Book Reviews

Street-Names of the City of London. By Eilert Ekwall. (Oxford:
The Clarendon Press, 1954, pp. xvi + 209, map. $2.40 at Oxford
University Press, New York, N.Y.)

This scholarly work by the author of *The Concise Oxford Dic-
tionary of English Place-Names* is divided into two parts. First there
is an introductory essay of sixty-seven pages explaining the prob-
lems involved in tracing the origin and the modification of the
names applied to the streets of Old London, those established be-
fore 1500. This is followed by a dictionary of these names in which
Professor Ekwall amply documents his conclusions concerning their
history and morphology. In the Introduction, Professor Ekwall also
provides an extensive bibliography and traces the contribution
made by previous works in this field, praising Henry A. Harben's
Dictionary of London (1918) as "the most important contribution
to the topography and history of London." But Harben's book is
out-of-print; and Professor Ekwall's little volume is further justified
by the fact that he has discovered material that enables him to sup-
plement and to correct a number of Harben's conclusions.

One of the great values of the present work is Professor Ekwall's
discussion of the principles of name-giving, well-illustrated in the
organization of his dictionary and in the materials which he in-
cludes in the history of various street-names. First, he classifies the
names: those in -street, in -lane, in -row, in -alley, in -hill, and those
without such a designation. Then he subdivides, grouping com-
pound names according to their first element: those in singular or
plural form, those with or without a genitive -s, and those with the
element derived from external characteristics, from some article or
commodity produced or offered for sale, as in *Milk Street,* from
their situation, as in *Thames Street,* from City gates, from various
buildings or structures, from crosses, and from markets, as in
Cheapside, from a surname, from some other kind of personal
description, as in *Chancery Lane,* originally *Chancellor Lane,* from
the name of an animal, as in *Huggin Lane, Hoggeslane* in 1234-5,

from an object or a place name, as in *Spittle Lane,* probably from a hospital in the lane, from inns or taverns, from churches, or from some activity carried on nearby.

In the dictionary sections some four hundred terms, located by ward, are traced through public documents, such as charters, abstracts, and court rolls, church registers, letters and manuscripts of monarchs, royalty and commoners, diaries, memorials, and other such contemporary sources, as well as the books of Professor Ekwall's forerunners in this field of study. Such an abundance of material for research, much of it in existence before Columbus discovered America, makes for interesting documentation as to names used, but leaves still undecided the origins of many. For example, the name *Threadneedle Street* was by some commentators derived "from a sign-board with three needles on it or from the arms of the needlemakers' company, which are stated to have borne three needles (Harben). But it is unlikely that the name should not be connected with that of the children's game *threadneedle . . .* The broad Threadneedle Street may have been found particularly suitable for the game." It is evident that in many cases the origins can never be accurately determined.

Changes in the form of the name can, however, be traced: for example, *Lombard Street,* from *Longebrod* (1252), *Langburnestrade* (1285), *Langebournestrete* (1312), *Lombardstrete* (from 1318). Professor Ekwall comments: "The original *Langebordstrete* meant 'the street leading to Langebord.' . . . The name contains the words *long* and *board* (OE *bord*). . . . A possible meaning would be 'the long table(s),' referring to some stall(s) to place wares on." *Finch Lane* was once *Finkeslane* (1231–45), "the alternative *Finch* being at first a Norman spelling with *ch* for *k.*" And *Fetter Lane* was originally called *Faytuneslane* (1292), probably derived from the ME *faitor,* meaning 'vagrant' or 'cheat.' Such glimpses of life in Old London are abundant in Professor Ekwall's study of the history of early street names.

LEVETTE J. DAVIDSON

Theory of Names. By Ernst Pulgram. (Pp. 49. American Name Society, Berkeley, California, 1954. First published in *Beiträge zur Namenforschung,* Vol. V, no. 2.)

Ernst Pulgram concludes his monograph on the theory of names by proposing a definition:

I therefore submit the following definition (in terms of function, not of form) for proper name: A proper name is a noun used κατ ἐξοχήν, in a non-universal function, with or without recognizable current lexical value, of which the potential meaning coincides with and never exceeds its actual meaning, and which is attached as a label to one animate being or one inanimate object (or to more than one in the case of collective names) for the purpose of specific distinction from among a number of like or in some respects similar beings or objects that are either in no manner distinguished from one another or, for our interest, not sufficiently distinguished.

Since the purpose of the entire monograph is to define the term "proper name," a description of some of the methods used to arrive at this somewhat complicated definition is in order.

After establishing, by means of examples, that "the giving and bearing of names" are universally accepted and indicate a "common need" among human beings, Pulgram argues, on philosophic grounds, that "the act of naming must have been among the most ancient speech performances," and that since a name can fulfill the task of "linguistic communication" as described by Bloomfield, "a grammatical distinction between noun and name is not legitimate."

After a considerable examination of the various categories of meanings into which proper names fall in various languages, he concludes that "not only name-bearing, but also namebuilding is a universal human practice, with the same elementary rules everywhere." Furthermore, he has found that "all proper names, regardless of their historical form, are to be derived from common nouns," although the dictionary value may have been obscured by time. It follows, therefore, that "noun" and "name" are one and that "the disparity that is commonly felt to exist between them is one produced by usage or performance."

Pulgram then turns his attention to pinpointing the distinction between proper name and common noun. He rejects as unfruitful the etymological study of the word "name" or ὄνομα for a basic meaning, because the Indo-European root has not been determined, and attacks the problem philosophically. He cites J. S. Mill to the effect that a common noun may be "truly affirmed, in the same sense, of an indefinite number of things," while a proper name "is only capable of being truly affirmed, in the same sense, of one thing." With this the author agrees, but he takes issue with Mill when the latter will allow no connotative value to a proper name.

Pulgram shows that a proper name new to the hearer is no more devoid of meaning than a common noun new to a hearer, and that names have varying degrees of connotative value dependent upon their familiarity to the user. It is when the connotative value of a name grows very great, and the denotative value is forgotten, that a name becomes a common noun. The change of name to noun Pulgram calls "an increase of extensive and a decrease of intensive meaning," and one has only to reverse the formula for the change from noun to name. In a language of which every speaker had perfect knowledge, everything would have a specific name; "every noun would be one par excellence." Since we do not possess perfect knowledge and must lump similar things into categories, we have developed "general terms" and "universals," that is, common nouns.

Common nouns, by their very nature, contain more meaning than one usually desires to express in a particular context, and a modifier is required to narrow and confine the word to its desired function. A proper name, however, can have no more meaning than it possesses in itself and can require no modifier to limit its meaning. When it begins to mean more than a particular person or thing, it is on the way to becoming a noun.

Pulgram, before summing up in the definition which begins this review, defends his philosophical definition by maintaining that the problems of naming are extra-linguistic, and that, although linguistic and grammatical methods are appropriate for separate languages, the problem of names is one of "phonemes, morphemes," and the like which "appear in every language," and "should be regarded as general characteristics of human speech and of mankind."

Stanford University   LLOYD L. DEWITT

Marlborough Place Names. By H. A. H. Insull. (Wellington: A. H. & A. W. Reed, 1952. Pp. 73. 10/6.)

The shortcomings of this book are revealed in the preface: it is a reprinting of a series of articles published during 1951 in *The Marlborough Express,* and it is incomplete. To his readers, presumably in New Zealand, the author writes: "I shall be happy to learn of any origins, history or meanings of any of these names whose as-

sociations I have not yet been able to track down." And his un-
familiarity with Maori has led him to repeat what others have said
of names derived from that language or to omit them altogether. It
is reasonable to suggest, then, that more time should have elapsed
between the first printing of this material and its publication in
book form, for then correspondents might have added to Mr. In-
sull's store of information, the author himself would have had an
opportunity to rework his study, and perhaps a student of Maori
could have been enlisted as a collaborator.

Four so-called chapters, each about three pages in length, precede
the alphabetical list of names: "Maori Names," where the difficul-
ties of the student of New Zealand place-names are apparent from
the citation of the name *Pare-ora,* the first element of which bears
ten different meanings while the second may be translated in eight
different ways; "Discovery of the Sounds," which deals with the
period from Captain Cook's first visit in 1770 to 1854; "The Early
Whalers," who commenced their activities in 1827; and "The First
Settlers," who date from 1847–50. Each of these chapters needs
more extended treatment, for Mr. Insull assumes a background of
reference that his readers in other parts of the world do not possess
and can acquire only with great difficulty.

The list of names is interesting, not only to the onomatologist but
to the student of history and legend as well. While it is true that the
introductory pages touch briefly on place-names given by the Maori,
the early explorers, the first whalers, and the early settlers of the
Province of Marlborough, the book would gain considerably from a
summarizing chapter that attempted a classification of the material
according to the examples of F. G. Cassidy *(The Place-Names of
Dane County, Wisconsin)* and R. L. Ramsay *(Our Storehouse of
Missouri Place-Names)* or the suggestions of G. R. Stewart *(Names,*
II, 1–13.

An addition to the ranks of place-name students is, of course,
always to be welcomed, and information about the names of a re-
mote English-speaking land is good to have. One is grateful, too,
for the two maps and the fourteen photographs, as well as for the
bibliograhpy of Marlborough, an appendix that includes more than
fifty items.

<div align="right">HENRY BOSLEY WOOLF</div>

Louisiana State University

American Ways of Life. By George R. Stewart. New York, Double-
day & Company, Inc., 1954. pp. 310. $3.95.

Those who have read an anthropologist's description of the ways
of life of a primitive tribe may sometimes wonder just how Ameri-
can habits and customs would be described. Professor George R.
Stewart, one of our most active members, has given us just such a
description.

To many of us who fail to see the forest for the trees here is the
opportunity to note just where Americans really differ from their
forbears in the old world. Perhaps one of the most surprising state-
ments is the author's assertion that the national drink of America is
water. A little reflection, coupled with a recollection of how difficult
it is to obtain water with one's meals in European countries, em-
phasizes the truth of this observation.

Two chapters are allocated to the discussion of food in America,
plus one on drink; the language, religion, clothing, shelter, sex,
play, holidays, and arts of the Americans are discussed in sep-
arate chapters, all with careful consideration of the relative in-
fluence of environment and heredity on each of these distinctive
aspects of American life.

Although all the subjects covered in Professor Stewart's book are
presented in an entertaining manner, readers of *Names* will prob-
ably turn first to the chapter entitled, "Personal Names." This is a
brief survey of Christian names, middle names and family names in
America from colonial days down to the present time. The author
observes that in our naming habits, as in so much else, we inherit
the English tradition. The two large groups who have taken sur-
names in America are the Indians and the Negroes. The names of
the former, he finds, are distinctive while those of the latter are
much like those of the Whites.

ELSDON C. SMITH

The Phrase Finder. Compiled by J. I. Rodale with the collaboration
of Edward J. Fluck. (Emmaus, Pennsylvania: Rodale Press. 1953.
Pp. 1325. $6.95.)

This reference book is really three books in one: Name-Word
Finder, Metaphor Finder and Sophisticated Synonyms. The first
part occupies the bulk of the work and consists of an Index of Key

Words covering 306 pages which leads one to a Dictionary of Names of 572 pages, and is the only part covered by this review.

The Index sets up a list of words and refers the worker to entries in the Dictionary of Names notable in that respect. Under the key word *hangman,* for example, is reference to Jack Ketch. The Dictionary of Names then gives the researcher a brief sketch of that worthy with special attention to his work.

In short, this is an imperfect thesaurus for the speaker and writer which tends to produce a name which will illustrate the quality or attribute that the user has in mind. Thus a liar might be called a Sapphira, Ananias or Baron Munchausen; helpfulness might be called Franklinian or referred in some way to David Harum, among other names. Many of the names are so little known generally that their use would only tend to confuse, but the idea is an excellent one. The collaborator reminds the user that such name-calling must be applied sparingly by the writer if he would make it most effective—sage advice.

ELSDON C. SMITH

Imported Varieties of Dates in the United States. By Roy W. Nixon. (Washington, 1950.) United States Department of Agriculture Circular No. 834.

This is the most complete listing of date varieties to be found in one volume since Paul B. Popenoe's *Date Growing in the Old World and the New,* Altadena, 1913. These two publications refer to articles and monographs by Dowson (Iraq), Brown and Bahgat (Egypt), Chevalier (French Sahara), Kearney (Tunisia), Mason (Egypt and the Sudan), Milne (the Punjab), Fairchild (Iran), Swingle (Algeria), and others, which altogether account for all of the significant varieties of dates in the world. Most of the names are of Arabic origin, although there is a scattering of Berber, Persian, Punjabi, and English names.

DONALD D. BRAND