

hailed by Erasmus (whether *ex officio* or *propter merita* is left to conjecture) as "unum literarum Britanniarum lumen et decus," was proclaimed *poeta laureatus* by both universities, and frequently applied this title as well as that of *orator regius* to himself without challenge. At about the age of forty he took orders, and was appointed rector of Diss in Norfolk, where he seems to have spent the last twenty-five years of his life. Yet this eminent scholar and churchman is the author of the oldest and the best drinking song in the English language—the drinking song in *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, and of one of the coarsest poems in any language—*The Tunning of Elinor Rummung*. He is the author of a satire against the clergy of his time—*Colin Clout*,—unsurpassed in pre-Reformation literature for direct and merciless ridicule, and of a satire against the great cardinal when at the height of his greatness—*Why come ye not to Court?*—boiling over with ferocious invective and insolent contempt. At the same time he had such a repute for rough wit and irregularity of life that he became the hero of a book of "merry tales." These mythical tales were probably in the mind of the historian who has described Skelton as a "ribald buffoon," "a profligate and ill-living wretch." Whether the real Skelton deserved such epithets is doubtful; his verse undoubtedly contains much that may fairly be described as ribaldry and buffoonery. It has not a trace of the chivalrous spirit of Chaucer, and his most characteristic form, known as Skeltonical verse, is wayward and unconventional—adopted as if in mad defiance of regular metre. Still, as Skelton himself claimed for it, "it has in it some pith."

"Though my ryme be ragged,
Tattered, and jagged,
Rudely rain-beaten,
Rusty and moth-eaten,
If ye take well therewith
It hath in it some pith."

Colin Clout, Why come ye not to Court? and *The Book of Philip Sparrow*—which Coleridge pronounced "an exquisite and original poem"—are written in this metre. *The Bouge* (ship) of *Court*, a satirical vision of personified abstractions, is more conventional in form, and was probably one of his earlier works. Both it and his interlude *Magnificence* show great power in the vivid description of character.

SKIMMER, the English name bestowed by Pennant¹ in 1781 on a North-American bird which had already been figured and described by Catesby (*B. Carolina*, i. pl. 90) as the "Cut-water,"—as it appears still to be called on some parts of the coast,²—remarkable for the unique formation of its bill, in which the maxilla, or so-called upper mandible, is capable of much vertical movement, while the lower mandible, which is considerably the longer of the two, is laterally compressed so as to be as thin as a knife-blade. This bird is the *Rhynchops nigra* of Linnæus, who, however, united with it what proves to be an allied species from India that, having been indicated many years before by Petiver (*Gazoph. Natura*, tab. 76, fig. 2), on the authority of Buckley, was only technically named and described in 1838 by Swainson (*Anim. Menageries*, p. 360) as *R. albicollis*. A third species, *R. flavirostris*, inhabits Africa; and examples from South America, though by many writers regarded as identical with *R. nigra*, are considered by Mr Saunders (*Proc. Zool. Society*, 1882, p. 522) to form a fourth, the *R. melanura* of Swainson (*ut supra*, p. 340). All these resemble one another

¹ "I call it *Skimmer*, from the manner of its collecting its food with the lower mandible, as it flies along the surface of the water" (*Gen. of Birds*, p. 52).

² Other English names applied to it in America are "Razorbill," "Scissorbill," and "Shearwater."

very closely, and, apart from their singularly-formed bill, have the structure and appearance of TERNS (*q.v.*). Some authors make a family of the genus *Rhynchops*, but it seems needless to remove it from the *Laridæ* (GULL, vol. xi. p. 274). In breeding-habits the Skimmers thoroughly agree with the Terns, the largest species of which group they nearly equal in size, and indeed only seem to differ from them in the mode of taking their food, which of course is correlated with the extraordinary formation of their bill. (A. N.)

SKIN DISEASES. These form a large and important class. In number they are very extensive, owing to the varied forms of morbid change which the skin texture may undergo, no less than to the different portions of the structure and its appendages which may be specially affected. Further, the modifications of the typical forms of these diseases which are to be observed have led to arrangements and classifications of very complex character and multiplied greatly their nomenclature. Skin diseases are regarded by the physician as of great importance, not only from the fact that morbid action in this texture must have a powerful influence on the general health and may bring in its train other maladies, but also because they are not unfrequently themselves the expression of constitutional conditions, inherited or acquired, the recognition of which is essential to their effectual treatment. In order to clearness of description it is necessary to make use of some method of classification. Various arrangements have been adopted by writers on the subject, but the following appears sufficient for the present purpose:—

- I. Disorders of the secreting apparatus (of the sebaceous and sweat glands);
- II. Disorders specially relating to nutrition (hypertrophies; atrophies; new formations; pigmentary changes);
- III. Inflammatory affections (erythematous; papular; vesicular; pustular; squamous or scaly);
- IV. Neuroses (nervous disorders);
- V. Parasitic affections (animal; vegetable).

I. DISORDERS OF THE SECRETING APPARATUS.—(1) *Of the Sweat Glands*.—The chief morbid conditions are excessive sweating (*hyperhidrosis*) and foetid sweating (*bromidrosis*). Excessive sweating is a symptom observed in various diseases, such as phthisis and rheumatic fever, but it may exist apart from such conditions, and either be general, affecting the whole body, or confined to a part, such as the axillæ, head, hands, feet, or, as in some rare instances, the one half of the body. Some persons habitually perspire, often to a great extent, on making any effort, yet never appear to suffer in health, although the discomfort is considerable. Excessive perspiration may often be prevented by the habitual use of the cold bath, and by tonics, such as iron, quinine, strychnia, &c. Locally, the use of astringent lotions of vinegar or a weak solution of lead will also be of service. Bromidrosis or foetid sweating is often associated with the former condition, and it too may be general or local. It most frequently affects the feet, especially in those who have much fatigue, and is a source of much personal discomfort as well as of annoyance to others. It is apparently due to rapid decomposition in the perspiration which has saturated the stockings, and for its treatment it is essential that these should be frequently changed and the feet washed several times a day, dried carefully, and dusted with some antiseptic powder, such as boracic or salicylic acid mixed with starch or French chalk. Hebra recommends the application to the feet of a composition of equal parts of olive oil and litharge plaster spread upon linen and used twice a day.

(2) *Of the Sebaceous Glands*.—*Seborrhæa* is a term

² For the structure of the skin see ANATOMY, vol. i. p. 897.

applied to describe an accumulation on the skin of the normal sebaceous secretion mixed up with dirt and forming scales or a distinct incrustation. On the head, where it is commonly seen, it may interfere with the nutrition of the hair and cause partial baldness. A form of this disease occurs in young infants. The main treatment is local, consisting in thorough cleansing of the parts. The crusts may be softened with oil and the affected skin regularly washed with soft soap and rectified spirit. The sebum frequently accumulates in the sebaceous ducts, giving rise to the minute black points so often noticed on the face, back, and chest in young adults, to which the term *comedones* is applied. A form of this disorder, but of larger size and white appearance, is termed *milium*. These affections may to a large extent be prevented by strict attention to ablution and brisk friction of the skin, which will also often remove them when they begin to appear. The retained secretion may be squeezed out or evacuated by incision and the skin treated with some simple sulphur application.

Acne is an eruption produced by inflammation of the sebaceous glands and hair follicles. It may occur in connexion with the preceding or independently, and shows itself in the form of red pimples or papules which may become pustular and be attended with considerable surrounding irritation of the skin. This affection is likewise most common in early adult life, and occurs on the chest and back as well as on the face, where it may, when of much extent, produce considerable disfigurement. It is apt to persist for months or even years, but usually in time disappears entirely, although slight traces may remain in the form of scars or stains upon the skin. Eruptions of this kind are sometimes produced by the continued internal use of certain drugs, such as the iodide or bromide of potassium. The treatment is similar to that for the previous affection, viz., brisk friction of the skin, short of producing irritation, and the application of a sulphur lotion or ointment. Attention to the general health, by suitable diet, tonics, exercise, &c., is a necessary adjunct. A variety of this malady, to which the name *acne rosacea* is given, is a more severe and troublesome disorder than that already mentioned. It is characterized by great redness of the nose and cheeks, accompanied with nodular enlargements on the surface of the skin, which produce marked disfigurement. Although often seen in persons who live too freely, it is by no means confined to such, but may arise in connexion with disturbances of the general health, especially of the function of digestion, and in females with menstrual disorders. It is apt to be exceedingly intractable to treatment, which is here too, as in the preceding form, partly local and partly constitutional. Of internal remedies preparations of iodine and of arsenic are sometimes found of service.

Molluscum contagiosum belongs to this class of skin diseases. It consists of an enlargement of the sebaceous glands and occlusion of the ducts, and is seen most commonly on the face, body, or hands in children, or on the breasts in women. It is said to be contagious, but it is a rare form of skin disease.

II. DISORDERS AFFECTING NUTRITION.—(1) *Hypertrophies*.—A *corn* (*clavus*) is a local thickening of the skin, generally occurring on the toes. There is hypertrophy of the epidermis, and in the centre of the corn there is usually a still denser mass, which, pressing down upon the subjacent sensitive true skin, causes pain and may give rise to inflammation and suppuration in the part. When situated between the toes the corn is softer than when on the free surface of the foot. The treatment consists in maceration of the hardened skin and the use of the knife or strong caustics. Salicylic acid combined with ether and collodion,

painted over the part, is said to be useful in the case of soft corns.

A *wart* (*verruca*) is an excrescence from the surface of the skin due to hypertrophy of the papillary layer of the cutis and of the epidermis. This form of growth may also occur on mucous membranes. Warts occasionally disappear spontaneously, or they may be excised, or carefully touched with some strong caustic acid or alkali.

Ichthyosis or *xeroderma* consists of a general thickening of the whole skin and marked accumulation of the epidermic elements, with atrophy of the sebaceous glands, giving rise to a hard, dry, scaly condition. It generally first appears in infancy, and is probably congenital. It differs in intensity and in distribution in different cases, and is generally little amenable to any but palliative remedies, such as the regular application of oily substances, although it is not a fatal malady.

For *elephantiasis Arabum*, see vol. viii. p. 126.

(2) *Atrophies*.—The chief of these relate to the hair. *Canities* or whitening of the hair consists in the non-formation of the pigmentary matter which is normally present in the substance of the hair, and occurs generally as a slow senile change. It may, however, take place prematurely, in which case it is often hereditary; or it may be associated with degenerative changes taking place in the system. It is occasionally seen to occur temporarily in very young persons in connexion with some defective condition of the general health. Its development suddenly has not unfrequently been observed as the result of some strong mental emotion.

Alopecia, or baldness, is the loss of hair, which is most commonly a senile change and irremediable, or on the other hand may be premature, occurring either hereditarily or in connexion with some previous constitutional morbid state (*e.g.*, after fevers or other blood poisons), in which latter case it may be only, although not always, temporary. It appears to depend upon atrophic changes affecting the hair follicle, including obliteration of the capillary vessels,—the result of which is that strong hairs cease to be produced, and only feeble, short, and thin hair (*lanugo*) is formed, which soon falls off and is not reproduced. Usually the whole skin of the hairy scalp undergoes thinning and other atrophic changes as well as the hair follicle. Sometimes the loss of hair occurs in distinct circular patches (*alopecia areata*), which tend to spread until the whole scalp is denuded. The treatment of temporary or premature baldness bears reference especially to any known conditions affecting the general health; and tonics, baths, and other means to promote a vigorous skin function are useful. Stimulating liniments containing spirits and cantharides, the regular cleansing and moderate brushing of the parts, the application to the scalp of the constant current of electricity, and various other remedies appear to be of service in promoting the growth of hair.

(3) *New Formations*.—(a) *Lupus* is a disease characterized by the formation in the skin of tubercles or nodules consisting of new cell growth which has no tendency to further development, but to retrograde change, leading to ulceration and destruction of the skin and other tissues in which it exists, and the subsequent formation of permanent white scars. *Lupus vulgaris* is most commonly seen in early life, and occurs chiefly on the face, about the nose, cheeks, ears, &c., but it may also affect the skin of the body or limbs. It first shows itself in the form of small, slightly prominent nodules covered with thin crusts or scabs. These may be absorbed and removed at one point, but they tend to spread to another. Their disappearance is followed by a white permanent cicatrix. The disease may be superficial in which case both the

ulceration and resulting scar are slight (*lupus non-exedens*); or, on the other hand, the ulcerative process may be deep and extensive, destroying a large portion of the tissues of the nose or cheeks, and leaving deep marks with much disfigurement (*lupus exedens*). Another form of this disease, termed *lupus erythematosus*, is of comparatively mild character, and occurs on the nose and adjacent portions of the cheeks in the form of red patches covered with thin scales, underneath which are seen the widened openings of the sebaceous ducts,—this variety of the disease affecting specially that portion of the skin texture. It is very slow in disappearing, but does not leave any marked scar. Lupus is generally more frequently seen in women than in men, and it is held to be connected with a scrofulous constitution. Its treatment bears reference especially to this condition (see SCROFULA). In the superficial variety the application of soothing ointments when there is much redness, and Squire's method of slight linear incisions to destroy the increased blood supply, are often serviceable. In the ordinary form the great principle of local treatment is to remove the new tissue growth. This is most readily done either by solid points of caustic, of which the nitrate of silver is perhaps the best, thrust into the tubercles to break them up, or by means of a scoop (Volkmann's spoon) to scrape away the diseased masses. Only by such means can the ulceration be arrested and healing brought about.

(b) *Leprosy (elephantiasis Græcorum)* may be regarded as belonging to this class of skin diseases, inasmuch as it consists in a new growth of cell material, like lupus, but with less tendency to disintegration and with a wider distribution affecting the skin, mucous membranes, nerves, &c., all over the body. For its history and pathology see vol. xiv. p. 468 sq. Leprosy is not amenable to treatment, beyond attempts at palliation of the symptoms and by general hygiene.

(4) *Pigmentary Changes.*—*Chloasma* is an abnormal pigmentation, in the form of brown patches, either generally diffused or confined to one part, such as the forehead and face, and occasionally seen in women suffering from uterine ailments. *Addison's disease* is connected with a morbid condition of the suprarenal capsules (see PATHOLOGY), and is accompanied with general bronzing of the skin, together with anæmia and great and increasing prostration. *Leucoderma* is a change in the pigmentation of the skin, whereby it becomes white in patches, with a tendency to spread and affect almost the whole surface, until a few dark areas alone remain to represent the original appearance of the skin. It is sometimes called white leprosy, but has no relation to that disease, nor is it of any special significance as regards the health. *Albinism* is an entire absence of pigment from the hair, skin, eyes, &c. The hair is usually white, and the skin exceedingly pale; and the eye has a pinkish appearance. This condition is congenital. It occasionally exists to a partial extent in any of the textures named.

III. INFLAMMATORY SKIN AFFECTIONS.—These embrace the following chief varieties:—(1) diffuse (erythema); (2) papular (lichen); (3) catarrhal (eczema); (4) vesicular (herpes, pemphigus); (5) pustular (impetigo); and (6) scaly (psoriasis, pityriasis).

(1) *Diffuse.*—This variety includes *erythema* (see ERYSIPELAS) and its forms, particularly *erythema nodosum*, which consists of spots and patches of dark red colour and slightly elevated, appearing on the front of the legs and back of the arms in young persons, mostly females. The patches continue for a number of days and then become fainter. It is supposed to be connected with rheumatism, joint pains not unfrequently accompanying it. *Urticaria* or *nettle-rash* is a diffuse redness of the skin, accompanied

with wheals of raised and paler appearance, not unlike the effect produced by the sting of nettles or of insects, and attended with great irritation and itching. Certain kinds of food, such as fruit and fish, produce this eruption in some persons, as also some drugs, such as opium. It is best treated by some soothing application, such as a solution of sal volatile, to which a little chloral has been added, and by attention to the state of the alimentary canal. *Roseola*, which consists in the appearance of rose-coloured spots upon the body, is frequently seen in children, and is apt to be mistaken for measles, but has none of the accompanying febrile or catarrhal symptoms of that disorder, and is of brief duration.

(2) *Papular.*—*Lichen*, an eruption consisting of small, thickly-set, and slightly-elevated red points, more or less widely distributed over the body, and in the young somewhat resembling scarlet fever, but with only slight febrile symptoms and no sore throat, usually results from digestive derangements, but apparently may also arise from exposure to the sun, and it lasts but a short time. Some forms, however (e.g., *lichen ruber*), are of chronic character and difficult of treatment. The ordinary form requires little beyond attention to the digestive organs and the application of a soothing lotion or powder. The chronic forms are best treated by the administration of arsenic. *Strophulus*, or tooth-rash, or, as it is popularly termed, "red gum," an affection very common in young infants, belongs to this class of skin disorders.

(3) *Catarrhal.*—*Eczema*, one of the most common and important of all skin diseases, consists of an inflammation of the true skin, of catarrhal character, together with the formation of papules, vesicles, or pustules, attended with more or less discharge, and with itching and other symptoms of irritation. It may be either acute or chronic, and presents itself in a variety of forms. As regards causation, it appears impossible to assign any one condition as giving rise to this disease. It occurs frequently in persons to all appearance in perfect health, and it may in such cases be a permanent or recurring affection during a whole lifetime. Again it is undoubtedly found in persons who possess a morbid constitution, such as the gouty or scrofulous; but apart from any such evident associations it seems in some instances itself distinctly hereditary. Sometimes it is set up as the result of local or general irritation of the skin in certain occupations, and it may exist in connexion with the presence of some other skin disease. It is much more common in men than in women. Numerous varieties of eczema are described, according to its site and duration; only the more important of these can be alluded to. *Acute eczema* shows itself by redness and swelling of the skin, with the formation of minute vesicles, and attended with severe heat and irritation. Should the vesicles rupture, a raw moist surface is formed, from which a colourless discharge oozes, which when it accumulates forms thin crusts. The attack may be general over the greater portion of the body, or it may be entirely localized to a limb or other part. It usually lasts for a few weeks and then passes off, leaving, however, a liability to recurrence. Such attacks may occur as a result of digestive derangements, or in persons of rheumatic or gouty habit, and they tend to appear at certain seasons, such as springtime. They are usually best treated by attention to the general health, and by a simple and carefully-regulated diet, while locally some soothing application, such as a weak lead lotion or a dusting powder of zinc, starch, or boracic acid, will be found of benefit. *Chronic eczema* shows itself in various forms, of which we note the most common. In *eczema rubrum* the disease affects a part, very often a limb, as a severe form of inflammation, with great redness, and weeping or oozing

of serous matter from the raw surface. It gives rise to great irritation and pain, and may cause considerable disturbance of the general health. It may last for years, with intervals of partial recovery, but easily recurring. The skin of the limb becomes in time thickened and the limb itself much swollen. In *dry eczema* the skin, though irritable, remains dry and scaly. In *pustular eczema*, or *eczema impetiginodes*, in addition to the cutaneous inflammation there occur pustules which break and the purulent matter forms yellow crusts upon the skin. This form is very common on the heads of young children during the period of dentition. The treatment of chronic eczema depends in great measure upon the form it assumes. Where there exists much irritation, soothing lotions or applications similar to those required for acute eczema are necessary; but where irritation has subsided, stimulating ointments, such as those of zinc or white precipitate, are often of service. Constitutional remedies, such as iron, arsenic, &c., are an important and often essential part of successful treatment.

(4) *Vesicular.*—*Herpes* is an inflammation of the true skin, attended with the formation of isolated or grouped vesicles of various sizes upon a reddened base. They contain a clear fluid, and either rupture or dry up. Two well-marked varieties of herpes are frequently met with. (a) In *herpes labialis et nasalis* the eruption occurs about the lips and nose. It is seen in cases of certain acute febrile ailments, such as fevers, inflammation of the lungs, or even in a severe cold. It soon passes off. (b) In *herpes zoster*, zona, or shingles, the eruption occurs in the course of one or more cutaneous nerves, often on one side of the trunk, but it may be on the face, limbs, or other parts. It may occur at any age, but is probably more frequently met with in elderly people. The appearance of the eruption is usually preceded by severe stinging neuralgic pains for several days, and, not only during the continuance of the herpetic spots, but long after they have dried up and disappeared, these pains sometimes continue and give rise to great suffering. The disease seldom recurs. The most that can be done for its relief is to protect the parts with cotton wool or some dusting powder, while the pain may be allayed by opiates or bromide of potassium. Quinine internally is often of service.

Pemphigus consists in large blebs upon a red base. They contain clear or yellowish fluid. This disease appears to show itself most frequently on the bodies and limbs of unhealthy or neglected children. The blebs give rise to much irritation, and when they burst leave raw ulcerated surfaces which are slow of healing. One variety of this malady (*pemphigus foliaceus*) affects the entire skin of the body, from which there exudes a constant discharge. This form is apt sooner or later to prove fatal from its exhausting effects. The treatment is mainly constitutional,—by good nourishment, iron, &c.

(5) *Pustular.*—*Impetigo*, consisting of small pustules situated upon a reddened base, mostly occurs in children. There appears to be a contagious form of this malady. *Ecthyma* consists of large pustules of similar character on the body and limbs. The treatment of these ailments requires special attention to nutrition, since they usually occur in low states of health.

(6) *Squamous or Scaly.*—*Psoriasis*, an inflammatory affection of the true skin, attended with the formation of red spots or patches, which are covered with white silvery scales, may affect any portion of the surface of the body, but is most common about the elbows and knees, and on the head. There is as a rule comparatively little irritation except at the outset, but there is an extensive shedding of the scales from the affected spots. Varieties of

this disease are described in relation to the size and distribution of the patches. The causes of psoriasis have given rise to much discussion, and, while some authorities regard its appearance as in many instances connected with some constitutional morbid state, such as gout, rheumatism, &c., the majority deny any such relationship, and mention hereditary influence as the only recognizable cause, although it must be admitted that even this evidence is wanting in a large number of cases. The disease appears to be consistent with continued good health. It is usually obstinate to treat, and may, with intervals of comparative immunity, last a lifetime. The remedies most serviceable are arsenic internally and the application externally of preparations of tar. Recently the employment of chrysophanic acid as an ointment or in solution has been resorted to with considerable success.

Pityriasis, a superficial inflammation of the skin, with the formation of minute branny scales, occurs most commonly on the head, and is of chronic duration. The remedies most useful are alkaline lotions and tar preparations. A variety of this disease (*pityriasis rubra*) affects the whole body, and is most intractable to treatment.

IV. NEUROSES (*Nervous Affections*).—Various disorders of nutrition of the skin occur in persons suffering from organic nervous diseases, such as bedsores, atrophic changes, eruptions, &c., but these belong to the symptoms of the several diseases with which they are associated. The most common of the neuroses of the skin is probably *pruritus*, which is an ailment characterized by intense itching of the surface of the body. It may occur in connexion with other morbid conditions, such as jaundice, diabetes, digestive disorders, &c., or as the result of the irritation produced by lice or other skin parasites. The most serious form is *pruritus senilis*, which affects old persons, and is often a cause of great suffering, depriving the patient of sleep (the malady being specially troublesome during the night). In such cases it is probably due to atrophic changes in the skin. No eruption is visible, except such marks as are produced by scratching. The treatment consists in the removal of any apparent cause, and measures to strengthen the system, such as the use of quinine, iron, &c. Soothing lotions composed of solutions of alkalis conjoined with chloral, opium, hydrocyanic acid, &c., may be applied to the affected skin at bedtime.

V. PARASITIC DISEASES.—(1) *Animal.*—The following are the chief animal parasitic diseases. *Phthiriasis* is produced by the presence of lice (*pediculi*), of which there are three varieties, infesting respectively the head, body, and pubis. The cause is in most instances uncleanliness, but occasionally in the aged, and in persons suffering from chronic diseases, there appears to be a liability to the development of pediculi, notwithstanding every care to prevent it. The irritation produced by the parasite and the scratching thus occasioned may give rise to abrasions of the skin and eczematous conditions. The treatment consists in thorough cleansing of the parts and the use of parasiticides, such as red or white precipitate, carbolic lotions (one in twenty), or a decoction or ointment of stavesacre. Where clothing is infested it should be destroyed or subjected to a strong heat to get rid both of the parasites and their ova. *Scabies* or *itch* is a skin affection due to the *Acarus scabiei* (see MITE). The female insects burrow into the upper layers of the skin and deposit their eggs in the tract thus made. Great irritation of the skin is set up, and scratching produces eruptions which aggravate the condition, especially at night. The most frequent sites are the parts between the fingers, or the wrists, but by scratching the disease may be conveyed to any part of the body, and in extreme cases the greater portion of the surface of the trunk and limbs may be involved. In infants the feet and buttocks

are the parts which suffer. The eruption in mild cases has at first the appearance of small raised vesicles with clear fluid, but it may become pustular or eczematous, and extensive excoriations may result. The treatment consists in thorough cleansing of the skin and the inunction of some form of parasiticide,—sulphur ointment being on the whole the best. The application should be discontinued after a few days, otherwise irritation may be produced by its use.

(2) *Vegetable parasites* consist of fungous growths in the texture of the skin and hair, which are characterized microscopically by minute round bodies or spores often coalesced into clusters or bead-like arrangements, and jointed filaments or *mycelium* of elongate and branching form. They are readily detected by removing a hair, or scraping a portion of the affected skin, treating it with a strong alkaline solution, and submitting it to microscopic examination, by which the slight differences in form and arrangement of the varieties of the parasite can be easily made out. The common name "tinea" is applied to these parasitic affections. *Tinea tonsurans*, or ringworm (parasite *Trichophyton tonsurans*), is a very common form of parasitic disease. It occurs as a result of contagion in the heads of children, and begins as circular patches with a scaly appearance and red border, which tend to spread. The hair at the part becomes thin and brittle and is easily removed. It is often extremely obstinate to treatment, and numerous agents have been proposed as specifics, not one of which, however, appears to possess infallible virtues. Among the best are oleate of mercury (5 to 10 per cent.) and other mercurial preparations, all which, however, must be used with care, and carbolic or sulphurous acid with glycerin, iodine, cantharides, &c.; but isolation of the patient as far as possible, together with strict medical supervision, are essential for the effectual treatment of this disorder. *Tinea sycosis*, or ringworm affecting the beard, and *tinea circinata*, or ringworm affecting the body, require to be dealt with in a similar manner. *Tinea favosa*, or favus (parasite *Achorion Schönleini*), is less frequently seen than the preceding. It occurs mostly on the scalp in unhealthy and neglected children, but it may affect the skin in any part of the body. It is characterized by round, yellow, sulphur-coloured, cup-shaped spots or crusts, which, when occurring extensively upon the scalp, have a peculiar mousy odour. It is very destructive of hair growth, and is most difficult to cure. The best treatment is removal of the hairs by epilation, and the employment of some of the parasitocides already mentioned, together with attention to the healthy nutrition of the patient. *Tinea versicolor*, or *pityriasis versicolor* (parasite *Microsporon furfur*), is a brown-coloured rash of scaly character occurring mostly in the form of spots or patches on the skin of the trunk, particularly on the front of the chest or between the shoulders, but sometimes also upon the arms and legs. It affects adults in whom the skin-function is not sufficiently attended to, or those who are in ill-health. The parasite affects the epidermic cells, and is readily made out by the microscope, thus enabling the disease to be distinguished from other skin disorders to which it often bears resemblance. It is best treated by the regular washing and brisk friction of the parts, and by the use of some of the applications above referred to.

SKINNER, JOHN (1721–1807), author of *Tullochgorum* and *The Evie wi' the Crookit Horn*, was an Episcopalian minister in the parish of Longside, Aberdeenshire. He held this charge for more than sixty-four years. The son of an Aberdeenshire schoolmaster, born at Balfour in 1721, he had been intended for the Presbyterian ministry, but, after passing through Marischal College, Aberdeen, and teaching

for a few years, he took orders in the Episcopal Church, and was appointed to the charge of Longside in 1742. There was a considerable remnant of Episcopacy in Aberdeenshire, but very soon after Skinner joined it it became, in consequence of the Jacobite rebellion in 1745, a much persecuted remnant. The young pastor's church was burnt; his house was plundered; for some years he had to minister to his congregation by stealth; and in 1753 information was lodged that he had broken the law by officiating to more than four persons besides his own family, and he suffered imprisonment for six months. After 1760 the penal laws were less strictly enforced, but throughout the century the lot of the Episcopalian ministers in Scotland was far from comfortable, and only the humblest provisions for church services were tolerated. Skinner's robust nature, however, made light of all privations; and his kindliness, humour, conviviality, ready wit, and generous force of character made him personally a favourite far and near outside the bounds of his own denomination. In 1789 he was presented with the freedom of the town in whose jail he had been a prisoner for conscience sake. It is by his songs, limited in quantity, but some of them of the very highest quality, that Skinner is generally known. An interesting correspondence took place between him and Burns, who considered *Tullochgorum* "the best Scotch song Scotland ever saw," and addressed the reverend poet with touching respect. His best songs had stolen into print; a collection was not published till 1809, under the title of *Amusements of Leisure Hours*. Such literally they seem to have been. Throughout his life he was a vigorous student, and in spite of his scanty resources established a more than local reputation for scholarship, while, according to his latest biographer, he had a paramount influence on the doctrinal views of his clerical brethren in the north. He published in 1788 an *Ecclesiastical History of Scotland*, in the form of letters; and other works in the same form, which best suited his easy unaffected strength, were collected and published by his son after his death (June 1807), having previously had a wide circulation, in manuscript. His prose style has the happiness, ease, and lucid force of a natural master of language. The reasoning of his answer to Beattie's *Essay on Truth* is an evidence of his robust clearness of intellect.

A minutely accurate biography of Skinner, in connexion with the history of Episcopacy in the north of Scotland, was published by the Rev. W. Walker in 1883. An edition of his songs and poems by Mr H. G. Reid, 1859, contains an interesting memoir.

SKIPTON, an ancient market-town in the West Riding of Yorkshire, is situated on the river Aire, on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, and on the Midland Railway, 9 miles north-west of Keighley and 15 south-east of Settle. It is substantially built of stone. The strong castle built by Robert de Romille in the time of the Conqueror was partly demolished in 1649, but was restored by the countess of Pembroke. Of the ancient building of De Romille all that now remains is the western doorway of the inner castle. In the castle grounds are the ruins of the ancient parish church of St John. The church of the Holy Trinity, in the Decorated Gothic, was also partly demolished during the Civil War, but was restored by the countess of Pembroke, and again underwent renovation in 1854. The free grammar school was founded in 1548 by William Ermysted, a canon of St Paul's, London. The town has a considerable general trade. The population of the urban sanitary district (area 4245 acres) in 1871 was 6078 and in 1881 it was 9091.

Skipton was the capital of the ancient district of Craven. At the Norman accession it became part of the possessions of Earl Edwin, and was granted to Robert de Romille, who built the castle about the end of the reign of William. Subsequently it went to

the Albemarle family, but was again vested in the crown, and Edward II. bestowed it on Piers de Gaveston. In 1311 it came into the possession of the Cliffords. The castle was taken by the Parliamentary forces in 1645 and demolished in 1649.

SKITTLES. This English game, which somewhat resembles American bowls (see vol. iv. p. 180), was formerly known as *Kails* (Fr. *quilles*), and first came into vogue in England in the 14th century. Nine large oval-headed pins with flat bottoms, and made of a hard wood, are set up on a wooden frame, three pins square on each side. An angle and not an even side of the said square is presented towards the player, who stands at the distance of 21 feet. There may be one or two players a-side; and the object of each side is to knock down, or "floor," the greatest number of pins in the least possible number of throws, which are generally two or three, though they may extend to five, according to agreement. The roundish ball used for throwing weighs from 8 to 14 lb, and in fair playing only one step forward is allowed in delivery. A firm grasp should be taken of the ball in a slightly slanting position, so as to strike the fore pin on the shoulder and then reach the back ones. A player who clears the board in two throws may be considered a good all-round one. In different localities there are minor variations in playing the game.

SKUA,¹ the name for a long while given to certain of the *Laridæ* (see GULL, vol. xi. p. 274), which sufficiently differ in structure, appearance, and habits to justify their separation as a distinct genus, *Stercorarius* (*Lestris* of some writers), or even Subfamily, *Stercorariinae*. Swift of flight, powerfully armed, but above all endowed with extraordinary courage, they pursue their weaker cousins, making the latter disgorge their already-swallowed prey, which is nimbly caught before it reaches the water; and this habit, often observed by sailors and fishermen, has made these predatory and parasitic birds locally known as "Teasers," "Boatswains,"² and, from a misconception of their intent, "Dunghunters." On land, however, whither they resort to breed, they seek food of their own taking, whether small mammals, little birds, insects, or berries; but even here their uncommon courage is exhibited, and they will defend their homes and offspring with the utmost spirit against any intruder, repeatedly shooting down on man or dog that invades their haunts, while every bird almost, from an Eagle downwards, is repelled by buffets or something worse.

The largest species known is the *Stercorarius catarrhactes* of ornithologists—the "Skooi" or "Bonxie" of the Shetlanders, a bird in size equalling a Herring-Gull, *Larus argentatus*. The sexes do not differ appreciably in colour, which is of a dark brown, somewhat lighter beneath; but the primaries have at the base a patch of white, visible even when the wings are closed, and forming, when they are spread, a conspicuous band. The bill and feet are black. This is a species of comparatively limited range, breeding only in some two or three localities in the Shetlands, about half a dozen in the Feroes,³ and hardly more in Iceland. Out of the breeding-season it shows itself in most parts of the North Atlantic, but never seems

¹ Thus written by Hoier (circa 1604) as that of a Faroese bird (*hódie Skúir*) an example of which he sent to Clusius (*Exotic. Auctarium*, p. 367). The word being thence copied by Willughby has been generally adopted by English authors, and applied by them to all the congeners of the species to which it was originally peculiar.

² This name in seamen's ornithology applies to several other kinds of birds, and, though perhaps first given to those of this group, is nowadays most commonly used for the species of *Tropic-BIRD* (*G. a.*), the projecting middle feathers of the tail in each kind being generally likened to the marinespike that is identified with the boatswain's position; but perhaps the authoritative character assumed by both bird and officer originally suggested the name.

³ It has long been subjected to persecution in these islands, a reward being paid for its head. On the other hand, in the Shetlands a fine was exacted for its death, as it was believed to protect the sheep against Eagles. Yet for all this it would long ago have been extirpated there, and have ceased to be a British bird in all but name, but for the special protection afforded it by several members of two families

to stray further south than Gibraltar or Morocco, and it is therefore a matter of much interest to find the Southern Ocean inhabited by a bird—the "Port Egmont Hen" of Cook's *Voyages*—which so closely resembles the Skua as to have been for a long while regarded as specifically identical with it, but is now usually recognized as distinct under the name of *S. antarcticus*. This bird, characterized by its stout deep bill and want of rufous tint on its lower plumage, has an extensive range, and would seem to exhibit a tendency to further differentiation, since Mr Saunders, in a monograph of the group (*Proc. Zool. Society*, 1876, pp. 317–332), says that it presents three local forms—one occurring from New Zealand to Norfolk Island and past Kerguelen Land to the Cape of Good Hope, another restricted to the Falklands, and the third hitherto only met with near the south-polar ice. On the western coast of South America, making its way into the Straits of Magellan, and passing along the coast so far as Rio Janeiro, is found *S. chilensis*, distinguished among other characters by the cinnamon tint of its lower plumage. Three other smaller species of the genus are known, and each is more widely distributed than those just mentioned, but the home of all is in the more northern parts of the earth, though in winter two of them go very far south, and, crossing the equator, shew themselves on the seas that wash the Cape of Good Hope, Australia, New Zealand, and Peru. The first of these is *S. pomatorhinus* (often incorrectly spelt *pomarinus*), about the size of a common Gull, *Larus canus*, and presenting, irrespective of sex, two very distinct phases of plumage, one almost wholly sooty-brown, the other particoloured—dark above and white on the breast, the sides of the neck being of a glossy straw-colour, and the lower part of the neck and the sides of the body barred with brown; but a singular feature in the adults of this species is that the two median tail-feathers, which are elongated, have their shaft twisted towards the tip, so that in flight the lower surfaces of their webs are pressed together vertically, giving the bird the appearance of having a disk attached to its tail. The second and third species so closely resemble each other, except in size, that their distinctness was for many years unperceived, and in consequence their nomenclature is an almost bewildering puzzle. Mr Saunders (*loc. cit.*) thinks that the larger of them, which is about the size of a Black-headed Gull, should stand as *S. crepidatus*, and the smaller as *S. parasiticus*, though the latter name has been generally used for the larger when that is not termed, as it often is, *S. richardsoni*—a name that correctly applies only to whole-coloured examples, for this species too is dimorphic. Even its proper English name⁴ is disputable, but it has been frequently called the Arctic Gull or Arctic Skua, and it is by far the commonest of the genus in Britain, and perhaps throughout the northern hemisphere. It breeds abundantly on many of the Scottish islands, and in most countries lying to the northward. The nest is generally in long heather, and contains two eggs of a dark olive-colour, suffused with still darker brown patches. Birds of either phase of plumage pair indiscriminately, and the young shew by their earliest feathers whether they will prove whole or particoloured; but in their immature plumage the upper surface is barred with pale reddish-brown. The smallest species, commonly known in English as the Long-tailed or Buffon's Skua, is not known to exhibit the remarkable dimorphism to which the two preceding are subject. It breeds abundantly in some seasons on the fells of Lapland, its appearance depending chiefly on the presence of lemmings (*Lemmus norvegicus*), on which it mainly preys. All these three species occasionally visit the southern coasts of Europe in large flocks, but their visitations are highly irregular. (A. N.)

SKUNK. The existence of the animal to which this name⁵ is applied was first notified to European naturalists as long ago as 1636, in Gabriel Sagard-Theodat's *History of Canada*, where, in commencing his quaint account of it (p. 748), he describes it as "enfants du diable, que les Hurons appelle Scangaresse, . . . une beste fort puante," &c. This fully shows in what reputation the skunk was then held, a reputation which has lasted to the present time, and has become so notorious that the mere name of skunk is an opprobrious epithet and can hardly be used in polite society.

The skunks, for there are several species of these animals, are members of the Meline or badger-like section of the family *Mustelidæ*, which contains also the

(Edmonston and Scott of Melby), whose exertions to that effect deserve the praise and recognition of all ornithologists.

⁴ It is the "Fasgadair" of the Hebrides, the "Shooi" of the Shetlands, and the "Scouti-allen" of the fishermen on the east coast of Scotland.

⁵ Probably derived from "Seecawk," the Crée name for the skunk. Another form given is "seganku."