will receive a deputation from the Workhouse Infirmary Nursing Association on Wednesday next, April 15th, at 2.30 P.M., at the House of Commons.

THE Prince of Wales has fixed Wednesday, June 10th, for the festival dinner at which he will preside at the Imperial Institute in aid of the re-endowment of Guy's Hospital.

ON THE ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF SOME DISEASE-NAMES.

BY WILLIAM SYKES, M.D. DUNELM., F.S.A.,
A CORRESPONDENT OF THE NEW ENGLISH DICTIONARY.

WHILE the New English Dictionary is working out in an exhaustive manner, and on historical lines, the origin, development, and use of every word in the English language, it will not be amiss for members of the medical profession to review their own terminology, both as a small contribution to this monumental work and as an independent attempt to discover the principles on which certain medical terms have come into existence originally. This, again, may not be without use in settling the lines on which they may be most usefully formed and developed in the future. Our vocabulary must, in the first instance, be sought out in the medical literature of all ages: not in the systems of nosology which have been so abundantly produced from the time of Cullen to the present day. The language of a profession is formed from the words actually spoken, written, and read by its members, just as the language of a country consists of the words used and understood by the people, not of the inventions, suggestions, emendations, and alterations of a few scholars in their studies. The subject, indeed, under consideration is the vocabulary of the science of medicine as employed by English writers in English medical works. One cannot help noticing in the first place that, however much Latinised or Grecised the names of diseases may have been in the past, medicine has really collected her vocabulary out of every language under heaven and from every age. Folk-speech dealing with rough objective symptoms has given us no mean proportion of our disease names, folk-adaptation from neighbouring peoples many more, folk-degradation of the language of the learned a few, while the deliberate coinage of writers has of course added largely to the list. In many instances we are able to trace the history of a medical word from its first inception and to decide at once to which of the above classes it belongs; in others we can even name the original birthplace of a word, say from what language it has been adopted, and give almost the exact date of its actual employment in our literature, yet at the same time be unable to perceive the reason of its adoption. The word "scarlatina" is an example of this difficulty. We believe the term to have been first used in English medical literature by the great Sydenham in his "Observationes Medicarum," published in 1676.[1] We also know that the word is of Italian origin, having been actually employed by an Italian writer in 1527,[2] and that it is derived from the Italian "*scarlatto*" (scarlet) in allusion to the colour of the patient's skin; but why Sydenham, who, with the doubtful exception of a period of study at Montpellier, had never been abroad, should have inserted an Italian name amidst a Latin list of maladies is difficult to explain; indeed, we have little to offer beyond conjecture. Could Sydenham's friend, John Locke the philosopher, having seen a case of the disease in his company, have suggested to him the name bestowed upon such abroad? We know that Locke was at Montpellier about the time of the publication of this very work, and we also learn from one of Sydenham's letters[3] that Locke "had troubled himself in visiting with Sydenham very many of his variolous patients especially." May it have been in some communication from him at Montpellier, or elsewhere abroad, that Sydenham received an account of the malady with its name? We know, however, from that quaint but most excellent writer, James Cooke of Warwick, that the English term "scarlet fever" as applied to this very disease was in provincial use in Sydenham's own time. The first edition of Cooke's "Mellificium Chirurgiæ, or Marrow of Surgery," preceded that of Sydenham's "Observationes Medicarum" by a year, while its fourth edition, from which I quote, appeared only nine years later. In what edition the passage I extract was first inserted I cannot, in the absence of the earlier editions, at present ascertain. In his fourth edition, however, Cooke describes a disease he calls "rosalia,"[4] as showing "red, fiery spots which break out at the beginning of the disease all over the body, as if it were a small *erysipelas*, though the tumour is hardly discernible." "They sometimes," he continues, "break not forth till the fourth or fifth day; in the progress of the disease they sometimes possess the whole body, so that it looks as though it were all on a red fire, which colour is again changed into spots as at the beginning, which vanish upon the seventh or eighth day, the cuticle falling off in Scales or great Fleaks. The first and last of these [i.e., small-pox and rosalia] were at Warwick," he says, "at the writing hereof, the last going under the name of scarlet fever." It is possible, if Sydenham originally wrote his works in English, as has been stated, and was indebted to Dr. Mapletoft or another hand for his Latin translation, that he used the English term "scarlet fever" and owed the Italian "scarlatina" to his translator. It is at any rate a curious fact, as Dr. Mason Good notices on Dr. Willan's authority,[5] that "scarlatina" was first used by British writers—as indeed has continued to be the case ever since—although Dr. Good remarks[6] that "in saying that the denomination scarlatina was first applied to the disease by British writers Dr. Willan can only mean that it was by British writers first applied *technically* and introduced as a professional term into the medical vocabulary; for the term itself is Italian and was long a vernacular name in use on the shores of the Levant before it was imported into our own country." Be the reason of its adoption what it may, "scarlatina" affords an excellent instance of the uselessness of attempting to supplant a widely-accepted disease-name by some more elegant or scholarly synonym. Dr. Mason Good, in his day a great nosologist and classifier of disease, made a deliberate attempt during the early third of the present century, when his works were in vogue, to replace "scarlatina" by the old term "rosalia." He wrote[7] that "scarlatina is a barbarous and unclassical term, which has unaccountably crept into the nomenclature of medicine upon the proscription of the original and more classical name rosalia," which he states it to be his intention to restore. "It will not," he says, "be the fault of the present author if the correction so universally called for in the case before us should be postponed to another age, or the error complained of be charged upon future nosologists." He goes on to mention De Haen, Morton, Huxham, Heberden, and others as objecting to the use of the term "scarlatina," and, although he mentions Dr. Willan as employing it, he declares that even he considered it necessary to apologise for its continuance on the ground "that, however offensive the term might be to a classical ear, having been first employed by British authors, it could not well be displaced, having obtained admission into all the systems of nosology." Yet, in spite of this consensus of the opinions of great men, we find the word "scarlatina" as commonly used to-day as when Dr. Mason Good wrote, while the suggested amendments of himself and his authors are entirely forgotten in favour of the popular term, which has become so naturalised in our language that its employment is quite as usual as its English equivalent "scarlet fever," which is looked on by the poor as the name of a severer malady, the question being frequently asked whether a patient be suffering from "scarlet fever" or only scarlatina.

Another disease-name of Italian origin is influenza, the exact date of whose introduction into British medical literature is a little uncertain. It was established in both popular and medical use during the epidemic of 1782.[8] Mr. Huxham, who wrote in 1758 an account of the previous epidemic of 1743, says: "This fever seems to have been exactly the same disease as that which in the spring was rife all over Europe,

[1] Sydenham: Opera Omnia, Greenhill's edition, lib. vi., cap. ii., p. 243. Published for the Sydenham Society in 1844.
[2] Hirsch's Handbook of Geographical and Historical Pathology: New Sydenham Society's Translations, vol. i., p. 172 (note 10).
[3] Latham's Translation of Sydenham's Works (Sydenham Society's edition), vol. i., Life, p. 72.
[4] Mellificium Chirurgiæ, or Marrow of Surgery, fourth edition (1685), part vi., section ii., p. 214.
[5] Dr. J. Mason Good: "Study of Medicine," fourth edition, 1834, vol. ii., p. 318.
[6] Loc. cit., p. 318. [7] Ibid., p. 317.
[8] Thompson's Annals of Influenza, Sydenham Society's edition, p. 118 et seq.

termed the influenza"; while Dr. George Baker, in describing the immediately preceding epidemic of 1762, writes: "At Norwich ...... according to the testimony of the distinguished physician William Offley ...... a much greater number fell victims than were destroyed by a similar pestilence in 1733 or by the more severe visitation, called influenza, in 1743." Dr. Watson, in a letter to Dr. Huxham dated Dec. 9th, 1762, states that "it is nearly the same disease which was at London in April and May, 1743, and *then called influenza*, the name applied to it in Italy." We may from this evidence assume that the term was first introduced into England during the epidemic of 1743, unless, indeed, Häser's statement, quoted by Dr. Creighton,[9] that the word was used in the title of an Edinburgh graduation thesis in Latin as early as 1703, be more than a clerical error. "Influenza," then, is a term directly imported into England from Italy and imposed on our medical terminology by popular approval. It is not quite plain, however, what the original Italian word indicated in reference to the disease. Zuelzer[10] says that it refers to the assumed influence of the atmosphere or climate, or—from the further signification of the word as something fluid, transient, or fashionable—to a name commonly used in the epidemic of 1709—viz., "die Galantrie-Krankheit" or "das Modefieber."[11] Dr. Creighton, however, remarks[12] that, while the word is usually taken to mean the influence of the stars, and may even have got that sense by popular usage, the original etymology was probably different. He points out that as early as 1554 the Venetian Ambassador in London called the sweating sickness of 1551 an *influsso*, which is the Italian form of *influxio*. The latter is the correct classical term for a humour, catarrh, or defluxion, the Latin *defluxio* itself having now a special limited meaning. It was therefore not astrology, but humoral pathology, that brought in the word *influsso* and *influxio*, out of the former of which word Dr. Creighton suspects that "influenza" grew, rather than out of any notion of influence rained down from the heavenly bodies. All this is, however, little more than conjecture, and can only be set at rest by a resort to Italian literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, an inquiry conducted on those historical lines which the "New English Dictionary" so well advocates and exemplifies. Curiously enough, the same popular caprice which placed the name "influenza" in the list of specific diseases almost succeeded in finally degrading it into a synonym of a common cold. The great epidemics of the disease in 1833 and 1847 fixed the association of the word so closely in connexion with a catarrhal condition that an influenza cold became an admitted term for an ordinary cold or coryza, especially if attended with sharp fever.[13] It was only the present cycle of outbreak, commencing in 1889, which disassociated the name with any form of catarrh.

In or before 1782 popular favour established the name "la grippe" in as firm a condition of acceptance in France as its rival, "influenza," in England. In this, folk etymology probably assisted. "La grippe" is, according to Joseph Frank,[14] derived from the Polish word *chrypka* (raucedo), but was at once in France referred for its etymology to the French verb *agripper* (to seize), the sudden onset of the attack in those afflicted apparently rendering this derivation a very likely and apt one. A similar instance of transferred derivation took place in the word "dengue," as will be noted directly. Attempts have been made, entirely unsuccessfully, however, to popularise the French *grippe* in England in place of the Italian *influenza*.

With regard to the derivation of the word "dengue," it appears that the term in Spanish means fastidiousness or prudery, also a female dandy; and, as the disease dengue is, on account of neuritic or muscular pain, accompanied by a stiff, ungainly gait and awkward bearing, when it first broke out in Cuba in 1827 no doubt was entertained that its title referred to this peculiarity, as was shown by its immediate translation in the English West Indian possessions into "dandy fever," a name it yet bears. Another popular synonym, "the giraffe," is no doubt referable to the same fact and derivation. Dr. Christie has, however, shown[15] that dengue is really a Swahili word, the full name of the disease in Zanzibar being *ka dinga pepo*, which may be thus construed: *Ka* is a partitive article meaning "a" or "a kind of"; *dinga*, *dyenga*, or *denga* means "a sudden cramp-like seizure"; while *pepo* signifies "an evil spirit or plague." And it was the Swahili *dinga* or *denga* which was confused with the Spanish word *dengue* on the appearance of the disease in the Spanish possessions in 1827. A still more absurd explanation of the meaning of dengue, than the Spanish one in question, has been attempted by some of our own writers. They explain it, by an ingenious method of double beheading, to be nothing more than (A)den (A)gue.

Although the history of the adoption of the French word "diphtheria" in English medical literature, as well as its origin and final alteration, are much better known than that of some of the above terms, yet on account of certain verbal peculiarities which mark its adaptation into English form it is worth recapitulating. In 1821 Brettoneau of Tours read a communication before the then Académie Royale de Médecine on Croup and Malignant Angina, in which the following paragraph occurs[16]: "Let it be permitted me to designate this phlegmasia by the name of *diphthérite*, derived from διφθέρα, *pellis; exuvium, vestis coriacea.*" In the same paper the adjective *diphthéritique* also occurs frequently. This new designation for a certain form of croupous inflammation was imported into English medical literature to a somewhat limited extent and in the modified form "diphtheritis." It did not, however, become a part of our terminology and was nearly invariably followed by reference to its French introducers and to French observations. It was accompanied in these instances by its adjective, Englished into "diphtheritic." In 1855 Brettoneau, in a fifth memoir,[17] altered his term *diphthérite* into *diphthérie*. Sir J. R. Cormack[18] asserts that he did this because he had discovered that the disease was not of an inflammatory character. Is it not equally probable that someone had drawn his attention to the fact that his original coinage was made on a mistaken model? It was framed after the example of such words as "iritis," "bronchitis," "laryngitis," &c., where, however, the completed word is composed of two elements, one indicating the region or part affected—e.g., "ir" from "iris" in "iritis"—the other the mark of inflammation, "itis." In Brettoneau's term, however, the primary element of the word dealt with the pellicular result of the inflammation, not at all with the part inflamed. Analysed on the model of the other words ending in *itis*, Brettoneau's coinage resolved itself simply into "the inflammation of a skin or pellicle" instead of into that which he desired to imply—viz., inflammation characterised by the production of a skin or pellicle.

At the same time that Brettoneau, from whatever motive, altered his new substantive from *diphthérite* into *diphthérie* he also amended the adjective *diphthéritique* into the form *diphthérique*. In 1857 a historical epidemic of the disease crossed the Channel from France to England, bringing with it its eagerly adopted French title *diphthérie* in the slightly altered form "diphtheria." Sir J. R. Cormack[19] states "that diphtheria was a word almost unknown in English medical literature till 1859, when the Sydenham Society published a volume of memoirs on the disease," but in this he is quite mistaken; the word made its appearance in the English medical journals as early as 1857, while those of 1858 actually abounded with it, as did the American professional papers for the same year. Its acceptance was widespread and immediate, and it at once became an established member of our language. Not so with the amended form of its adjective *diphthérique*, which a few purists vainly endeavoured to naturalise as "diphtheric." But, with the capriciousness which characterises popular word-adoption, "diphtheric" never became general, and, while Brettoneau's original substantive "diphtheritis" was relegated to the limbo of disused words, its derived adjective, "diphtheritic," was universally adopted in this country, and we have the curious spectacle of a substantive "diphtheria" and a resulting adjective "diphtheritic" which could by no correct method of derivation have been formed from it in a legitimate manner. During the last few months I have noted with some pleasure that a more correctly formed derivative adjective, "diphtherial," has come into vogue, which may, perhaps, in course of time perform that which the equally

9 History of Epidemics in Britain, 1894, vol. ii., p. 304.
10 Ziemssen's Cyclopædia of Medicine, English translation, vol. ii., p. 517.
11 I.e., "Gallantry disease or fashionable fever."
12 Loc. cit., vol. ii., p. 304.
13 Creighton: Op. cit., vol. ii., p. 304.
14 Quoted in Ziemssen's Cyclopædia of Medicine, English translation, vol. ii., p. 517.
15 Glasgow Medical Journal, September, 1881. See also New English Dictionary, under Dengue.

16 New Sydenham Society's Memoirs on Diphtheria, 1859, p. 20.
17 Op. cit., p. 173.
18 Quain's Dictionary of Medicine, 1883, p. 374, under Diphtheria.
19 Loc. cit.

correct "diphtheric" could not do—viz., entirely displace the older and incorrect "diphtheritic."

Croup, the name of a disease which is by some thought to be really diphtheria, was transferred during the last century from the Lowland Scottish dialect into a permanent position in our medical nomenclature. In parts of Scotland "to croup" is a verb meaning to cry hoarsely, to croak as a raven, to make a hoarse crowing sound. It appears to be allied in derivation to the English provincial word "roup," applied to a disease of fowls. The verb was also applied to the sound caused in the disease, a use not yet quite obsolete; in some medical works and in many nurseries a child is still said "to croup" when emitting the brassy, harsh cough symptomatic of the complaint. Afterwards, by extension, the term "croup" was doubtless transferred to the disease itself. It was first used in medical literature by Dr. P. Blair,[20] of Cupar, Angus, in 1718, who in describing a hitherto unnoticed malady gave it its local designation. It was not, however, until 1765, when Dr. F. T. Home,[21] another Scotchman, published his treatise on the malady, that it obtained a permanent place in our nosology as a specific disease under its provincial name.

Measles is an old English disease-name which so-called classical nosologists have vainly attempted to replace by such synonyms as "morbilli" and "rubeola." Dr. Creighton[22] says that originally the term "measles" meant the leprous—first in the Latin form *miselli* and *missellæ* (diminutive of *miser*), and that John of Gaddesden, by haphazard bracketing of the disease of measles and the tubercular nodules of leprosy under the common name of "messles," caused the word to be divorced from its original connexion with leprosy and restricted to its common use. "It can," he concludes dogmatically, "hardly be doubted that we owe the English name 'measles' as the equivalent of morbilli to John of Gaddesden." In this, perhaps from taking too exclusively English a standpoint in his examination of the literature of the subject, Dr. Creighton is probably in error. Dr. Skeat,[23] a remarkably accurate writer, declares, on the contrary, that the word "measles" is wholly unconnected with the Middle English *mesel*, a leper, which merely meant originally "a wretch," from the old French *mesel*, Latin *misellus*, the diminutive of *miser*, wretched. Measles is, he says, derived from the Dutch *maseln* (measles); the disease is also called in Holland *masel-sucht*, the measle-sickness, so translated by an old English writer. The literal sense is "small spots." The original word occurs in the Middle High German *mase*, Old High German *masa*, a spot. Hirsch[24] also states that the English word "measles" corresponds to the German *Maal* and *Masern*, and the Sanscrit *masura*, spots. Doubtless it is to this meaning of spots, hence spotty, that we owe the term "measly pork," as applied to the meat of the pig when infested with scolices of tænia.

Of names deliberately invented by medical scholars of set purpose for the designation of diseases or their symptoms some have taken a permanent place in our language and literature, while many more have sunk back into a merited oblivion. Of the former class many were coined to describe diseases or conditions previously unknown, and passed into common acceptation with the recognition of the existence of the maladies they described. Probably "bronchitis" may be taken as an apt illustration of this class. The word was introduced into use by the English Dr. Badham in 1810,[25] and afterwards by the German J. P. Frank in 1812.[26] The disease itself had been hitherto little recognised or investigated under its old name of "peripneumonia notha," so that the alteration in name not only signalised an improvement in both pathology and treatment, but also accompanied a description of disease which familiarised both practitioners and the people with an easily recognisable and striking affection, very common among the poor, and was thus adopted, once and for ever, in the folk-speech of the country.

Other words of this successful class of deliberate scientific coinage have held their ground simply because they were invented to meet the requirements of the learned in regions which, lying beyond the ken or need of the vulgar, were the sole possession of science. The word "aphasia" is an example of this series, the pathological condition it represents being wholly, and the clinical condition nearly, outside the observation and analysis of laymen. Therefore the word was forged by scholars for scholars, after due discussion and alterations, which would have been impossible in the case of a word which was amenable to the disturbing process of public approbation or disapproval.

Trousseau[27] tells us that "the affection now called 'aphasia' was in 1841 termed 'alalia' by Professor Lordat, and that in 1861 M. Broca changed this name for that of 'aphemia.' But M. Chrysaphis, a very distinguished Greek scholar, and himself a Greek, although accepting the term 'alalia,' proposed as a better one that of 'aphasia,' derived from α, privative, and φάσις, speech. M. Littre, whose authority is so great, and M. Briau likewise preferred the word 'aphasia,' and all three concur in rejecting 'aphemia.'" Trousseau himself had at first adopted the name of "aphemia" after M. Broca, but afterwards, on the authority of the scholars named above, substituted for it that of "aphasia." To complete the transaction the German, Küssmaul, has more lately annexed Professor Lordat's discarded word "alalia," and applied it to stammering, an entirely different disease.[28]

One of the most successful and extensive artificial systems of nomenclature in a kindred branch of science was that of Dr. Barclay. In 1803, being then a teacher of anatomy in Edinburgh, he published a new system of anatomical nomenclature, which was so successful that a number of his suggested terms were at once adopted by anatomists and incorporated in their works. Many of them remain in daily use even now. He recommended about twenty-five new adjectives, or adjectives with new meanings, to denote the various aspects and situations of the organs and limbs, &c. His list includes such useful and common words as mesial, lateral, dextral, sinistral, peripheral, central, proximal, and distal.

Thus we see physicians and scholars forging new names as blacksmiths forge horseshoes, but it is, as noted above, only while these new creations are retained in the calmer atmosphere of science that they maintain their vitality. Once let these word-smiths begin making new names for folk maladies, and their artificial creations immediately crumble to pieces before the more robust denizens of the land. It is doubtful, for instance, if Barclay's system of anatomical nomenclature would have so rapidly commended itself if applied to some more popular science. As it was, the moment Barclay transgressed the genius of our language his proposed alterations were ignored and are now forgotten. This was so in the case of his new system of adverbs, of which he suggested a like number with his adjectives. While the latter ended in "al," the former concluded with "ad," and we had "laterad," "dextrad," "sinistrad," and a score or so more of like monstrosities, a very few of which struggled on in very occasional use for about forty years,[29] and are now quite obsolete. Even when scientific coinages have been adopted into the language of the people it is not always certain that men of fair culture correctly analyse them into their original constituents and real signification. In a recent novel of an American author, Frank Stockton,[30] the following sentence occurs: "She was, in a certain sense, a floraphobist, and took an especial delight in finding in foreign countries blossoms which were the same or similar to the flowers she was familiar with in New England." Here the author has evidently formed his word "floraphobist" on some such imaginary model as hydrophobist, derived from hydrophobia, a well-known disease-name handed down to us from Celsus. But unfortunately the result arrived at is entirely opposite in meaning to what the writer intended. "Floraphilist" was the thing

20 Miscellaneous Observations in the Practice of Physic, &c. London, 1718.

21 Inquiry into the Nature, Cause, and Cure in Croup. Edinburgh, 1765.

22 Op. cit., vol. v., p. 632.

23 Concise Etymological Dictionary, fourth edition, 1894, p. 276, under Measles.

24 Handbook of Geographical and Historical Pathology: New Sydenham Society's edition, vol. i., p. 154.

25 On the Inflammatory Affections of the Mucous Membrane of the Bronchiæ. London, 1810.

26 Interpretationes Clinicæ, i., 110.

27 Lectures on Clinical Medicine: New Sydenham Society's Translations, vol. i., lecture vii., p. 218, note.

28 Ziemssen's Cyclopædia of Medicine, English translation, vol. xiv., p. 633.

29 A good résumé of Barclay's nomenclature will be found in Wishart's translation of Scarpa's Treatise on Hernia, Edinburgh, 1814, p. xiii. et seq. The latest anatomical work in which I have noted any instances of Barclay's adverbs is Todd's Cyclopædia of Anatomy and Physiology, 1849, &c. The question has been raised whence was the form ending in "ad" derived—in "centrad," for example. The New English Dictionary suggests it as derived from the Greek κεντραδε, but the words are entirely Latin in construction, and were, I doubt not, formed by the displacement of the Latin participle "ad" (to or towards) to the end of the new coined name.

30 A Borrowed Mouth, and other Stories, 1887: Our Story, p. 271.

the author desired to indicate, but, evidently confusing in his mind the madness of rabies with the last section of the word "hydrophobia," he took it as tantamount to "mania," and deemed that a "floraphobist" was the same as a "floramaniac"—a somewhat unfortunate blunder, well illustrating the contention that mere scientific coinages, however ancient, hardly ever sink into the understandings of the people so completely as native terms do.

When, however, a disease-name of scientific invention has once become welded into the language of the nation it almost invariably holds its own against subsequent attempts of scientists at emendation, just as a folk-name does. Take typhoid fever, for instance. Originally introduced by Louis in 1829 in his classical memoir on the subject,[31] *fièvre typhoïde* has been in general French use ever since, and was widely adopted in England about 1851. From an imaginary possible confusion between the adjective "typhoid," as applied to certain conditions of an asthenic, non-specific nature, and the specific fever itself, Dr. Murchison was led to invent an improved name, "pythogenic"—that is, filth—fever. This was, on the obvious ground of incorrect suggestion, at once objected to, was never very widely accepted, and is now quite obsolete. Dr. Wilks of Guy's Hospital, for the same theoretical reason, proposed "enterica" or "enteric fever" as a preferable term. This has had a more general acceptance unfortunately, especially among medical writers connected with Guy's Hospital, and is frequently to be found in medical reports and works. It has, however, never gained a footing in the literature or language of the people, and will, therefore, when it has produced its only effect, that of confusing the lay mind, finally die a natural death. Meanwhile, even those very purists who object to the term "typhoid" as likely to confuse, agree that "enteric fever" is probably caused by the bacillus typhosus of Eberth. The German "typhus" in connexion with this disease is, in fact, to be retained, while the French "typhoid" is to be sternly rejected.

Beyond such historical interest as this paper may arouse, its aim is to draw attention to the principles on which disease-names have been successfully formed in the past and to offer a few suggestions for their formation in the future:—1. Since medical literature in this country has become essentially English, disease-names which are most in sympathy with the genius and structure of our language or are actually drawn from our speech are most suitable for adoption by us. Since the writing of our literature in Latin has for ever ceased, the attempted classicising of names introduced from other sources ought to be abandoned. It has, for instance, been attempted to Latinise "dengue" into "denguis," an absurd endeavour. 2. A disease-name once generally adopted should never on any pretence be changed. Such alteration only confuses the records of historical medicine. In many of the diseases described by older authors we vainly seek for their real nature under an unfamiliar nomenclature. On the other hand, imaginary disease-names invented in modern days for historical epidemics are equally misleading. The "black death" which ravaged Europe during the years 1348–50 with such terrible results is not to be found in any contemporary literature under that name, which has been shown by Dr. Murray in the New English Dictionary to have had no more recondite a source than Mrs. Markham's "History of England," published no earlier than the beginning of the present century for the instruction of children. 3. It is vain to attempt to replace a folk name or one widely adopted by the people by a new one deliberately coined by scholars, and this for the following reasons: first, whatever names may be accepted by medical men must be translated by them into the vernacular of their patients, and by a resulting reaction the vernacular name comes to be the commoner one with themselves; and, secondly, there is no continuity or unchangeableness in the terms invented by *savants*, which are amended, improved upon, and displaced by the next writer on the subject, or, even more absurdly still, by the very inventors themselves in a subsequent publication. A striking instance of this occurs in that excellent work, "Fagge's Principles and Practice of Medicine." In the first edition, published in 1886, German measles is termed "rötheln," but in the second edition, issued only two years later, it is promoted to the dignity of "rubeola." Meanwhile, some writers call measles themselves "rubeola" and others "morbilli"—a pretty confusion, indeed, for the subsequent historian to unravel. These nosologists are, indeed, like one of Thackeray's characters, Lady Southdown, who having forced her followers to accept Podger's pills and Jowler's religion, had by the time their adherence was secured become herself a doubter and expected them instantly to abjure those heresies, medical and theological, and to accept other prophets equally extreme. 4. All language is the result of natural growth and cannot be artificially created. It is, therefore, more scientific to accept the products of natural development than to indulge in an artificial and therefore ephemeral system of cultivation. 5. All disease-names are only labels by means of which the maladies themselves can be identified, discriminated, and classified, and those names are the best which are simple, distinctive, and express no theories of causation. It is the folk names which most often meet these requirements, and therefore deserve the widest adoption by us in the future.

Gosport, Hants.

[31] Recherches Anatomiques, Pathologiques, et Thérapeutiques sur la Maladie, &c., Paris, 1829.

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD TWENTY-FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT (1894-95).

FOOD.

THERE was an increase in the number of the analyses made under the Food and Drugs Act during the last official year amounting to nearly 2300 samples over the number made in the previous period, despite which the returns show that the proportion of adulterated samples was considerably below the average of the past three years—viz., 10·3 per cent., which *is the lowest percentage of adulteration since the passing of the Sale of Food and Drugs Act in 1875.* We take this as a positive proof that with the increase of vigilance on the part of the authorities to exercise their powers there has resulted a distinct decline in fraudulent practices which, during the operation of the Act, is without parallel. We have again and again insisted that a greater number of samples per head of population should be taken, and that in those districts where the Act was inoperative through the inaction of the authorities the Local Government should stir them up to their sense of duty in this matter. And the result has been satisfactory. There is still room, however, for improvement, since the present report shows that in all there were thirty-seven districts with an aggregate population of nearly two millions in which the Acts were entirely or almost entirely ignored. What is it that prevents no less than eleven county councils and the town councils of thirteen boroughs (including Great Yarmouth with a population of 49,334) and the thirteen boroughs including important places like Norwich, Stockport, Northampton, Ipswich, Warrington, and Tynemouth from making the slightest attempt to carry out the Acts which aim at providing a pure food supply for the people? We cannot believe that the food supply of these districts is so free from reproach that the application of the Act would be superfluous. We rather think that it is indifference on the part of the authorities, and steps should be taken to represent to these authorities the important gap they leave unstopped in carrying out their administrative duties. Looking down the list of the various articles of food that were collected for analysis we find that milk as in previous years was the chief subject of adulteration. Of the 16,305 samples of milk analysed no less than 1868, or 11½ per cent., were returned as adulterated. There is little doubt, however, that many samples passed as genuine were probably watered so as to be just within the limits of average quality. Such specimens of milk can only be dealt with by fixing a fair but not too low standard. Bread appears to have been tampered with only to the extent of rather less than 1 per cent. of the samples examined. The percentage of adulterated samples of butter fell last year to 10·4 whereas in the previous report it was 13·7. With the exception of 1888 this is the lowest record since the passing of the Act. Of 1724 samples of coffee examined 180, or 10·4 per cent., were condemned, a result which, compared with previous records, shows a distinct improvement; 29 samples of sugar were condemned out of the 397 samples