

Shop Etymology.

It may, perhaps, be of some interest to glance briefly at the origin of the words which designate the objects with which a chemist is surrounded daily, the utensils of his business, and the essential operations of pharmacy.

The word "shop" is traceable to the Anglo-Saxon *scoppa*, which meant a stall or a booth at a market or fair. Similar words are found in all the old Gothic languages. To the same origin belongs the word *shippen* or *shippon*, still used in some parts of the country for a cowshed; but "ship" has quite a different derivation.

"Scale" has a similar history, corresponding words being found in all Scandinavian and old Teutonic languages. The Anglo-Saxon *scyll* or *scell* is the same word as we now use in the form of "shell," and it came to be used for drinking-bowls, and these bowls being employed as balances the word followed them. "Skool," the Icelandic hailing shout as a Long-fellow's "Skool to the Northland, Skool") depends for its birth on the same bowl.

"Bottle" reaches us through *bouteille* (French), *botella* (Spanish), *bottiglia* (Italian), from the Latin *buticula*, diminutive of the Latin *butis* or *buttis*, a butt. A similar word is found in the Gothic languages (*bytte*, Anglo-Saxon; *botte*, Danish; *butte*, German) to designate vats, casks, butts in which wine or other liquids were stored. "Vial" or "phial" is the Greek *phiala*, which was a shallow cup or bowl used for drinking, but originally for libations, and for cinerary urns.

"Box" has been in use in our language from Anglo-Saxon times, and comes from the name applied to the box-tree (*Buxus sempervirens*), which also occurs in Latin as *buxus*, Greek *poxus*.

"Label" corresponds with the French *lambeau*, a rag, and with our lappet. Lappa was a Saxon word for a hanging slip of ribbon or such like. The word was Latinized as *labella*, and has been retranslated. It was naturally applied to the labels which were tied around the necks of bottles, and thence to those more in use now.

"Pestle and mortar" are words so peculiarly associated with the drug trade that these cannot be passed by. "Pestle" comes through old French *pestel*, Italian *pestello*, Latin *pistilus*, diminutive of *pistrum*, the noun derived from the verb *pinsere* or *pisere*, to pound, traceable back to the Sanscrit root *pis*, to pound. The pistil of plants derived its name from its resemblance in shape to the pestle. "Mortar" comes from the Latin *mortarium*, which meant the same thing, and was related to *marcalus* or *martulus*, diminutive of *marcus*, a hammer. Mortar, the material used for binding bricks or stones, was so called from its being made in a mortar.

To "dispense," from the Latin *dispensare*, has the original meaning of to weigh out; but to weigh, German *wegen*, Anglo-Saxon *wegan* had the first meaning of to

carry, equivalent to the Latin *vehere*, whence vehicle, as "waggon" comes from the Saxon word. The original meaning of carrying passed into that of raising, lifting (as, for example, to weigh anchor) and thence to its modern signification.

"Weigh" suggests weights. The "grain" was originally a plump grain of wheat. "Scruple" is supposed by some to be the diminutive of *scrupus*, a sharp stone, from which its meaning as "scruple of conscience" would be also indicated; but it is more generally traced to *scripulum*, something written, which was exactly the meaning of the Greek small weight *gramma* (from which the French *gramme* was adopted), though it is not quite easy to see the connection between "something written" and a small weight. "Drachm" is the Greek *drachma*, the principal silver coin of the Greeks, the word being derived originally from *drax*, a handful. The silver coin became a weight, and that weight was known among all the nations round about in that age, though its value varied somewhat. The Arabs adopted a *derham*, which became in Spanish *adarme* and this brought us our dram, correctly the one-sixteenth of an avoirdupois ounce. "Ounce" was the Greek *oungia* (pronounced *ounkia*), Latin *uncia*, and meant at first a twelfth part. Hence the same word was applied to the twelfth part of a pound and to the twelfth part of a foot, the latter meaning becoming our inch, inch and ounce having thus a common origin. The "pound" has been known by something like that name, and was something approaching to the same value in weight, in all European countries. It comes to us from *pondo libra*, a pound by weight of the Romans. The *libra* was the balance, and this gave the word *livre* to the French, and "lovel" to ourselves. We also owe to it the abbreviation "lb" to represent the pound. The "pound" of money was originally a pound by weight of silver, or of the alloy used for it.

Of measures, "pint" comes from the point or mark *picla* or *pineta* or painted on a larger measure, "quart" is the *quartus* or fourth part of a gallon; and "gallon" is a very ancient liquid measure, possibly originally derived from an old French word *gale*, for a bowl.

"Paper" comes from *papyrus*, the rush from which it was first made; "string" seems to be traceable back to the Anglo-Saxon *strang*, strong, though it may be related to the Latin *stringere*, to draw tight, Greek *straygos*, hard twisted, *stragale*, a halter (the Greek words are pronounced *strangos*, *strangale*); "twine" is a twin thread, a string of two strands; and "cork" from the Spanish *corcho*, is related to the Latin *cortex*. "Spatula" is a little spathe or spade.

In the laboratory we find the "still" formally called in English the stillatory, from the Latin word *stillia*, a drop, *stillare*, to drop. "Retort" is from the Latin *retortus*, past participle of *retorquere*, to twist back. "Flask" appears in all Arian languages—in Anglo-Saxon as *flasce* and *flaxe*, in Greek as *phlasko*, with the mean-

ing of a vessel to hold liquids, the leather bottles principally. In modern French we have it as *flacon*, and in English again as *flagon*. Probably the Greek and the Teutonic words may have both had a common Celtic origin. "Beaker" is the German *becher*, the Danish *byger*, (a cup), the Italian *becchiere* (from which comes our pitcher), all probably of Eastern origin. "Crucible" may or may not be associated with *crux*, cross. It seems to have come to us from the old French *croche*, English *crock*, *crockery*.

Lastly, we may note, without entering on the names of particular medicines, those of classes of pharmaceutical preparations. "Tinctures" are tinted substances, from *tinctus*, the past participle of *tengere*, to dye. "Syrup" comes from the Arabic *sharab* or *shurab*, a sweet drink, and is allied to shrub and sherbet. "Pill" is a corruption of "pilule," probably resulting from the general abbreviation of the word "pil" in doctors' prescriptions. *Pilula* was the Latin diminutive of *pila*, a ball. "Ointment" is a word formed from the old English "oint," to anoint; Latin, *unctus*, "Essence" is the thing that is—the *esse*. "Plaster" is traceable to the Greek *plassein*, to form or mould. —Exchange.

Confection of Phosphorus.

Hartz recommends the following confection of phosphorus as a stable and satisfactory preparation: 7 ounces of the best wheat flour, 1 ounce of armenian bole, and 8 ounces of glycerin are stirred together in a tin kettle of the capacity of $\frac{1}{2}$ gallon. A solution of 4 scruples of salicylic acid and 4 drams of sodium phosphate in 2 fluid ounces of water, is added, and then 14 fluid ounces of boiling water are added with constant stirring. The whole is now heated, until a thick, uniform paste is formed. 3 drams of phosphorus in sticks are then covered with the hot paste, and, by rapid but careful stirring, the phosphorus is distributed in about three minutes in a manner that no phosphorus granules will any longer be visible to the naked eye. 2 ounces of mutton-tallow are then introduced, the whole is covered, and when the tallow is melted, again cautiously stirred. The mass is apt to ignite during this last operation, unless this be done quickly and with care. Inexperienced persons will therefore do well to wrap a cloth around their hands.—*Phar. Rundsch.*

SOME INTERESTING FACTS about Cochineal insects are reported (*Pharm. Jour.*) by Dr. Paul Meyer. The embryos develop completely within the mother, but are born within egg shells. The red pigment is not found within any organ apart from the diffuse fatty body and the yolk. It does not occur in skin, gut, salivary glands, excretory tubules, or blood, and nothing is yet known regarding its use to the insect. Carminic acid is said to be a product of metabolism.