

of the Ray fungus, not as *Actinomyces*, but as *Streptothrix*, or, rather, to speak of a group of streptothrices of which the *Actinomyces hominis* is one member. Is this permissible? Undoubtedly the form described by Cohn long years ago as the *Streptothrix Fœrsteri* conformed very closely in its morphology with the actinomyces, and, if he had been the first to employ this name, then we should be justified in going back to the early terminology, nay, should be forced to do so; and there would be a certain amount of convenience in so doing. There are, however, certain laws regarding scientific nomenclature which, by international agreement, are accepted by all educated people, or, more correctly, which have been so accepted by the different international congresses of members of the different branches of descriptive science; laws which we cannot neglect to recognize unless, frankly, we acknowledge that medicine is not a science, and that nothing in connexion with medicine is scientific. Among these laws I may mention the following:—

1. That every animal and every plant—and also every fission fungus—belongs to a species, every species to a genus, and every genus to a family.

2. Every living organism should have two Latin names; the first a substantive designating the genus to which the organism belongs; the second indicating the variety or species and being an adjective qualifying the former, or, if not an adjective, the genitive of a substantive. We speak thus of *B. typhosus* or *B. anthracis* with perfect accuracy. To use more than one adjective in the name of a species is incorrect, unless the two words indicate a single idea. It is thus proper to speak of *B. acidi lactici*.

3. If it is found that some species has been named previously by an earlier observer in strict accordance with the rules of scientific nomenclature, then the later name has to give place to the first even if the second be the more appropriate.

4. If a name be given to any definite species is later found to have been previously employed to designate another form, then it has to be given up, and whoever first finds the error is justified in renaming the species.

There are many other rules, but these most affect us in the present case. So soon as it was found that the form termed *Actinomyces hominis* by Bollinger had the generic characters of the form previously described as a streptothrix by Cohn, then the name actinomyces had to be given up, and it seemed justifiable to speak of this as the *Streptothrix hominis*. But as soon as Lehmann pointed out¹ that thirty years

¹ Lehmann and Neumann, *Atlas and Principles of Bacteriology*. Second German Edition, translated by Weaver, Philadelphia, Vol. II., 1901, p. 121.