Theodore Gill, Some questions of Nomenclature
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persons, by this custom, being wisely taught not to consider blindness or any other bodily misfortune as a reproach or disgrace, but to answer to appellations of that kind as their proper names."

What was good enough for the ancient Romans to bestow on the most admired of their heroes is good enough for the nomenclature of our genera of animals. We have also examples of names of adjective form used substantively for animals among classic writers. Such, for example, are the *Aculeatus* (pipe-fish), and *Oculata* (lamprey or nine-eyes), mentioned by Pliny.

Linnæus himself, later, coined many names having an adjective form; and three of his genera of plants of one small family, so designated, occur in this region—*Saponaria*, *Arenaria* and *Stellaria*. Yet even at the present day we have evidences of the lingering of the old idea embodied in the canon in question.

We have also had drawn up for us certain rules for the conversion of Greek words into Latin, which are tinctured with more than Roman severity. Thus, we are told that Greek names ending in *-os* should always be turned into *-us*; that the final *-on* is inadmissible in the new Latin, and should invariably be rendered by *-um*.

In accordance with such rules, *Rhinoceros* has been turned into *Rhinocerus*, and *Rhinocerotidæ* into *Rhinoceridæ*. But *Rhinoceros* was admitted into classical Latinity, and with it the corresponding oblique cases, *Rhinocerotis*, etc.; in fact, the word was current in the language of description, satire, and proverb—as when used by Juvenal for a vessel made of the horn, or by Lucilius for a long-nosed man, or by Martial in the proverbial expression, 'Nasum rhinocerotis habere'; *i. e.*, to turn the nose up, as we would say. These authorities are good enough for me.

The termination *-on* was also familiar to the Romans of classic times, and numerous words with that ending may be found in the books of Pliny. But our modern purists will have none of them; the Greek *-on* in the new Latin must always become *-um*. For example, *Ophidion* was the name given to a small conger-like eel, according to Pliny, and was (without reason) supposed to have been applied to the genus now called *Ophidium*; and this last form was given by Linnæus, who eventually* refused to follow Pliny in such barbaric use of Latin. But Pliny is good enough for me—at least as a Latinist.

Another rule prohibits the use of such words as *Ægir*, *Göndul*, *Moho*, *Mitu*, *Pudu* and the like, and provides that they should have other terminations in accordance with classical usage. But why should those words be changed and surcharged with new endings? As they are, they are all uniform with classical words. *Ægir* has its justification in *Vir*, *Göndul* in *consul*, *Moho* in *homo* (of which it is an accidental anagram) and *Mitu* and *Pudu* are no more cacophonous or irregular than *cornu*. I therefore see no reason why we should not accept the words criticised and corrected by some naturalists in their original form, even if we consider the question involved as grammatical rather than one of scientific convenience.

I have thus defended some of the names of our old nomenclators, and really think the rules laid down for name-making were too severe. But those rules were on the whole judicious, and should not be deviated from by future nomenclators without good and substantial reason; even if too severe, they 'lean to virtue's side.' On the other hand, let old names be respected in the interests of stability, even if slightly misformed.

MISAPPLIED NAMES.

While Linnæus was so exacting in his rules of nomenclature in the cases cited, in

* At first (in the tenth edition) Linnæus allowed *Ophidion*.