THE MIRTHLESS WORLD OF THE BILINGUAL DICTIONARY

A Critical Look at Two German-English Examples, and A Glossary *

... Officers, without a word of German, were billeted on families, and the town swarmed with G.I.s. Lucia, whose English was always considered so good, had great difficulty in understanding what they said. She had a bewildered feeling of not being able - in the language sense - to 'hear' the phrases used. 'It beats the crap outa me,' she heard one say. She could not find the key-word in her English-German dictionary. Nor many other words they used.


I

Lucia's plight in 1945, and that of untold other non-native speakers before and after, is a common one. In the three decades and a half since then, some very good bilingual dictionaries in the pocket-size, desk and encyclopaedic ranges have been published. Yet, in spite of the praises that have been sung about such publications, most of them fail to do justice both to the richness of the spoken language on either side, and to the many ways and means by which that richness can, and should, be matched level for level. Such a discovery is as inevitable as it is disconcerting. These general dictionaries, both in what they offer and in what they withhold, are, all in all, a sadly distorted reflection of living speech: far too frequently their renderings merely approximate to the usage of native speakers. They may be quite

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on target as far as denotation goes, but in the infinitely more subtle sphere of connotation they belie the original: the "equivalents" listed often do not deserve the name, as they incline either towards excessive coarseness or exaggerated gentility, vacillate between verbosity and taciturnity, make unwarranted changes such as the deletion, attenuation or superimposition of metaphorical colouring, and reveal a number of other infidelities besides.

Let the reader beware! But let not the linguists who are qualified to know better gloat over the gaucheries of those preceding them. Here are a few guide-lines along which the improvement of present lexical shortcomings might be attempted in our particular field:

** Any bilingual lexicographer, after having taken his bearings, is well advised, as a first step, to do some long and thorough stock-taking of conversational speech; he is encouraged to gather evidence from the sundriest of sources - from plays and stories, magazine articles and popular newspapers, but above all from his neighbour next door and the speaker in the street, and from observing how he talks himself. Joe Orton's warning in 1964, "I think you should use the language of your age, and use every bit of it, not just a little bit," though addressed to fellow-playwrights, is worthy of attention by potential editors of dictionaries as well.

It seems quite preposterous in this connection (going by a no doubt genuine incident related by Dr. R. W. Chapman in his slim volume on *Lexicography* [Oxford University Press, 1948, p. 12]) that some people in authority make a distinction between dictionary words and non-dictionary words. Clearly, formidable Mrs. Grundy is still active, and is responsible for the enduring banishment, or at best grudging admission, of four-letter words. On the other hand, if their teeming vitality in everyday collocations were given unbridled freedom, such words would spread over columns and indeed pages of any larger general dictionary. As it is, present-day Lucias will continue to find little or no evidence of them, and will hence continue to be baffled. However, in fairness, some cautious slackening of the strict lexicographical propriety
can now be observed: for instance, the new seventeenth edition of *Duden 1* (1973) showed itself to be "abreast" of the times when it printed ubiquitous German *BH* - a perfect match for English *bra*, by the way - for the first time; and in English-speaking countries a new research centre for verbal aggression, with its semi-annual journal *Maledicta*, has begun to investigate the role of taboo words and win them dictionary status.

** Only when the collecting is done, and an *ad hoc* card-index for both languages organised by word field, are these riches ready for linear confrontation. The editor and his associates, by thus unearthing and marshalling the hidden resources of the two languages, will have done much to avoid the pitfall of desultory and therefore unrepresentative selection - one of the chronic weaknesses in lexicography. But what is more, rejecting editorial haphazardry will reward them with a host of words and sayings that can be neatly paired, be it in the areas of folk wisdom, weather lore or common everyday speech where the simple man's fondness for colourful metaphors and similes, for emphatic and irreverent witticisms, becomes evident on all hands:

*der Apfel fällt nicht weit vom Stamm* an apple never falls far from the tree

*ein blindes Huhn findet auch ein Korn* even a blind pig finds an acorn some time

*das passt wie die Faust aufs Auge* that fits like a saddle on a sow

*der Teufel haut sein Weib* (a word symbolism to describe the meteorological phenomenon of rain and sunshine at the same time) the devil is beating his wife

*der Petrus tut kegelscheiben* (South Germany and Austria: a popular interpretation of rumbling peals of thunder) Hendrick Hudson and his crew are at their game of ninepins (New England)

*dein Vater ist wohl Glaser? ist dein Vater Glaser* (SGer. a.)
ein Glašerer'? (a jeering note to one obstructing the view)
your father wasn't a glazier!

sie (or die) vergönneinenicht einmal das Schwarze unter Nagel (with an appropriate gesture pulling the flesh from under one's thumb-nail against one's forefinger) they wouldn't give you the dirt from under their finger-nails
das ist ganz meine Wellenlänge that's right on my wavelength

sternhagelvöllbesoffen dirty stinking rotten drunk

null, Komma, Josef, gebrochen durch nichts (South Germany and Austria: a humorous and drastic way of expressing total ignorance, lack of funds, etc.) smaller than the little end of nothing whittled down to a fine point (Ozarks)

One of the rigorously exclusive and therefore unadulterated types of colloquial speech is dialect; speakers, even when airing their views on human character and things metaphysical, are wont to express themselves not in abstract and learned terms, but in pictures drawn from the everyday world around them. One does not have to go far for graphic illustration. For instance, it is well worth taking a brief look at two old national entities, Bavaria and Scotland, whose rural communities— in spite of noticeable differences in political, economic, and ecclesiastical spheres— lead simple lives "at the grass-roots", which makes them both see eye to eye on many matters. The accumulated knowledge of generations has long been distilled and preserved in proverbial lore and descriptive sayings. Looking at this essence of seasoned experience, one cannot help being amazed at the fact that, again and again, two peoples should have arrived at the self-same conclusions although their lives were divided by land and sea, and although, until after the Second World War, they knew little of and had had little of nothing to do with each other.

auf oam Weg, wo vui gefahrn wird, wachet koa Gras (implying that it does not pay to get into a rut) ower sair [sorely]
bett [beaten] a roadie niver grows corn

an anbrennte Scheitl brennt besser als an andere (used of a renewed quarrel or love-affair) an aal fire's seen kennelt [kindled]

wo d'Henna kraht und net da Hahn, da is die Wirtschaft übel dran, or Deandl, de pfeifn, und Henna, de krah, sollt ma of zwoa an Hals umdrahn (a reference to unnatural phenomena) fustlin maidens an craain hens is nae lucky aboot ony man's place; note also the remarkable similarities of form and content in a South Carolina proverb: a whistling girl and a crowing hen will bring this world to no good end, or will land this world in the devil's den)

a Geicht, daß d' Muech sauw wurd (said of one who looks discontented) a face that wid [would] soor milk

nix via naus, was koa Haussins zahlt (a warning to get rid of something that does more harm than good) better a teem [empty] hoose than an ill tenant

wenn der Bettlma aufs Roß kommt, kann er 's nimmer derhalt'n (a comment on the haughtiness of many upstarts) set a beggar on horseback, and he'll ride a gallop

d' Schuastaweiba und d' Schmiedsroß gehn barfuß (a caustic comment on the common human tendency to skimp in the face of plenty) the shaymakkar's weif and the smith's meer's aye warst shoad

liaba an Augnblick feig als a Lebm lang dout better a livin cooard than a deid hero

's letzte Gwand hat koane Taschn (earthly riches cannot be transferred to the hereafter) shrouds haven't any pockets

ojs hat oa End, nur die Wurscht hat zwoa ilka thing has ane end, bit a pudden [= sausage] (or a staff) has twa.

These instances of parallelism, so fascinating in content and form, are
only random helpings from a huge repository, into which scholarly com-
paratists, translators, and students of the language at large are in-
vited to dip. Interestingly and yet sadly enough, dictionary makers' eyes - up to the present - have been closed to such riches.

Occasionally, however, one's delight at discovering and recording an exact parallel for dictionary use must be bridled. This caution applies both to lexemes and syntagmas that occur rarely or are limited in scope, and to those containing slang, dialect or vulgarisms known to the in-
sider only. A dictionary, after all, cannot function as a "stretch-as-
stretch-can", and a line must be drawn somewhere. The principles of se-
lection may vary somewhat from case to case but, given consistency, ought to be self-evident, preference of course going to those items that are (a) widespread, (b) in current use, and (c) immediately com-
prehensible without further glossing.

** One besetting sin committed by lexicographers now deserves special mention. Almost anyone leafing through a bilingual dictionary will have come across brief, yet enigmatic equations like

\[
\begin{aligned}
\text{Liebestöter} & \quad \text{passion killers} \\
\text{Musspritze} & \quad \text{gamp} \\
\text{Pusselarbeit} & \quad \text{niggling work}
\end{aligned}
\]

which because of their employment of slang and regional idiosyncrasies are unlikely within such a scanty setting, to be readily understood throughout the area of the source language. For the same reason, in their turn, native speakers of the target language may similarly be left guessing. Entries of the kind, then, resemble simple equations with one or even two unknowns which, as any schoolboy knows, are im-
possible to solve.

What is true of individual words can be even more exasperating if the riddle is a whole phrase. The semantic sky looks speciously clear and serene, at first glance, over entries like

\[
\text{einen Frosch im Halse (stecken) haben} \quad \text{to have a frog in one's throat}
\]
ein Loch im Bauch haben to have a hole in one's stomach
du bist wohl auf der Nase gelaufen? did you fall on your nose?

Now, does one really swallow a frog? Get a hole in one's stomach, unless from a gunshot wound? Surely, running on one's nose is an absurdity. So, what meaning does that sentence convey? The dictionary-user now, if not before, discovers that a label, *fig.*, precedes the German phrase in all three instances, warning him to abandon the concrete for a transferred sense. But which one is it? Unless the reader knows (which is unlikely), he has nothing to guide him, and the rest is unmitigated frustration. Perpetrators of ghost entries like these ought to be reminded of an old teaching tenet, "It is more important that students should know the context in which words and phrases might be used than that they should be able to explain their meanings" (cp. B.D. GRAVES, *Advanced English Practice* [London: Oxford University Press, 1967 (1963)], p. 141).

** The operation requiring by far the greatest knowledge and skill is the process of detaching the semantic content from its socio-cultural environs in the source language, and embedding it in the new matrix of the target language. The fact that German and English are both descended from West Germanic facilitates the transference considerably; nevertheless, only in a minority of cases can meaning be preserved with ease, and without loss or change. There is the ever-present danger of complication: some facets of meaning may not be carried by the new vehicle of thought (which, conversely, may hold others not extant in the source), and there are a variety of "reasons", often impervious to logic, why the word or phrase chosen may not convey the same aura of feeling as the original.

Perfection of denotational and connotational balance is, therefore, difficult to achieve on the level of colloquial speech, where emotional values play a much greater rôle than in the standard language. Let a concrete example take the place of further theoretical discussion. One of the encyclopaedic dictionaries of the mid-seventies has this to say
under the collocation *etwas intus* (= *etwas versehrt*) haben:

to have eaten or drunk sth., to have sth. under one's belt

*(colloq.)*; *er hat einen intus* he is tipsy

Now, the first phrase, "to have eaten or drunk sth.", looks definitely standard, and was possibly intended by the editor to be an explanation rather than a valid translation. If so, however, why duplicate work in standard German and in standard English when his true task was to render the idea on the sub-standard level of the original? What remains, then, on the colloquial par is the phrase "to have sth. under one's belt". Unfortunately, this is one that errs on the side of bluntness, introducing a metaphor where the original has none, and a blatantly virile metaphor at that: "under my [etc.] belt" would simply sound preposterous in a woman's mouth or, alternatively, mark her out as less than ladylike. German *intus* has no such masculine or disparaging overtones: by borrowing from the Latin it drapes the message of the standard phrase in a slightly humorous or ironic garb, but goes no further, and certainly adds no garish paint. Is there a solution? There is. English colloquial speech does not use the Latinism; yet it achieves an effect equally mild and facetious on the strength of its own resources: "to have sth. [hot, etc.] inside one." The single illustration in a sentence that follows does duty, of course, for the bibulous side of intus-ness only, and again "tipsy" is hardly the right word since it simply describes someone 'unsteady in gait or speech with drink', but lacks the faint colouring just mentioned. What is wanted is some verbal utterance suggesting either a sympathetic smile or a slightly condescending smirk. Anyway, and fortunately, both smile and smirk are on call in the vague innuendo, "he's had a few."

Colour, indeed, is an attribute of colloquiality more honoured in the denial than in the observance. Leafing through the pages of two large dictionaries the reader may well catch himself shaking his head over the frequent absence of humour, of which, for instance, not a shred is left in this sober trio:

*er hat eine feuchte Aussprache* he sputters (in speaking)

im Schweinsgalopp at a gallop, post-haste
gedrängte Wochenübersicht dish made up from last week's leftovers.

Was there not one among their numerous staff to come up with congenial witticisms in the target language? Consider, for instance:

he gives you a shower when he's talking to you (with the added exemplification: say it, don't spray it!, do you serve towels with your showers?)

like a bat out of hell, with my (his, etc.) tongue hanging out

resurrection pie, AE a. clean-the-refrigerator soup.

Dry-as-dust definitions are the order of the day, each one of them, of course, a striking demonstration of how carelessly the principle of connotational adequacy has been violated up to the present.

** Lack of humour is a frequent fault among translators. But the critical reader will soon make another, even more fundamental, observation. There are a number of dictionary-makers who simply do not know English well enough or, to put it differently though no less damningly, who did not do their "homework" before setting out on the task of matching the two languages. Instances of sobersides explanations, some of them barely cloaking their German origin, abound; again, three of them will deputize for dozens of others:

Gebetbuch des Teufels a pack of playing cards

eine Wasserratte sein to love the water

Lieber den Magen verrenken, als dem Wirt etwas schenken rather get an upset stomach than let anything go back to the innkeeper.

Going to native English sources makes it easy to prove how ridiculously forced, by contrast, such dictionary entries must appear to Anglo-Saxons. Their colloquial and dialect speech, after all, holds equivalents
as fresh and near to the original as one could wish for: indeed, they also speak of "the devil's prayer-book" and "two-legged "water-rats", while gluttons throughout the British Isles are known to plead, in divers dialect tongues, their own brand of husbandry by saying, "Better belly bust nor good meat [= food] wasted."

II

Sapienti sat. Let the remaining space, so generously allotted to me by the Editor, serve as a modest demonstration of how future scholarship might deal with present gaps and deficiencies in the lexicography of modern German colloquial speech. The field chosen is that of Humour, Irony and Derogation which, as mentioned briefly above, lexicographers seem to regard with a jaundiced stepfatherly eye; indeed, both casual and scholarly word-seekers inevitably gain the impression that laughter is traditionally banned from dictionary offices - so little of it is recorded; and that little, badly.

Now, shortage of space may well be a serious consideration in smaller dictionaries, and such an objection is difficult to deny. Major undertakings, however, cannot be excused with similar ease. The following brief glossary has been provoked by a number of gravamina found in two of the most comprehensive publications on the market today: Harrap's Standard German and English Dictionary, edited by TREVOR JONES, London 1963 - [so far only letters A - R], and Langenscheidt's Encyclopaedic Dictionary of the English and German Languages, edited by OTTO SPRINGER, Berlin 1974-75.

In the German key-word, stress is indicated by a subscript dot if the vowel is short, and by a line if the vowel is long. Pointed brackets (< >) enclose the basic non-figurative sense of the entry on the standard level. Etymologies and other pertinent information are offered between square brackets ([ ]). These, further down in the article, are also used to offer alternatives dependent on the context, while free variations, or regional and stylistic ones, are indicated by round brackets ( ). The swung dash (~) replaces the key-word, as well as the first element in a series of compounds. In the English text, the colon ( : ) separates the standard term, or its explanation, from what follows on the sub-standard, mainly colloquial, levels. * stands for a
somewhat literal but thoroughly idiomatic rendering since the concept is non-existent in the target language.


The Glossary

Abend m -s/-e <evening> phr. 1. hum. yet mostly iron. am ~ werden (selbst) Faule (or die Faulen) fleißig when the sun is in the west, lazy people work the best. 2. a courteous or cynical greeting to late-comers at a party: je später der ~, desto schöner die Gäste! (i) as a welcome: last, but (certainly) not least!; * the later the hour, the greater the honour!; * the loveliest guests come the latest! (ii) with a tone of annoyance: seeing you at last is worth all the waiting!; the last shall be the first!; * the later the hour, the greater the honour! 3. hum. said late at night by one still in high spirits: was machen wir mit dem angebrochenen ~ ? what shall we do next (or now)? - the evening's still young. 4. euphem. phr. a thinly veiled anatomical obscenity, used jocularly or in slight annoyance: er kann mich am ~ besuchen (or suchen or begrüßen) he knows what he can do, he knows where he can go, BE he can go and eff himself, he can go and sling his hook.

Ablage P [pe:, pi:] f - <file P; P stands for Papierkorb 'wastepaper basket'> hum. wastepaper basket, looked upon as the obvious receptacle for useless office material: AE round file; was mache ich mit den vielen Weihnachtskarten vom Vorjahr? (surr) Ablage P (geben)? what should I do with all of last year's Christmas cards? (put them) in the round file?
Abraham pr. n. m -s <Abraham> phr. 1. expressing security: sicher wie in -s Schoß as safe as (safe) can be, BE as safe as houses; das Geld liegt dort sicherer als in -s Schoß the money is as safe there as in the Bank of England, AE ... as in Fort Knox; ich fühle mich wie in -s Schoß I feel as safe as a babe in its mother's arms. 2. SGer. hum. said of a person's unborn state (+ Himmelwiese): damals war ich noch in -s Wurstkessel, damals bin ich noch in -s Wurstkessel geschwommen I wasn't even thought of then, AE I was just a blob of protoplasm then floating around in space. 3. expressing a very long time past (+ Olim): das war ja schon vor -s Zeiten that was way back before the Flood, AE that was in the days of Abraham, Ir. that's been since Moses (or Judas) was in the Fire Brigade.

Anatomie f -/rarely: -en <med. (science of) anatomy> 1. hum. a woman's impressive physical appearance: (remarkable) curves; sie hat eine makellose ~ she is a lesson (or study) in anatomy; die makellose ~ dieser Badeschönheit the faultless figure (or anatomy) of this bathing beauty. 2. iron. euphem. in the phr. ~ studieren to engage in love-play: to study anatomy (or human biology); na, hast du gestern abend ~ studiert? well, were you doing your human biology homework (or, boning up on anatomy) last night?; gibt sie dir Nachhilfe in ~? is she giving you private anatomy lessons?

Anatomiestudien f pl <med. anatomical studies> iron. euphem. love-play: ~ betreiben = Anatomie studieren, ~ Anatomie 2.

Ansichtskarte f -/n <picture postcard> phr. a sarcastic remark to one picking his nose: wenn du oben bist, schickst du mir eine ~? send me a postcard when you get to the other side (or, AE, to China)!

anwachsen v/i <to grow on (to something)> phr. 1. said by someone who wishes to leave a social function before it gets too late: jetzt muß ich gehen, bevor ich anwachse I've got to leave before I take root (or, before I get stuck, or, before I turn into a pumpkin). 2. impatiently, to a late-comer: wo bleibst du denn (or, warum kommst du jetzt erst)?, soll ich hier ~? where have you been all the time? do
you want me to grow roots (AE you want I should grow roots)?

Arbeit f -|- en <work> in phrases, humorously sympathetic or critical, said by one who would prefer to keep work at a distance: die ~ lebe hoch - so hoch, daß ich sie nicht erreichen kann! I like work, it fascinates me (or, simply, work fascinates me), I could sit and watch (or look at) it for hours; die ~ läuft uns nicht davon the work (or job) isn't going to (or won't) run away from us; die ~ schmeckt ihm nicht he doesn't have much (of a) taste for work, work isn't his cup of tea (AE his thing, or his bag); der hat die ~ auch nicht erfunden work is certainly not his middle name; der hat auch bloß seine geraden Glieder, damit er der ~ aus dem Weg gehen kann as far as he is concerned, work is a spectator sport, he thinks Manual Labour was a Spaniard (AE ... a Mexican).

Arbeiter...: -denkmal n -(e)s/...mäler, -standbild n -(e)s/-er iron. said of one or several labourers, esp. construction men, idly standing about or leaning on their shovels, etc.; as a fictitious title for the 'monumental' scene: Statue of the Great Worker, Monument to Labour, Labourer[s] Resting on His [Their] Work-Tool[s]; er macht schon wieder ~ ! there he is again, making sure nothing moves!; he's at it again, keeping the tools from falling down!

Arbeitswut f - hum. or iron. sudden and keen desire to do some work: sudden craze (or passion) for work; wenn mich die ~ packt (or überkommt), dann stelle (or setze) ich mich ins Eck und warte, bis sie vorbei ist whenever I feel the urge to work, I sit down and wait until the feeling passes (or goes away).

Aufgehängte m & f -n/-n <hanged man [woman]> Austr. slightly iron. in a solicitous comment to a badly groomed person, e.g. one whose jacket shoulders are hunched up or whose tie is awry: du kommst daher wie ein ~r you look like you've been pulled (or dragged) through a hedge (or, BE, a gorse bush, or, AE, a knothole) (backwards).

Aufzug m -(e)s/...züge 1. <BE lift, AE elevator> sarc. for audibly
drawing back the mucus in one's nose: sniffle 1 phr. used in reaction to such behaviour: **vornehme Leute haben einen eigenen** ~ ! you have an interesting style of blowing your nose. 2. <procession> joc. inap­propriate attire: strange outfit, funny get-up; in **so einem** ~ **kannst du dich nirgends sehen lassen** you can't go (or, AE, show yourself) anywhere in that get-up; **ist dir nicht zu warm in dem** ~ ? aren't you too hot in that outfit?

**auswendig** adv <by heart> hum. or iron. phr., on observing someone to talk to himself: **er [der] lernt was** ~ he [that man] 's rehearsing his lines, he's having a long conversation with himself, he's talking to his invisible friend, he's talking to Harvey.

**Bandwurm** m -(e)s...<tapeworm> phr. 1. a jocular or half-re­proachful suggestion to a ravenous eater, esp. to one who yet does not gain weight: **du hast bestimmt einen** ~ you must have a tapeworm (somewhere inside), BE you must have worms gnawing (at) your insides, AE you must have hollow legs, NZE you must have bugs in your stomach. 2. in hum. self-defence to a charge of ravenousness: (ja,) **ich muß für zwei essen, für mich und meinen** ~ (yes,) I've got to eat for two, me and my tapeworm.

**barfuß** pred. adj. & adv. <barefoot> hum. phr. ~ **bis zum Hals (hinauf)** without clothes: in the altogether, (dressed) in one's birthday suit, the way one's mother made one; **er geht or ist ~ bis zum Hals** he's barefoot up to his chin, he's got nothing but a smile on, he's wearing nothing but a smile.

**Bescheidenheit** f <modesty> phr. in a rhyming jingle warning against excessive humbleness: ~ **ist eine Zier, doch weiter kommt man ohne ihr** *modesty is a virtue true; but it's cleverness that sees you through; though modesty pays, there are easier ways.

**Besteck** n -(e)s/-e <(set of) knife, fork and spoon> hum. phr. ~ **Löffel** 1 (ii)
bestellen v/t <to order> phr. 1. hum. euphem. or child lang. with reference to pregnancy: sie [i.e., the young couple] haben sich etwas (Kleines) bestellt they've put an order in with the stork, they're on the stork's waiting list; die Eltern der Kleinen verriet den ihr, sie hätten ihr ein Brüderchen bestellt the little girl's parents let her into (AE in on) the secret that they had ordered a baby brother for her; sie hat sich ein Brüderchen bestellt she's ordered a baby brother (for herself). 2. apprec., in pleasant surprise, said for instance of fine weather setting in on the day of an excursion: (das kommt [ja] wie bestellt! just the way we ordered it; just what the doctor ordered. II similarly, when a door, usu. closed or even locked, is unexpectedly found wide open to one intending to pass through with bags and baggage in his hands: na was, die Tür ist offen - das kommt ja wie bestellt! great! the door is open - just what I needed. 3. phr. describing the feeling of one frustrated by a cancellation or change of plans; esp. said of or by a lover kept waiting at the rendezvous: bestellt und nicht abgeholt dressed up and stood up; (with) the glad rags (or the gladis) on and no one to appreciate it; ich fühle mich bestellt und nicht abgewie I feel all dressed up, with (or and) nowhere (AE no place) to go; du stehst herum wie bestellt und nicht abgeholt you're standing around as though you'd been stood up (or, as though nobody wants you; or, like a little lost dog).

Betrieb m -(e)s <business> (great) activity in an organization, etc.: bustle, stir; er versteht es, ~ zu machen he knows how to get things going; ein lahm ~ a boring (or dead) outfit; ich hab den ganzen ~ satt I'm fed up with the whole business (BE carry-on) II reproachfully to one who stands in other people's busy ways: Sie halten hier nur den ~ auf! you're holding up the whole works, you're holding up production. ~macher m -e/- = Betriebemacher.

Betriebs... ~macher m -e/- 1. very active person: live wire; er ist ein ~ he has lots of go, AE he has lots of get-up and go. 2. slightly contp. person who is almost too keen on his job and who works very hard: eager beaver; der (or das) ist ein ~ he wants to be in on every-
thing, he's always putting his oar in; er zählt zu den Besonnenen, nicht zu den -n he is one of those strong, silent types, not one of your busybodies. -nudel f -/-n 1. = Betriebsmacher 2. = apprec. & hum. born entertainer: live wire, AE party pepper-upper; eine -sein to be the life and soul of any party. -ratsf
crst m -/-n en hum. or iron. head shop steward: BE king of the shop floor, AE company union boss. -rübe f -/-n = Betriebsmacher 2. -unfall m -(-e)s/...fälle <industrial accident> hum. or sarc. 1. failure to achieve one's illegitimate ends (e.g. of burglary) because of an unexpected mishap: nasty stroke of bad luck. 2. unplanned pregnancy within a marriage or other intimate relationship: mistake; (die) Mutti war schon über vierzig, wie sie den Hans gekriegt hat; er war ein ~ , aber jetzt ist sie froh, daß sie ihn hat Mum was already over forty when she had Jack; he was a mistake, but now she's happy she has him. + Versehen.

Blume f -/-n <flower> phr. 1. hum. or iron. said of, and by, passengers in an annoyingly slow train or in a car moving in a queue: -n pflücken können to be able to pick daisies; das geht jetzt so rasant dahin, daß man direkt aussteigen könnte und -n pflücken! we are moving at such breakneck speed we might as well get out and pick daisies, and hop back on again. II + Veilchenbahn 2. a sarc. rejoinder after a backhanded compliment: danke für die -n! thanks for the flowers (or the bouquet or the kudos)!

Briefmarkensammlung f -/-en <stamp collection> hum. in a cliché, supposedly used as a pretext by an amorously inclined male when luring his lady upstairs (+ Tasse); kann (or darf) ich Ihnen meine - zeigen? would you like to see my stamp collection (or my etchings, or my drawings)?

Dame f -/-n <lady> phr. in slight irritation, a mocking retort to affected feminine primness: die ~ will gebeten werden! (what are you doing?) playing Lady Hard-to-Get?

Einladung f -/-en <invitation> phr. used when slightly irritated by someone's hesitancy, e.g. to come to the speaker, to move along as
directed, to join a party or other undertaking: Du brauchst wohl eine extra ~ ?, soll ich dir (vielleicht) [noch] eine (schriftliche) ~ schicken (or zukommen lassen)? What's the matter, are you waiting for a written invitation, or something?, do you want me to send you an engraved invitation?

einnehmend adj hum. or sarc. <punning its basic sense of 'prepossessing', 'attractive'> said of a greedy person: sie hat ein ~ es Wesen she's all grab, AE she's got a personality like a vacuum cleaner ( - she sucks up everything inside).

Entenfarm f +/-en iron. to someone who waddles: hast du das Gehen auf einer ~ gelernt? where did you learn to walk - on a duck farm?

Erfrorene m, f, n -/n <person frozen to death> phr. 1. slightly iron. someone who always feels the cold: iceberg; Du bist mir so etwas ~ (or, eine ~ [ein ~r]), die ganze Zeit jammern! you're a regular iceberg, always complaining about the cold. 2. hum. person coming in from the cold: ice lump, icicle; da kommen ja zwei ~ ! ausgezogen und zum Feuer gesetzt - gleich kriegt ihr einen warmen Tee here come two ice lumps (or, there come our two Eskimos)! off with your things and warm up by the fire; we'll bring you some hot tea in a minute. 3. iron. a scoff at one who complains about existing sub-zero weather: heute haben sie schon ein paar ~ gebraucht #a couple of people have frozen to death already, you'll turn into a snowman in a minute.

essen vt/i <eat> 1. concr. 1. hum. (i) to a child or adolescent, iron. also to an adult: iß, daß du was wirst!; iß, daß was wird aus dir!; iß, daß du groß und stark wirst! go and eat (or, eat up), if you want to be big and strong (to a male, also: ... if you want to put hair on your chest)! (ii) to an adolescent or adult: du muß etwas ~ ; sonst fällt du vom Fleisch! you've got to eat something, or else you disappear (or, you dry up and blow away); if you don't eat you'll waste (or fade) away. 2. selber ~ macht fett! (i) hum. declining an offer of food: you need it more than I do; no, you eat it, I'm too fat already; you('ve) got to look after Number One. (ii) a caustic
refusal to share food: charity begins at home; (you've got to) look after Number One first. 3. usu. hum. a back-handed compliment on a dinner invitation: zu ō gab es genug, nur die Nötigung hat gefehlt there was plenty of food on the table, but they weren't awfully generous with the servings. 4. a flippant farewell remark after a party: gege88en und getrunken haben wir, und auf die Gesellschaft legen wir keinen Wert mehr we've eaten your food and drunk your liquor - I suppose (AE I guess) we can skip the socializing. 5. in praise of an immaculate set of rooms: bei denen (etc.) ist es so sauber, daß man vom Fußboden essen kann (or, daß du am Boden essen kannst) it's so clean at their (etc.) house you can eat off the floor. II prov. & fig. 1. a claim that every function of the body, and especially mental activity, is dependent upon the quality and kind of food we eat: der Mensch ist, was er ißt you are what you eat, man is what he eats. 2. wie man ißt, so arbeitet man people work as fast as they eat. 3. wer nicht arbeitet (or arbeiten will), soll auch nicht essen if you want to eat, you've got to work; if you don't work, you don't eat. 4. es wird nichts so heiß gegessen, wie es gekocht wird; die Suppe wird nicht so heiß gegessen, wie sie gekocht wird things are never as black (or bad) as they seem (or look). 5. a hum. comment on the limits of extramarital flirtation: Appetit kannst du anderswo (or auswärts) holen, gege88en wird zu Hause!; naschen kannst du anderswo (or wo du willst), gegessen wird daheim! you can have a cocktail (or, your appetizer) elsewhere, but must come home for the main dish (or, AE, main meal); you can have a little nibble elsewhere, but you must come home for the main dish.

Fallsucht f - <med. epilepsy> 1. iron. = die - hinfällende Krankheit. 2. hum. or slightly iron. to one who has dropped one object after another: hast du denn die ~ ? (i) in punning proximity: you haven't got the dropsies (, have you)? (ii) as a free idiomatic equivalent: what a butterfingers you are!, you're a real butterfingers!

Familienhund m -(e)s hum. or iron. member of the family who is destined to eat up all the leftovers: human dustbin, BE wastepaper basket, AE
family garbage can; ich bin der ~, ich esse alles I am the dustbin around here, I'll eat anything.

Fangeisen n -s/- hum. or iron. <steel trap (for animals)> engagement or wedding ring: handcuff || phr. 1. said of a young man whose bachelorhood is about to be ended: da ist auch einer, der fürs ~ fällig wird there's another one who is due (or ripe) for the ball-and-chain. 2. joc. to one wearing a new engagement or wedding ring: was ist denn das, ein ~ ? what's that, a nose-ring?

Feldherr m -n/-en <mil. military leader> hum., a facetious synonymization of lit. Landmann 'husbandman': *Sir Plough; er ist ein ~ he's a man outstanding in his field.

Fett n -(e)s <fat> phr. in mocking comfort for one complaining about excessive heat: dir wird das ~ schon nicht davonlaufen! what's the matter, are you afraid your lard will melt?

Fleisch n -(e)s <flesh; meat> phr. 1. vom ~ fallen to lose weight: to lose flesh, AE to fall off; du mußt etwas essen, sonst fällt du vom ~ essen I. 1. (ii); ich werde schon nicht gleich vom ~ fallen, wenn ich einmal nicht esse it won't hurt me a bit to miss a meal. 2. joc. or in slight irritation, said by one on whom another person rests his heavy hand, etc.: ich habe genug faules ~ selber zu tragen I have a hard enough time carrying my own weight without you as well.

Fleischergang m -(e)s/...gänge NGer. fruitless trip: fool's errand, (wild-)goose chase; ich rufe an, damit Sie nicht einen ~ machen müssen I'm ringing so that you won't have to make an extra trip.

Fleisch... ~fliege f -/n <blowfly> hum. phr. used for a woman with a seductive look: sie hat einen Augenaufsahlag wie eine ~ she bats her eyes like a pro (or professional). ~markt m -(e)s/...märkte hum. or iron. display of bare human flesh at a busy public place, e.g. in a beauty contest, at a lido or on a sandy beach congested with bathers: meat-show, skin-show.
**Floh...**: -beißen n -s hum. in a cheery good-night greeting: angenehmes ~! sleep tight, don't let the bed-bugs bite! -falle f -/-n 1. hum. (usu. one's own) bed: flea-trap, cootie cage; ich gehe jetzt in die ~ I'm going to hit the hay (or the sack, or, BE, the deck); es geht nichts übger die eigene ~! there's nothing like one's own downy flea pasture! 2. contp. filthy bed: crummy flea-trap. 3. contp. slovenly woman: old flea-bag. -jagd f -/-en NGer. hum. in fröhliche ~! = angenehmes Flohbeiß + Flohbeißen. -kino n -s/-s hum. or contp. = Flohkiste 3. -kiste f -/-n 1. hum. = Flohfalle 1. 2. contp. = Flohfalle 2. 3. hum. or contp. local or third-rate cinema: flea-pit. -leiter f -/-n hum. succession of broken stitches in hosiery: louse ladder. -schatulle f -/-n NAWGer. = Flohkiste 3.

**flüssig adj** <liquid> in a hum. comment on someone whose food, it seems, consists only of beer: sich ~ ernähren to have a liquid lunch [dinner]; die sind ja nicht da, um zu essen; die wollen sich nur ~ ernähren they haven't come for a meal, they're only here for the beer.

**Friedhofsjodler** m -s/- iron. bad cough: churchyard cough; er hat auch schon den ~ there's another one who'll cough his way to the graveyard, with a cough like that he's already got one foot in the grave.

**Fröhlichkeit** f - <cheerfulness> taboo female pudend: goodies pl, treasures pl, delights pl II said of a woman revealing much leg, e.g. when carelessly seated in a chair (~ Himmel 2 ii): man konnte ihr bis zur ~ sehen her skirt was so short you could see all her naughty bits (or, everything she had [to offer]).

**Gehsteig** m -(e)s/-e <BE pavement, AF sidewalk> in the hum. or iron. phrase typifying a rather big, though far from cosmopolitan, town, which offers no night life whatsoever: die ~ (or Trottoire) einziehen (or in die Höhe ziehen); böse Zungen behaupten, daß bei uns ab sechs Uhr abends die ~ in die Höhe gezogen werden evil gossip would have it that in our town the sidewalks are being rolled up at 6 p.m.

**Gelsenfett** n -(e)s Austr. hum. or iron. a fictitious object or commodi-
ty (here, 'gnat grease') used in a practical joke: humble-bee feathers, can (or pint) of pigeon's milk; um fünf Deka ~ schicken BE to send for a shilling's worth of strap oil, AE to send for a dime's worth of radium; geh, hol mir ein ~! go get a left-handed monkey wrench, AE buy me a dime's worth of wooden nickels.

Germanengrill m -s/-s iron. = Teutonengrill.

giftig adj <poisonous> hum. phr. heard among close relatives or friends, e.g. between husband and wife, during a meal in reply to a darf ich deine Gabel nehmen? ('may I use your fork?'), and the gentle and considerate objection, gerne, aber ich habe sie schon benutzt, or gerne, ich habe aber mit ihr schon gegessen ('of course, but I've already used it'): ach, du bist ja nicht ~! it won't poison me!, AE your germs won't hurt me!

Glashäkten m -s/...kästen <glass-case> Bav. phr. in candid, less often in slightly ironic, praise of a man's adulation for his wife or fiancée: er möchte sie am liebsten in einen ~ stellen if he could, he would like to put her in a glass-case; he worships the ground she walks on.

Gurgel f -/-n <throat> hum. phr. die ~ schmieren (or spülen) to drink something alcoholic: to lubricate one's tonsils.

Gürtel m -s/- <belt> hum. said of a mini-skirt: ein sehr breiter (or breitgeratener) ~ (nothing but) a wide (or low) belt; sie trägt einen verlängerten ~ her skirt is nothing but a belt around her middle, she's wearing nothing but a collar in a different place (or nothing more than a frill on the bottom of her blouse).

Gußto m -s/-s <liking> Austr. a hum. or sarc. acknowledgement of the fact that there is no accounting for taste: ~ und Ohrfeigen (or Wat­ schen) sind verschieden! different strokes for different folks; 'everyone to his taste,' as the old woman said when she kissed the horse's nose; 'it's just a matter of taste,' as the dog said as he
licked the cat's ear; AE you know what Nancy said when she kissed the cow? 'everyone to his own fancy.'

**Hand f -/Hände hum.** a threat by word and rhyme only, fist raised with a smile: *schau dir nur die - an, mit den fünf Fingern dran!* see this finger, see this thumb - you'd better run!

**Hasenfutter n -e <hares' food> hum., sometimes contp. salad, carrots, green vegetables, etc., intended for human consumption: rabbit food; seit meine Frau auf vegetarisch macht, gibt's nur mehr - since my wife's gone vegetarian, all I get to eat is rabbit food.

**Hechtsuppe f -/-n <? pike soup> NGer. phr.** said of a very strong draught: *es sieht (or hier sieht es) wie - it's as draughty as a barn in here, it's blowing a gale in here, there's a draught like on a raft in the open sea.

**Herrgott m -(e)s/...götter <relig. Lord Almighty> phr.** 1. hum., sometimes iron. an amused comment on the divergencies of human taste and behaviour: *(ja,) unser - hat (wohl, or schon) einen großen Tiergarten!* (well,) it takes all sorts (or kinds) (to make a world), AE that's what it takes to make a horse-race. 2. describing a state of opulence: *leben wie der - in Frankreich* to live like a prince or a king [like princes or kings], AE to live like Rockefeller, to live the life of Riley. 3. iron. or aggressively to, or of, an incurable idler: *dem lieben - den Tag stehlen* to idle about the whole day, to fritter the day away. 4. iron. or contp., said in the face of someone's extreme indifference: *den - einen guten (or frommen) Mann sein lassen to take things easy; er läst den - einen guten Mann sein und fährt auf Urlaub, gerade wann er will* he takes life easy and just goes off on holiday (AE on vacation) whenever he feels like it. 5. iron. said of a self-important man: *ein kleiner - sein* to be one step down from The Almighty, to be God's right-hand man; *man könnte glauben, er ist ein kleiner - you'd think he was God Almighty; das kann ich mir nie und nimmer erlauben - glaubst du denn, ich bin ein kleiner -? I could never afford that - who do you think I am, God Almighty (or the
big boss here)? 6. Bav. iron., or with gentle pity, said of one who is mortally ill: *der darf auch schön langsam bei unserm ~ um ein gü­tes Wetter anhalten* it's about time he started getting in good with the Lord (or, getting in the Lord's good graces; or, mending his fences).

**Himmel** m -s <sky; heaven> 1. interj. (i) a cry of confusion or anguish: a. ~ ! heavens! b. if verbalized more fully: *du lieber ~ ! heavens above!, good grief!, good God!* (ii) (*sum*) ~ , *Donnerwetter!* a. expressing considerable surprise: holy mackerel!, holy Moses! b. expressing considerable annoyance: for Pete's sake!, for Christ's sake! (iii) a cry of surprised annoyance: ~ , *Schimmel!* hell's bells!, holy hat! (iv) a. an angry curse, low: ~ , *Arseh und Zwirn* (or *Wolken­bruch*)! shit, piss, and corruption! b. the same, playfully *euphem.* ~ , *Gesči13 und Nčihga1'n!* hell, fire, and damnation! 2. phr. (i) contp. said of a number of things mixed up without any sensible order of ar­rangement: *das Buch ist ein Ragout, aus ~ und Schimmel zusammengetra­gen und ohne Zusammenhang* the book is a hodgepodge ([AE hodgepodge] or mishmash, or hash) of little bits and pieces, just stuck together any old way. (ii) taboo said of a woman revealing much leg, e.g. when carelessly seated in a chair (*Fröhlichkeit*): *bei ihr hat man ~ , Mond und Sterne* (or, *bis in den [siebenten] ~ *) sehen können with the skirt she had.on you could nearly see all the way up to her tonsils, her dress was so short you'd see stars if she bent over.

**Himmelfahrtsnase** f */-n [punning Himmelfahrt 'Ascension' as meaning sky-bound] iron. upturned nose: ski-jump nose.

**Himmelpapa** m -(s) SGer. child lang. = Himmelvater.

**Himmelswiese** f */-n N.&WGer. hum. place of residence before being born (*Abraham 2*): *damals spielte ich noch auf der ~* I wasn't even thought of then; *das war, als ich noch auf der ~ spielte* that happened when I was still a cherub with wings (or, with a slight innuendo, when I was no more than a gleam in my father's eye).
Himmelvater m - s <relig. Our Father in Heaven> SGer. an explanation for thunder given to children, or said with cheerful lightness among adults: (i) der ~ schimpft or greint God's grumbling up there, God's in a bad mood today up there; (ii) der liebe ~ tut Bierfaß rollen God's moving furniture, AE Rip van Winkle's rolling out the barrels.

hinfällend pr.p. & adj <falling (down)> in: ~e Krankheit f, colloq. Hinfällende n - n <med. epilepsy> iron. an unsmiling question to one who has just stumbled or fallen: du hast wohl die hinfällende Krankheit (or das Hinfällende)? (i) in punning proximity: looks like you've got the falling sickness. (ii) as a free idiomatic equivalent: (a) did you have a good trip?, AE did you have a nice fall?, have a nice trip ... see you next fall!; (b) have you lost something?, are you looking for something down there?

Hinterhugelhapping n Bav., Hintermoppelhausen n, Hinterpimpelsheim n, Hinterupfung n Bav. & Austr. [all fictitious pl. ns.] hum. or iron. unattractive little town or village, usu. one that is difficult of access: BE Much-Binding-in-the-Marsh, Llanpotty, AE Hicksville, Nowheresville, Podunk, Austral. Woop Woop; nun, wie lebt sich's in ~? seid ihr dort schon eingeschlafen? well, what's life like at the back of beyond (or, out in the sticks, AE out in the boondocks, Austral. beyond the black stump)? have you all gone into a coma?

hinterlistig adj <deceitful; with a pun on hinter 'behind'> in a phr. expressing one's need for some toilet-paper: ich brauch (et)was für ~e Zwecke I need something for private purposes; wirf die Zeitung (die Papierseervette etc.) nicht weg, das kann man ja noch für ~e Zwecke hernehmen don't throw the newspaper (the paper napkin, etc.) away, it could come in handy some time.

hui adj <indeclinable> iron., in phrases bluntly commenting on pretentiousness: außen ~, innen pfui; oben ~, unten pfui (i) with reference to women: fur coat and no knickers; (ii) with reference to dwellings: BE lace curtains at the front and bugger-all at the back, AE Queen Anne front and Mary Jane back.
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Krauterbam m -s/- '<herb tree', a spoonerism on Ger. Bräutigam; in English, the sounds and letters are similarly transposed> Vien. hum.


Kummer... -kasten m -s/-...kasten <journ. agony column> phr. said by one to whom others pour out their troubles: ich bin ein lebendiger ~ I'm a shoulder for everybody to cry on, BE I'm a second 'Dear Marge', AE I'm a second 'Dear Abby'. ~läuschen n -s/- hum. an imaginary insect that makes people worry: AE worry-bug; joc., said to one whose head itches: BE a scratch feels good, doesn't it?, AE what's the matter, have you got worry-bugs? ~speck m -(e)s overweight caused by mental anguish and compensatory eating: *worry fat; sie ist sich einen ~ an she eats to forget her troubles.

Landluft f - <country air> hum. comments, in rural areas, when suddenly catching a strong whiff of (esp. liquid) manure: 1. interj. ~! good old country air (or smells)!!; nein, diese würzige ~! oh, all the wonderful smells of the countryside! 2. phr. schnell, nehmt euch mal eine Nase ~ (mit)! quick! let's all get a good sniff of this wonderful country air.

Laus f -/Läuse <louse> in the contp. phrase for a miserly person: er schneidet auch noch die ~ um den Balg, Austr. der treibt die ~ nach Mariazell nur wegen dem Fell he is so stingy he'd skin a gnat, he is so stingy he'd sell his own grandmother (BE for sixpence).

Löffel m -s/- phr. 1. <spoon> hum. (i) in a forceful metaphor to describe a non-alcoholic drink, usu. tea or coffee, with a high degree of concentration: der ist so stark, daß der ~ (drin) steckenbleibt it's so strong you can (or could) stand a spoon in it, BE it's so strong you could trot mice over it. (ii) fig. den ~ (or das Besteck) abgeben or wegwerfen to die: to lay down one's fork and knife. 2. [a playful variant on Lust 'inclination'] used in negations only: heute habe ich keinen ~ zur Arbeit I just don't feel like work today, AE I just don't have much taste for work today.
Luft f -/Lüfte <air> hum. phr. to a very tall person, with an appropriate look and gesture: wie ist die - da oben? how's the weather up there?, is it cold up there?

Lungenentzündung f -/-en <inflammation of the lungs> hum. or sarc. 1. orig. mil. a warning by a fastidious male to a junior, one of whose top coat-buttons happens to be undone: (Mann,) Sie werden sich noch eine ~ zuziehen! button up, soldier, you want to get arrested for indecent exposure! 2. a playful hint to a woman with a low-cut dress: da wirst du dir aber eine ~ holen! you'll catch your death of pneumonia if you dress like that.

Maikäfer m -s/- <BE cockchafer, AE maybug> in the phr. das Liebesleben (or Seelenleben) der ~ 'the love life [or spiritual life] of cockchafers': 1. a hum. description, by non-specialists, of the interests of biologists and zoologists: wir zoologen werden ja gelegentlich als Leute bezeichnet, die sich um das Liebesleben der ~ bekümmern we zoologists are sometimes called people who are fascinated by the sex life of the earthworm. 2. hum. or sarc. a fictitious, and unrealistic, topic of a dissertation or discussion: heutzutage kann man über alles promovieren, sogar über das Liebesleben der ~ you can do a Ph.D. on anything these days, even on the love life of the earthworm (or, on pottery in New Guinea) II in a brusque answer to one desirous to know what is being discussed: wir haben über das Liebesleben der ~ gesprochen we were discussing the state of the nation.

Mannsbild n -(e)s/-er emot., normally used by women: man, male 1. (i) apprec. strong, jovial man: stout and hearty fellow II Austr. ein fesches ~, Bav. ein gestandenes ~ a fine figure of a man; dieser Felsbrocken von einem ~ this big hunk of a man, this big bruiser. (ii) neutral, slightly iron. or pej. fellow, BE chap, bloke, AE guy II SGer. & Austr. said of a bachelor: ein einschichtiges ~ an unattached male; if of a very independent character: loner, lone wolf; du trauriges ~! you pathetic specimen of manhood!, you weed!; und so was will ein ~ sein! (a) he's an apology for a man [husband]; (b) in di-
rect address: (and you) call yourself a man!; low ein ~, daß es einer Sau graust! a type of man to make you puke. 2. phr. wenn meine Freundin und ich den Urlaub wirklich genießen wollen, dann lassen wir die -er zu Hause if me and my girl-friend really want to enjoy ourselves on holiday, we leave the men at home; schau dir nur das ~ an ~ (das) geht bei dieser Kälte ohne Kopfbedeckung! look at that funny man over there - without a hat in this cold; hast du schon einmal erlebt, daß dir ein ~ seinen Platz angeboten hat? has a man ever stood up for you and offered you his seat?

Nabelschau f -/en in the iron. phrase describing an inactive person: ~ halten to contemplate (or meditate on) one's navel; er sitzt den ganzen Tag herum und hält ~ he just sits around all day, meditating on his navel.

Nachtfrösche m -(e)s/...frösche hum. naked child: tadpole, little bare-bottom, little man [lady] in his [her] birthday suit.

Nadel f -/n <needle> N & W Ger., hum. or slightly critical, in the phr. mit einer heißen ~ nähen to make long loose stitches: to sew with a hot needle (and a galloping thread); das ist mit einer heißen ~ genäht und hält recht schlampig that was done with a hot needle, and a slipshod job it is too.

naß adv <wet> in the phr. ~ füttern <vet. to subsist primarily on liquid nourishment> hum. to be fond of alcoholic drinks, esp. beer: to have one's cups; er füttert gerne ~ he prefers a liquid diet.

Natur...: ~apostel m -s/- sometimes iron. devotee of nature: (back-to-) nature freak. ~kleid n -(e)s hum. nakedness: birthday suit; im ~ in one's birthday suit, in the buff, BE in the noddy; neulich ist einer im ~ auf den Eiffelturm gestiegen, um Furore zu machen someone recently climbed the Eiffel Tower in his birthday suit to create a sensation. ~pullover m -s/- hum. hair on the chest: chest toupee; er hat einen ~ he's got a door-mat (or a jungle) on his chest, he grows his own tobacco (or, his own sweaters).
nein adv <no> hum. or contp. phr. 1. said of a weak-willed woman who always lets herself be involved in amorous affairs: sie hat einen Sprachfehler, sie kann nicht ' ~ ' sagen there is a gap in her vocabulary, she can't (or, she doesn't know how to) say 'no'. 2. said of women never telling the truth about their sexual desires: wenn eine Frau ' ~ ' sagt, meint sie 'vielleicht'; und wenn sie 'vielleicht' sagt, meint sie 'ja' when a woman says 'no', she means 'maybe'; and when she says 'maybe', she means 'yes'.

Olim m [a fictitious pr. n., < Lat. adv. olim 'once upon a time'] in hum. phr. meaning 'long ago' (→ Abraham 3): 1. seit ~ s Zeiten since Adam, since the year dot, AE since the year one; der ist so alt, den gibt's schon seit ~ s Zeiten (or, ... der ist schon seit ~ s Zeiten da) he's so old he could have been a waiter at the Last Supper; in bin seit ~ s Zeiten nicht im (or, in einem) Kino gewesen I haven't been to the movies (esp. BE to the cinema) for donkey's years. 2. zu ~ s Zeiten in the year dot, AE in the year one; das war zu ~ s Zeiten that was when Adam (or Noah) was around, that was when the Romans were around, IrE that was when Moses (or Judas) was in the Fire Brigade; in dem Büro haben sie eine Organisation wie zu ~ s Zeiten the set-up in that office is prehistoric; sie sieht sich an wie zu ~ s Zeiten her clothes could have come out of the Ark; er spielt Tennis wie zu ~ s Zeiten he plays tennis like his own grandfather, he plays tennis as though he were still living in the gay nineties.

Orchideenfach n -(e)s/...facher educ. slightly contp. specialist subject: airy-fairy subject.

Ozean m -(e)s/ <ocean> hum. in a pun on Meer = mehr: + schmecken I I (ii).

Pensionistengletscher m -(e)s/- hum. local hill popular with elderly people for walks: *old folks' Matterhorn (or Everest).

Pfarrer m -(e)s/- <parson> phr. a rather curt way of declining to repeat a remark: der ~ predigt nur einmal (or nicht zweimal) Shakespeare never
repeats, you don't boil your cabbage twice, AE dial. I don't chew my tobacco but once.

Popomanschette f -/-n hum., low mini-skirt (= Gürtel): BE pussy pelmet.

Putz sn. [a fairly frequent German surname, here a playful inversion of the common noun, Putzfrau] in: Frau - f hum. charwoman: Mrs. Mopp, Lady of the Broom; war die Frau schon hier? has Mrs. Mopp (or, the Lady of the Broom) been ([through] here)?

Rasenmäher m -s/- <lawn-mower> iron., a quip on a bad haircut: bist du unter den - gefallen? did the barber (or someone) use a lawn-mower on you?, did your barber (or someone) use the hedge-clippers (or shears) to you?

Rücken m -s/- <(man's) back> phr. 1. hum. euphem. verlängerter - buttocks pl (+ Unaussprechliche I): backside, hind-end, rear-end, AE southern exposure, hinds; er ist genau auf den (or seinen) verlängerten - gefallen he fell right on his tail-end. 2. hum. or sarc., often in mocking self-consolation, when confronted with someone's back (where the sight of that person's face would have been preferred): ein schöner - kann auch entsücken it's nice to see your [his, her] unfamiliar side, your [his, her] back's a sight for sore eyes.

schmecken vt/i <to taste> I v/i 1. concr. (i) Austr. a housewife's cheery invitation to begin eating: laat es euch besser -, wie es ist! I hope it tastes better than it looks. (ii) in praise of good food: das schmeckt nach mehr (or, punning mehr - Meer, ... nach Ozean) that tastes like more, BE that tastes more-ish. (iii) in dispraise of weak or flavourless coffee, tea, soup, etc.: (das) schmeckt wie Abwaschwasser or Spülwasser (that) tastes like dishwater or hogwash; even less politely: (...) wie Arseh und Friedrich BE ([...] like) witch piss, AE ([...] like) cow piss (or horse piss). (iv) a snippet of conversation about some disgusting food: A: das (Essen da) schaut aus wie Kotze! B: und so schmeckt's auch! A: this (food here) looks like puke. B: it tastes like that, too. (v) sarc. to a person audibly drawing back the
mucus in his nose: schmeckt's? hope it tastes good! 2. fig. (i) a rowdy's triumphant taunt: wie haben dir die Prügel geschmeckt? how did you like the hiding I gave you? II 1. (ii) said in connection with an unexpected turn of events, some unpalatable news, etc.: na, wie schmeckt dir das? how d'you like that?, AE how does that grab you?, how d'ya like them apples?; das hat ihm gar nicht geschmeckt that was a hard thing for him to swallow - he nearly choked on it. + Arbeit. II v/t fig. 1. a threat with an accompanying gesture: magst d' ~ ? would you like a taste of my knuckles?, would you like my fist in your face? ± I 2. <to smell>, (i) SGer. a rude retort by an offended speaker: schmeckt's! how should I know? (a) on an untoward turn of events: der Solist ist krank geworden, das Konzert ist ausgefallen, aber keiner hat was davon gewußt - schmeckt's (or, das hätte man wohl ~ sollen)! the soloist fell ill, and they cancelled the concert, but they didn't tell a soul - how d'you like that (AE how d'ya like them apples)? (b) when faced with an unjustified reproach or demand: A: du hättest mir leicht helfen können beim Kellerräumen - jetzt hab ich wieder alles allein machen müssen! B: ja, schmeckt's!(or kann [or soll] ich das (vielleicht) ~ ?, das soll man wohl ~ ?) A: you could have easily helped me tidy up the basement, I've had to do it all (by) myself again! B: that's tough (or, my heart bleeds, or you make me cry, BE hard cheese, AE tough cookies)! (ii) Bav. sarc. a repudiation of someone's complaint about the malodorous result of flatulence: wer's sweret schmeckt, hat's Gackerl <egg> gelegt what's the matter, can't you stand your own smell? 3. SGer. always in the negative, chiefly with regard to persons: to endure: to stick, AE to hack it; mein Vater möchte, daß ich mir eine feste Arbeit suche, aber was Festes schmeckt mir nicht my father wants me to get a steady job, but I could never stick (AE hack) it; er will mich heiraten, aber ich kann ihn (überhaupt) nicht ~ he wants to marry me, but I (simply, or just) can't stick him (or stand the sight of him).

Schneewittchen n ~a <Snow White> iron. phr. a callous metaphor used for an elderly woman with a youthful figure: von hinten ~ und von vorne Mensch-ürgere-dich-nicht #she is [was] a dream from behind, and a
nightmare from the front.

Schönheit f - <abstr. beauty> phr. 1. hum. or iron. a gentle taunt on leaving a room or house, when one person has to precede the other: Alter vor ~! (i) age before beauty!; (ii) AE a children's jeer: beauty before the beast! 2. sarc. on the uncertain value of external beauty: mit der ~ (allein) kann man sich (or kannst du dir) nichts kaufen, mit der ~ allein kann man nichts anfangen, von der ~ kann man sich (or, kannst du dir) nichts abschneiden you won't (or can't) get far on good looks alone, IrE & AE beauty won't make the pot boil. 3. sarc. or hum. a taunt, or an admission, that a woman's good looks can often be achieved through painful cosmetic trickery only: ~ muß leiden! no beauty without tears, that's the price of beauty, the price of beauty is high, beauty hurts. 4. said of a person, usu. a woman, with moderately good looks: die ~ plagt sie nicht, die ~ hat sie nie geplagt, sie drückt die ~ nicht, sie kann ihre ~ noch ertragen she's certainly not plagued by good looks, she certainly doesn't suffer from good looks, she's not exactly troubled (or afflicted) with beauty, she was never cursed with beauty.

Speisekarte, less often Speisenkarte f -/n <cul. menu (card)> 1. jur. record of previous convictions: record; er hat eine meterlange ~ he's got a record as long as his arm, BE he's been had up more times than I've had hot dinners. 2. hum. or iron. when describing a person whose slovenly eating habits have visibly stained his clothes: bei dem kannst du die ganze ~ am Revers lesen you can tell what he's had to eat the last few days just by looking at his jacket.

Strohsack m -(e)s/...säcke <straw mattress> 1. euphem. interj. heiliger ~! holy smoke!, BE holy mackerel!, AE holy cow! 2. sarc. a rude warning not to leave the door open: habt ihr (or, haben sie) bei euch einen ~ (or Strohsäcke) vor der Tür? were you born (or, AE, brought up) in a barn?

Taschen...: ~billiard n -s taboo applied to a man who, hand in pocket, palps his genitals: BE pocket-billiards, AE pocket pool; ~ spielen BE
to play pocket-billiards, to pinch the cat, AE to play pocket pool; spielst du (grad) ~ ? having a feel (or, a grope) (around your trouser pockets)? ~Tuch n -(e)s...tücher pocket-handkerchief: hankie, hanky II phr. 1. as an antidote to forgetfulness: vergiß nicht, mach dir einen Knoten (Austr. einen Knopf) ins ~ ! don't forget now, tie a knot in your hankie (AE tie a string around your [first] finger). 2. to someone sniffling (i) sympathetically: hast du dein ~ vergessen? did you forget your hankie? (ii) sternly (+ Aufzug 1): sag einmal, hast du denn kein ~ bei dir? what's the matter, haven't you got a handkerchief? 3. iron. a pithy comment on a sad and sentimental film: ~ wird mitgeliefert! (it's) a two-handkerchief film (or movie).

Tasse f -/-n.<cup> hum. in a cliché, supposedly used by an amorously inclined female to her escort after an evening out (+ Briefmarkensammlung): wollen Sie bei (or mit) mir noch eine ~ Kaffee (or Tee) trinken? would you like to come round to my place for a cup of coffee? how about a cup of coffee (BE round, AE up) at my place?

Teutongrill m -e/-e iron. a coastline or seaside resort overly popular with German holidaymakers: #Teutonic Sun Strip; das ist ja ein richtiger ~ hier this seaside place is overrun by (or, swarming with) Germans.

Textil n -e/-ien hum. clothing: rags pl; sie hatte wenig ~ am Leib what she had on barely covered the essentials.

Thron m -(e)s/-e <throne> hum. 1. chamber pot, toilet: throne; er sitzt auf dem (or am) ~ he's on the throne, he's in session; sitzt du dem ewig auf dem (or am) ~ ? will you be on the throne forever? 2. outdoor privy: country seat; du weißt ja den ~ , nicht? you know where the country seat is, don't you? ~saal m -(e)s/-säle <throne room> hum. toilet: throne room; im ~ on the throne; ich muß (ein)mal in den ~ (gehen) I've got to go (and) sit in my throne room.

Unaussprechliche m -n/rarely: -n <the inexpressible or unpronounceable one> euphem. 1. hum. buttocks pl (+ Rücken 1): unmentionable, b.t.m.
er hat sie behutsam auf den ~n getätschelt he patted her gently on her you-know-what. 2. iron. peculiarity of the mind or character: kink; er hat einen ~ im Kopf he isn't quite right in the head, he's slightly you-know-what.

Valentin [f-] m -s <Chr. n. Valentine; Saint Valentine's Day (February 14th)> Bav. phr. 1. hum. said in questioning surprise or slight irritation by one who has been dropping objects in quick succession: (ja,) ist denn heute ~ ? looks like I've got dropsy today. 2. iron. to such a clumsy person: hast du heute ~ ? = hast du denn die ~ Fallsucht?

Veilchen n -s/- <bot. violet> a. blaues ~ hum. or iron. blackened eye: ebony eye, eye like a beetroot, chiefly AE shiner; jemandem ein ~ überreichen to give someone a black eye: to shine someone's eye for him, to get someone's eye put in mourning; hast du ein ~ abgekriegt?, hat es bei dir ein ~ gesetzt? did you get your eye put in mourning?, did you walk into a door?

Veilchen... hum. or iron.: -augen n pl. NGer. 1. a boxer's blackened eyes: two mourners; in der letzten Runde hat er dann richtige ~ ver-paßt gekriegt that last round then gave him a full suit of mourning. 2. loving glances: goo-goo eyes. -bahn f -/-en slow and usu. narrow-gauge railway (+ Blume l): bluebell railway, tulip line; das ist ja eine ~ ! that train's so slow you could get out and pick daisies, and hop back on again.


Verschen n -s/- <mistake> sometimes hum. unplanned pregnancy within a marriage or other intimate relationship (+ Betriebsunfall 2): happy accident, happy blunder; Albert war ein ~, er war nicht eingeplant Albert was a happy accident, he was not on the agenda.

Viertel n -s/- SGer. & Austr. phr. 1. <quarter of an hour> a non-factual response to a request to know the time: es ist drei ~ über Halber, es ist drei ~ auf den Zaunstecken (1) if said in a boisterous mood:
it's half past the corner, it's ten minutes to the lamp-post, it's a
quarter past a freckle, it's three freckles past a hair; (ii) if said
in annoyance: time you knew better!, what time would you like?, what-
ever time you like! 2. <quarter of the moon> a sarc. comment on some-
one's late arrival: *bis du kommst, geht in Böhmen ein ~ ein! I thought
you would have taken till doomsday to get here.

Vorstand m -(e)s/. . . stände <president, chairman, principal, etc.; here,
as a pun: person standing before (one)> in a query, directed with ag-
gressive humour at one who stands in the light or who obstructs the
view: *(sag einmal,)* dein Vater ist wohl ~ ? (tell me,) was your father
a glazier?; you make a better door than a window!

Wiedersehen n -s <reunion> phr. a hum. reminder to return a borrowed ar-
ticle: ~ macht Freude! this chair (etc.) will be homesick till it gets
back (or, doesn't like being away from home)!, mind you, it's on an
elastic band - it comes back!, NZE mind you, it's a boomerang, it
might come back and hit you!

Windelmercedes, Windel-Mercedes m -/- hum. BE pram, AE baby carriage:
  kiddy chariot.

Winter...: ~fenster n pl <double window> hum. spectacles: (AE front)
  windows pl, blinkers pl, goggles pl. ~heizen m -s/- <mot. snow tyre>
  hum. or iron. obesity at the waist: BE spare tyre, AE rubber tire;
extra padding, midriff bulge, love-handles pl | er setzt schon lang-
sam einen ~ an he's getting a little pudgy at the equator; *du solltest
etwas gegen deinen (or den) ~ tun* you should fight that midriff bulge
of yours. ~speck m -(e)s hum. excess fatty tissue developed during
the winter months: winter flab, winter fat; im Februar und März habe
ich statt einem kräftigen Abendbrot bloß eine Menge Salat gegessen -
und weg war der ~! in February and March I only ate a lot of salads
instead of a real dinner; and what do you know! my winter fat (just)
melted away.

Winzling m -(e)s/-e 1. neutral or hum. very small object (or the insig-
nificant remainder of a larger one), miniature-sized room, etc.: itsy-bitsy thing, bitsy-witsy thing, BE titch; *der Bleistift* (da) ist ja nur mehr ein ~ all I've got left is this little stubby pencil, BE that pencil here's such a titch; *ein ~ von (einem) Lokal* a little hole in the wall. 2. neutral or emot. very small animal: tiny creature; *die Gartengrasmücke ist ein ~ von bestenfalls 20-25 Gramm Gewicht* the garden-warbler is a featherweight of less than an ounce. 3. emot. hum. very small child: tiny tot, wee mite; hast du den süßen ~ in der Tragtasche gesehen? did you see that teeny-weeny (little) baby in the carry-cot? 4. contp. small person: midget, shrimp, BE titch, AE peewee; diesen ~ da könnte ich ja umblasen I could knock that midget over with a feather.

**Wurm** m -(e)s/Würmer <worm> hum. phr. used when observing the activities of an angler: er badet seinen ~, er bringt seinem ~ das Schwimmen bei, er lernt seinem ~ das Schwimmen he is out teaching the worms to swim, he is out to drown worms.

**Zahnklemmer** m -s/- N&W Ger. hum. dentist or dental surgeon: BE fang-fARRIER, gum-puncher, AE tooth carpenter, tooth-plumber, jawsmith.

**Zucker** m -s <sugar> phr. an ironic consolation for one who is afraid of getting drenched by the rain: was hast du denn (or, reg dich nicht auf), du bist 'ja nicht aus ~ BE don't make so much fuss, you won't get washed away, AE what's the matter, you won't melt (or, you're not made of sugar).

A bilingual glossary like this one encapsulates, by its very nature, the idiolects and speech patterns of people whose name is Legion. Great, too, is the number of those whose use and knowledge of words I could draw upon. There was Gerhard Graband, my esteemed friend, colleague and successor in the Chair of English at Braunschweig Technical University, whose linguistic prowess is only matched by the vastness and vividness of his vocabulary. Anna Buckett, Deborah Lehman-Irl, Jean Ritzke-Rutherford, Angelika Erhart, and Wolfgang Judenmann were able and resourceful contributors who, in untold sessions, willingly allowed their brains to be picked. Last, but not least, Heidi Eidelloth was a model co-ordinator and the producer of a flawless manuscript. I do not know what I should have done without them.
Če pregledamo slovarje sodobne angleščine malo natančneje, opazimo, da ta dela le nepopolno upoštevajo povsod navzočni in bogati pogovorni jezik. Nemalokrat stoji v ponazoritev kakšega pojma iz pogovornega jezika en sam primer, mogoče tudi ta ponesrečen. Še pogosteje pa tako slovarsko geslo sploh zamen iščemo.

V dvojezični leksikografiji je dodatna težava, da je treba ohraniti krhko ravnotežje med različno obarvanostjo obeh jezikov in najti izraze, ki so si enakovredni glede na šaljivost, posmeh, neposrednost in čustveno pretanjenost. To ravnotežje vse preveč slovarnikov zanemarja in podira, saj opredeljujejo ali razlagajo iskano na standardni ravni, tj. navajajo zgolj stvarne, ne hkrati obarvanih, ustreznosti zadnjih besed in fraz.

Članek obravnava kratko ta in podobna vprašanja. Gradivo zajema večinoma iz dveh nemško-angleških slovarjev, izdanih v šestdesetih in sedemdesetih letih (HARRAP, LANGENSCHEIDT), in ti deli v marsičem popravlja in dopolnjuje.