7
8	3	7	1	9	4	2	5	6
2	7	6	9	1	5	3	4	8
3	1	4	6	8	2	5	7	9
5	8	9	4	7	3	1	6	2

1	3	7	5	9	2	6	8	4
9	6	2	3	4	8	7	5	1
4	8	5	1	7	6	9	2	3
3	7	6	4	8	1	2	9	5
2	1	9	6	5	7	3	4	8
8	5	4	2	3	9	1	6	7
7	2	1	8	6	5	4	3	9
6	4	8	9	1	3	5	7	2
5	9	3	7	2	4	8	1	6

Trick 7 solutions

Elementary

Brain Builders

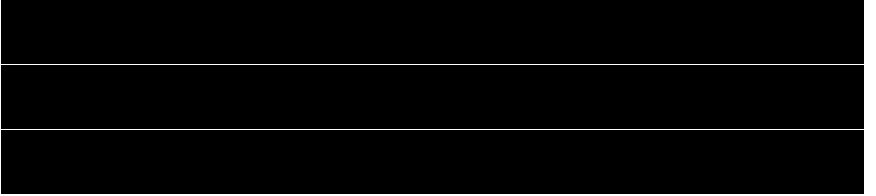
1. 1,225
2. 7,225
3. 9,025
4. 625
5. 3,025
6. 5,625
7. 2,025
8. 225

9. 4,225
10. 9,025
11. 7,225
12. 1,225
13. 625
14. 3,025
15. 5,625
16. 2,025

1. 11,025
2. 1,225
3. 562,500
4. 72.25
5. 422.5
6. 2,250
7. 132.25
8. 3,025
9. 0.2025
10. 9,025

In this issue.

From Nell Gwyn, 1924. page 1, 2



Rapid Math, Prof. E. H. Julius. page 23

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Crossword Puzzle, Prof. E. H. Julius. page 46

Crossword Puzzle by Will Rogers, 1925. page 48

Puzzling Matters. page 53



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For best results, take Vidya daily.