over to the state. Böckh suggested that the word signified one who laid an information in reference to an object of trifling value, such as a fig (cf. “ I don’t care a fig about it ”), hut there seems no authority for such a use of *συκov* in Greek. According to C. Sittl (*Die Gebärden der Griechen und Römer,* Leipzig, 1890), the word refers to an obscene gesture of phallic significance (see also A. B. Cook in *Classical Review,* August 1907), called “ showing the fig ” (*faire la figue, far la fica* or *le fiche),* originally prophylactic in character. Such gesture, directed towards an inoffensive person, became an insult, and the word sycophant might imply one who insulted another by bringing a frivolous or malicious accusation against him. According to S. Reinach *{Revue des études grecques,* xix., 1906), who draws special attention to the similar formation “ hierophant, ” the sycophant was an official connected with the cult of the Phytalidae, whose eponymus Phytalus was rewarded with a fig-trec by the wandering Demeter in return for his hospitality. The final act of the cult, the “ exaltation ” of the fig, with which Reinach compares the “ exaltation ” of the ear of corn by the hierophant at the Eleusinian mysteries, was performed by the sycophant. Again, like the hierophant, the sycophant publicly pronounced the formula of exclusion of certain unworthy persons from the celebration of the mysteries of the fig. As the cult of the Phytalidae sank into insignificance beside the greater mysteries, the term sycophant survived in popular language in the sense of an informer or denouncer, whose charges deserved but little consideration. L. Shadwell suggests that the real meaning is “ fig-discoverer,” not “ fig-informer,” referring to the blackmailer who discovers the “ figs ” (that is, the money) of the rich man and forces him to hand it over by the threat of bringing a criminal accusation against him. It must be remembered that any Athenian citizen was at liberty to accuse another of a public offence, and the danger of such a privilege being abused is sufficiently obvious. the people naturally looked upon all persons of wealth and position with suspicion, and were ready to believe any charge brought against them. Such prosecutions also put money into the pockets of the judges, and, if successful, into the public treasury. In many cases the accused persons, in order to avoid the indignity of a public trial, bought off their accusers, who found in this a fruitful source of revenue. Certain legal remedies, intended to prevent the abuses of the system, undoubtedly existed. Persons found guilty of bringing false charges, of blackmail, or of suborning false witnesses, were liable to criminal prosecution by the state and a fine on conviction. Penalties were also inflicted if an accuser failed to carry the prosecution through or to obtain a fifth part of the votes. But these remedies were rather simple deterrents, and instances of informers being actually brought to trial are rare. Sycophants were an inseparable accompaniment of the democracy, and the profession, at least from a political point of view, was not regarded as in any way dishonourable. The idea of encouraging the citizens to assist in the detection of crime or treason against the state was commendable; it was not the use, but the abuse of the privilege that was so injurious. Allu­sions to the sycophants are frequent in Aristophanes and the Attic orators. the word is now generally used in the sense of a cringing flatterer of the great.

See Meier and Schömann, *Der attische Process* (ed. J. IL Lipsius, 1883-1887); article by C. R. Kennedy and H. Holden, in Smith's *Dictionary of Antiquities* (3rd ed., 1891).

**SYDENHAM, CHARLES EDWARD POULETT-THOMSON.** ist Baron (1799-1841), British statesman, was born on the 13th of September 1799, being the son of John Buncornbe-Poulett- Thomson, a London merchant. After some years spent in his father’s business in Russia and in London he was returned to the House of Commons for Dover in 1826. In 1830 he joined Lord Grey’s ministry as vice-president of the board of trade and treasurer of the navy. A free-trader and an expert in financial matters he was elected M.P. for Manchester in 1832, a seat which he occupied for many years. He was continuously occupied with negotiations affecting international commerce until 1839, when he accepted the governor-generalship of Canada, where it fell to his lot to establish the union of Upper and Lower Canada. His services in establishing the Canadian constitution were recognized in 1840 by a K.C.B. and a peerage. He took the title of Baron Sydenham of Sydenham in Kent and Toronto in Canada. He died unmarried on the 4th of September 1841, when his peerage became extinct.

His *Memoirs* were published by his brother, G. J. Poulett Scrope, in 1843.

**SYDENHAM, THOMAS** (1624-1689), English physician, was born on the 10th of September r624 at Wynford Eagle in Dorset, where his father was a gentleman of property and good pedigree. Λt the age of eighteen he was entered at Magdalen Hall, Oxford; after a short period his college studies appear to have been interrupted, and he served for a time as an officer in the army of the parliament. He completed his Oxford course in 1648, graduating as bachelor of medicine, and about the same time he was elected a fellow of All Souls College. It was not until nearly thirty years later (1676) that he graduated as M.D., not at Oxford, but at Pembroke IIalJ, Cambridge, where bis eldest son was then an undergraduate. After 1648 he seems to have spent some time studying medicine at Oxford, but be was soon again engaged in military service, and in 1654 he received the sum of *£600,* as a result of a petition he addressed to Cromwell, setting forth that various arrears were due to two of bis brothers who had been killed and that he himself had faithfully served the parliament with the loss of much blood. In 1655 he resigned his fellowship at All Souls and married, and probably a few years later went to study medicine at Montpellier. In 1663 he passed the examinations of the College of Physicians for their licence to practice in Westminster and 6 m. round; but it is probable that he had been settled in London for some time before that. This minimum qualification to practise was the single bond between Sydenham and the College of Physicians through­out the whole of his career. He seems to have been distrusted by some members of the faculty because he was an innovator and something of a plain-dealer. In his letter to John Mapletoft he refers to a class of detractors “ qui vitio statim vertunt si quis novi aliquid, ab illis non prius dictum vel etiam inauditum, in medium proferat and in a letter to Robert Boyle, written the year before his death (and the only authentic specimen of his English composition that remains), he says, “ I have the happiness of curing my patients, at least of having it said con­cerning me that few miscarry under me; but [I] cannot brag of my correspondency with some other of my faculty .... Though yet, in taken fire at my attempts to reduce practice to a greater easiness, plainness, and in the meantime letting the mountebank at Charing Cross pass unrailed at, they contradict themselves, and would make the world believe I may prove more considerable than they would have me.” Sydenham attracted to him in warm friendship some of the most discriminat­ing men of his time, such as John Locke and Robert Boyle. His first book, *Methodus curandi febres,* was published in 1666; a second edition, with an additional chapter on the plague, in 1668; and a third edition, much enlarged and bearing the better-known title of *Observationes medicae,* in 1676. His next publication was in 1680 in the form of two *Epistolae respon- soriae,* the one, “ On Epidemics, ” addressed to Robert Brady, regius professor of physic at Cambridge, and the other “ On the Lues venerea, ” to Henry Paman, public orator at Cambridge and Gresham professor in London. In 1682 he issued another *Dissertatio epistolaris,* on the treatment of confluent small-pox and on hysteria, addressed to Dr William Cole of Worcester. The *Tractatus de podagra et hydrope* came out in 1683, and the *Schedula moniloria de novae febris ingressu* in 1686. His last com­pleted work, *Processus integri,* is an outline sketch of pathology and practice; twenty copies of it were printed in 1692, and, being a compendium, it has been more often republished both in England and in other countries than any other of his writings separately. A fragment on pulmonary consumption was found among his papers. His collected writings occupy about *600* pages 8vo, in the Latin, though whether that or English was the language in which they were originally written is disputed.