THE ROMANCE OF WORDS

CHAPTER I

OUR VOCABULARY

The bulk of our literary language is Latin, and consists of words either borrowed directly or taken from "learned" French forms. The every-day vocabulary of the less educated is of Old English, commonly called Anglo-Saxon, origin, and from the same source comes what we may call the machinery of the language, i.e., its inflexions, numerals, pronouns, prepositions, and conjunctions. Along with Anglo-Saxon, we find a considerable number of words from the related Norse languages, this element being naturally strongest in the dialects of the north and east of England. The third great element of our working vocabulary is furnished by Old French, i.e., the language naturally developed from the spoken Latin of the Roman soldiers and colonists, generally called Vulgar Latin. To its composite character English owes its unequalled richness in expression. For most ideas we have three separate terms, or groups of terms, which, often starting from the same metaphor, serve to express different shades of meaning. Thus a deed done with malice prepense (an Old French compound from Lat. pensare, to weigh), is deliberate or pondered, both Latin words which mean literally
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"weighed"; but the four words convey four distinct shades of meaning. The Gk. sympathy is Lat. compassion, rendered in English by fellow feeling.

Sometimes a native word has been completely supplanted by a loan word, e.g., Anglo-Sax. here, army (cf. Ger. Heer), gave way to Old Fr. (h)ost (p. 158). This in its turn was replaced by army, Fr. armée, which, like its Spanish doublet armada, is really a feminine past participle with some word for host, band, etc. understood. Here has survived in Hereford, harbour (p. 164), harbinger (p. 90), etc., and in the verb harr (cf. Ger. verheeren, to harry). Or a native word may persist in some special sense, e.g., weed, a general term for garment in Shakespeare—

"And there the snake throws her enamelled skin, 
Weed wide enough to wrap a fairy in"
(Midsummer Night's Dream, ii. 2.)

survives in "widow's weeds."  Chare, a turn of work—

"the maid that milks
And does the meanest chares."
(Antony and Cleopatra, iv. 15.)

has given us charwoman, and persists as American chore—

"Sharlee was . . . concluding the post-prandial chores."
(H. S. Harrison, Queed, Ch. 17.)

Sake, cognate with Ger. Sache, thing, cause, and originally meaning a contention at law, has been replaced by cause, except in phrases beginning with the preposition for. See also bead (p. 74). Unkempt, uncombed, and uncouth, unknown, are fossil remains of obsolete verb forms.

In addition to these main constituents of our language, we have borrowed words, sometimes in
considerable numbers, sometimes singly and accidentally, from almost every tongue known to mankind, and every year sees new words added to our vocabulary. The following chapters deal especially with words borrowed from Old French and from the other Romance languages, their origins and journeyings, and the various accidents that have befallen them in English. It is in such words as these that the romance of language is best exemplified, because we can usually trace their history from Latin to modern English, while the earlier history of Anglo-Saxon words is a matter for the philologist.

Words borrowed directly from Latin or Greek lack this intermediate experience, though the study of their original meanings is full of surprises. This, however, is merely a question of opening a Latin or Greek dictionary, if we have not time for the moment's reflexion which would serve the same purpose. Thus, to take a dozen examples at random, to *abominate*\(^1\) is to turn shuddering from the evil *omen*, a *generous* man is a man of "race" (*genus*), an *innuendo* can be conveyed "by nodding," to *insult* is to "jump on," a *legend* is something "to be read," a *manual* is a "hand-book," an *obligation* is essentially "binding," to *relent* is to "go slow," *rivals* are people living by the same "stream"\(^2\) (*rivus*), a *salary* is an allowance for "salt" (*sal*), a *supercilious* man is fond of lifting his "eyebrows" (*supercilium*), and a *trivial* matter is so commonplace that it can be picked up at the meeting of "three ways" (*trivium*). *Dexterity* implies skill with the "right" hand (*dexter*), while *sinister* preserves the superstition of the ill-omened "left."

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\(^1\) *Abominate* is regularly spelt *abominate* in late Old French and Mid. English, as though meaning "inhuman," Lat. *homo, homin-*, a man.

\(^2\) This etymology is doubted by some authorities.
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It may be remarked here that the number of Latin words used in their unaltered form in every-day English is larger than is generally realised. Besides such phrases as bona-fide, post-mortem, viva-voce, or such abbreviations as A.M., ante meridiem, D.V., Deo volente, and L. s. d., for libri, solidi, denarii, we have, without including scientific terms, many Latin nouns, e.g., animal, genius, index, odium, omen, premium, radius, scintilla, stimulus, tribunal, and adjectives, e.g., complex, lucifer, miser, pauper, maximum, senior, and the ungrammatical bonus. The Lat. veto, I forbid, has been worked hard of late. The stage has given us exit, he goes out, and the Universities exeat, let him go out, while law language contains a number of Latin verb forms, e.g., affidavit (late Latin), he has testified, caveat, let him beware, cognovit, he has recognised—

“You gave them a cognovit for the amount of your costs after the trial, I’m told.”

(Pickwick, Ch. 46.)

due to the initial words of certain documents. Similarly item, also, is the first word in each paragraph of an inventory. With this we may compare the purview of a statute, from the Old Fr. pourveu (pourvu), provided, with which it used to begin. A tenet is what one “holds.” Fiat means “let it be done.” When Mr Weller lamented—

“Oh, Sammy, Sammy, vy warn’t there a alleybi?”

(Pickwick, Ch. 34.)

it is safe to say that he was not consciously using the Latin adverb alibi, elsewhere, nor is the printer who puts in a vis. always aware that this is an old abbreviation for videlicet, i.e., videre licet, it is permissible to see. A nostrum is “our” unfailing remedy, and tandem, at length. Instead of side by side, is a university joke.
Sometimes we have inflected forms of Latin words. A *rebus* is a word or phrase represented "by things." *Requiem*, accusative of *requies*, rest, is the first word of the introit used in the mass for the dead—

> "Requiem æternam dona eis, Domine,"

while *dirige* is the Latin imperative *dirige*, from the antiphon in the same service—

> "Dirige, Domine meus, in conspectu tuo viam mean."

The spelling *dirige* was once common—

> "Also I byqwetho to ech of the paryshe prystys beying at my dyryge and masse xiid."

(Will of John Perfay, of Bury St. Edmunds, 1509.)

*Query* was formerly written *quaere*, seek, and *plaudit* is for *plaudite*, clap your hands, the appeal of the Roman actors to the audience at the conclusion of the play—

> "Nunc, spectatores Iovis summi causa clare *plaudite.*"

(*Plautus, Amphitruo.*)

*Debenture* is for *debentur*, there are owing. *Dominie* is the Latin vocative *domine*, formerly used by schoolboys in addressing their master, while *pandy*, a stroke on the hand with a cane, is from *pande pacem*, hold out your hand. *Parse* is the Lat. *pars*, occurring in the question *Quae pars orationis?* What part of speech? *Omnibus*, for all, is a dative plural. *Limbo* is the ablative of Lat. *limbus*, an edge, hem, in the phrase "in limbo patrum," where *limbus* is used for the abode of the Old Testament saints on the verge of Hades. It is already jocular in Shakespeare—

> "I have some of 'em in *limbo* patrum, and there they are like to dance these three days."

(*Henry VIII.*, v. 3.)

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1 But the word comes to us from French. In the 16th century such puzzles were called *rebus de Picardie*, because of their popularity in that province.
Folio, quarto, etc., are ablatives, from the phrases in folio, in quarto, etc., still used in French. Premises, earlier premisses, is a slightly disguised Lat. præmissas, the aforesaid, lit. sent before, used in deeds to avoid repeating the full description of a property. It is thus the same word as logical premisses, or assumptions. Quorum is from a legal formula giving a list of persons “of whom” a certain number must be present. A teetotum is so called because it has, or once had, on one of its sides, a T standing for totum, all. It was also called simply a totum. The other three sides also bore letters to indicate what share, if any, of the stake they represented. Cotgrave has totum (toton), “a kind of game with a whirl-bone.” In spite of the interesting anecdote about the temperance orator with an impediment in his speech, it was probably teetotum that suggested teetotaller.

We have also a few words straight from Greek, e.g., analysis, aroma, atlas, the world-sustaining demi-god whose picture used to decorate map-books, colon, comma, dogma, epitome, miasma, nausea, Gk. nauvola, lit. sea-sickness, nectar, whence the fruit called a nectarine—

“Nectarine fruits which the compliant boughs
Yielded them, sidelong as they sat recline.”

(Paradise Lost, iv. 332.)

pathos, python, pyx, synopsis, etc.; but most of our Greek words have passed through French via Latin, or are newly manufactured scientific terms, often most unscientifically constructed.

Gamut contains the Gk. gamma and the Latin conjunction ut. Guy d’Arezzo, who flourished in the 11th century, is said to have introduced the method of indicating the notes by the letters a to g. For the note below a he used the Gk. gamma. To him is attri-
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...buted also the series of monosyllables by which the notes are also indicated. They are supposed to be taken from a Latin hymn to St John—

Ut queant laxis resonare fibris
Mira gestorum famuli tuorum
Solve polluti labii reatum
Sancte Ioannes.

Do is sometimes substituted for ut in French, and always in modern English.

• In considering the Old French element in English, one has to bear in mind a few elementary philological facts. Nearly all French nouns and adjectives are derived from the accusative. I give, for simplicity, the nominative, adding • the stem in the case of imparisyllabic words. The foundation of French is Vulgar Latin, which differs considerably from that we study at school. I only give Vulgar Latin forms where it cannot be avoided. For instance, in dealing with culverin (p. 38), I connect Fr. coupre, adder, with Lat. coluber, a snake. Every Romance philologist knows that it must represent Vulgar Lat. • colbra; but this form, which, being conjectural, is marked with an asterisk, had better be forgotten by the general reader:

Our modern English words often preserve a French form which no longer exists, or they are taken from dialects, especially those of Normandy and Picardy, which differ greatly from that of Paris. The word caudle illustrates both these points. It is the same word as modern Fr. chaudeau, "a cauld; or, warme broth" (Cotgrave), but it preserves the Old French ¹ -el for -eau, and the Picard c- for ch. An uncomfortable bridle which used to be employed to silence scolds was

¹ For simplicity the term Old French is used here to include all words not in modern use. Where a modern form exists it is given in parentheses.
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called the *branks*. It is a Scottish word, originally applied to a bridle improvised from a halter with a wooden "cheek", each side to prevent it from slipping—

"And then its shanks,
They were as thin, as sharp and sma'
As cheeks o' branks."

(BURNS, Death and Doctor Hornbook, vii. 4.)

These cheeks correspond to the two parallel levers called the "branches" of a bridle, and *brank* is the Norman *branque*, branch. All the meanings of *patch* answer to those of Fr. *pièce*. It comes from the Old French dialect form *peche*, as *match* comes from *mèche*, and *cratch*, a manger, from *crèche*, of German origin, and ultimately the same word as *crib*. *Cratch* is now replaced, except in dialect, by *manger*, Fr. *mangeoire*, from *manger*, to eat, but it was the regular word in Mid. English—

"Sche childeide her firste born sone, and wliappide him in clothis,
and puttide in a *cracch*."

(WYCLIF, Luke, ii. 7.)

*Pew* is from Old Fr. *puy*, a stage, eminence, Lat. *podium*, which survives in *Puy de Dôme*, the mountain in Auvergne on which Pascal made his experiments with the barometer. *Dupuy* is a common family name in France, but the *Depews* of the West Indies have kept the older pronunciation.

Many Old French words which live on in England are obsolete in France. *Chime* is Old Fr. *chimbe* from Greco-Lat. *cymbalum*. Minsheu (1617) derived *dismal* from Lat. *dies malis*, evil days. This, says Trench, "is exactly one of those plausible etymologies which one learns after a while to reject with contempt." But Minsheu is substantially right, if we substitute Old Fr. *dis mal*, which is found as early as 1256. Old Fr.
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*di;* a day, also survives in the names of the days of the week, *lundi,* etc. In *remainder* and *remnant* we have the infinitive and present participle of an obsolete Old French verb derived from Lat. *remanère.* *Manor* and *power* are also Old French infinitives, the first now only used as a noun (*manoir*), the second represented by *pouvoir.* *Misnomer* is the Anglo-French infinitive, "to misname."

In some cases we have preserved meanings now obsolete in French. *Trump*, in cards, is Fr. *triomphe,* "the card game called ruffe, or trump; also, the ruffe, or *trump* at it" (Cotgrave), but the modern French word for *trump* is *atout,* to all. *Rappee* is for obsolete Fr. (tabac) *rapé,* pulverised, rapped. Fr. *talon,* heel, from Vulgar Lat. *talo,* talon-,* for talus,* was applied by falconers to the heel claw of the hawk. This meaning, obsolete in French, has persisted in English. The *mizen* mast is the rearmost of three, but the Fr. *mât de misaine* is the fore-mast, and both come from Ital. *messana,* middle, "also the poop or *mizensail*" in a ship" (Torriano).

As in the case of Latin, we have some inflected French forms in English. *Lampon* is from the archaic Fr. *lampon,* "a drunken song" (Miège, *French Dict., 1688*). This is coined from the imperative *lampons,* let us drink, regularly used as a refrain in seditious and satirical songs. For the formation we may compare

1 The name was thus applied to a sail before it was given to a mast. Although the Italian word means "middle," it is perhaps, in this particular sense, a popular corruption of an Arabic word of quite different meaning. The discussion of so difficult a problem is rather out of place in a book intended for the general reader, but I cannot refrain from giving a most interesting note which I owe to Mr W. B. Whall, Master Mariner, the author of *Shakespeare's Sea Terms Explained*—"The sail was (until c. 1780) lateen, *i.e.,* triangular, like the sail of a galley. The Saracen, or Moors, were the great galley sailors of the Mediterranean, and *mizzen* comes from Arab. *mīzān,* balance. The *mizen* is, even now, a sail that 'balances,' and the reef in a *mizen* is still called the 'balance' reef."
American *vamose*, to skedaddle, from Span. *vamos*, let us go. The military *réveillé* is the French imperative *réveille*, wake up, but in the French army it is called the *diane*. The *gist* of a matter is the point in which its importance really "lies." *Ci-gist*, for Old Fr. *ci-gist*, Lat. *jacet*, here lies, is seen on old tombstones. *Tennis*, says Minsheu, is so called from Fr. *tênes*, hold, "which word the Frenchmen, the onely tennis-players, use to speake when they strike the ball." This etymology, for a long time regarded as a wild guess, has been shewn by recent research to be most probably correct. The game is of French origin, and it was played by French knights in Italy a century before we find it alluded to by Gower (c. 1400). Erasmus tells us that the server called out *accipe*, to which his opponent replied *mitte*, and as French, and not Latin, was certainly the language of the earliest tennis-players, we may infer that the spectators named the game from the foreign word with which each service began. In French the game is called *paume*, palm of the hand; cf. *fives*, also a slang name for the hand. The archaic *assoil*

"And the holy man he assoi'd us, and sadly we sail'd away."

*(Tennyson, Voyage of Maudne, xi. 12.)*

is the present subjunctive of the Old Fr. *asoldre* (*absoudre*), to absolve, used in the stereotyped phrase *Dieus vos asoile*, may God absolve you.

A linguistic invasion such as that of English by Old French is almost unparalleled. We have instances of the expulsion of one tongue by another, e.g., of the Celtic dialects of Gaul by Latin and of those of Britain by Anglo-Saxon. But a real blending of two languages can only occur when a large section of the population is bilingual for centuries. This, as we know, was the
case in England. The Norman dialect, already familiar through inevitable intercourse, was transplanted to England in 1066. It developed further on its own lines into Anglo-Norman, and then, mixed with other French dialects, for not all the invaders were Normans, and political events brought various French provinces into relation with England; it produced Anglo-French, a somewhat barbarous tongue which was the official language till 1302, and with which our legal jargon is saturated. We find in Anglo-French many words which are unrecorded in continental Old French, among them one which we like to think of as essentially English, viz., duetl, duty, an abstract formed from the past participle of Fr. devoir. This verb has also given us endeavour, due to the phrase se mettre en devoir—

"Je me suis en devoir mis pour moderer sa cholere tyrannique."¹

(Rabelais, i. 29.)

No dictionary can keep up with the growth of a language. The New English Dictionary had done the letter C before the cinematograph arrived, but got it in under K. Words of this kind are manufactured in such numbers that the lexicographer is inclined to wait and see whether they will catch on. In such cases it is hard to prophesy. The population of this country may be divided into those people who have been operated for appendicitis and those who are going to be. Yet this word was considered too rare and obscure for insertion in the first volume of the New English Dictionary (1888), the greatest word-book that has ever been projected. Sabotage looks, unfortunately, as if it had come to stay. It is a derivative of sabot, to scamp work, from sabot, a wooden shoe, used contemptuously of an

¹ "I have endeavoured to moderate his tyrannical choler" (Urquhart's Translation, 1613).
in inferior article. The great French dictionaries do not know it in its latest sense of malicious damage done by strikers, and the New English Dictionary, which finished Sa-in the year 1912, just missed it. Hooligan is not recorded by the New English Dictionary. The original Hooligans were a spirited Irish family of that name whose proceedings enlivened the drab monotony of life in Southwark towards the end of the 19th century. The word is younger than the Australian larrikin, of doubtful origin (see p. 190), but older than Fr. apache. The adoption of the Red Indian name Apache for a modern Parisian bravo is a curious parallel to the 18th-century use of Mohock (Mohawk) for an aristocratic London ruffler.

Heckle is first recorded in its political sense for 1880. The New English Dictionary quotes it from Punch in connection with the Fourth Party. In Scottish, however, it is old in this sense, so that it is an example of a dialect word that has risen late in life. Its southern form hatchell is common in Mid. English in its proper sense of "teasing" hemp or flax, and the metaphor is exactly the same. Tease, earlier toose, means to pluck or pull to pieces, hence the name teasel for the thistle used by wool-carders. The older form is seen in the derivative tosle, the family name Tozer, and the dog’s name Towser. Feckless, a common Scottish word, was hardly literary English before Carlyle. It is now quite familiar—

"Thriftless, shiftless, feckless."
(Mr Lloyd George, 1st Nov. 1911.)

There is a certain appropriateness in the fact that almost the first writer to use it was James I. It is for effectless. I never heard of a week-end till I paid a visit to Lancashire in 1883. It has long since invaded the whole island. An old geezer has a modern sound, but
It is the medieval guiser, guisard, mummer, which has persisted in dialect and re-entered the language.

The fortunes of a word are sometimes determined by accident. Glamour (see p. 145) was popularised by Scott, who found it in old ballad literature. Grail, the holy dish at the Last Supper, would be much less familiar but for Tennyson.* Mascot, from a Provençal word meaning sorcerer, dates from Audran’s operetta La Mascotte (1880). Jingo first appears in conjurors’ jargon of the 17th century. It has been conjectured to represent Basque jinko, God, picked up by sailors. If this is the case, it is probably the only pure Basque word in English. The Ingoldsby derivation from St Gengulphus—

“Sometimes styled ‘The Living Jingo,’ from the great tenaciousness of vitality exhibited by his severed members,”
is of course a joke. In 1878, when war with Russia seemed imminent, a music-hall singer, the Great Macdermott, delighted large audiences with—

“We don’t want to fight, but, by jingo, if we do,
    We’ve got the ships, we’ve got the men, we’ve got the
    money too.”

Hence the name jingo applied to that ultra-patriotic section of the population which, in war-time, attends to the shouting.† Fr. chauvin, a jingo, is the name of a real Napoleonic veteran introduced into Scribe’s play Le Soldat Laboureur. Barracking is known to us only through the visits of English cricket teams to Australia. It is said to come from a native Australian word meaning derision. The American caucus was first applied (1878) by Lord Beaconsfield to the Birmingham Six Hundred. In 18th-century American it means

† The credit of first using the word in the political sense is claimed both for George Jacob Holyoake and Professor Minto.
meeting or discussion. It is probably connected with a North American Indian (Algonkin) word meaning counsellor, an etymology supported by that of pow-wow, a palaver or confab, which is the Algonkin for a medicine-man. With these words may be mentioned Tammany, now used of a corrupt political body, but, in the 18th century, of a society named after the tutelar saint of Pennsylvania. The original Tammany was an Indian chief with whom William Penn negotiated for grants of land about the end of the 17th century. Littoral first became familiar in connection with Italy's ill-starred Abyssinian adventure, and hinterland marked the appearance of Germany as a colonial power—

"'Let us glance a moment,' said Mr Queed, 'at Man, as we see him first emerging from the dark hinterlands of history.'"

(H. S. HARRISON, Queed, Ch. 17.)

Sometimes the blunder of a great writer has enriched the language. Scott's bartzan—

"Its varying circle did combine
Bulwark, and bartzan, and line
And bastion, tower..." (Marmion, vi. 2.)

is a mistake for bratticing, timber-work, a word of obscure origin of which several corruptions are found in early Scottish. It is rather a favourite with writers of "sword and feather" novels. Other sham antiques are slug-horn, Chatterton's absurd perversion of the Gaelic slogan, war-cry, copied by Browning—

"Dauntless the slug-horn to my lips I set,
And blew 'Childe Roland to the Dark Tower came.'"

and Scott's extraordinary misuse of warison, security, a doublet of garrison, as though it meant "war sound"—

"Or straight they sound their warison,"
"And storm and spoil thy garrison." (Lay, iv. 21.)
Scott also gave currency to *niddering*, a *coward*—

"Faithless, mansworn, and *niddering.*"

*(Ivanhoe, Ch. 42.)*

which has been copied by Lytton and Kingsley, and elaborated into *nidderling* by Mr Crockett. It is a misprint in an early edition of William of Malmesbury for *niding* or *nithing*, cognate with Ger. *Neid*, envy. This word, says Camden, is mightier than *Abracadabra*, since—

"It hath lewied armies and subdued rebellious enemies. For when there was a dangerous rebellion against King William Rufus, and Rochester Castle, then the most important and strongest fort of this realm, was stoutly kept against him, after that he had but proclaimed that his subjects should repair thither to his camp, upon no other penalty, but that whosoever should refuse to come should be reputed a *niding*, they swarmed to him immediately from all sides in such numbers that he had in a few days an infinite army, and the rebels therewith were so terrified that they forthwith yielded." *(Remains concerning Britain.)*

*Derring-do* is used several times by Spenser, who explains it as "manhood and chevalrie." It is due to his misunderstanding of a passage in Lidgate, in which it is an imitation of Chaucer, complicated by a misprint. Scott took it from Spenser—

"'Singulas,' he again muttered to himself, 'if there be two who can do a deed of such *derring-do*.'" *(Ivanhoe, Ch. 29.)*

and from him it passed to Bulwer Lytton and later writers.


2 This word, which looks like an unsuccessful palindrome, belongs to the language of medieval magic. It seems to be artificially elaborated from *δρακός*, a word of Persian origin used by a sect of Greek gnostics. Its letters make up the magic number 365, supposed to represent the number of spira in the Gnostics' being.
Such words as these, the illegitimate offspring of genius, are to be distinguished from the “ghost-words” which dimly haunt the dictionaries without ever having lived (see p. 201). Speaking generally, we may say that no word is ever created *de nvo*. The names invented for commercial purposes are not exceptions to this law. Bovril is compounded of *Lat. bos*, ox, and *vrl*, the mysterious power which plays so important a part in Lytton’s *Coming Race*, while ‘Tono-Bungay’ suggests *tonic*. The only exception to this is *gas*, the arbitrary coinage of the Belgian chemist Van Helmont in the 17th century. But even this is hardly a new creation, because we have Van Helmont’s own statement that the word *chaos* was vaguely present to his mind. *Chortle* has, however, secured a limited currency, and is admitted by the *New English Dictionary*—

“Oh frabjous day! Callooh! callay!
He *chortled* in his joy.”

(*Through the Looking-Glass.*)

and, though an accurate account of the *boojum* is lacking, most people know it to be a dangerous variety of *snark*.

1 In coining *vrl* Lytton probably had in mind *Lat. vis, vires*, power, or the adjective *vulga*. 
CHAPTER II

WANDERINGS OF WORDS

In assigning to a word a foreign origin, it is necessary to show how contact between the two languages has taken place, or the particular reasons which have brought about the borrowing. A Chinese word cannot suddenly make its appearance in Anglo-Saxon, though it may quite well do so in modern English. No nautical terms have reached us from the coast of Bohemia (Winter’s Tale, iii. 3), nor is the vocabulary of the wine trade enriched by Icelandic words. Although we have words from all the languages of Europe, our direct borrowings from some of them have been small. The majority of High German words in English have passed through Old French, and we have taken little from modern German. On the other hand, commerce has introduced a great many words from the old Low German dialects of the North Sea and the Baltic.

The Dutch element in English supplies a useful object lesson on the way in which the borrowing of words naturally takes place. As a great naval power, the Dutch have contributed to our nautical vocabulary a number of words, many of which are easily recognised as near relations; such are boom (beam), skipper.

\footnote{This includes Flemish, spoken in a large part of Belgium and in the North East of France.}
(shipper), orlop (over leap), the name given to a deck which "over-runs" the ship's hold. Yacht, properly a "hunting" ship, is cognate with Ger. jacht, hunting, but has no English kin. Hexham has jaght, "zee-roovers schip, pinace, or pirars ship." The modern Dutch spelling is jacht. We should expect to find art terms from the country of Hobbema, Rubens, Vandyke, etc. See easel (p. 39), etch (p. 133), lay-figure (p. 166), sketch (p. 22). Landscape, earlier landskip, has the suffix which in English would be -ship. In the 16th century Camden speaks of "a landskip, as they call it." The Low Countries were for two centuries the cock-pit of Europe, and many military terms were brought back to England by Dugald Dalgetty and the armies which "swore terribly in Flanders." Such are cashier (p. 157), forlorn hope (p. 129), tattoo (p. 162). Other interesting military words are leaguer (lair), recently re-introduced from South Africa as laager, and furlough. The latter word, formerly pronounced to rime with cough, is from Du. verlof (for leave); cf. archaic Ger. Verlaub, now replaced by Urlaub. Knapsack, a food sack, comes from colloquial Du. knap, food, or what the Notts colliers call snap. We also find it called a snapsack. Both knap and snap contain the idea of "crunching"—

"I would she (Report) were as lying a gossip in that as ever knapped ginger." (Merchant of Venice, iii. i.)

Roster (roaster) is the Dutch for gridiron, the allusion being to the parallel lines of the list or plan; for a somewhat similar metaphor cf. cancel (p. 88). The pleasant fiction that—

"The children of Holland take pleasure in making
What the children of England take pleasure in breaking,"

confirms the derivation of toy from Du. twijg, implement;

1 Heuressack, oat-sack, comes through French from German.
thing, stuff, etc., a word, like its German cognate 'Zeug,' with an infinity of meanings. We now limit toy to the special sense represented by Du. speel-thing, play-thing.

Our vocabulary dealing with war and fortification is chiefly French, but most of the French terms come from Italian. Addison wrote an article in No. 165 of the Spectator ridiculing the Frenchified character of the military language of his time, and, in the 16th century, Henri Estienne, patriot, printer, and philologist, lamented that future historians would believe, from the vocabulary employed, that France had learnt the art of war from Italy. As a matter of fact she did. The earliest writers on the new tactics necessitated by villainous saltpetre were Italians trained in condottiere warfare. They were followed by the great French theorists and engineers of the 16th and 17th centuries, who naturally adopted a large number of Italian terms which thus passed later into English.

A considerable number of Spanish and Portuguese words have reached us in a very roundabout way (see pp. 23-7). This is not surprising when we consider how in the 15th and 16th centuries the world was dotted with settlements due to the Portuguese and Spanish adventurers who had a hundred years' start of our own.

There are very few Celtic words either in English or French. In each country the result of conquest was, from the point of view of language, complete. A few words from the Celtic languages have percolated into English in comparatively recent times, but many terms which we associate with the picturesque Highlanders are not Gaelic at all. Tartan comes through French from the Tartars (see p. 47); kilt is a Scandinavian

1 This applies also to some of the clan names, e.g., Macpherson, son of the parson, Macneah, son of the abbot.
verb, "to tuck up," and dirk, of unknown origin, first appears about 1600. For trews see p. 117.

A very interesting part of our vocabulary, the canting, or rogues', language, dates mostly from the 17th and 18th centuries, and includes contributions from most of the European languages, together with a large Romany element. The early dictionary makers paid great attention to this aspect of the language. Elisha Coles, who published a fairly complete English dictionary in 1676, says in his preface, "'Tis no disparagement to understand the canting terms: it may chance to save your throat from being cut, or (at least), your pocket from being pick'd."

Words often go long journeys. Boss is in English a comparatively modern Americanism. But, like many American words, it belongs to the language of the Dutch settlers who founded New Amsterdam (New York). It is Du. baas, master, which has thus crossed the Atlantic twice on its way from Holland to England. A number of Dutch words have become familiar to us in recent years in consequence of the South African war. One of them, slim, cute, seems to have been definitely adopted. It is cognate with Ger. schlimm, bad, and Eng. slim, slender, and the latter word has for centuries been used in the Eastern counties in the very sense in which it has now been re-introduced.

Apricot is a much travelled word. It comes to us from Fr. abricot, while the Shakespearean apricock—

"Feed him with apricocks and dewberries."
(Midsummer Night's Dream, iii. i.)

represents the Spanish or Portuguese form. Ger. Aprikose comes, via Dutch, from the French plural.

1 My own conviction is that it is identical with Dan. sterk, dirk, a pick-lock. See Dietrich (p. 42). An implement used for opening an enemy may well have been named in this way. Cf. Du. opsteker (up steker), "a pick-lock, a great knife, or a dagger" (Sewel, 1737).
The word was adopted into the Romance languages from Arab. *al-barquq*, where *al* is the definite article (cf. examples on p. 115), while *barquq* comes, through medieval Greek, from Vulgar Lat. *præcoquum*, for *præcta*, early-ripe. Thus the word first crossed the Adriatic, passed on to Asia Minor or the North coast of Africa, and then travelling along the Mediterranean re-entered Southern Europe.

Many other Arabic trade words have a similar history. *Carat* comes to us, through French, from Italian *carato*, "a weight or degree called a caract" (Florio). The Italian word is from Arabic, but the Arabic form is a corruption of Gk. *καράτιον*, fruit of the locust tree, lit. little horn, also used of a small weight. The verb to *garble*, now used only of confusing or falsifying, meant originally to sort or sift, especially spices—

"Garbler of spices is an officer of great antiquity in the city of London, who may enter into any shop, warehouse, etc., to view and search drugs, spices, etc., and to *garble* the same and make them clean." (Cowell's *Interpreter.*

It represents Span. *garbellar*, from *garbello*, a sieve. This comes from Arab. *ghirbal*, a sieve, borrowed from Lat. *cribellum*, diminutive of *cribrum*. *Quintal*, an old word for hundred-weight, looks as if it had something to do with five. Fr. and Span. *quintal* are from Arab. *qintar*, hundred-weight, which is Lat. *centenarium* (whence directly Ger. *Zentner*, hundred-weight). The French word passed into Dutch, and gave, with a diminutive ending, *kindejijn*, now replaced by *kinnetje*, a firkin. We have adopted it as *kilderkin*, but have

1 "It was a wholly garbled version of what never took place" (Mr Birrell, in the House, 26th Oct. 1911). The bull appears to be a laudable concession to Irish national feeling.

2 Formerly *fardel*, a derivative of Du. *vierde*, fourth; cf. *farthing*, a little fourth.
doubled its capacity. With these examples of words that have passed through Arabic may be mentioned *talisman*, not a very old word in Europe, from Arab. *tilsam*, magic picture, ultimately from Gk. *τελείν*, to initiate into mysteries, lit. to accomplish, and *σέφεντι*, a Turkish corruption of Gk. *αὐθέντως*, a master, whence Lat. *authentic*.

*Hussar* seems to be a late Latin word which passed into Greece and then entered Central Europe via the Balkans. It comes into 16th-century German from Hungar. *hussar*, freebooter. This is from a Serbian word which means also pirate. It represents medieval Gk. *κουρσάριον*, a transliteration of Vulgar Lat. *corsarius*, from *currere*, to run, which occurs also with the sense of pirate in medieval Latin. *Hussar* is thus a doublet of *corsair*. The immediate source of *sketch* is Du. *schets*, “draught of any picture” (Hexham), from Ital. *schizzo*, “an ingrossement or first rough draught of anything” (Florio), whence also Fr. *esquisse* and Ger. *Skizze*. The Italian word represents Greco-Lat. *schedium*, an extempore effort.

*Assassin* and *slave* are of historic interest. *Assassin*, though not very old in English, dates from the Crusades. Its oldest European form is Ital. *assassino*, and it was adopted into French in the 16th century. Henri Estienne, whose fiery patriotism entered even into philological questions, reproaches his countrymen for using foreign terms. They should only adopt, he says, Italian words which express Italian qualities hitherto unknown to the French, such as *assassin*, *charlatan*, *poltron!* *Assassin* is really a plural, from the *hachashin*, eaters of the drug *haschish*, who executed the decrees of the Old Man of the Mountains. It was one of these who stabbed Edward Longshanks at Acre. The first *slaves* were captive *Slavonians*. We
find the word in most of the European languages. The fact that none of the Western tribes of the race called themselves Slavs or Slavonians shows that the word could not have entered Europe via Germany, where the Slavs were called Wends. It must have come from the Byzantine empire via Italy.

Some Spanish words have also come to us by the indirect route. The cocoa which is grateful and comforting was formerly spelt cacao, as in French and German. It is a Mexican word. The cocoa of cocoa-nut is for coco, a Spanish baby-word for an ugly face or bogie-man. The black marks at one end of the nut give it, especially before the removal of the fibrous husk, some resemblance to a ferocious face. Stevens (1706) explains coco as “the word us’d to fright children; as we say the Bulbeggar.”

Mustang seems to represent two words, mestengo y mostrenco, “a straier” (Percyvall). The first appears to be connected with mesta, “a monthly fair among herdsmen; also, the laws to be observed by all that keep or deal in cattle” (Stevens), and the second with mostyar, to show, the finder being expected to advertise a stray. The original mustangs were of course descended from the strayed horses of the Spanish conquistadors. Ranch, Span. rancho, a row (of huts), is a doublet of rank, from Fr. rang, Old Fr. rang. Old High Ger. hring, “a ring. Thus what is now usually straight was once circular, the ground idea of arrangement surviving. Another doublet is Fr. harangue, due to the French inability to pronounce hr- (see p. 55), a speech delivered in the ring. Cf. also Ital. aringo, “a riding or carreering place, a liste for horses, or feates of armes: a declamation, an oration, a noise, a common loud speech” (Florio), in which the “ring” idea is also prominent.
Other "cow-boy" words of Spanish origin are the less familiar _cinch_, _girth of a horse_, Span. _cincha_, from Lat. _cingula_, also used metaphorically—

"The state of the elements enabled Mother Nature 'to get a cinch' on an honourable æstheticism." (Snaith, _Mrs Fitz_, Ch. 1.)

and the formidable riding whip called a _quirt_, Span. _cuerda_, cord—

"Whooping and swearing as they plied the quirt."

(Masefield, _Rosas_.)

We have the same transference of meaning in Span. _reata_, a tethering rope, from the verb _reatar_, to bind together, Lat. _re-aptare_. Combined with the definite article (_la reata_) it has given _lariat_, a familiar word in literature of the Buffalo Bill character. _Lasso_, Span. _laso_, Lat. _laqueus_, snare, is a doublet of Eng. _lace_.

When, in the _Song of Hiawatha_—

"Gitche Manito, the mighty,
Smoked the _calumet_, the Peace-pipe,
As a signal to the nations,"

he was using an implement with a French name. _Calumet_ is an Old Norman word for _chalumeau_, reed, pipe, a diminutive from Lat. _calamus_. It was naturally applied by early French voyagers to the "long reed for a pipe-stem." Eng. _shawm_ is the same word without the diminutive ending. Another Old French word, once common in English, but now found only in dialect, is _felon_, a whitlow. It is used more than once by Mr Hardy—

"I've been visiting to Bath because I had a felon on my thumb." (Far from the _Madding Crowd_, Ch. 33.)

This is still an every-day word in Canada and the United States. It is a metaphorical use of _felon_, a fell
villain. A whitlow was called in Latin *furunculus*, "a little theefe; a sore in the bodie called a *fellow*" (Cooper), whence Fr. *furoncle*, or *fronde*, "the hot and hard bumph or swelling, tearmed, a *fellow*" (Cotgrave). Another Latin name for it was *tagax*, "a *felon* on a man's finger" (Cooper), lit. thievish. One of its Spanish names is *padastro*, lit. step-father. I am told that an "agnail" was formerly called a "step-mother" in Yorkshire. This is a good example of the semantic method in etymology (see pp. 99-104).

Some of the above instances show how near to home we can often track a word which at first sight appears to belong to another continent. This is still more strikingly exemplified in the case of Portuguese words, which have an almost uncanny way of pretending to be African or Indian. Some readers will, I think, be surprised to hear that *assegai* occurs in Chaucer, though in a form not easily recognisable. It is a Berber word which passed through Spanish and Portuguese into French and English. We find Fr. *archegaie* in the 14th century, *asagai* in Rabelais, and the modern form *sagai* in Cotgrave, who describes it as "a fashion of slender, long, and long-headed pike used by the Moorish horsemen." In Mid. English *larchegai* was corrupted by folk-etymology (see p. 115) into *lancegay*, *launcegay*, the form used by Chaucer—

"He worth upon his stede gray,
And in his hond a launcegay,
A long swerd by his syde."

(*Sir Thopas*, l. 40.)

The use of this weapon was prohibited by statute in 1406, hence the early disappearance of the word.

Another "Zulu" word which has travelled a long way is *kraal*. This is a contracted Dutch form from
Port. curral, a sheepfold (cf. Span. corral, a pen, enclosure). Both assagai and krool were taken to South East Africa by the Portuguese and then adopted by the Boers and Kafirs. Sambok occurs in 17th-century accounts of India in the form chawbuch. It is a Persian word, spelt chabouk by Moore, in Lalla Rookh. It was adopted by the Portuguese as chabuco, "in the Portuguese India, a whip or scourge" (Vieyra, Port. Dict., 1794). Fetish, an African idol, first occurs in the records of the early navigators, collected and published by Hakluyt and Purchas. It is the Port. setico, Lat. factitus, artificial, applied by the Portuguese explorers to the graven images of the heathen. The corresponding Old Fr. faitis is rather a complimentary adjective, and everyone remembers the lady in Chaucer who spoke French fairly and fetousi. Palaver, also a travellers' word from the African coast, is Port. palavra, word, speech, Greco-Lat. parabola. It is thus a doublet of parole and parable, and is related to parley. Ayah, an Indian nurse, is Port. ala, nurse, of unknown origin. Caste is Port. casta, pure, and a doublet of chaste. Tank, an Anglo-Indian word of which the meaning has narrowed in this country, is Port. tanque, a pool or cistern. Lat. stagnum, whence Old Fr. estang (stang) and provincial Eng. stank, a dam, or a pond banked round. Cobra is the Portuguese for snake, cognate with Fr. couleuvre, Lat. coluber (see p. 7). We use it as an abbreviation for cobra de capello, hooded snake, the second part of which is identical with Fr. chapeau and cognate with cape, chapel (p. 152), chaplet, a garland.

1 Kafir (Arab.) means infidel.  
2 Eng. chawbuch is used in connection with the punishment we call the bastinado. This is a corruption of Span. bastinada, "a stroke with a club or staff" (Stevens, 1706). On the other hand, we extend the meaning of scurf, the Arabic word for bastinade, to a beating of any kind.
and *chapron*, a "protecting" hood. From still further afield than India comes *foss*, a Chinese god, a corruption of Port. *deus*, Lat. *deus*. Even *mandarin* comes from Portuguese, and not Chinese, but it is an Eastern word, ultimately of Sanskrit origin.

The word *gorilla* is perhaps African, but more than two thousand years separate its first appearance from its present use. In the 5th or 6th century, B.C., a Carthaginian navigator named Hanno sailed beyond the Pillars of Hercules along the west coast of Africa. He probably followed very much the same route as Sir Richard Dalyngridge and Saxon Hugh when they voyaged with Witta the Viking. He wrote in Punic a record of his adventures, which was received with the incredulity usually accorded to travellers' tales. Among the wonders he encountered were some hairy savages called *gorillas*. His work was translated into Greek and later on into several European languages, so that the word became familiar to naturalists. In 1847 it was applied to the giant ape, which had recently been described by explorers.

The origin of the word *silk* is a curious problem. It is usually explained as from Greco-Lat. *sericum*, a name derived from an Eastern people called the *Seres*, presumably the Chinese. It appears in Anglo-Saxon as *sealc*. Now, at that early period, words of Latin origin came to us by the overland route and left traces of their passage. But all the Romance languages use for silk a name derived from Lat. *sata*, bristle, and this name has penetrated even into German (*Seide*) and Dutch (*sijde*). The derivatives of *sericum* stand for another material, *serge*. Nor can it be assumed that the *r* of the Latin word would have become in English always *l* and never *r*. There are races which cannot sound the letter *r*, but we are not one of them. As the
word *silk* is found also in Old Norse, Swedish, Danish, and Old Slavonian, the natural inference is that it must have reached us along the north of Europe, and, if derived from *sericum*, it must, in the course of its travels, have passed through a dialect which had no *r*. 
CHAPTER III

WORDS OF POPULAR MANUFACTURE

In a sense, all nomenclature, apart from purely scientific language, is popular. But real meanings are often so rapidly obscured that words become mere labels, and cease to call up the image or the poetic idea with which they were first associated. To take a simple instance, how many people realise that the daisy is the "day's eye"?—

"Wele by reson men it calle may
The daisy or ellis the 'eye of day,'"

(CHAUCER, Legend of Good Women, Prolog., i 184.)

In studying that part of our vocabulary which especially illustrates the tendencies shown in popular name-giving, one is struck by the keen observation and imaginative power shown by our far-off ancestors, and the lack of these qualities in later ages.

Perhaps in no part of the language does this appear so clearly as in the names of plants and flowers. The most primitive way of naming a flower is from some observed resemblance, and it is curious to notice the parallelism of this process in various languages. Thus our crowfoot, crane's bill, larkspur, monkshood, snapdragon, are in German Hahnenfuss (cock's foot), Storchschnabel (stork's bill), Rittersporn (knight's spur), Eisenhut
(iron hat), Löwenmaul (lion's mouth). I have purposely chosen instances in which the correspondence is not absolute, because examples like 'Löwensahm (lion's tooth), dandelion (Fr. dent de lion) may be suspected of being mere translations. I give the names in most general use, but the provincial variants are numerous, though usually of the same type. The French names of the flowers mentioned are still more like the English. The more learned words which sometimes replace the above are, though now felt as mere symbols, of similar origin, e.g., geranium and pelargonium, used for the cultivated crane's bill, are derived from the Greek for crane and stork respectively. So also in chelidonium, whence our celandine or swallow-wort, we have the Greek for swallow.

In the English names of plants we observe various tendencies of the popular imagination. We have the crudeness of cowslip for earlier cowslip, cow-dung, and many old names of unquotable coarseness, the quaintness of Sweet William, lords and ladies, bachelors' buttons, dead men's fingers, and the exquisite poetry of forget-me-not, heart's ease, love in a mist, traveller's joy. There is also a special group named from medicinal properties, such as feverfew, a doublet of febrifuge, and tansy, Fr. tanaisie, from Greco-Lat. athenasia, immortality. We may compare the learned saxifrage, stone-breaker, of which the Spanish doublet is sassafras. The German name is Steinbrech.

There must have been a time when a simple instinct for poetry was possessed by all nations, as it still is by uncivilised races and children. Among European nations this instinct appears to be dead for ever. We can name neither a mountain nor a flower. Our Mount Costigan, Mount Perry, Mount William cut a sorry figure beside the peaks of the Bernese Oberland,
the Monk, the Maiden, the Storm Pike, the Dark Eagle Pike. Occasionally a race which is accidentally brought into closer contact with nature may have a happy inspiration, such as the Drakenberg (dragon mountain) or Weenen (weeping) of the old voortrekkers. But the Cliff of the Falling Flowers, the name of a precipice over which the Korean queens cast themselves to escape dishonour, represents an imaginative realm which is closed to us. The botanist who describes a new flower hastens to join the company of Messrs Dahl, Fuchs, Lobel, Magnol, and Wistar, while fresh varieties are used to immortalise a florist and his family.

The names of fruits, perhaps because they lend themselves less easily to imaginative treatment, are even duller than modern names of flowers. The only English names are the apple and the berry. New fruits either retained their foreign names (cherry, peach, pear, quince) or were violently converted into apples or berries, usually the former. This practice is common to the European languages, the apple being regarded as the typical fruit. Thus the orange is usually called in North Germany Apfelsine, apple of China, with which we may compare our "China orange." In South Germany it was called Pomeranze (now used especially of the Seville orange), from Ital. pomo, apple, arancia, orange. Fr. orange is folk-etymology (or, gold) for *arange, from Arab. narandj, whence Span. naranja. Melon is simply the Greek for "apple," and has also given us marmalade, which comes, through French, from Port. marmelada, quince jam, a derivative of Greco-Lat.

1 But Passeraarhorn is perhaps from the river Aar, not from Aar, eagle.

2 A place where a number of settlers were massacred by the Zulus.

3 "Two mountains near Dublin, which we, keeping in the grocery line, have called the Great and the Little Sugarloaf, are named in Irish the Golden Spears."—(Trench, On the Study of Words.)
melimelum, quince, lit. honey-apple. Pine-apple meant "fir-cone" as late as the 17th century, as Fr. pomme de pin still does. The fruit was named from its shape, which closely resembles that of a fir-cone. Pomegranate means "apple with seeds." We also find the apricot, lemon (pom-citron), peach, and quince all described as apples.

At least one fruit, the greengage, is named from a person, Sir William Gage, a gentleman of Suffolk, who popularised its cultivation early in the 18th century. It happens that the French name of the fruit, reine-claud (pronounced glaude), is also personal, from the wife of Francis I.

Animal nomenclature shows some strange vagaries. The resemblance of the hippopotamus, lit. river-horse, to the horse, hardly extends beyond their common possession of four legs. The lion would hardly recognise himself in the ant-lion or the sea-lion, still less in the chameleon, lit. earth-lion, the first element of which occurs also in camomile, earth-apple. The guinea-pig is not a pig, nor does it come from Guinea (see p. 51). Porcupine means "spiny pig." It has an extraordinary number of early variants, and Shakespeare wrote it porpentine. One Mid. English form was porkpoint. The French name has hesitated between spine and spike. The modern form is porc-epic, but Palsgrave has "porkeypyn a beest, porc espin." Porpoise is from Old Fr. porpeis, for porcpeis (Lat. porcus piscis), pig-fish. The modern French name is marsouin, from Ger. Meerschwein, sea-pig; cf.

1 The French name for the fruit is ananas, a Brazilian word. A vegetarian friend of the writer, misled by the superficial likeness of this word to banana, once petrified a Belgian waiter by ordering half a dozen for his lunch.

2 A reader calls my attention to the fact that, when the hippopotamus is almost completely submerged, the pointed ears, prominent eyes, and large nostrils are grotesquely suggestive of a horse's head. This I have recently verified at the Zoo.
the name sea-hog, formerly used in English. Old Fr. *peis* survives also in *grampus*, Anglo-Fr. *grampais* for *grand peis*, big fish, but the usual Old French word is *craspeis* or *graspeis*, fat fish.

The caterpillar seems to have suggested in turn a cat and a dog. Our word is corrupted by folk-etymology from Old Fr. *chatepceleuse*, "a corne-devouring mite, or weevell" (Cotgrave). This probably means "woolly cat," just as a common species is popularly called woolly bear, but it was understood as being connected with the French verb *peler*, "to pill, pare, barke, unrinde, unskin" (Cotgrave). The modern French name for the caterpillar is *chenille*, a derivative of *chien*, dog. It has also been applied to a fabric of a woolly nature; cf. the botanical *catkin*, which is in French *chaton*, kitten.

Some animals bear nicknames. *Dotterel* means "dotard," and *dodo* is from the Port. *doudo*, mad. *Ferret* is from Fr. *furet*, a diminutive from Lat. *fur*, thief. *Shark* was used of a sharper or greedy parasite before it was applied to the fish. This, in the records of the Elizabethan voyagers, is more often called by its Spanish name *tiburon*, whence Cape Tiburon, in Haiti. The origin of *shark* is unknown, but it appears to be identical with *shirk*, for which we find earlier *sherk*. We find Ital. *scrocco* (whence Fr. *escroc*), Ger. *Schurke*, Du. *schurk*, rascal, all rendered "shark" in early dictionaries, but the relationship of these words is not clear. The *palmén*, i.e. pilgrim, worm is so called from his wandering habits. *Ortolan*, the name given by Tudor cooks to the garden husting, means "gardener" (Lat. *hortus*, garden). It comes to us through French from Ital. *ortolano*, "a gardener, an orchard keeper. Also a kinde of dauntie birde in Italie, some take it to be *the linnet*" (Florio). We may compare Fr. *bouvreuil*, bull-finch, a diminutive of *bouvier*, ox-herd. This is
called in German Dompaaffe, a contemptuous name for a cathedral canon. Fr. moineau, sparrow, is a diminutive of moine, monk. The wagtail is called in French lavandière, laundress, from the up and down motion of its tail suggesting the washerwoman's beetle, and bergeronnette, little shepherdess, from its habit of following the sheep. Adjutant, the nickname of the solemn Indian stork, is clearly due to Mr Atkins, and the secretary bird is so named because some of his head feathers suggest a quill pen behind an ear.

The converse process of people being nicknamed from animals is also common and the metaphor is usually pretty obvious. An interesting case is shrew, a libel on a very inoffensive little animal, the shrewmouse, Anglo-Sax. scréawa. Cooper describes mus araneus as "a kinde of mise called a shrew, which if he go over a beastes backe he shall be lame in the chyne; if he byte it swelleth to the heart and the beast dyeth." This "information" is derived from Pliny, but the superstition is found in Greek. The epithet was, up to Shakespeare's time, applied indiscriminately to both sexes. From shrew is derived shrewd, earlier shrewed, the meaning of which has become much milder than when Henry VIII. said to Cranmer—

"The common voice I see is verified
Of thee which says, 'Do my lord of Canterbury
A shrewd turn, and he's your friend for ever.'"

(Henry VIII., v. 2.)

The title Dauphin, lit. dolphin, commemorates the absorption into the French monarchy in 1349, of the lordship of Dauphiné, the cognisance of which was three dolphins.

The application of animals' names to diseases is a"
familiar phenomenon, e.g., cancer (and canker), crab, and lupus, wolf. To this class belongs mulligrubs, for which we find in the 14th century also mouldy grubs. Its oldest meaning is stomach-ache, still given in Hotten’s Slang Dictionary (1864). Mully is still used in dialect for mouldy, earthy, and grub was once the regular word for worm. The Latin name for the same discomfort was verminatio, from vermis, a worm. For the later transition of meaning we may compare megrims, from Fr. migraine, head-ache, Greco-Lat. hemicrania, lit. half-skull, because supposed to affect one side only of the head.

A good many names of plants and animals have a religious origin. Hollyhock is for holy hock, from Anglo-Saxon hōc, mallow: for the pronunciation cf. holiday. Halibut means holy butt, the latter word being an old name for flat-fish; for this form of holy, cf. halidom. Lady in names of flowers such as lady’s bedstraw, lady’s garter, lady’s slipper, is for Our Lady. So also in ladybird, called in French bête à bon Dieu and in German Marienkafer, Mary’s beetle. Here may be mentioned samphire, from Old Fr. herbe de Saint Pierre, “sampire, crestmarin” (Cotgrave). The filbert, earlier philibert, is named from St Philibert, the nut being ripe by St Philibert’s day (22nd Aug.). We may compare Ger. Lambertsnuss, filbert, originally “Lombard nut,” but popularly associated with St Lambert’s day (17th Sept.).

The application of baptismal names to animals is a very general practice, though the reason for the selection of the particular name is not always clear. The most famous of such names is Renard the Fox. The Old French for fox is goupil, a derivative of Lat. vulpes, fox. The hero of the great beast epic of the Middle Ages is Renard le goupil, and the fact that renard has now completely supplanted goupil shows how popular the Renard
legends must have been. *Renard* is from Old High Ger. *regin-hart*, strong in counsel; cf. our names *Reginald* and *Reynold*, and Scot. *Ronald*, of Norse origin. From the same source come *Chantecler*, lit. sing-clear, the cock, and *Partlet*, the hen, while *Bruin*, the bear, lit. “brown,” is from the Dutch version of the epic. In the Low German version, *Reinke de Vos*, the ape’s name is *Moneke*, a diminutive corresponding to Ital. *monicchio*, “a pugge, a *munkie*, an ape” (Florio), the earlier history of which is much disputed. The cat was called *Tibert* or *Theobald*—

**Mercutio.** “*Tybalt*, you rat-catcher, will you walk?”

**Tybalt.** “What wouldst thou have with me?”

**Mercutio.** “Good king of cats, nothing but one of your nine lives.”

*(Romeo and Juliet, iii. 1.)*

The fact that the donkey was at one time regularly called *Cuddy* made *Cuthbert* for a long period unpopular as a baptismal name. He is now often called *Neddy*. The hare was called *Wat* (*Walter*) in Tudor times. In the *Roman de Renard* he is *Couard*, whence *coward*, a derivative of Old Fr. *coue* (*queue*), tail, from Lat. *cauda*. The idea is that of the tail between the legs, so that the name is etymologically not very appropriate to the hare. *Parrot*, for earlier *perrot*, means “little Peter.” The extension *Poll Parrot* is thus a kind of hermaphrodite. Fr. *pierrot* is still used for the sparrow. The family name *Perrot* is sometimes a nickname, “the chatterer,” but can also mean literally “little Peter,” just as *Emmyot* means “little Emma,” and *Marriot* “little Mary.” *Petrel* is of cognate origin, with an allusion to St Peter’s walking upon the sea; cf. its German name, *Sankt Peters Vogel*. Sailors call the petrel *Mother Carey’s chicken*, probably a nautical cor-
ruption of some old Spanish or Italian name. But, in spite of ingenious guesses, this lady's genealogy remains as obscure as that of Davy Johns or the Jolly Roger.

*Robin* has practically replaced *red-breast*. The *martin* is in French *martinet*, and the name may have been given in allusion to the southward flight of this swallow about Martinmas; but the king-fisher, not a migrant bird, is called *martin-plecher*, formerly also *martinet plecher* or *oiseau de Saint-Martin*, so that *martin* may be due to some other association. Sometimes the double name survives. We no longer say *Philip sparrow*, but *Jack ass, Jack daw, Jenny wren, Tom tit* (see p. 123), and the inclusive *Dicky bird*, are still familiar. With these we may compare *Hob* (i.e. Robert) or *goblin*. *Madge owl*, or simply *Madge*, was once common. For *Magpie* we find also various diminutives—

"Augurs, and understood relations, have  
By magot-pies, and coughs, and rooks, brought forth  
The secret'st man of blood."

(Macbeth, iii. 4.)

Cotgrave has *pie*, "a pye, pyannat, meggatapie." In Old French it was also called *jaquette*, "a proper name for a woman; also, a piannat, or megatapie" (Cotgrave).

The connection of this word, Fr. *pie*, Lat. *pica*, with the comestible *pie* is uncertain, but it seems likely that the magpie's habit of collecting miscellaneous trifles caused its name to be given to a dish of uncertain constituents. It is a curious coincidence that the obsolete *chuet* or *chewet* meant both a round *pie* and a jackdaw.¹ It is uncertain in which of the two senses Prince Hal

¹ Connection has even been suggested between *haggis* and Fr. *agasse*, "a pie, pinnet, or megatapie" (Cotgrave). *Haggis*, now regarded as Scottish, was once a common word in English. Parlegrave has *hagges*, a podyng, "caliette (cailette) de mouton," i.e., sheep's stomach.
applies the name to Falstaff (1 Henry IV., v. 1). It comes from Fr. chouette, screech-owl, which formerly meant also "a though, daw, jack-daw" (Cotgrave).

A piebald horse is one balled like a magpie. Ball is a Celtic word for a white mark, especially on the forehead; hence the tavern sign of the Baldfaced Stag. Our adjective bald is thus a past participle.

Things are often named from animals. Crane, kite, donkey-engine, monkey-wrench, pig-iron, etc., are simple cases. The crane picture is so striking that we are not surprised to find it literally reproduced in many other languages. The toy called a kite is in French cerf-volant, flying stag, a name also applied to the stag-beetle, and in Ger. Drachen, dragon. It is natural that terrifying names should have been given to early fire-arms. Many of these, e.g., basilisk, serpent, falconet, saker (from Fr. sacre, a kind of hawk), are obsolete—.

"The cannon, blunderbuss, and saker,
He was th' inventor of and maker."

(Hudibras, i. 2.)

More familiar is culverin, Fr. couleuvre, a derivative of couleuvre, adder, Lat. coluber—

"And thou hast talk'd
Of sallies and retires, of trenches, tents,
Of palisadoes, frontiers, parapets,
Of basilisks, of cannon, culverin."

(1 Henry IV., ii. 3.)

One name for a hand-gun was dragon, whence our dragoon, originally applied to a kind of mounted infantry or carbineers. Musket, like saker (v.s.), was the name of a hawk. Mistress Ford uses it playfully to her page—

"How now, my eyes—musket, what news with you?"

(Merry Wives, iii. 3.)

* For eyes see p. 114.
But the hawk was so nicknamed from its small size. Fr. mousquet, now replaced in the hawk sense by l'omouche, is from Ital. moschetto, a diminutive from Lat. musca, fly. Thus mosquito (Spanish) and musket are doublets.

Porcelain comes, through French, from Ital. porcellana, "a kind of fine earth called porcelane, whereof they make fine china dishes, called porcellan dishes" (Florio). This is, however, a transferred meaning, porcellana being the name of a particularly glossy shell called the "Venus shell." It is a derivative of Lat. porcus, pig. Easel comes, with many other painters' terms, from Holland. It is Du. esel, ass, which, like Ger. Esel, comes from Lat. asinus. For its metaphorical application we may compare Fr. chevalet, easel, lit. "little horse," and Eng. "clothes-horse."

Objects often bear the names of individuals. Such are Albert chain, brougham, victoria, wellington boot. Middle-aged people can remember ladies wearing a red blouse called a garibaldi. Sometimes an inventor is immortalised, e.g., mackintosh and shrapnel, both due to 19th-century inventors. The more recent maxim is named from one who, according to the late Lord Salisbury, has saved many of his fellows from dying of old age. Other benefactors are commemorated in derringer, first recorded in Bret Harte, and bowie, which occurs in Dickens' American Notes. Sandwich and Spencer are coupled in an old rime—

"Two noble earls, whom, if I quote,
Some folks might call me sinner;
The one invented half a coat,
The other half a dinner."

1 To the same period belongs the colour magenta, from the victory of the French over the Austrians at Magenta in 1859.
An Earl Spencer (1782-1845) made a short overcoat fashionable for some time. An Earl of Sandwich (1718-1792) invented a form of light refreshment which enabled him to take a meal without leaving the gaming table. It does not appear that Billy Cock is to be classed with the above, or with Chesterfield, Chippendale & Co. The New English Dictionary quotes (from 1721) a description of the Oxford "blood" in his "bully-cocked hat," worn aggressively on one side. Pinchbeck was a London watchmaker (fl. c. 1700), and doily is from Doyley, a linen-draper of the same period. Etienne de Silhouette was French finance minister in 1759, but the application of his name to a black profile portrait is variously explained. Negus was first brewed in Queen Anne's reign by Colonel Francis Negus.

The first orrery was constructed by the Earl of Orrery (c. 1700). Galvani and Volta were Italian scientists of the 18th century. Mesmer was a German physician of the same period. Nicotina is named from Jean Nicot, French ambassador at Lisbon, who sent some tobacco plants to Catherine de Médicis in 1560. He also compiled the first Old French dictionary. The gallows-shaped contrivance called a derrick perpetuates the name of a famous hangman who officiated in London about 1600. It is a Dutch name, identical with Dietrich, Theodoric, and Dirk (Hatteraick). Conversely the Fr. potence, gallows, meant originally a bracket or support, Lat. potentia, power. The origin of darbies, handcuffs, is unknown, but the line—

"To bind such babes in father Darbies bands."

(Gascoigne, The Steel Glass, 1576.)

suggests connection with some eminent gaoler or thief-taker.

Occasionally a verb is formed from a proper name.
On the model of tantalise, from the punishment of Tantalus, we have boundlerise, from J. Bowdler, who published an expurgated "family Shakespeare" in 1818; cf. maeadamise. Burke and boycott commemorate a scoundrel and a victim. The latter word, from the treatment of Captain Boycott of Co. Mayo in 1880, seems to have supplied a want, for Fr. boycotter and Ger. boycotteren are already every-day words. Burke was hanged at Edinburgh in 1829 for murdering people by suffocation in order to dispose of their bodies to medical schools. We now use the verb only of "stifling" discussion, but in the Ingoldsby Legends it still has the original sense—

"But, when beat on his knees,
That confounded De Guise
Came behind with the 'fogle' that caused all this breeze,
Whipp'd it tight round his neck, and, when backward he'd jerk'd him,
The rest of the rascals jump'd on him and Burkd him."

(The Tragedy.)

Jarvey, the slang name for a hackney coachman, especially in Ireland, was in the 18th century Jervis or Jarvis, but history is silent as to this modern Jehu. A pasquinade was originally an anonymous lampoon affixed to a statue of a gladiator which still stands in Rome. The statue is said to have been nicknamed from a scandal-loving cobbler named Pasquino. Florio has pasquino, "a statue in Rome on whom all libels, railings, detractions, and satirical invectives are fathered." Pamphlet is an extended use of Old Fr. Pamphilet, the name of a Latin poem by one Pamphilus, which was popular in the Middle Ages. The suffix -et was often used in this way, e.g., the translation of Æsop's fables by Marie de France was called Ysopet, and Cato's moral maxims had the title Catonet, or Parvus
Cato. Modern Fr. pamphlet, borrowed back from English, has always the sense of polemical writing. In Eng. libel, lit. "little book," we see a similar restriction of meaning. A three-quarter portrait of fixed dimensions is called a kitcat—

"It is not easy to see why he should have chosen to produce a replica, or rather a kitcat." (Journal of Education, Oct. 1911.)

The name comes from the portraits of members of the Kitcat Club, painted by Kneller. Kit Kat, Christopher Kat, was a pastrycook at whose shop the club used to dine.

 Implements and domestic objects sometimes bear Christian names. We may mention spinning-jenny, and the innumerable meanings of jack. Davit, earlier daviot, is a diminutive of David. Fr. davier, formerly daviet, is used of several mechanical contrivances, including a pick-lock. A kind of davit is called in German Jütte, a diminutive of Judith. The implement by which the burglar earns his daily bread is now called a jemmy, but in the 17th century we also find bess and betty. The French name is rossignol, nightingale. The German burglar calls it Dietrich, Peterchen, or Klaus, and the contracted forms of the first name, dyrk and dirk, have passed into Swedish and Danish with the same meaning. In Italian a pick-lock is called grimaldello, a diminutive of the name Grimaldo.

A kitchen wench was once called a malkin—

"The kitchen malkin pins
Her richest lockram,\(^1\) 'bout her reechy neck,
Clambering the walls to eye him."

(Coriolanus, li. 1.)

This is a diminutive of Matilda or Mary, possibly of

\(^1\) For lockram, see p. 48.
both. *Grimalkin* applied to a fiend in the shape of a cat, is for *gray malkin*—

"I come, *Graymalkin."" (Macbeth, i. i.)

The name *malkin* was transferred from the maid to the mop. Cotgrave has *escouillon* (*écouillon*), "a wispe, or dish-clowt; a *mawkin*, or drag, to cleanse, or sweepe an oven." *Écouillon* is a derivative of Lat. *scopa*, broom. Now another French word, which means both "kitchen servant" and "dish-clout," is *souillon*, from *souiller*, to soil. What share each of these words has in Eng. *scullion* is hard to say. The only thing certain is that *scullion* is not originally related to *scullery*, Old Fr. *escuellerie*, a collective from Old Fr. *escuelle* (*écuelle*), dish, Lat. *scutella*.

*A doll* was formerly called a *baby* or *puppet*. It is the abbreviation of *Dorothy*, for we find it called a *doroty* in Scottish. We may compare Fr. *marionnette*, a double diminutive of Mary, explained by Cotgrave as "little Marian or Mal; also, a puppet." *Little Mary*, in another sense, has been recently, but perhaps definitely, adopted into our language. Another old name for doll is *mammet*. Capulet uses it contemptuously to his daughter—

"And then to have a wretched puling fool,
A whining *mammet*, in her fortune's tender,
To answer: 'I'll not wed,'—'I cannot love.'"  

*(Romeo and Juliet, iii. 5.)*

Its earlier form is *maumet*, meaning "idol," and it is a contraction of Mahomet.

The derivation of *jug* is not capable of proof, but a 17th-century etymologist regards it as identical with the female name *Jug*¹ for Joan or Jane. This is

¹ Jehannette, "Jug, or Jinny" (Cotgrave). For strange perversions of baptismal names see Chap. XII. It is possible that the rather uncommon family name *Jagrass* is of the same origin.
supported by the fact that jack was used in a similar sense—

“That there’s wrath and despair in the jolly black-jack,
And the seven deadly sins in a flagon of sack.”

(Lady of the Lake, v. 5.)

We may also compare toby jug and demi-john. The latter word is in French dame-jeanne, but both forms are possibly due to folk-etymology. A coat of mail was called in English a jack and in French jaque, “a jack, or coat of mail” (Cotgrave); hence the diminutive jacket. The German miners gave to an ore which they considered useless the name kobalt, from kobold, a goblin, gnome. This has given Eng. cobalt. Much later is the similarly formed nickel, a diminutive of Nicholas. It comes to us from Sweden, but appears earliest in the German compound Kupferringel, copper nickel. Apparently nickel here means something like goblin; cf. Old Nick and, probably, the dickens—

“I cannot tell what the dickens his name is my husband had him of.—What do you call your knight’s name, sirrah?”

(Merry Wives, iii. 2.)

Pantaloons come, via France, from Venice. A great many Venetians bore the name of Pantaleone, one of their favourite saints. Hence the application of the name to the characteristic Venetian-bose. The “lean and slippered pantaloon” was originally one of the stock characters of the old Italian comedy. Torriano has pantalone, “a pantalone, a covetous and yet amorous old dotard, properly applied in comedies unto a Venetian.” Knickerbockers take their name from Diedrich Knickerbocker, the pseudonym under which Washington Irving wrote his History of Old New York, in which the early Dutch inhabitants are depicted in baggy knee-breeches. Certain christian names are curiously associated
with stupidity. In modern English we speak of a 
silly Johnny, while the Germans say ein dunner Peter, or 
Michel, and French uses Colas (Nicolas), Nicodème and 
Claude, the reason for the selection of the name not 
always being known. English has, or had, in the sense 
of "fool," the words ninny, nickum, noddy, sany. Ninny 
is for Innocent, "Innocent, Ninny, a proper name for a 
man" (Cotgrave). With this we may compare French 
benêt (i.e. Benedict), "a simple, plaine, doltish fellow; a 
noddy peake, a ninny hammer, a peagoose, a coxe, a 
silly companion" (Cotgrave). Nickum and noddy are 
probably for Nicodemus or Nicholas, both of which are 
used in French for a fool—

"'But there's another chance for you,' said Mr Boffin, smiling 
still. 'Do you like the name of Nicodemus? Think it over. Nick 
or Noddy.'" (Our Mutual Friend, Ch. 5.)

Noddy-peak, ninny-hammer, nickumoop, now nincompoop, 
seem to be arbitrary elaborations. Zany, formerly a con-
juror's assistant, is sanni (see p. 143), an Italian diminutive 
of Giovanni, John. With the degeneration of Innocent 
and Benedict we may compare Fr. crétin, idiot, an 
Alpine patois form of chrétien, Christian, and Eng. silly, 
which once meant blessed, a sense preserved by its 
German cognate selig. Dunce is a libel on the disciples 
of the great medieval schoolman John Duns Scotus, 
born at Duns in Berwickshire.

Dandy is Scottish for Andrew, e.g., Dandie Dinmont 
(Guy Mannering). Dago, now usually applied to 
Italians, was used by the Elizabethans, in its original 
form Diego, of the Spaniards. The derivation of guy and 
bobby (peeler) is well known. Jockey is a diminutive of 
the north country Jock, for Jack. The history of jacks-
apes is obscure. The earliest record of the name is in 
a satirical song on the unpopular William de la Pole,
Duke of Suffolk, who was beheaded at sea in 1450. He is called Jack Napes, the allusion being apparently to his badge, an ape's clog and chain. But there also seems to be association with Naples; cf. fustian-anapes for Naples fustian. A poem of the 15th century mentions among our imports from Italy—

"Apes and japes and marmusettes tayled."

Jilt was once a stronger epithet than at present. It is for earlier Jill, which is a diminutive of Jill, the companion of Jack. Jill, again, is short for Gillian, i.e. Juliana, so that jilt is a doublet of Shakespeare's sweetest heroine. Termagant, like shrew (p. 34), was formerly used of both sexes, e.g., by Sir John Falstaff—

"'Twas time to counterfeit, or that hot termagant Scot (Douglas) had paid me scot and lot too." (1 Henry IV, v. 4.)

In its oldest sense of a Saracen god it regularly occurs with Mahound (Mahomet)—

"Marsiles fait porter un livre avant:
La lei i fut Mahum e Tervagan."¹

(Chanson de Roland, l 610.)

Ariosto has Trivigante. Being introduced into the medieval drama, the name became synonymous with a stage fury—

"I would have such a fellow whipped for o'erdoing Termagant."

(Hamlet, iii. 2.)

The origin of the word is unknown, but its sense development is strangely different from that of Mahomet (p. 43).

¹ "Marsil has a book brought forward: the law of Mahomet and Termagant was in it."
CHAPTER IV
WORDS AND PLACES

A very large number of wares are named from the places from which they come. This is especially common in the case of woven fabrics, and the origin is often obvious, e.g., arras, cashmere (by folk-etymology, kerseymere), damask, holland. The following are perhaps not all so evident—frieze from Friesland; fustian, Old Fr. fustaine (futaine), from Fustat, a suburb of Cairo; muslin, Fr. mousseline, from Mosul in Kurdistan; shalloon from Châlons-sur-Marne; lawn from Laon; jean, formerly jane, from Genoa (French Gênes); cambric from Kamerijk, the Dutch name of Cambrai (cf. the obsolete dornick, from the Dutch name of Tournay); tartan from the Tartars (properly Tatars), used vaguely for Orientals; sarcenet from the Saracens; sendal, ultimately from India (cf. Gréco-Lat. sindon, Indian cloth); tabby, Old Fr. atabis, from the name of a suburb of Bagdad, formerly used of a kind of silk, but now of a cat marked something like the material in question.

1 Whence also cheval de frise, a contrivance used by the Frieslanders against cavalry. The German name is die spanischen Reiter, explained by Ludwig as "a bar with iron-spikes; cheval de frise, a warlike instrument, to keep off the horse."

2 The form jeans appears to be usual in America—"His hands were thrust carelessly into the side pockets of a gray jeans coat."

(Meredith Nicholson, War of the Carolinas, Ch. 15.)
Brittany used to be famous for hempen fabrics, and the villages of Logrenan and Daoulas gave their names to lockram (see quotation from Coriolanus, p. 42) and doulas—

Hostess. You owe me money, Sir John; and now you pick a quarrel to beguile me of it: I bought you a dozen of shirts to your back.

Falstaff. Doulas, filthy doulas; I have given them away to bakers' wives, and they have made bolters of them.

(1 Henry IV., iii. 3.)

Duffel is a place near Antwerp—

"And let it be of duffl gray,
As warm a cloak as man can sell."

(Wordsworth, Alice Fell.)

and Worstead is in Norfolk. Of other commodities majolica comes from Majorca, called in Spanish Mallorca, and in medieval Latin Majolica; bronze from Brundusium (Brindisi), delf from Delft, the magnet from Magnesia, the shallot, Fr. échalote, in Old French also escalogne, whence archaic Eng. scallion, from Ascalon; the sardine from Sardinia. A milliner, formerly Milaner, dealt in goods from Milan. Cravat dates from the Thirty Years' War, in which the Croats, earlier Cravats, played a part. Ermine is in medieval Latin mus Armenius, Armenian mouse, but the name perhaps comes, through Fr. hermine, from Old High Ger. harme, weasel. Buncombe, more usually bunkum, is the name of a county in North Carolina. To make a speech "for Buncombe" means, in American politics, to show your constituents that you are doing your best for your £400 a year or its American equivalent. Cf. Billingsgate and Limehouse.

The adjective spruce was formerly pruse and meant Prussia. Todd quotes from Holinshed—

"Sir Edward Howard then admirall, and with him Sir Thomas Parre in doublets of crimsin velvett, etc., were appareled after the fashion of Prussia or Spruce."
Of similar origin are spruce-leather, spruce-beer, and the spruce-fir, of which Evelyn says—

"Those from Prussia (which we call spruce) and Norway are the best."

Among coins the besant comes from Bysantium, the florin from Florence, and Shylock's ducat, chiefly a Venetian coin, from the ducato d'Apuglia, the Duchy of Apulia, where it was first coined in the 12th century. The dollar is the Low Ger. daler, for Ger. Taler, originally called a Joachimstaler, from the silver-mine of Joachimstal, "Joachim's dale," in Bohemia. Cotgrave registers a curious Old French perversion jocondale, "a daller, a piece of money worth about 3s. sterl." Some fruits may also be mentioned, e.g., the damson from Damascus, through Old Fr. damaisine, "a damascene or damsen plum" (Cotgrave); the currant from Corinth, and the peach, Fr. poche, from Vulgar Lat. pessica, for Persia.

A polony was originally a Bolonian sausage, from Bologna. Parchment, Fr. parchemin, is the adjective pergamenus, from Pergamus, in Asia Minor. Spaniel is the Old Fr. espagneul (Espagneul), lit. Span. sh. We have the adjective Moorish in morris, or morrice, pike—

"He that sets up his rest to do more exploits with his mace than a morris pike." (Comedy of Errors, iv. 3.)

In morris dance, Fr. danse mauresque, the same adjective is used with something of the vagueness to be noticed in connection with India and Turkey (p. 52). Shakespeare uses the Spanish form—

"I have seen him
Caper upright, like to a wild morisca,
Shaking the bloody darts as he his bells."

(2 Henry VI., iii. r.)

Other "local" dances are the polka, which means Polish woman, masurka, woman of Mazuria, and
the obsolete pelonaise, lit. Polish, cracovienne, from Cracow, and varsiovienne, from Warsaw. The tarantella, like the tarantula spider, takes its name from Taranto in Italy. The tune of the dance is said to have been originally employed as a cure for the lethargy caused by the bite of the spider. Florio has tarantola, “a serpent called an eft or an evet. Some take it to be a flye whose sting is perilous and deadly, and nothing but divers sounds of musicke can cure the patient.”

The town of Troyes has given its name to troy weight. The armourers of Bilbao in Spain, made swords of such perfect temper that they could be bent point to hilt. Hence Falstaff describes himself in the buck-basket as—

“Compassed, like a good bilbo, in the circumference of a peck, hilt to point, heel to head.” (Merry Wives, iii. 5.)

The Andrea Ferrara, or Scottish broadsword, carried by Fergus M’Ivor, bears, according to some authorities, the name of an armourer of Ferrara, in Italy. According to others, Andrea Ferrara was a sword-maker at Belluno. I have heard it affirmed by a Scottish drill-sergeant that the real name of this genius was Andrew Ferrars,¹ and that he belonged to the same nationality as other great men.

An argosy, formerly also vagusye, was named from

¹ A Scotch reviewer (Glasgow Herald, 13th April 1912) corrects me here—“His name was certainly not Ferrara, but Ferrier. He was probably an Arbroath man.” Some readers may remember that, after General Todleben’s brilliant defence of Sebastopol (1854-5), Punch discovered a respectable ancestry for him also. In some lines commencing—

“I ken him weel, the shield was born in Fife,
    The bairn of Andrew Drummond and his wife,”

It was shown that the apparently foreign name had been conferred on the gifted child because of the agility with which he used to “toddle ben the hoose.”
the Adriatic port of Ragusa, and a lateen sail is a Latin, i.e. Mediterranean, sail; gamboge is the Fr. Cambodge Cambodia, and indigo is from Span. indico, Indian. Of wines, malmsy, chiefly remembered in connection with George of Clarence, and malvoisie are doublets, from Monemvasia in the Morea. Port is named from Oporto, i.e. o porto, the harbour (cf. le Havre), and sherry (see p. 116) from Xeres, Lat. Casaris (urbs); cf. Sarragossa, from Cásarea Augusta.

But it is possible to be mistaken in connecting countries with products. Brasil wood is not named from the country, but vice-versa. It was known as a dye-wood as early as the 12th century, and the name is found in many of the European languages. The Portuguese navigators found large quantities of it in South America and named the country accordingly. They christened an island Madeira, timber, Lat. materia, for a similar reason. The canary comes from the Canary Islands, but its name is good Latin. The largest of these islands, Canaria, was so called by the Romans from the dogs found there. The guinea-fowl and guinea gold came first from the west coast of Africa, but the guinea-pig is a native of Brazil. The name probably came from the Guinea-men, or slave-ships, which regularly followed a triangular course. They sailed outward to the west coast of Africa with English goods. These they exchanged for slaves, whom they transported to the West Indies, the horrible "middle passage," and finally they sailed homeward with New World produce, including, no doubt, guinea-pigs brought home by sailors. The turkey is also called guinea-fowl in the 17th century, probably to be explained in the same way. The German name for guinea-pig, Meerschweinchen, seems to mean little pig from over the sea.
Guinea was a vague geographical expression in the 17th century, but not so vague as India or Turkey. Indian ink comes from China (Fr. encre de Chine), and Indian corn from America. The names given to the turkey are extraordinary. We are not surprised that, as an American bird, it should be naturally connected with India; cf. West Indies, Red Indian, etc. Turk was in the 16th and 17th centuries a vague term for non-Christians—

“Jews, Turks, infidels, and hereticks” (Collect for Good Friday.) and we find also Turkey wheat for maize. The following names for the turkey, given in a Nomenclator in eight languages, published in Germany in 1602, do not exhaust the list:

German.—Indianisch oder Kalekuttisch¹ oder Welsch² Hun.
Dutch.—Calcoensche oft Turkische Henne.
French.—Geline ou poulle d’Inde, ou d’Afrique.
Italian.—Gallina d’India.
Spanish.—Pavon (peacock) de las Indias.
English.—Cok off Inde!

No doubt the turkey was confused with other birds, for we find Fr. geline d’Inde before the discovery of America. D’Inde has become dinde, whence a new masculine dindon has been formed.

The early etymologists were fond of identifying foreign wares with place-names. They connected diaper with Ypres, gingham with Guingamp (in Brittany), drugget with Drogheda, and the sedan chair with Sedan. Such guesses are almost always wrong. The origin of diaper is doubtful, that of drugget quite unknown, and gingham is Malay. As far as we know at present, the sedan came from Italy in the 16th century, and it is there, among derivatives of Lat. sedere, to sit, that its

¹ Calicut, not Calcutta. ² See walmut (p. 151).
origin must be sought, unless indeed the original Sedan was some mute, inglorious Hansom.¹

¹ As the Hansom will shortly be of archaeological interest only, it may be recorded here that it took its name from that of its inventor—"The Hansom's patent (cab) is especially constructed for getting quickly over the ground" (Pulley's Etymological Compendium, 1853). Sic transit...
CHAPTER V

PHONETIC ACCIDENTS

The history of a word has to be studied from the double point of view of sound and sense, or, to use more technical terms, phonetics and semantics. In the logical order of things it seems natural to deal first with the less interesting aspect, phonetics, the physical processes by which sounds are gradually transformed. Speaking generally, it may be said that phonetic changes are governed by the law of least resistance, a sound which presents difficulty being gradually and unconsciously modified by a whole community or race. With the general principles of phonetics I do not propose to deal, but a few simple examples will serve to illustrate the one great law on which this science is based.

The population of this country is educationally divided by the letter $k$ into three classes, which we may describe as the confident, the anxious, and the indifferent. The same division existed in Imperial Rome, where educated people sounded the aspirate, which completely disappeared from the every-day language of the lower classes, the so-called Vulgar Latin, from which the Romance languages are descended, so far as their working vocabulary is concerned. The anxious class was also represented. A Latin epigram-
PHONETIC LAZINESS

Matist remarks that since Arrius, prophetic name, has visited the Ionic islands, they will probably be henceforth known as the Hionic islands. To the disappearance of the $h$ from Vulgar Latin is due the fact that the Romance languages have no aspirate. French still writes the initial $h$ in some words by etymological reaction, e.g., *homme* for Old Fr. *ome*, and also at one time really had an aspirate in the case of words of Germanic origin, e.g., *la honte*, shame. But this $h$ is no longer sounded, although it still, by tradition, prevents elision and *liaison* mistakes in which are regarded much in the same way as a misplaced aspirate in English. The “educated” $h$ of modern English is largely an artificial restoration; cf. the modern *hotel*-keeper with the older word *ostler* (see p. 164), or the family name *Armitage* with the restored *hermitage*.

We have dropped the $h$ sound in initial $kn$, as in *knavé*, still sounded in Ger. *Knabe*, boy. French gets over the difficulty by inserting a vowel between the two consonants, e.g., *canif* is a Germanic word cognate with Eng. *knife*. This is a common device in French when a word of Germanic origin begins with two consonants. Cf. Fr. *dérive*, drift, Eng. *drive*; Fr. *varech*, sea-weed, Eng. *wrack*. *Harangue*, formerly *harengue*, is Old High Ger. *hring*, Eng. *ring*, the allusion being to the circle formed by the audience. Fr. *chenapan*, rogue, is Ger. *Schnapppahn*, robber, lit. fowl-stealer. The *shallop* that “flitteth silken-sail’d, skimming down to Camelot,” is Fr. *chaloupe*, probably identical with Du. *sluip*, sloop.

1 "Nece sibi postilla metuebant talia verba,
Cum subito adertur nuntius horribilis,
Ionios fluctus, postquam illuc Arrius isset,
Iam Bon Ionies esse, sed Hionis."

(Catullus, 84.)
Consonant sound at the beginning of a word appears also in the transformation of all Latin words which began with \( sc, sp, st \), e.g., scola > escola (école), spongia > esponge (ponge), stabulum > éstable (étale). English words derived from French generally show the older form, but without the initial vowel, school, sponge, stable.

The above are very simple examples of sound change. There are certain less regular changes, which appear to work in a more arbitrary fashion and bring about more picturesque results. Three of the most important of these are assimilation, dissimilation, and metathesis.

Assimilation is the tendency of a sound to imitate its neighbour. The tree called the lime was formerly the line, and earlier still the lind. We see the older form in linden and in such place-names as Lyndhurst, lime wood. Line often occurred in such compounds as line-bark, line-bast, line-wood, where the second component began with a lip consonant. The \( n \) became also a lip consonant because it was easier to pronounce, and by the 17th century we generally find lime instead of line. We have a similar change in Lombard for Ger. lange-bart, long-beard, or, according to some, long-axe. For Liverpool we find also Litherpool in early records. If the reader attempts to pronounce both names rapidly, he will be able to form his own opinion as to whether it is more natural for Liverpool to become Litherpool or vice-versa, a vexed question with philologists. Fr. veau, a derivative of Old Fr. vœu (veau), calf, and venin, Lat. venenum, have given Eng. vellum and venom, the final consonant being in each case assimilated \(^1\) to the initial labial. So also mushroom, Fr. mousse, moss.

\(^1\) Apart from assimilation, there is a tendency in English to substitute \( e, a \) for \( s, a \), e.g. program for groove (see p. 68). In the family name Hansen, for Hænæn, the son of Hana, we have dissimilation of a (see p. 57).
Dissimilation

Vulgar Lat. circare (from circa, around) gave Old Fr. chercher, Eng. search. In modern Fr. chercher the initial consonant has been influenced by the medial ch. The m of the curious word ampersand, variously spelt, is due to the neighbouring p. It is applied to the sign &. I thought it obsolete till I came across it on successive days in two contemporary writers—

"One of my mother's chief cares was to teach me my letters, which I learnt from big A to Ampersand in the old hornbook at Lantrig." (Quiller Couch, Dead Man's Rock, Ch. 2.)

"Tommy knew all about the work. Knew every letter in it from A to Emperzan." (Petit Ridge, In the Wars.)

Children used to repeat the alphabet thus—"A per se A, B per se B," and so on to "and per se and." The symbol & is an abbreviation of Lat. et, written &.

Dissimilation is the opposite process. The archaic word pomander—

"I have sold all my trumpery; not a counterfeit stone, not a riband, glass, pomander, brooch, ... to keep my pack from fasting." (Winter's Tale, iv. 3.)

was formerly spelt pomeamber. It comes from Old Fr. pomme ambre, apple of amber, a ball of perfume once carried by the delicate. In this case one of the two lip consonants has been dissimilated. A like change has occurred in Fr. nappe, cloth, from Lat. mappa, whence our napkin, apron (p. 113), and the family name Napier.

The sounds most frequently affected by dissimilation are those represented by the letters l, n, and r. Fr. gonfalon is for older gonfanon. Chaucer uses the older form, Milton the newer—

"Ten thousand thousand ensigns high advanc'd,
Standards and gonfalons, 'twixt van and rear,
Stream in the air."

(Paradise Lost, v. 589.)
Gonfanon is of Germanic origin. It means literally “battle-flag,” and the second element is cognate with English fan or vane (Ger. Fahne). Eng. pilgrim and Fr. pèlerin, from Lat. pèlerinus, illustrate the change from r to l, while the word frail, an osier basket for figs, is due to a change from l to r, which goes back to Roman times. A grammarian of imperial Rome named Probus compiled, about the 3rd or 4th century, A.D., a list of cautions as to mispronunciation. In this list we find *flagellum, non fragellum.” In the sense of switch, twig, fragelkm gave Old Fr. freel, basket made of twigs, whence Eng. frail; while the correct flagellum gave Old Fr. steel (stilou), whence Eng. staff. A Vulgar Lat. *mora, mulberry, from Lat. morus, mulberry tree, has given Fr. mûre. The r of berry has brought about dissimilation in Eng. mulberry and Ger. Maulbeere. Colonel has the spelling of Fr. colonel, but its pronunciation points rather to the dissimilated Spanish form coronel which is common in Elizabethan English. Cotgrave has colonel, “a colonell, or coronell; the commander of a regiment.”

The female name Annabel is a dissimilation of Amael, whence Mabel. By confusion with the popular medieval name Orable, Lat. orabilis, Annabel has become Arabel or Arabella. Our level is Old Fr. livel, Vulgar Lat. *libellum, for libella, a plummet, diminutive of libra, scales. Old Fr. livel became by dissimilation nivel, now niveau. Many conjectures have been made as to the etymology of oriel. It is from Old Fr. oriol, a recess, or sanctum, which first occurs in a Norman French poem of the 12th century on Becket. This is from a Late Latin diminutive aulaclum, a small chapel or shrine, which was dissimilated into aulzolum.

Sometimes dissimilation leads to the disappearance of a consonant, e.g., Eng. feeble, Fr. faible, represents
METATHESIS

Lat. flebilis, lamentable, from flere, to weep. Fugleman was once fugelman, from Ger. Flugelmahn, wing man, i.e., a tall soldier on the wing who exaggerated the movements of musketry drill for the guidance of the rest.

Metathesis is the transposition of two sounds. A simple case is our trouble, Fr. troubler, from Lat. turbulare. Maggot is for Mid. Eng. maddok, a diminutive of Anglo-Sax. mappa; cf. Ger. Made, maggot. Kittle, in the phrase "kittle cattle," is identical with tickle; cf. Ger. kitseln, to tickle. One theory for the origin of tankard is that it stands for *cantar, from Lat. cantharus, with which it corresponds exactly in meaning; e.g., cantharus, "a pot, a jugge, a tankerd" (Cooper); cantharos, "a tankard or jug that houldeth much" (Florio); canthare, "a great jugge, or tankard" (Cotgrave). The metathesis may be due to association with the name Tankard (Tancred).

Wattle and wallet are used indifferently in Mid. English for a little bag. Shakespeare no doubt had in mind the wattles of a cock or turkey when he made Gonzalo speak of mountaineers—

"Dew-lapp'd like bulls, whose throats had hanging at them
Wattles of flesh."

(Tempest, iii. 3.)

Fr. moustique is for earlier mousquite, from Span. mosquito, a diminutive from Lat. musca, a fly. Tinsel is Fr. étincelle, spark, earlier estincel, which supposes a Lat. *stincilla for scintilla. The old word anlace, dagger, common in Mid. English and revived by Byron and Scott—

"His harp in silken scarf was slung,
And by his side an anlace hung."

(Rokeby, v. 15.)

has provoked many guesses. Its oldest form, anelas, is a metathesis of the common Old Fr. alenas, dagger. This is formed from alne, of Germanic origin, cognate
with awl; cf. cutlass, Fr. coutelas (p. 126). Beverage is from Old Fr. bevage, or beuvrage, now breuvage, Vulgar Lat. *biberaticum, from bibere, to drink. Here, as in the case of level (p. 58), and search (p. 57), English preserves the older form. In Martello tower, from a fort taken by the British (1794) in Mortella, i.e., Myrtle, Bay, Corsica, we have vowel metathesis.

It goes without saying that such linguistic phenomena are often observed in the case of children and uneducated people. Not long ago the writer was urged by a gardener to embellish his garden with a ruskit arch. When metathesis extends beyond one word we have what is known as a Spoonerism, the original type of which is said to be—

"Kinquerings congs their titles take."

We have seen (p. 57) that the letters l, n, r are particularly subject to dissimilation and metathesis. But we sometimes find them alternating without apparent reason. Thus banister is a modern form for the correct baluster. This was not at first applied to the rail, but to the bulging colonets on which it rests. Fr. balustre comes, through Italian, from Greco-Lat. balaustium, a pomegranate flower, the shape of which resembles the supports of a balustrade. Cotgrave explains balustres as "ballisters; little, round and short pillars, ranked on the outside of cloisters, terraces, galleries, etc." Glamour is a doublet of grammar (see p. 145), and blounce was formerly frounce from Fr frayroncer, now only used of "knitting" the brows—

"Till civil-suited morn appear,
Not trickt and froonet as she was wont
With the Attic boy to hunt."

(Penseroso, L. 123.)

1 Of the similar change in the family name Banister (p. 179).
SHRINKAGE OF WORDS.

Fr. *filibustier*, whence our *filibuster*, was earlier *frildstier*, a corruption of Du. *vrijbuiter*, whence directly the Eng. *freebooter*.

All words tend in popular usage to undergo a certain amount of shrinkage. The reduction of Lat. *digitale*, from *digitus*, finger, to Fr. *cl*., thimble (little thumb) is a striking example. The strong tonic accent of English, which is usually on the first, or root, syllable, brings about a kind of telescoping which makes us very unintelligible to foreigners. This is seen in the pronunciation of names such as *Cholmondeley* and *Marjoribanks*. *Bethlehem* hospital, for lunatics, becomes *bedlam*; *Mary Magdalene*, taken as a type of tearful repentance, gives us *maudlin*, now generally used of the lachrymose stage of intoxication. *Sacristan* is contracted into *sexton*. Fr. *paralysie* becomes *palsy*, and *hydropisie* becomes *dropsy*. The fuller form of the word usually persists in the literary language, or is artificially introduced at a later period, so that we get such doublets as *proctor* and *procurator*.

In the case of French words which have a prefix, this prefix is almost regularly dropped in English, e.g., *raison* for *raison*, while suffixes, or final syllables, often disappear, e.g., *treasure* *trove*, for Old Fr. *troué* (*trowe*), or become assimilated to some familiar English ending, e.g., *parish*, Fr. *paroisse*, *skirmish*, Fr. *escarmouche*; *cartridge*, Fr. *cartouche*, *partridge*, Fr. *perdix*. A good example of such shrinkage is the word *vamp*, part of a shoe. Old Fr. *apant-pie* (*pied*), which became Mid. Eng. *vampey*, and then lost its final syllable. We may

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1. It may be noted here that a *buccaneer* was not originally a pirate, but a man whose business was the smoking of beef in the West Indies. The name comes from a native word *bucce*, adopted into French, and explained by Cotgrave as a "wooden-gridiron whereon the cannibals broil pieces of men, and other flesh."
compare *vambrace*, armour for the forearm, Fr. *avant-bras*, *vanguard*, Fr. *avant-garde*, often reduced to *van*—

“Go, charge Agrippa
Plant those that have revolted in the *van*;
That Antony may seem to spend his fury
Upon himself.”

(*Antony and Cleopatra*, iv. 6.)

and the obsolete *vaunt-courier*, forerunner—

“You sulphurous and thought-executing fires,
*Vaunt-couriers* of oak-cleaving thunderbolts.”

(*Lear*, iii. 2.)

When the initial vowel is *a-* its loss may have been helped by confusion with the indefinite article. Thus for *anatomy* we find *atomy*, for a skeleton or scarecrow figure, applied by Mistress Quickly to the constable (2 *Henry IV.*, v. 4). *Peal* is for *appeal*, call; *mend* for *amend*, *lone* for *alone*, i.e., *all one*. *Peach*, used by Falstaff—

“If I be ta’en, I’ll *peach* for this.”

(1 *Henry IV.*, ii. 2.)

is for older *appeach*, related to *impeach*. *Sise*, in all its senses, is for *assize*, Fr. *assise*, with a general meaning of allowance or assessment, from Fr. *aspirer*, to put, lay. *Sisars* at Cambridge are properly students in receipt of certain allowances called *sising*. With painters’ *sise* we may compare Ital. *assisa*, “*sise* that painters use” (Florio). We use the form *assise* in speaking of the “sitting” of the judges, but those most familiar with this tribunal speak of being tried at the *sises*. The obsolete word *cate*, on which Petruchio plays—

“For dainties are all *cates*—and therefore, Kate,
Take this of me, Kate of my consolation.”

(*The Taming of the Shrew*, ii. 1.)

is for earlier *acate*, an Old French dialect form corresponding to modern Fr. *achat*, *purchase*. The man
entrusted with purchasing was called an acatour or catour (whence the name Cator), later cater, now extended to caterer, like fruitiser for fruiter, poulterer for poulter and upholstery for upholster or upholster.  

Limbeck has been squeezed out by the orthodox alembic—

“Memory the warder of the brain,  
Shall be a fume, and the receipt of reason  
A limbeck only.”

(Macbeth, i. 7.)

and prentice has given way to apprentice. Tire and attire both survive, and mase persists by the side of amase with the special sense which I have heard a Notts collier express by puzzle-garden (cf. Ger. Irrgarten). Binnacle is a corruption, perhaps due to association with bin, of earlier bittacle, from Lat. habitaculum, a little dwelling. It may have come to us through Fr. habitacle or Port. bitacola, “the bittacle, a frame of timber in the steerage, where the compass is placed on board a ship” (Vieyra, Port. Dict., 1794). As King of Scotland, King George has a household official known as the limner, or painter. For limner we find in the 15th century limner and luminour, which is apheric for alluminour, or enlumineur. Cotgrave, s.v. enlumineur de livres, says, “we call one that coloureth, or painteth upon, paper, or parchment, an alluminer.”

But confusion with the article is not necessary in order to bring about aphasis. It occurs regularly in

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1 Upholsterer has become specialised in sense; cf. undertaker (of funerals), and stationer, properly a tradesman with a station or stall. Costermonger illustrates the converse process. It meant originally a dealer in costards, i.e. apples. The French costermonger has the more appropriate name of marchand des quatre saisons.

2 English sometimes occurs as an attempt at the French and Celtic u; cf. brish from brusque, porimig (p. 69), and whisky (p. 68).
the case of words beginning with esc, esp, est, borrowed from Old French (see p. 56). Thus we have squire from escuyer (escuyer), skew from Old Fr. eschuer, to dodge, “eschew,” ultimately cognate with Eng. sky, spice from espic (épice), sprite from esprit, stage from estage (étage), etc. In some cases we have the fuller form also, e.g., esquire, eschew; cf. sample and example. Fender, whether before a fireplace or slung outside a ship, is for defender; fence is always for defence, either in the sense of a barrier or in allusion to the noble art of self-defence. ¹ The tender of a ship or of a locomotive is the attender, and taint is athetic for attain, Fr. atteinte, touch—

"I will not poison thee with my attaint."
(Lucrece, l. 1072.)

Puzzle was in Mid. Eng. opposile, i.e., something put before one. We still speak of “a poser.”

Spital, for hospital, survives in Spitalfields, and Spittlegate at Grantham and elsewhere. Crew is for accrewé (Holinshed). It meant properly a reinforcement, lit. on-growth, from Fr. accroître, to accrue. In recruit, we have a later instance of the same idea. Fr. recrue, recruit, from recruter, to grow again, is still feminine, like many other military terms which were originally abstract or collective. Cotgrave has recrue, “a supplie, or filling up of a defective company of soulidiers, etc.” We have possum for opossum, and coon for racoon, and this for arraçacoun, which I find in a 16th-century

¹ Our ancestors appear to have been essentially pacif. With fence, for defence, we may compare Ger. schirm, to fence, from Schirm, screen (cf. Regenschild, umbrella), which, passing through Italian and French, has given us skirmish, scrimmage, scarabouché (see p. 142), and Shakespearean scarrum, fencer (Hamlet, iv. 7). So also Ger. Gewehr, weapon, is cognate with Eng. weir, and means defence—

"Cet animal est très méchant; Quand on l’attaque, il se défend."
record of travel; cf. American skeeter for mosquito. In these two cases we perhaps have also the deliberate intention to shorten (see p. 66), as also in the obsolete Australian teach, for the aphetic 'tentiary, i.e., penitentiary. With this we may compare tec for detective.

Drawing-room is for withdrawing room, and only the final t of saint is left in Tooley St., famed for its three tailors, formerly Saint Olave Street, and tawdry. This latter word is well known to be derived from Saint Audrey's fair. It was not originally depreciatory—

"Come, you promised me a tawdry lace, and a pair of sweet gloves." (Winter's Tale, iv. 3.)

and the full form is recorded by Palsgrave, who has Seynt Andries (read Audrée's) lace, "cordone." The verb vie comes from Old Fr. envier, to challenge, Lat. invitare, whence the phrase à l'envi l'un de l'autre, "in emulation one of the other." (Cotgrave); cf. gin (trap), Fr. engin, Lat. ingenium. The prefix dis or des is lost in Spencer (see p. 165), spite, splay, sport, stain, etc.

In drat, formerly 'od rot, sounds for God's wounds, 'sdeath, odsbodikins, etc., there is probably a deliberate avoidance of profanity. The same intention appears in Gogs—

"'Ay, by gogs-wounds!' quoth he; and swore so loud,
That, all amaz'd, the priest let fall the book."

(Taming of the Shrew, iii. 2.)

Cf. Fr. parbleu for par Dieu, and Ger. Pots for Gottes.

This English tendency to aphesis is satirised in a French song of the 14th-century, intentionally written in bad French. Thus, in the line—

"Or sont il vint le tans que Glais voura vauchier."¹

Glais is for Anglais and vauchier is for chevauchier

¹ "Now the time has come when the English will wish to ride."
(chevaucher), to ride on a foray. The literary language runs counter to this instinct, though Shakespeare wrote haviour for behaviour and longing for belonging, while such forms as billiments for habiliments and sparagus for asparagus are regular up to the 18th century. Children keep up the national practice when they say member for remember and examine for examine. It is quite certain that baccy and tater would be recognised literary forms if America had been discovered two centuries sooner or printing invented two centuries later.

Many words are shortened, not by natural and gradual shrinkage, but by deliberate laziness. The national distaste for many syllables appears in wire for telegram, the Artful Dodger’s wipe for the clumsy pocket handkerchief, soccer for association, and such portmanteau words as squason, an individual who is at once squire and parson, or Bakerloo for Baker St. and Waterloo.

The simplest way of reducing a word is to take the first syllable and make it a symbol for the rest. Of comparatively modern formation are pub and zoo, with which we may compare Bart’s, for Saint Bartholomew’s, Cri, Pav, “half a mo,” bike, and even paj, for pageant.

This method of shortening words was very popular in the 17th century, from which period date citizen, mob(ile vulgus), the fickle crowd, and pun(digrion). We often find the fuller mobile used for mob. The origin of pundigrion is uncertain. It may be an illiterate attempt at Ital. puntiglio, which, like Fr. pointe, was used of a verbal quibble or fine distinction. Most of these clipped forms are easily identified, e.g. cob(rolet), gent(leman), hack(nev), vet(erinarian surgeon). Cad is for Scot. cadder, errand boy, now familiar in connection with golf, and caddie- is from Fr. cadet, younger. The word had not always the very strong meaning we now
associate with it. Among Sketches by Bos is one entitled—

"The last Cab driver and the first Omnibus Cad;"

where cad means conductor. On tick, for on ticket, is found in the 17th century. We may compare the more modern bis and spec. Brig is for brigantine, Ital. brigantino, "a kinde of pinnasse or small barke called a brigantine" (Florio). The original meaning is pirate ship; cf. brigand. Wag has improved in meaning. It is for older waghalter. Cotgrave has baboin (babouin), "a trifling, busie, or crafty knave; a crackrope, waghalter, etc." The older sense survives in the phrase "to play the wag," i.e. truant. For the "rope" figure we may compare Scot. hempie, a minx, and obsolete Ital. cavestrolo, a diminutive from Lat. capistrum, halter, explained by Florio as "a wag, a haltersacke." Modern Ital. capestro is used in the same sense. Crack-rope is shortened to crack. Justice Shallow remembered Falstaff breaking Skogan's head—

"When he was a crack, not thus high."

(2 Henry IV., iii. 2.)

Chap is for chapman, once in general use for a merchant and still a common family name. It is cognate with cheap, chaffer, and Ger. kaufen, to buy, and probably also with Lat. causo, tavern keeper. We have the Dutch form in horse-coper, and also in the word coopering, the illicit sale of spirits by Dutch boats to North Sea fishermen. Merchant was used by the Elizabethans in the same way as our chap. Thus the Countess of Auvergne calls Talbot a "riddling merchant."

1 Cf. also Dan Kibbenhavn (Copenhagen), the merchants' haven, the numerous Swedish place-names ending in -höping, e.g. Jonshörning, and our own Chippings, or market-towns.
PHONETIC ACCIDENTS

(1 Henry VI., ii. 3). We may also compare Scéot: callant, lad, from the Picard form of Fr. chaland, customer—

"He had seen many a braw callant, far less than Gusg Gibbie, fight brawly under Montrose." (Old Mortality, Ch. 1.)

and our own expression "a rum customer," reduced in America to "a rum cuss." Hock, for Hochheimer, wine from Hochheim, occurs as early as Beaumont and Fletcher; and rum, spirit, is for earlier rumbullion, of obscure origin. Gin is for geneva, a corruption of Fr. genièvre, Lat. juniperus, with the berries of which it is flavoured. The history of grog is more complicated. The stuff called grogram, earlier groggrayne, is from Fr. gros grain, coarse grain. Admiral Vernon (18th century) was called by the sailors "Old Grog" from his habit of wearing grogram breeches. When he issued orders that the regular allowance of rum was henceforth to be diluted with water, the sailors promptly baptized the mixture with his nickname.

Sometimes the two first syllables survive. We have navy for navigator, brandy for brandywine, from Du. brandewyn, lit. burnt wine, and whisky for usquebaugh, Gaelic uisge-beatha, water of life (cf. eau-de-vie), so that the literal meaning of whisky is very innocent. It has a doublet in the river-name Usk. Before the 18th century usquebaugh is the regular form. In the following passage the Irish variety is referred to—

"The prime is usquebaugh, which cannot be made anywhere in that perfection; and whereas we drink it here in aqua vitae measures, it goes down there by beer-glassfuls, being more natural to the nation." (Howell, 1634.)

Canter is for Canterbury gallop, the pace of pilgrims
CLIPPED FORMS

...riding to the shrine of St Thomas. John Dennis, known as Dennis the Critic, says of Pope—

"Boileau's Pegasus has all his paces. The Pegasus of Pope, like a Kentish post-horse, is always on the Canterbury."

(On the Preliminaries to the Dunciad.)

In bugle, for bugle-horn, lit. wild-ox-horn, Old Fr. bugle, Lat. bucillus, a diminutive of bos, ox, we have perhaps rather an ellipsis, like waterproof (coat), than a clipped form—

"Comrades, leave me here a little, while as yet 'tis early morn:
Leave me here, and when you want me, sound upon the bugle-horn."

(Locksley Hall.)

Patter is no doubt for paternoster—

"Fitz-Eustace, you, with Lady Clare,
May bid your beads and patter prayer."

(Marmion, vi. 27.)

and the use of the word marble for a toy sometimes made of that stone makes it very probable that the alley, most precious of marbles, is short for alabaster.

Less frequently the final syllable is selected, e.g., bus for omnibus, too for lanterloo, variously spelt in the 17th and 18th centuries—

"Ev'n mighty Pam, that Kings and Queens o'earthew,
And mow'd down armies in the fights of lu."

(Rape of the Lock, iii. 62.)

Fr. lanturelu was originally the meaningless refrain or "toll de rol" of a popular song in Richelieu's time. Van is for caravans, a Persian word, properly a company of merchants or ships travelling together, "also of late corruptly used with us for a kind of waggon to carry passengers to and from London" (Blount, Glossographia, 1674). Wig is for periwig, a corruption of Fr. perrique, of obscure origin. Varsity, for university, and Sam Weller's Tiser, for Morning Advertiser, belong to the 19th century.

1 The knave of clubs. The name was also given to Lord Palmerston.
Christian names are treated in the same way. *Alexander* gives *Alec* and *Sandy, Herbert, Erb* or *Bert.* *Ib* (see p. 172) was once common for *Isabella,* while the modern language prefers *Bella; Maud* for *Matilda* is a telescoped form of Old Fr. *Maheut,* while *'Tilda* is perhaps due to unconscious aphasis, like *Denry—*

"She saved a certain amount of time every day by addressing her son as *Denry,* instead of *Edward Henry*" (Arnold Bennett, *The Card,* Ch. 1.)

Among conscious word- formations may be classed many reduplicated forms, whether rimen, as *kurry-burry,* or alliterative, as *tattle-tattle,* though reduplication belongs to the natural speech of children, and, in at least one case, Fr. *tante,* from *ante-ante,* Lat. *amita,* the baby word has prevailed. In a reduplicated form only one half as a rule needs to be explained. Thus *seesaw* is from *saw,* the motion suggesting two sawyers at work on a log. *Zigzag* is French, from Ger. *sickzack,* from *Zacke,* tooth, point. *Shilly-shally* is for *shill I, shall I?* *Namby-pamby* commemorates the poet Ambrose Philips, who was thus nicknamed by Pope and his friends. The weapon called a *sickersnee—*

"'First let me say my catechism,
Which my poor mammy taught to me.'
'Make haste, make haste,' says guzzling Jimmy,
While Jack pulled out his *sickersnee.*"

*(Thackeray, Little Billee, l. 21.)*

is of Dutch origin and means something like "cut and thrust." It is usually mentioned in connection with the Hollanders—

"Among other customs they have in that town, one is, that none must carry a pointed knife about him; which makes the Hollander, who is us'd to *snit* and *smee,* to leave his horn-sheath and knife a ship-board when he comes ashore." (Howell, letter from Florence, 1621.)
Here the reduplication is only apparent, for the older form was to *stick* or *snee*, representing the Dutch verbs *steken*, to thrust, *snijden* or *snijen*, to cut. The initial of the first verb has been assimilated to that of the second—

"It is our countrie custome onely to *stick* or *snee*. (Glaphthorne, *The Hollander*)

Reduplication is responsible for *pickaback*, earlier *pick-pack*, from *pack*, bundle. The modern form is due to popular association with *back*.

Occasionally we have what is apparently the arbitrary prefixing of a consonant, e.g., *spruce* for *pruce* (p. 48). *Dapple gray* corresponds so exactly to Fr. *gris pommelet*, Mid. Eng. *pomeli gris*, Ger. *apfelgrau*, and Ital. *pomellato*, "spotted, bespeckled, pide, *dapple-graie*, or fleabitten, the colour of a horse" (Florio), that it is hard not to believe in an unrecorded *apple-gray*, especially as we have *daffodil* for earlier *affodil*, i.e., *asphodel*. Cotgrave has *asphodile* (*asphodele*), "the *daffadill, affodill*, or *asphodill, flower*." The playful elaboration *daffadowndilly* is as old as Spenser.