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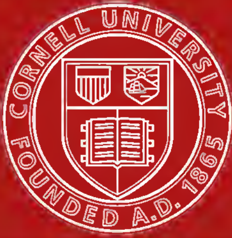

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THE HISTORY

OF THE

ENGLISH PARAGRAPH

A DISSERTATION PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY OF
ARTS, LITERATURE, AND SCIENCE, OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO, IN CANDIDACY
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR
OF PHILOSOPHY

BY

EDWIN HERBERT LEWIS

CHICAGO
The University of Chicago Press
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PREFACE.

HISTORICALLY considered, the word paragraph means (*a*) a marginal character or note employed to direct attention to some part of the text; (*b*) a character similar to (*a*), but placed in the text itself; (*c*) the division of discourse introduced by a paragraph mark or by indentation, and extending to the next paragraph mark or the next indentation; (*d*) the rhetorical paragraph, that is, (*c*) developed to a structural unit capable of organic internal arrangement.

The plan of the present essay is to discuss, in the first chapter, (*a*) and (*b*) and other mechanical signs of the paragraph; in the second chapter to introduce (*c*) for the purpose of further definition; in the next seven chapters to show the historical development of (*c*) in English prose, first by a statement of the general development, then by a particularized account according to periods, then by a summary of this account; lastly, in an appendix, to offer a few incomplete notes on the development of (*c*) in Middle English verse.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge here my indebtedness, first to Professor W. D. McClintock, who approved the choice of subject, and made most searching and suggestive comments upon the whole course of the treatment; and to Professors F. A. Blackburn, W. C. Wilkinson, and A. H. Tolman, for many helpful criticisms. Professor L. A. Sherman, of the University of Nebraska, generously furnished me with certain statistics, noted in the text by the parenthesis (Sherman). Mr. G. W. Gerwig, of Allegheny, Pa., kindly supplied me in advance with the results of his research concerning the decrease of predication,—research pursued under Professor Sherman's direction. I have quoted freely from his results, using as reference mark the parenthesis (Gerwig). In such

cases the expression "clauses saved" needs a word of explanation. Mr. Gerwig says:

"The manifest effect of such verb suppression is a lightening of the style of the authors engaging in it. A partial effort was made to find out the line of this movement, but no complete or final results were obtained. The number of clauses saved by the substitution of present and past participles or by the use of appositives was noted, and is made a systematic part of the present exhibits. No especial value is claimed for the results, except perhaps as an aid to later investigators. . . . This exhibit of course includes only the verb suppressions through aid of the simplest substitutes. That there has been a similar saving by the use of verbal nouns, gerundive constructions, and other devices will be apparent to any student."

I have made no effort to extend the line of investigation thus indicated. But, since the matter concerns indirectly the development of paragraph structure, I have quoted many of Mr. Gerwig's results on this point, as suggestive, though incomplete.

Professor W. I. Knapp, of this University, was good enough to let me examine the rubrication in certain rare Romance texts in his possession. To the authorities of the British Museum, the Cambridge University Library, the Astor Library, and the Newberry Library (especially Dr. Karl Pietsch) I owe repeated courtesies. Two other friends, Mr. L. D. Thornton and Mr. W. E. Moffatt, from time to time lightened for me the burden of the numerical work; one of these, Mr. Moffatt, interested himself in the general theme, and called my attention to several enlightening facts.

A discussion of the history of the paragraph must necessarily concern itself chiefly with what De Quincey called the mechanology of style. The danger in such study is that the method of investigation may itself become mechanical. But, though no other method is so mechanical as the numerical method, and though I have wished to lay the chief emphasis upon the purely rhetorical discussion, I have not been able to resist the tempta-

tion to do a little counting. For the figures obtained I do not wish to claim any significance that is not in them; they seem to me interesting in themselves, and have proved to some extent a means of testing conclusions reached by freer and more sympathetic reading. Psychological meaning, too, they must have, but I understand little of it. Had time permitted the making of curves, from the tables in hand, to illustrate the exact course of each author's numbers, these curves would have possessed far more meaning than the system of averages I have had to use. Manifestly, in employing a system of averages, one is constantly in danger of implying more than he wishes to. For the mere numerical average may not be the most important thing to know in a given case; the course of an author's fluctuations in sentence length or paragraph length, may be the really significant thing; and this matter of fluctuations I have not been able to deal with adequately. Again, when, in the later chapters, references are freely made to a given author's average paragraph length, it must be remembered that in most cases only a small part of the author's whole work serves as a basis of induction. The numerical results are therefore avowedly tentative, and the interpretation of them is often inadequate.

E. H. L.

CHAPTER I.

THE MECHANICAL SIGNS OF THE PARAGRAPH.

The various signs of the paragraph, as they appear in English manuscripts and English books, are a legacy from classical scribes, and must be studied in the light of their origin.

The paragraph (παράγραφος (γραμμή)), is the oldest mark of punctuation in Greek manuscripts. It first occurs as a horizontal stroke (sometimes with a dot over it), placed at the beginning of a line, just beneath the first two or three letters. It indicated that a sentence, or some longer division of the text, was ended in the underscored line. The mark thus distinguished the close of one section rather than the beginning of another.

Instead of the horizontal mark the wedge (διπλῆ), or the hook (κορωνίς), was occasionally employed. The terms διπλῆ and κορωνίς are not carefully discriminated by lexicographers; both forms shown in Fig. 1, in the accompanying cut, are called διπλῆ, and at least the first form has been called κορωνίς.

Later in Greek literature, the mark is used for other purposes. It marks a spurious passage; or it indicates, in the drama, a change of persons in dialogue, chorus, or parabasis. Aristotle, Rhet. III., 8, 6, says that the terminal pæon, ⏑⏑⏑–, should not be determined by the paragraph (παραγραφή)—a warning which points to great frequency in the use of the mark. I cannot, however, say whether Welldon is fully justified in his note on the point: "The 'marginal annotation' (Grk. παραγραφή, Lat. *interductus librarii*) would answer to the modern full stop."[1]

O. J. 142

In law παραγραφή came to mean an exception taken by the defendant to the indictment. In the later rhetoric παραγραφή meant a brief summary. The sign used for a paragraph of this sort in the *Gortynian Codex of Private Rights* is the cross shown in

[1] *The Rhetoric of Aristotle*, Trans. J. E. C. Welldon, p. 251.

Fig. 2. The use of παραγραφή to mean a summary indicates how soon the word came to signify a division of discourse.

There were, among the Greeks, other mechanical devices for indicating the paragraph. Roberts[1] mentions the use of the letters of the alphabet, in an old Locrian inscription, to indicate the successive divisions; the letters were turned upon one side. In the manuscripts the custom early arose of leaving a short space after the last word of each paragraph. Very early also grew up the habit of emphasizing the conclusion of a paragraph by points, placed in the space referred to. Many English manuscripts show the same device: as, a full point placed high,[2] or a colon and a dash,[3] or three full points (.·.).[4]

Of the Greek marks, it was the κορωνίς, I take it, that survived, assuming the form of a gamma [Fig. 3];[5] although the hypothesis has been suggested[6] that the gamma stands for γραμμή. In later times this gamma underwent many modifications, though it is usually possible to recognize in the variants the parent mark, even as late as the sixteenth century. In the cut these changes, for they can hardly be called steps in any evolution, are shown in figures 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14 (?), 22, 23, 24, 25, 27 (second character). Fig. 8 is from the West Gothic forms given by Wattenbach. Fig. 12 is from the *Ormulum;* fig. 13, from the Harleian *Leviticus.* Walther gives 14, 22, 23, 24, 25, in the *Lexicon Diplomaticum.* Fig. 14 is difficult to explain, and I am not sure that it is a gamma at all. Fig. 17, though it seems to have the force of a paragraph mark, is no easier to dispose of than 14. The gamma in 27 is from a beautiful incunabulum by Ulrich

[1] *An Introduction to Greek Epigraphy*, p. 348.

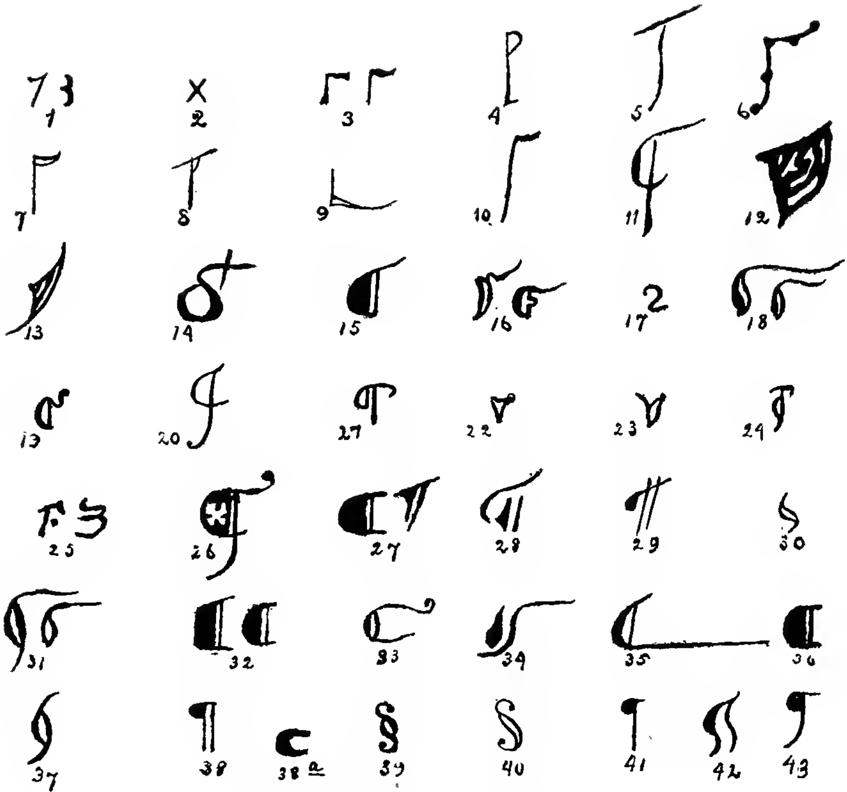
[2] *E.g.* Cotton MS., Vespasian A. viii., A. D. 966.

[3] *E.g.* D'Orville MS. X. I. Inf., 2.30. Bodleian Lib., A. D. 889.

[4] *E.g.* Cotton MS., Claudius B. iv. Early eleventh century.

[5] *Cf.* Isidor (*Orig.* I. 21) . . . "Paragraphus [Fig. 3] ponitur ad separandas res a rebus." (Quoted in Wattenbach, *Anleitung zur Lateinischen Palæographie*, p. 36.)

[6] *Cf.* Liddell and Scott's Lexicon.



PARAGRAPH MARKS.

Zell. On the page of chapter titles this mark alternates with the thick character resembling a reversed D.

When one looks at the West Gothic form given in Fig. 8, the question suggests itself, might not the modern mark ¶ have descended from the original gamma. It is probably the observation of this West Gothic mark, or some still more suggestive form, that has led Mr. Maunde Thompson[1] to say recently: "Our modern ¶ is directly derived from the simple ancient form" [Fig. 3]. Mr. Thompson introduces no fact whatever in support of this statement. There are surely definite objections to this view, even if we can find more suggestive forms than Fig. 8. One objection is that unquestionable variants of the gamma have persisted side by side with the variants of the ¶, and to a very late date, as in the Ulrich Zell book mentioned. A more serious objection is the fact that the form resembling a P (Fig. 4), is found in very old Latin manuscripts. Now, if Mr. Thompson can cite no transitional form (between the gamma and this ancient P) more marked than Fig. 8, his case is not strong. It is a long step from the bold, oblique stroke of Fig. 8 to the carefully limited curve of Fig. 4. It seems much more rational, therefore, to believe that the P stood for "paragraphus;" nothing could be more natural for a Latin scribe than to substitute the initial letter of a word with which he was familiar, for the ancient gamma, which seemed to him quite unrelated to the word it represented.

This early Latin mark had been changed as early as 1127 to the form in Fig. 11; whether to distinguish the sign from all letters, or because the left curve is easier to make than the right, is not clear. The change may have been hastened by the habit which grew up in the twelfth (?) century, of placing the mark at the left of the marginal line in poetry. The reason for the change in this case would be the danger of the right curve impinging upon the text.

In the years between 1127 and 1280 the long stem of the

[1] *Handbook of Greek and Latin Palæography*, p. 71.

reversed P was gradually dropped, and the form shown in Fig. 15 resulted. A little later the long reversed P again came into fashion.

The characters in Figs. 16 and 18 are developed from 15, although the first form of 16 shows how nearly the gamma and the Latin mark could be made to approach each other; the same resemblance occurs again in 28. Other variants of the P appear in Figs. 19, 20, and 21, of which the first belongs to the latter part of the fourteenth century, the second and third to the first part of the fifteenth.

The ornamental form 26 is but one of many fanciful and even fantastic shapes that grew up under the hand of the illuminator — forms which could not be shown to advantage here without the aid of many colors. Indeed it should be remembered that red and blue are the colors in which most of the figures of the cut appear in the manuscripts or incunabula. The list will show which are printer's types.

In certain manuscripts, as British Museum Additional Manuscript, 15,580, the paragraph mark is not employed at all; its place is taken by the parallel virgules, oblique.

The heavy-faced marks shown in 32 were the models of the paragraph-type cast in Germany as early as 1477. Caxton began in 1483(?) to use a similar mark — 36. Down to this time, or even till 1485, according to Mr. Blades,[1] Caxton employed a rubricator (rubrisher), who inserted, in vermilion, paragraph marks and initials. It was in the book called *Quattuor Sermones* that he first employed a paragraph-type.

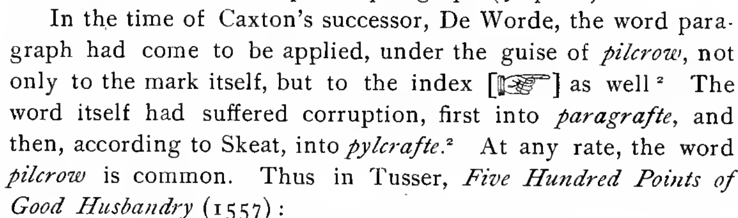
Fig. 29 shows how, by careless drawing, the modern reference mark ¶ was evolved. It is hardly to be supposed that the type ¶ was deliberately meant to be, as Worcester's definition has it, "Nothing more than a capital P reversed, the white part being made black, and the black part white, for the sake of greater distinction." This modern type was used by English printers in the sixteenth century. But a similar one was used, having only

[1] *The Biography and Typography of William Caxton*, p. 135.

one stem—Figs. 41, 43. These long-stemmed varieties were used more as ornaments than as paragraph marks. By the middle of the sixteenth century the paragraph mark had indeed almost passed out of use except as a decoration, and when it was revived it was as a reference mark. In editions of Latin and Greek classics it was still retained, being placed in the text.

Indentation (German and French *alinéa*) was not an invention of the fifteenth century, nor yet of the fourteenth. Its origin is often ascribed to the practice of leaving a blank space to be filled with a capital by the illuminator. But why is it necessary to assign such a reason for a device which really exists in some of the oldest English manuscripts? In a manuscript of the sixth century (Cambridge University Library, 41), quotations are written as in modern paragraphs,—carried in evenly from the marginal line.

Perfect indentation in the modern sense, where the space of a printer's em is left at the beginning of the new paragraph, is to be found as early as 1482, in an incunabulum of Knoblochtzer.[1] Caxton made no indentations in the modern sense. But he often spaced out the line before a new paragraph, and occasionally left a space within the line to mark a new section of the discourse—a sort of compound paragraph (*cf.* p. 28).

In the time of Caxton's successor, De Worde, the word paragraph had come to be applied, under the guise of *pilcrow*, not only to the mark itself, but to the index [] as well[2] The word itself had suffered corruption, first into *paragrafte*, and then, according to Skeat, into *pylcrafte*.[2] At any rate, the word *pilcrow* is common. Thus in Tusser, *Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry* (1557):

> "In husbandry matters, where pilcrow ye find,
> That verse appertaineth to huswifery kind."

[1] *Oratio Habita in Synode Argent.* Gailer von Kaiserburg, Strassburg 1482.

[2] Indeed before Caxton's day we have *pylcrafte* meaning something other than paragraph. Thus as early as 1440, in Geoffrey's *Promptorium Parvulorum*, *pylcrafte* is defined as *asteriskus*.

The name *pilcrow* continued to be used till after the middle, at least, of the seventeenth century. In "The New World of English Words—or a General Dictionary, containing the Interpretation of such hard words as are derived from other languages," 1658, we have this definition: "A Paragraphe (Greek), a full head or title in any kind of writing; as much as is comprehended in one section; it is also called a Pillkrow."

One other use of the paragraph mark in the sixteenth century should perhaps be mentioned,—a bookbinder's use. The system of signatures, developed in the fifteenth century, gave a letter to each signature, a Roman numeral being added to show the page. Thus the first signature would be A, and its leaves, Aj, Aij, Aiij, etc. The introductory section (preceding A) was often marked ¶ i, ¶ ij, etc. If there was a second introductory section, as a preface after the title pages and blank pages, it was sometimes marked ¶¶ i, ¶¶ ij, etc.

After the establishment of indentation the method of marking paragraphs becomes essentially what we find it today. At first the old mark was for emphasis occasionally added to the indentation, as in Ascham now and then. But this custom was short-lived. The paragraphs of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are often separated by wide spaces; but this is a printer's convenience, and has no connection with the modern way of double-spacing before an unusual break in the sense (*cf.* p. 29). In the eighteenth century it was a printer's custom to print the first word of each paragraph in capitals.

It remains to consider the origin of the so-called section mark [§], called on the continent, *paragraphe.* The genesis of this mark has been explained in two different ways. The first of these is equally ingenious and ingenuous. It is thus expressed in an American treatise on composition and rhetoric:[1] "The Section [§], the mark for which seems to be a combination of two s's, standing for *signum sectionis,* the sign of the section." The theory is still more definitely expounded in

[1] Quackenbos, *Course of Composition and Rhetoric,* p. 145.

D. J. Hill's *Elements of Rhetoric*:[1] "THE SECTION [§] . . . is supposed to be derived from the Latin words, *signum sectionis*, sign of a section, the two old-fashioned long *ſ'ſ* being written side by side, but finally one below the other." The only necessary answer to this fancy is that the early section-type, Fig 30, does not at all suggest the combination of two s's.

The second theory is that of Friedrich Blass, and must be received with respect, though stated without defense or explanation. Blass says (Ivan von Müller's *Handbuch der Klassischen Alterthumswissenschaft*, I., 332): "Aus diesem Zeichen [the gamma] erstant durch die Mittelform [Fig. 7] unser §." By this he seems to mean that the hollow branch of the transitional gamma [Fig. 7] developed into the long duplex circumflexus of the old section mark.

It is hard to see how this can be. Whatever evolution the form 7 would have gone through would naturally have been from left to right, not *vice versa*. In fact the only form of the gamma I have found that bears the slightest resemblance to the early § (Fig. 30) is Fig. 24, where the canny scribe has invented a Tironian paragraph-mark by uniting the curve of the Latin mark to the stem of a fully developed gamma. But surely 30 could never have come from 24, and it seems next to impossible for it to have come from 7.

The type 30 was used at Padua in 1473. I have not found it in earlier Italian books, though it may have been used. The (rubricated) mark which does exist, however, and frequently and conspicuously in Venetian books of 1474–1479, is the graceful one shown in Figs. 31 and 33.

Why, then, should not 30 be an invention, perhaps between 1467 and 1473,[2] based on the beautiful first form in 31? A variant still nearer to 30 is 37, where but the slightest change is needed to give a rude form of 30.

[1] D. J. Hill, *Elements of Rhetoric*, p. 123.

[2] No Roman or Venetian book that I have been able to examine shows a paragraph-type in this period.

My hypothesis then is, that the § is developed, not from the gamma, but from the old P, the date of the final change being approximately as indicated in the preceding paragraph.

SOURCES OF THE CUT.

1. Early Greek inscriptions. Mommsen, *Res Gestæ divi Augusti*, p. 190.
2. Gortynian Codex of Private Rights.
3. Early Greek and Latin MSS. Wattenbach, *Anleitung zur Lateinischen Palæographie*, p. 36.
4. Oldest Latin MSS. Wattenbach, *Anleitung*, p. 36.
5. 804–820 A. D. S. Augustinus. Boulogne MS., 44.
6. 854–873 A. D. Rabanus Maurus. Munich Hofbibliotek. Lat. 6262.
7. Date? Blass, in Ivan von Müller's *Handbuch der Klassischen Alterthumswissenschaft*, I., 332.
8. Ninth century. West Gothic form. Wattenbach, *Anleitung*, p. 36.
9. Tenth century. Berliner Bibliotek. MS., theol. lat. Fol. 481.
10. Eleventh century. Freiburger Universitätbibliotek. MS. containing the *Canonessamlung* of Burchard von Worms.
11. 1127 A. D. *Regula S. Benedicti.* British Museum Add. MS. 16,979.
12. c. 1200 A. D. *Ormulum.* MS. Junius I.
13. 1176 A. D. *Leviticus.* Harl. MS. 3038.
14. 1265 A. D. In Walther, *Lexicon Diplomaticum.*
15. 1280 A. D. Münchener Hof- und Staatsbibliotek, MS. 13,029.
16. Thirteenth century. French MS.
17. 1295 A. D. *Comptes du Temple.*
18. Thirteenth century. *The Great Psalter, in Three Parts.* Paris, *Biblioteque Rle.*
19. Before 1400. *Wiclif's Bible.* MS. Douce 70.
20. c. 1400 A. D. *Piers Plowman.* MS. Laud Misc., 581.

21. 1422 A. D. In Walther, *Lexicon Diplomaticum.*
22. 1435 A. D. In Walther, *Lexicon Diplomaticum.*
23. 1441 A. D. In Walther, *Lexicon Diplomaticum.*
24. 1441 A. D. In Walther, *Lexicon Diplomaticum.*
25. 1441 A. D. In Walther, *Lexicon Diplomaticum.*
26. 1460–1465 A. D. Incunabulum, Quadrag. F. Leon. Ital.
27. 1470 A. D. *Tractatus Diversi.* Incunabulum, by Zell, Cologne.
28. c. 1470 A. D. *St. Bernard.* Incunabulum, Strassburg.
29. 1472 A. D. Fr. *Beneventura Breviloquium.* Incunabulum, Nürnberg.
30. 1473 A. D. *Type. Platea, Tabula Restitutionum.* Padua.
31. 1474. A. D. Duns Scotus, *Scriptum in primum Sententiarum.* Incunabulum, Venice.
32. 1477 A. D. *Type.* Jacobus de Cessolis, *Schachzabelbuch,* Incunabulum by Heinrich Knoblocktzer, Strassburg.
33. 1479 A. D. Carraciolo de Licio, *Sacræ Theologiæ Magistri Necnou Sacri,* Incunabulum, Venice.
34. 1483 A. D. *Deutscher Kalendar.* Incunabulum by Knoblocktzer, Strassburg.
35. 1481 A. D. St. Bernard, *Epistolæ.* Incunabulum.
36. 1483 (?) A. D. Caxton, *Quattuor Sermones, &c.*
37. Date uncertain. A Latin incunabulum in the Newberry Library, Chicago.
38. 1585 A. D. *Type,* used by East.

38 a. 1587 A. D. Alnick J., *Meditations vpon Gods Monarchie, and the Deuill his Kingdome,* London, Gerred Dewes.

39. Modern English "section mark," called *paragraphe* by continental printers.
40. French variant of 39.
41. 1599 A. D. *Type* used by the firm of George Bishop, Ralph Newberie, & Robert Barker.
42. 1491 A. D. *Type. Mirabilia Urbis Romæ.* German incunabulum.

43. 1738 A. D. Hugo, *De Prima Scribendi Origine*, Trajecti ad Rhenum, mdccxxviii., p. 257. Quoted from Pancirolus as "vetus illa," thus: "Est autem nota hæc § et vetus illa [Fig. 43] cujus illa sit formæ, novi inventi, cum olim verba omnia in MSS. cohærent, rariusque singula interpungeretur, et a seculo nono demum distinctiones per spatia quædam inter singulas voces relicta obtinerent, etc."

CHAPTER II.

RHETORICAL THEORIES OF THE PARAGRAPH.

§ 1.

We have now examined, at rather tedious length, the general history of the mechanical marks of the paragraph; the rest of our discussion must concern itself chiefly with rhetorical qualities of the paragraph. Before we can proceed to trace the history of this unit of composition, we must have a definition of it, and a classification of its varieties. In this matter the longest way round is perhaps the shortest way home; and to reach a working definition and classification we will examine such definitions and classifications as have already been made.

Until 1866, when Bain published his *Manual of English Composition and Rhetoric*, the paragraph as a structural unit had received from writers on rhetoric no serious attention. Campbell had discussed sentence connectives in an indifferent sort of way, and De Quincey had urged in more than one place the philosophy of transition. But it is a little remarkable that the treatises on rhetoric were so slow in coming to note the organic significance of the paragraph; that the theory of the teachers was so many years behind the practice of the writers.

Bain's definition ran thus [§ 158]: "The division of discourse next higher than the sentence is the Paragraph: which is a collection of sentences with unity of purpose." Angus was more specific, but less to the point: "A paragraph is a combination of sentences, intended to explain, or illustrate, or prove, or apply some truth; or to give the history of events during any definite portion of time, or in relation to any one object of thought."[1] Minto's Manual does not define. D. J. Hill says: "A paragraph is a group of sentences that are closely related in thought."[2]

[1] *Handbook of the English Tongue*, § 730.

[2] *Elements of Rhetoric*, p. 71.

McElroy: "A Paragraph is in fact a whole composition in miniature, and sometimes constitutes a whole composition."[1] Genung: "A paragraph is a connected series of sentences constituting the development of a single topic."[2] A. S. Hill speaks of the paragraph as "something more than a sentence and something less than an essay; . . . an important means of marking the natural divisions of a composition as a whole."[3] G. R. Carpenter quotes Bain, Genung, and McElroy, and adds: "These definitions of well-known writers on rhetoric all agree in making a paragraph a series or combination of sentences, constituting an integral part of a whole composition."[4]

Three writers have somewhat more definitely declared the organic nature of the paragraph. These three, John Nichol, T. W. Hunt, and Barrett Wendell, define the paragraph in terms of syntax. Nichol,[5] in a parenthesis, thus: "With regard to the arrangement of sentences in a Paragraph—to which on a larger scale the same laws apply as to the sentence—it may be remarked that the best effect is generally produced when the long sentence precedes and the short sentence follows, striking, as it were, the nail on the head, and concentrating the sentiment which has been previously followed." Hunt:—"a collection of sentences unified by some common idea. It sustains the same relation to the sentence which this does to the clause or member. It is a structure of which completeness is a mark—completeness of form and discussion."[6] Wendell,[7] after search, finds in the books no definition that suits him, and says: "In these straits, trying to make a definition for myself, I have been able to frame no better one than this, whose comparative

[1] *The Structure of English Prose*, § 246.

[2] *The Practical Elements of Rhetoric*, p. 193.

[3] *Foundations of Rhetoric*, p. 325.

[4] *Exercises in Rhetoric and English Composition*, Advanced Course, p. 153.

[5] *Primer of English Composition*, p. 103.

[6] *The Principles of Written Discourse*, p. 82.

[7] *English Composition*, p. 119.

form makes it at least suggestive: A paragraph is to a sentence what a sentence is to a word." Hunt's definition comes nearer to historical truth then Wendell's. But the latter writer, whose definition would hardly be couched in such tropical terms if it were meant to apply to the historical paragraph, does not pretend to say that good use has necessitated this definition; he is rather speaking of a paragraph that ought to be.

The latest definition is that of Scott and Denney.[1] It is particularly important, since it emphasizes the idea that a good paragraph is, more properly than the sentence itself, an organic unit of composition. "A paragraph is a unit of discourse developing a single idea. It consists of a group or series of sentences closely related to one another and to the thought expressed by the whole group or series. Devoted, like the sentence, to the development of one topic, a good paragraph is also, like a good essay, a complete treatment in itself."

All the definitions thus far given were framed primarily for purposes of pedagogy. This may explain why so much stress is laid upon the idea of a paragraph as a sentence group. It hardly need be said that one of the trials of the teacher is this,—that when a young mind is told to make paragraphs it begins to paragraph each sentence. It proceeds by what might be called impartial analysis, failing to distinguish the larger stadia of the thought from the smaller.

The question, however, arises, whether the name of paragraph can justly be refused to an indented sentence. Of the ten authors quoted above, three admit the fact of the paragraph of one sentence; six ignore it; one disputes it. Angus rather reluctantly admits that "sometimes an author makes his paragraphs little else than expanded sentences;"[2] and, unhappily, quotes Jeremy Taylor by way of illustration. D. J. Hill follows Angus: "Sometimes an expanded sentence constitutes a paragraph;"[3] and he

[1] *Paragraph Writing*, p. 1.

[2] *Handbook*, § 735.

[3] *Elements*, p. 75.

quotes the same passage from Taylor, the reading of which would be more certain to deter any student from constituting a sentence a paragraph than would any exhortation. The only whole-hearted recognition of the single sentence paragraph is that of A. S. Hill: "If a paragraph complies with these fundamental requirements, it matters not whether it contain one sentence or twenty."[1] The fundamental requirements here referred to are those of unity, coherence, etc., and Hill's words do not imply any previous discussion as to the proper number of sentences to the paragraph. The most recent discussion of the paragraph (and the most comprehensive), that of Scott and Denney, refuses to recognize the single-sentence paragraph; in this it follows Earle, of whom we shall speak separately. The words of Scott and Denney are: "No arbitrary rules can be given as to the proper length of paragraphs. Observing the custom of some of our best writers, we may safely say that it is not well to extend a single paragraph beyond three hundred words. The advantage of at least one paragraph indentation on almost every page of a printed book is felt by every reader. On the other hand, as Professor Earle says (*English Prose*, p. 212), 'The term paragraph can hardly be applied to anything short of three sentences,' though rarely a complete and satisfactory effect is produced by two."[2]

Here, then, the question is transferred from writers whose discussion has chiefly a pedagogical purpose to one whose point of view is chiefly historical. It is in speaking of present-day writers that Earle says there must be at least two sentences to the paragraph in order to secure "a complete and satisfactory effect." These last words of Professor Earle are vague. What is "a complete and satisfactory effect," in the paragraph? Is it an effect of logical division or partition? or is it, for instance, a rhythmical effect? In either case, or both, it is not hard to show that good authors of this century do not infrequently get the desired effect by the use of the paragraph of one sentence.

[1] *Foundations*, p. 325.

[2] *Paragraph Writing*, p. 10.

To be sure, the single-sentence paragraph is less used in this century than in the last, and much less today than in the day of the good bishop quoted by Angus and by D. J. Hill. It may be worth while to indicate rather more specifically just what the general course of this development has been, and how the usage now stands. The following lists will show a count of the percentage of single-sentence paragraphs in various authors, the second column of figures indicating the whole number of paragraphs considered. In cases where the greater part of the indented sentences are due to dialogue, an asterisk is prefixed. In the other authors there is either no dialogue or not enough thus paragraphed to raise the percentage materially. In a third column is added, for purposes of comparison, the average sentence-length of each author, based on the paragraphs indicated in the second column.

Author.	Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs.	Paragraphs considered.	Average number of words in the sentence.
Defoe: *Essay on Projects*,	62	200	49.64
*Bunyan,	61	200	31.61
Paley,	58	200	37.68
Sterne,	55	200	36.50
Spenser,	48	200	49.80
*Scott,	45	551	32.53
*Dickens, -	43	300	23.78
Stow,	c. 41	200	c. 57.00
*Kingsley,	39	200	23.72
Fielding,	38	—200 : 100—	41.92
Lord Brooke,	35	200	c. 55.00
Hobbes,	35	200	39.26
*Landor,	34	200	26.18
Lyly, -	33	221	36.83
Bacon: *Advancement*,	32	110	60.03
*George Eliot,	27	212	22.39
Johnson, -	27	152	38.15
Lord Herbert,	25	40	75.00
Walton: *Life of Hooker*,	25	106	64.00
Fuller,	20	100	23.45
Burton,	18	100	40.14
Burke,	18	145	26.09

Author.	Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs.	Paragraphs considered.	Average number of words in the sentence.
Locke,	18	200	49.80
Latimer,	18	116	20.45
Cranmer,	17	100	37.22
* Irving,	17	129	26.73
Clarendon,	15	—200 : 100—	74.94
Lamb,	15	87	27.19
Swift,	15	200	40.00
De Quincey,	14	89	38.81
Temple,	14	184	53.40
Webbe,	14	75	50.50
Addison,	14	200	38.36
Ruskin,	13	151	33.31
Browne,	13	107	33.09
Gosson,	11	45	60.
Dryden,	11	180	38.04
Reginald Pecock,	c. 10	200	c. 61.
Ascham, -	10	100	43.13
Sidney,	10	79	38.10
Milton,	10	33	50.70
Coleridge,	8	100	37.60
Tyndale, -	8	100	31.72
Goldsmith,	8	107	26.94
Pater,	7	37	38.40
Jeremy Taylor,	6	109	52.93
Newman,	6	200	41.40
Bolingbroke,	5	173	34.86
Barrett Wendell,	5	55	25.65
Matthew Arnold,	5	71	34.41
Cowley,	5	66	25.65
Herbert Spencer,	4	68	30.38
Lowell,	4	75	31.47
Emerson,	3	122	20.58
Jeffrey,	3	100	50.65
Macaulay,	2	3338	23.43
Hume,	1	200	39.81
Gibbon,	—	200	31.21
Channing,	—	60	25.35
Dr. Bartol,	—	45	16.63
Abraham Lincoln,	—	12	16.25
J. R. Green,	—	200	29.09

The fact that these names are arranged in the order of the frequency with which the paragraph of one sentence occurs is not meant to imply that a consideration of larger numbers of paragraphs might not change the order. When not more than thirty or forty paragraphs are considered the only conclusion that can be drawn is whether the author is or is not afraid of indenting single sentences. It will, however, appear from the list that the general course of our prose development has been away from the paragraph of one sentence; but that the most polished stylists of the last twenty-five years have returned to a certain freedom in its use. The reason for the decrease in the use of the single-sentence paragraph is to be found in the historical shortening of the sentence; and the whole question will be considered in the next chapter.

Meanwhile it is enough if we can interpret the fact that this form of the paragraph has been used by representative prosaists of every period in English literature. The figures given point to the conclusion that the real test of what is a paragraph has always been *analysis*—either a logical or a rhetorical analysis of the parts of the whole composition. The final question with nearly every great writer has not been, Is this paragraph a group of sentences? but, Is this paragraph a real stadium in the thought?

This is not saying that the stadium must always be a logical step. The analysis may be purely rhetorical, the thought being raised to the dignity of a paragraph by its artistic value in the general development. Matter merely transitional from one main thought to another may thus form a paragraph, because it is, as in the old sense of the word, something important to be noticed.

So frequent, indeed, in nineteenth century prose are the transitional, preliminary, and directive single-sentence paragraphs that some critic might question whether they do not constitute by far the major part of the indented sentences. A reading of Macaulay's single-sentence paragraphs—of which there are 64 in the whole History, if we include in the text the part

published after the author's death — will convince anyone that very important logical stadia are often paragraphed in the indented sentence.

Returning to Professor Earle, we find it worth noticing that Earle's favorite author, Dr. Johnson, uses no less than 27 per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs. Nay more, in the very book in which Earle makes the dictum we have quoted, there are various excellent paragraphs of less than two sentences each. Not every author writes better in style than on style: Professor Earle is one who enjoys that distinction.

§ 2.

It is evident that there may be as many types of paragraph as there are ways of developing an idea. Exhaustively to enumerate these types would be useless and would require an arbitrary method. There are, however, certain chief types that may serve as a means of distinguishing one author from another with reference to general methods of developing a topic.

Genung was the first writer to assign definite names to paragraph types. He distinguishes first the Propositional Paragraph, of which he says: "This is the common and natural type; indeed, the other kinds of paragraphs may perhaps be regarded merely as *sections* of an ideal structure represented by this form."[1] He proceeds to explain that in this type "the subject is expressed in the form of a definite assertion, and then developed, by proof or illustration or some form of repetition." It is indeed true, as Genung says, that this is the common type; the great majority of English paragraphs are to some extent propositional. Whether it is the ideal type is a question at least open to discussion. It is certain that some of the best writing is such because it subtly avoids the massing of its main idea in a formal first sentence. Topic songs are not, for being such, necessarily better than other songs. Genung next names the Amplifying Paragraph, "whose office it is to particularize or amplify some statement made previously, or to enumerate the details of a description or

[1] *Practical Elements*, p. 210.

narrative." The name seems happy for the office described in the first clause of the definition, but is hardly descriptive of that implied in the second clause. Genung speaks also of the Preliminary Paragraph, "that gives merely the general theme of a chapter, essay, or section ; or lays out the plan of a succeeding course of thought"—and of the Transitional Paragraph.

The fullest classification of types is that of Scott and Denney.[1] These gentlemen treat first the Isolated Paragraph. Under this they separate first the type that is expository and argumentative, secondly that which is descriptive and narrative. These two general types are again subdivided. The first breaks into the logical type and the less formal types ; the logical again shows two species,— the deductive and the inductive,— while the less formal types include paragraphs of definition, paragraphs of detail, etc. The authors then proceed to the Related Paragraph, which of course shows the same structural characteristics as the Isolated, and also a few special forms—introductory and concluding, transitional and directive, and amplifying.

For the purposes of this discussion I shall feel at liberty to make use of any or all of the names that have been introduced by the authors referred to in the last two paragraphs. I shall also think of paragraphs as Loose or Periodic, and would like to suggest these terms as quite as applicable to the paragraph as to the sentence. The Loose will state the subject first. When the main conclusion is also stated first and applied in the following sentences the Loose paragraph will be Deductive : often the proposition of a deductive paragraph will form a general rule, broader than the immediate particulars will justify. The Periodic will suspend the full enunciation of the subject through most of the sentences. When the main conclusion of the Periodic is suspended to the last and made to follow from the particulars of the paragraph, the Periodic type will also be Inductive.

It will further be useful to distinguish the Compound Paragraph, where the unity of the whole depends on the union of

[1] *Paragraph Writing*, p. 47 ff.

several smaller sections. Such paragraphs, the parts separated by figures or letters, are plentiful among the analytic writers — De Quincey, Newman, for instance. The early editions of Herbert Spencer's books indicate the compound nature of a paragraph by a wider space between the first sentence of one subsection, and the last of the preceding. There is also such a thing as a Spaced Paragraph, the opposite of the compound; here, in the midst of related paragraphs, one, seeming more important or less related than the others, is widely separated from them by leads. When a group of paragraphs is separated, by spacing, from another group, and is perhaps distinguished by a large initial, we may find it convenient to refer to such a group as a Compound Capital Paragraph, in distinction from a section. In Anglo-Saxon will be found many Simple Capital Paragraphs — ordinary paragraphs introduced by capitals.

§ 3.

Most of the theorizing that has been done concerning the paragraph as an organic unit follows the line of the "six rules" of Bain.[1] These are as follows I. "The bearing of each sentence upon what precedes shall be explicit and unmistakable." II. "When several consecutive sentences iterate or illustrate the same idea, they should, so far as possible, be formed alike. This may be called the rule of Parallel Construction." III. "The opening sentence, unless so constructed as to be obviously preparatory, is expected to indicate with prominence the subject of the paragraph." IV. "A paragraph should be consecutive, or free from dislocation." V. "A paragraph should possess unity; which implies a definite purpose, and forbids digressions and irrelevant matter." VI. "As in the sentence, so in the paragraph, a due proportion should obtain between principal and subordinate statements." These six rules were illustrated and defended with the same acuteness and grasp that have made Bain perhaps the ablest writer on rhetoric since Aristotle. It is evident that the third rule is one of the historical causes of the widely diffused

[1] *English Composition and Rhetoric*, § 158–§ 179.

impression that the loose paragraph is the only right kind. Bain gave no examples of the periodic structure, though it is hard to see how he could have missed knowing plenty of good examples of it — especially in a day when everyone was reading Macaulay. Bain's six rules have indeed had a very strong influence in leading the teachers of paragraph principles to advocate a purely logical structure, and particularly an expository structure. They have re-appeared with new names and various modifications in the best text-books of the last quarter-century. They constitute the formal criterion by which Minto judges paragraph values. They are quoted by McElroy and regulate his discussion. They appear in Genung with slight variations. Barrett Wendell evidently combines the first, second, and fourth, to get his rule of Coherence. The third and sixth he includes in his theory of Mass, with the important addition of his own idea that the close of a paragraph is a more prominent position than the beginning. Scott and Denney follow Bain with one or two variations. For instance, McElroy had emphasized the principle of selection with reference to the arrangement of the parts of a composition; this principle is introduced by Scott and Denney as a paragraph principle. It amounts to what might be called Unity by Exclusion — exclusion of such details as do not contribute to the artistic effect sought. The same authors make prominent the principle of variety, which had been mentioned with some disparagement by Bain, but more fully treated by McElroy — variety in length of sentences, in their structure, in the ordering of details, in the method of building different paragraphs, and in the length of different paragraphs.

The only really new phases of paragraph theory since Bain — and the germs of both are in Bain — are Wendell's theory of Mass, and Scott and Denney's theory of Proportion.

Wendell, proceeding on his theory that the paragraph is to the sentence what the sentence is to the word, writes as follows: "We have already seen that a paragraph should possess unity; we have already seen that the test of unity in a paragraph

is whether we can sum up its substance in a single sentence. Now, clearly the chief words in a typical sentence are the subject and the predicate. Clearly, then, in general, the chief ideas in a paragraph are those which are summarized in the subject and the predicate of the sentence which summarizes the whole. Our question, then, proves one which, by implication, we have already answered. A paragraph whose unity can be demonstrated by summarizing its substance in a sentence whose subject shall be a summary of its opening sentence, and whose predicate shall be a summary of its closing sentence, is theoretically well massed."[1] This is both clever and interesting; and as a matter of theory it is probably more than half true and good. Historically, however, paragraphs as well massed as this are comparatively few: Mr. Wendell gives some good illustrations from editorials in the *Nation*, and others could be found. But it may be important for the details of a paragraph to be kept as nearly as possible coördinate in prominence. Some descriptive paragraphs, some narrative paragraphs, are not to be arranged in climax of any sort.

The law of Mass, however, must admit other means of prominence than placing main ideas where the eye will easily catch them. The relative distance between periods in a paragraph is one of these means, and the actual bulk of writing — the whole number of sentences to an idea — is another. Bain, in his section on the sentence, had said: "In description, and in narrative, it is often requisite to bring together in the same sentence several distinct facts. A sentence is then a smaller paragraph." He proceeds: "The only rule that can be observed in distinguishing the sentences, is to choose the longer breaks in the sense."[2] This is probably the hint that led to the writing of the most important section in Scott and Denney's recent book.[3] "The grammars and rhetorics, which regard the sentence as the unit of discourse, give rules for punctuation applying mainly to the

[1] *English Composition*, p. 128 ff.

[2] § 157.

[3] *Paragraph Writing*, p. 42.

proper pointing of the various parts of the sentence. Considering the paragraph, however, as the true unit of discourse, we are met by questions of punctuation which the rules usually given do not answer. The rule tells us to put a period at the close of every declarative sentence; but the important question, for the paragraph writer, often is, what is the proper place at which to bring the sentence to a close? In the paragraph, not every distinct statement is followed by a full stop. Statements which standing alone would properly be independent sentences, are frequently united into one sentence when they become part of a paragraph." The next paragraph follows Bain's words. "The rule dictated by paragraph unity for the division of a paragraph into sentences is that the full stops should be placed at the close of the larger breaks in the thought. What the sentence divisions shall be will depend upon the meaning in each case; upon the need of giving prominence to the chief assertion and of keeping the other assertions subordinate. . . . . A general statement containing the main idea may be followed by a specific statement, with only a colon or semicolon separating the two. The same rule is followed when the second statement gives a short reason, an example, a qualification, a consequence, an explanation, or a repetition." Many other cases are adduced where the grouping of particulars in a sentence tends to increase their joint unity and reduce their individual distinction.

The law thus formulated is so strongly operative in the best prose of today that it seems to me safe to proceed even farther and say: in general it is true that in the best modern paragraphs the distance between periods is inversely as the emphasis of each included proposition. Today the best prosaists put their strongest statements into short sentences. This is not exactly the same thing as saying that they use the short sentence to give prominence. Prominence they may obtain by a mass of amplifying sentences, which in turn reflects prominence on the short general statement that usually accompanies them. Again, prominence may be obtained by massing for the eye; but it will often

happen that to mass at the beginning or at the end the chief idea, may seriously limit the method of development.

One other point in rhetorical theory may be mentioned. The question was raised as far back as Campbell, whether or not a sentence may properly begin with a conjunction. This question, which, it would seem, has but one side, has been settled at last, and no one now doubts the propriety of beginning a sentence with *and* or *but* if the new idea is really coördinate with what precedes. Any conjunction — if we are to accept the best literature as evidence — may begin a sentence, though certain connectives prefer an interior position. In recent years McElroy, managing to make up a most vivacious case against a rather equivocal statement of A. S. Hill, proved beyond cavil that a conjunction may begin a paragraph. Hill had said:[1] "A paragraph indicates that there is a break in the sense too important to be bridged by a conjunction." McElroy enthusiastically proved that no end of good paragraphs could be cited to the contrary. Of course the point of the matter is, that if a paragraph so begins, it is to be taken as standing, in its entirety, in a certain relation to the preceding paragraph as a whole. We shall later have occasion to trace something of the course of intersentential connectives.

[1] *Principles*, p. 116.

CHAPTER III.

PARAGRAPH-LENGTH AND SENTENCE-LENGTH.

§ 1.

In view of the now well-known fact[1] that the English sentence has decreased in average length at least one-half in three hundred years, the question arises whether the length of the paragraph has decreased, increased, or remained stationary. Setting aside for the present the O. E. and the M. E. paragraph as inorganic, we make a count of the average number of words to the sentence and to the paragraph, in representative authors since the middle of the fifteenth century. Considerations of time compel us to choose between counting a large number of paragraphs in a few writers, or a smaller number in a considerable list. Since we are not sanguine at the start that a unit so subject to the will of the writer as the paragraph apparently is, can be expected to show close rhythmical constancy, we decide to examine the larger list, with less pretense to scientific accuracy in the individual author, and with more hope of discovering the whole general line of the development. We arrange the results of the investigation in list form, as below. The name of the author is first given, then the number of paragraphs counted (c. being prefixed to the subsequent results in the few cases where the count is not *throughout* word for word); following this comes the average length of the paragraph in words, decreasing from the author of the highest average ; then the average paragraph length in sentences ; then the average number of words in the sentence. Pains were taken to secure editions in which the paragraphing was probably that of the author's edition. In many cases first editions were fortunately secured, and when neither first edition, very early edition, nor facsimile could be had, the services of friends at a distance

[1] The fact was definitely demonstrated by Professor L. A. Sherman, in his *Analytics of Literature*, Boston, 1892.

were made use of,—friends who could examine and verify the paragraphing of the editions in question. It may be guessed that the hands of later editors have often so changed the original paragraphing as to make the process of hunting down the original anything but exhilarating. A list of the editions used is given in the *Bibliography*, p. 179ff. In the table of paragraph lengths an asterisk is placed before names where the paragraph is materially shortened by dialogue.

Author and Work.	Paragraphs considered.	Words per paragraph.	Sentences per parag.	Words per sentence.
Hooker: *Ecclesiastical Polity*,	16-Bk.I.	1868.43	45.31	41.23
Lowell: *Dante*,	50	668.30	——	——
Milton: *Areopagitica*,	33	543.88	10.73	50.70
Jeremy Taylor: *Liberty of Prophesying*,	109	502.63	9.49	52.93
J. R. Green: *Hist. of the English People*,	200	c. 456.75	15.74	c. 29.04
Lowell: *Carlyle*,	25	447.84	14.24	31.45
Burton: *Anatomy of Melancholy*,	100	380.57	9.48	40.14
De Quincey: *Opium Eater*,	89	355.42	9.16	38.81
Channing: *Self-Culture*,	60	316.81	12.50	25.35
Dr. Bartol: *Genius*,	45	297.44	17.89	16.63
Arnold: *Lit. Infl. of Acad.+Func. of Crit*,	71	293.26	8.52	34.41
Coleridge: *The Friend*,	100	292.41	7.77	37.60
Macaulay: *History of England*,	3338	291.96	12.44	23.43
Gosson: *School of Abuse*,	45	c. 288.00	c. 4.14	c. 60.00
Dryden: *Prefaces*,	180	277.55	7.22	38.44
Jeffrey: *Contribs. to Edinburgh Review*,	100	276.08	5.45	50.65
Cowley: *Essays*,	66	268.27	7.38	48.37
Pecock: *Repressour, &c.*,	200	c. 262.00	4.29	c. 61.00
Newman: *Idea of a University*,	200	254.48	6.14	41.44
Carlyle: *Richter*,	34	250.62	7.94	31.56
Lord Herbert: *Autobiography*,	40	249.00	3.30	75.60
Gibbon: *Rome*,	200	243.74	7.81	31.21
Hume: *England*,	200	238.87	6.00	39.81
Sidney: *Defense of Poesie*,	79	235.30	6.50	38.80
Swift: *Gulliver*,	200	234.22	5.85	40.00
Pater: *Style*,	37	228.37	5.92	38.54
Goldsmith: *Vicar of Wakefield*,	107	218.59	8.11	26.94
Clarendon: *History of the Rebellion*,	100	217.32	2.90	74.94
Lyly: *Euphues*,	221	211.03	5.73	36.83
Macaulay: *Essays*,	325	206.67	8.96	23.05
Bacon: *Advancement of Learning*,	110	204.67	3.41	60.03
Tyndale: *Obedience of a Christian Man*,	110	204.48	6.45	31.72

Author and Work.	Paragraphs considered.	Words per parapraph.	Sentences per parag.	Words per sentence.
Holinshed : *Chronicle*,	200	c. 204.00	——	——
Locke : *Conduct of the Understanding*,	200	202.70	4.07	49.80
Emerson : *Essays and Addresses*,	122	198.91	9.66	20.58
Bolingbroke : *Letter to Wyndham*,	173	197.68	5.67	34.86
Herbert Spencer : *Philosophy of Style*,	68	192.97	6.35	30.38
Walton : *Life of Hooker*,	106	187.19	2.90	64.00
Stow : *Chronicle*,	200	c. 186.00	c. 3.30	c. 57.00
Swift : *Tale of a Tub*,	100	185.77	4.56	40.74
Ruskin : *Sesame and Lilies*,	151	179.60	5.39	33.31
Addison : *Freeholder*,	200	173.25	4.49	38.58
Barrett Wendell : *The Paragraph*,	55	170.23	6.63	25.65
Carlyle : *Sartor Resartus*,	100	166.90	4.76	35.05
Lamb : *Essays of Elia*,	87	165.35	6.08	27.19
Burke : *Conciliation with America*,	145	163.71	6.20	26.09
Carlyle : *French Revolution*,	100	160.31	6.71	23.89
Temple : *Heroic Virtue*,	184	156.30	2.90	53.40
Webbe : *Defense of English Poesie*,	75	c. 154.00	3.10	c. 50.50
Lord Brooke : *Life of Sidney*,	200	c. 150.00	c. 2.70	c. 55.00
Defoe : *Robinson Crusoe*,	200	141.63	1.80	78.68
Abraham Lincoln : *Letter*,	12	138.25	7.60	16.25
Cranmer : *Answer to Gardiner*,	100	137.75	3.70	37.22
Ascham : *Toxophilus*,	100	135.85	3.15	43.13
Spenser : *View of State of Ireland*,	200	125.20	2.51	49.80
Browne : *Hydriotaphia*,	107	125.08	3.78	33.09
Latimer : *Sermons*,	116	117.42	5.74	20.45
Hobbes : *Leviathan*,	200	116.40	2.96	39,26
Thos. Wilson : *Art of Rhetorique*,	100	115.35	——	——
*Irving : *Sketch Book*,	129	110.23	4.12	26.73
*Fielding : *Tom Jones*,	100	101.86	2.43	41.92
Johnson : *Rasselas* and *Rambler*,	152	98.40	2.58	38.15
*Landor : *Conversations (Statesmen)*,	200	88.48	3.48	25.43
Fuller : *Worthies of England*,	100	86.77	3.70	23.45
Defoe : *Essay on Projects*,	200	84.89	1.70	49.64
*Kingsley : *Alton Locke*,	200	79.19	3.34	23.74
*Scott : *Ivanhoe*,	551	76.77	2.22	32.14
*George Eliot : *Daniel Deronda*,	212	76.57	3.42	22.39
Paley : *Moral and Political Philosophy*,	200	73.85	1.96	37.68
Selden : *Table Talk*,	81	72.90	2.17	33.58
*Sterne : *Sentimental Journey*,	200	71.37	1.95	36.50
*Bunyan : *Pilgrim's Progress*,	200	62.60	1.98	31.61
*Dickens : *Old Curiosity Shop*,	300	50.67	2.13	23.78

It is pretty clear from these figures that for relatively the same kinds of discourse there has been no steady decrease in the average word-length of the paragraph. Indeed, if we rule out Hooker's enormous sections as properly no paragraphs at all, we find a critical essay of Lowell at the head of the column with a paragraph of 668 words, while the little book that stands as in some sense the parent of English criticism, Sir Thomas Wilson's *Art of Rhetorique*, we find pretty near the end of the line, with a paragraph of 115 words. Green's *English People*, 456 words, may be contrasted with Fuller's *Worthies*, 86 words. Dr. Bartol's jerky homiletic sentence is not a third as long as Jeremy Taylor's golden period, but Bartol's paragraph is two-thirds as long as Taylor's. Pecock and Newman differ in paragraphs only seven words, though in sentences, twenty. Carlyle's paragraph (in *Richter*) is not a whole word longer than Lord Herbert's, though Carlyle's sentence is much less than half Lord Herbert's. Locke and Emerson, though twenty-nine words apart in sentence average, have practically the same paragraph. Lincoln's paragraph is within a word the same as Cranmer's, but Lincoln's sentence is 18, Cranmer's, 37. Evidently, then, the great changes in the structure of our prose have taken place within the paragraph, and have not, in four hundred years, materially affected the length of the paragraph. Probably no reputable English writer who wrote paragraphs at all has risen above an average of seven hundred words, nor has any fallen below fifty — the great difference being due chiefly to the different *genres* of prose; and these extremes have probably been reached in each generation of English prosaists.

§ 2.

We shall hardly see the full meaning of the fact that the word length of the paragraph has not decreased with the decrease in sentence length, until we note more definitely the apparent increase in the number of sentences to the paragraph. It may be worth while to re-arrange the list of authors to exhibit the course of the progress. This time we may proceed from the

lowest number of sentences (per paragraph) to the highest. As before, we star names where the results are much affected by dialogue. We add two or three new names.

	Average sentences per paragraph.	Average words in sentence.
Defoe: *Essay on Projects*,[1]	1.71	49.64
Defoe: *Robinson Crusoe*,	1.80	78.68
Bunyan,	1.98	31.61
*Sterne,	1.95	36.50
Paley,	1.96	37.68
*Dickens,	2.13	23.78
Selden,	2.17	33.58
*Scott,	2.22	32.14
*Fielding,	2.43	41.92
Spenser,	2.51	49.80
Johnson,	2.58	38.15
Lord Brooke,	2.70	c. 55.00
Clarendon,	2.90	74.94
Temple,	2.90	53.40
Walton,	2.90	64.00
Hobbes,	2.96	39.26
Webbe,	3.10	c. 50.50
Ascham,	3.15	43.13
Stow,	3.30	c. 57.00
Lord Herbert,	3.30	75.60
*Kingsley,	3.34	23.72
Bacon,	3.41	60.03
*George Eliot,	3.42	22.39
*Landor,	3.48	25.43
Fuller,	3.70	23.45
Cranmer,	3.70	37.22
Browne,	3.78	33.09
Locke,	4.07	49.80
*Irving,	4.12	26.73
Gosson,	4.14	c. 60.00
Pecock,	4.29	c. 61.00
Addison,	4.49	38.58
Carlyle: *Sartor Resartus*,	4.76	35.06
Ruskin,	5.39	33.31
Jeffrey,	5.45	50.65

[1] The numerical accounts are omitted.

	Average sentences per paragraph.	Average words in sentence.
Bolingbroke,	5.67	34.86
Lyly,	5.73	36.83
Latimer,	5.74	20.45
Swift,	5.85	40.00
Pater,	5.92	38.54
Blair,	5.93	——
Hume,	6.00	39.81
Wordsworth,	6.03	——
Lamb,	6.08	27.19
Newman,	6.14	41.44
Burke,	6.20	26.09
Bentley,	6.23	——
Herbert Spencer,	6.35	30.38
Tyndale,	6.45	31.72
Sidney,	6.50	38.80
Barrett Wendell,	6.63	25.65
Carlyle: *French Revolution*,	6.71	23.89
Dryden,	7.22	38.44
Cowley,	7.38	48.37
Lincoln,	7.60	18.23
Coleridge,	7.77	37.60
Gibbon,	7.81	31.21
Carlyle: *Richter*,	7.94	31.56
Goldsmith,	8.11	26.94
Arnold,	8.52	34.41
Macaulay: *Essays*,	8.96	23.05
De Quincey,	9.16	38.81
Burton,	9.48	40.14
Taylor,	9.49	52.93
Emerson,	9.66	20.58
Milton,	10.73	50.70
Macaulay: *England*,	12.44	23.43
Channing,	12.50	25.35
Lowell,	14.24	31.45
J. R. Green,	15.74	c. 29.04
Bartol,	17.89	16.63

Evidently, from these figures, the number of sentences in the paragraph has in general increased, while the sentence length has decreased. There have, however, been noticeable exceptions to

the rule. Both rule and exceptions will be made clearer if we arrange the list so as to exhibit prominently the decrease in sentence length.

	Average words in sentence.	Average sentence per paragraph.
Defoe: *Crusoe*,	78.68	1.80
Lord Herbert,	75.60	3.30
Clarendon,	74.94	2.90
Walton,	64.00	2.90
Pecock,	c. 61.00	4.29
Gosson,	c. 60.00	c. 4.14
Bacon: *Advancement*,	60.03	3.61
Stow,	c. 57.00	c. 3.30
Brooke,	c. 55.00	c. 2.70
Temple,	53.40	2.90
Taylor,	52.93	9.49
Jeffrey,	50.65	5.45
Milton,	50.70	10.73
Webbe,	c. 50.5	c. 3.1
Spenser,	49.80	2.51
Locke,	49.80	4.07
Defoe: *Projects*,	49.64	1.71
Cowley,	48.37	3.93
Ascham,	43.13	3.15
*Fielding,	41.92	2.43
Newman,	41.44	6.14
Hooker,	41.23	45.31 (§§)
Burton,	40.14	9.48
Swift,	40.00	5.85
Hume,	39.81	6.00
Hobbes,	39.26	2.96
De Quincey,	38.81	9.16
Addison,	38.58	4.49
Pater,	38.54	5.92
Dryden,	38.44	7.22
Johnson,	38.15	2.58
Sidney,: *Defense*,	38.10	6.50
Paley,	37.68	1.96
Coleridge,	37.60	7.77
Cranmer,	37.22	3.70
Lyly,	36.83	5.73
Sterne,	36.5	1.95

	Average words in sentence.	Average sentence per paragraph.
Carlyle: *Sartor*.	35.06	4.76
Bolingbroke, -	34.86	5.67
Arnold,	34.41	8.52
Selden,	33.58	2.17
Ruskin,	33.31	5.39
Browne,	33.09	3.78
Scott,	32.14	2.22
Tyndale,	31.72	6.45
Bunyan,	31.61	1.98
Carlyle: *Richter*,	31.56	7.94
Lowell,	31.45	14.24
Gibbon,	31.21	7.81
Herbert Spencer,	30.38	6.35
J. R. Green,	29.04	15.74
Bacon: *Essays*,	28.	——
Lamb, -	27.19	6.08
Goldsmith,	26.94	8.11
*Irving,	26.73	4.12
Burke,	26.09	6.31
Barrett Wendell,	25.65	6.63
*Landor,	25.43	3.48
Channing,	25.35	12.50
Carlyle: *French Revolution*,	23.89	6.71
*Dickens,	23.78	2.13
*Kingsley,	23.72	3.34
Fuller,	23.45	3.70
Macaulay,	23.43	12.44
*George Eliot,	22.39	3.42
Emerson,	20.58	9.66
Latimer,	20.45	5.74
Lincoln,	18.23	7.60
Bartol,	16.63	17.89

The rule that decrease in average sentence-length is accompanied by increase in the average number of sentences to the paragraph, is evidently not to be stated in the form of strict proportion. The fluctuations are considerable, even when we omit all the authors in whom dialogue plays a great part. The most noticeable exceptions to the general principle are Taylor and

Milton, whose paragraph and whose sentence are both very long. Milton had no paragraph sense except of the paragraph as a device for occasional emphasis. At least so it seems to me; though the friends of Milton's prose would probably hold that these great paragraphs represent immense thought units; that Milton's prose moves — as Wordsworth pointed out that his blank-verse strophes move — in vast circles. Taylor, whether in paragraph or sentence, was forever conceiving a unit larger (by its profusion of accessory thought) than could be logically arranged within itself. Another noticeable exception is Paley, whose sentence (37.68) is about as long as Coleridge's, but whose paragraph (73.85) is shorter than George Eliot's. Paley is perhaps the most deliberate — not the most discriminating — analyzer by paragraphs, in the history of English prose. He sets by itself everything that can possibly claim to mark a step of the whole composition. Dr. Johnson, too, has a surprisingly short paragraph (98.40); and its brevity is not due to dialogue. De Quincey has too long a sentence for a style that numbers the same paragraph length in sentences as Emerson's. Sidney, Burton, Dryden, Latimer, Gosson, Pecock, Tyndale, all come later in the list than one might expect, but Latimer and Tyndale are quite as late proportionally in sentence-length. The fact is that Tyndale and Latimer belong to the Anglo-Saxon tradition that would have developed the modern paragraph two hundred years earlier, but for Latin influences in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries.

But we may safely conclude that the paragraph of today contains at least twice as many sentences as did that of Ascham's day. Indeed if we accept Macaulay's *England* as a present-day norm, the past increase in the number of sentences per paragraph will be far more than one hundred per cent. in three hundred years.

§ 3.

It is easy now to interpret that decrease, in the use of the single-sentence paragraph, which we noted in the preceding

chapter; likewise the relatively stationary word-length of the paragraph; likewise the decrease in sentence-length and the increase of the number of sentences to the group.

Evidently there has been from the earliest days of our prose a unit of invention much larger than the modern sentence, and always separated in the mind of the writer from the sentence unit, of whatever length. In other words, men have thought roughly in long stages before they have thought accurately in short ones. The process of composition is always relatively an intuitive one; the process of writing is relatively an analytic one. The writer conceives his paragraph topic before he develops it, though of course in the process of development the associations of the symbols used may lead him afield. He thinks, so to speak, in successive nebulous masses, perceiving in each a luminous centre before he analyzes the whole. The size of these nebulous masses, or, to change the figure, the size and the complexity of the mental picture, is conditioned by the mental power of the thinker. One man thinks in longer paragraphs than another, though of course he may deliberately analyze his larger paragraph-units into smaller ones, for the benefit of his less nimble reader.

Whether, now, this large unit of thought — always represented by the paragraph device — shall be broken into short propositions or not, is another question. In any case the mental unit is the same: the unit of the excessively long period is the unit of the paragraph. In Tyndale and Latimer the tendency is to analyze into short sentences, with a view to assisting ready comprehension. In Spenser and Defoe and Lord Brooke, the impulse is to construct a single long sentence, partly in the vague hope of indicating more closely the relative value of propositions, and partly out of sheer garrulity. Again, though it is not the most latinized writers who use most freely paragraphs of one sentence, yet the long period brought in by the early classical influence is of course a prime force in restraining the tendency to resolve the paragraph into short sentences.

The paragraph as we know it comes into something like settled shape in Sir William Temple. It was the resultant of perhaps five chief influences. First, the tradition that the paragraph mark or the indentation distinguishes a stadium in thought; this tradition is fairly strong in fifteenth and sixteenth century writers, barring the few most completely under Latin influence. Second, the Latin influence, which was rather towards disregarding paragraph mark or indentation as a sign of anything but emphasis: the typical writer is Hooker. Third, the natural genius of the Anglo-Saxon structure. Fourth, the beginnings of popular writing—what may be called the beginning of oral style, or consideration for a relatively uncultivated audience. Fifth, the study of French prose, in this respect a late influence, allied in its results to the third and fourth influences.

Of these influences the second was the common enemy of all the rest. It tended, however, to ally itself with the first as soon as it found its own power unequal to the task of making Latin-English prose intelligible, and for a time we have the single-sentence paragraph of great length. The Latinists still think themselves bound to group many clauses in one sentence, but they feel the natural genius of the language conflicting with their wish. They cannot discard their large unit of thought—that would be, to them, philosophic retrogression. They cannot—in the uninflected language—go on indefinitely prolonging the period. They determine to make long sentences still, and, when the periodic structure fails, to secure distinction and intelligibility for the long unit by paragraphing it. Hence arises the interminable paragraphed sentence, not strictly periodic, by any means, but articulated by all the points of the *periodos*—(: ; , .) Even men as early as Ascham and Bacon are full of such amorphous things. I suppose Bacon[1] felt that he had a rather

[1] I am aware that there is ground for laying the blame of some of this punctuation upon the printer. The fact does not alter our point of view materially. The writers themselves used commas oftener than they did colons and periods, where colons and periods ought to have been. And though the printer has

pretty unit in such paragraphs as appear on p. 69 or p. 64, of the first edition of the *Advancement*. The one on p. 69 is devoted exclusively to Antoninus Pius. Something very symmetrical and satisfactory in disposing of Antoninus Pius in a single sentence and a single paragraph!

Antoninus Pius, who ſucceeded him, was a Prince excellently learned; and had the patient and ſubtile Wit of a Schoole-man: Inſomuch as in common ſpeech, (which leaves no virtue vntaxed) hee was called Cymini Sector, a Caruer, or diuider of Comine ſeede, which is one of the leaſt ſeedes: ſuch a patience hee had and ſetled ſpirit, to enter into the leaſt & most exact differences of cauſes: a fruite no doubt of the exceeding tranquillity, and ſerenity of his minde: which being no wayes charged or incumbred, eyther with feares, remorſes, or ſcruples, but hauing beene noted for a man of the pureſt goodneſſe, without all fiction, or affectation, that hath raigned or lived: made his minde continually prefect and entyre: he likewiſe approached a degree neerer vnto Chriſtianity, and became as Agrippa ſaid vnto St. Paul, Halfe a Chriſtian; holding their Religion and Law in good opinion; and not only ceaſing perſecution, but giuing way to the aduancement of Chriſtians.

Lord Brooke and Spenser are perhaps the two greatest offenders in this matter of the confusion of the period and the paragraph.

At last the Latinists came to see that their units of thought were too large to be developed in any one sentence of an uninflected language. The later Latinists were hurried on to this conclusion by the excesses of certain of their own number. They found it impossible to read some of Clarendon's clause-heaps,

always been something of a tyrant, it is folly to imply that our old authors, so scrupulous about most things, could not have controlled the punctuation of their printed books. The authors of the sixteenth century did make paragraphs in their manuscripts, for the manuscripts that we have show them. If the printer tampered with the paragraphing as he did with the punctuation, why then, there is nothing for it but to hold the author responsible for not correcting him.

nay, even some of Burton's defied them; and doubtless more than one classicist began to remember passages in their own beloved Hooker that had once passed for profundity, but now began to look like mere tangle. Mr. Saintsbury has applied to these inextricable sentences of Clarendon and Burton the name of "sentence-and-paragraph heap"[1]—a name hardly less awkward than the thing itself. This is not to be confused, by the way, with the single-sentence paragraph, which may or may not coincide with it—does so in early prose often, in modern very rarely. A better word for what Mr. Saintsbury means is "clause-heap," a term that he employs in his preface to Burton in the recent second volume of Craik.[2] In the "heap," "clause is linked on to clause till not merely the grammatical but the philosophical integer is hopelessly lost sight of in a tangle of jointings and appendages." As we said before, it is not the writers of the most hopeless clause-heaps that write the largest number of paragraphed sentences; the "heap" belongs chiefly to the Latinists. When, however, one of Clarendon's heaps is paragraphed, the result is something disheartening. The first single-sentence paragraph in the edition of 1712 (p. 4) has 242 words; the eighth (p. 28) has 166, and the thirteenth (p. 45) has 195.

As authors like these, able men, though slow to put themselves in touch with the people, began to perceive the hopelessness of their self-appointed task, they began to shorten the sentence, retaining the paragraph. The wide popularity of the new school of vernacular writers—if we may speak of Bunyan as belonging to any school—inspired literary men with the new desire to reach a larger public. Authors began to put themselves in the place of their readers, and write as if to an average man. Soon the superiority of French prose began to be felt as a vehicle for the expression of the clearer, more straightforward,

[1] English Prose Style, in *Specimens of English Prose*, p. xix. *History of Elizabethan Literature*, p. 42, *et al.*

[2] Craik's *English Prose*, vol ii., p. 117.

less subtle phases of thought. From this time on, the development of the modern paragraph is a matter of degree of skill rather than of stylistic method.

Such, in the rough, is the history of the paragraph in the most critical period of its history. The particulars of this period will be given in Chapters VI. and VII.

§ 4.

One other general question may properly receive consideration here: whether the length of the paragraph follows any rhythmical law, as, for instance, one that renders the average length a constant quantity, in successive large groups of paragraphs. To illustrate, will two books written in the same *genre* of composition, by the same author, yield anything like the same paragraph averages?

This question is rendered the more interesting by the recent investigations of Professor Sherman and Mr. Gerwig, to the effect that the sentence-length, the percentage of predications to the period, and the percentage of simple sentences, each tends to be constant in successive large groups of sentences, as of 500. In his discussions of the constancy of the sentence-length, however, Professor Sherman seems to give hardly weight enough to the differences caused in an author's style by time. He mentions several instances[1] where the sentence-length remains unchanged by change of years; and my own observations have furnished others equally notable, none more so than that of Swift, who varies not a whole word in twenty-eight years. But Sherman gives no exceptions. Nay, he says, "Even Carlyle showed no change for worse or better, in respect to sentence proportions, between the Edinburgh *Essays* and his *Frederick the Great*." But it should likewise be said that between the *Essays* and *Frederick* the average sank (in the *Revolution*) fully one-third. In the formative period of our prose similar changes are very common. Sidney's sentence dropped in five years from 75 to 38.

[1] *University Studies*, I., No. 4, p. 349.

We approach the general question of the constancy of the paragraph, with an author as far back as Browne. We find between the *Hydrotaphia* and the *Religio* a difference of seven sentences to the paragraph, making the word-length of the *Religio* nearly thrice that of the *Hydrotaphia*. No constancy here. We try Taylor's *Liberty of Prophesying*, comparing the sections, beginning with the fourth. The word-averages run: 480.75, 535.71, 788.33, 563.14, 648.66, 518.00, 450.00, 681.75, 294.57, 418.92, 193.71. The paragraph-length by sentences runs: 8.37, 7.46, 14.16, 11.26, 10.83, 9.33, 9.16, 14.00, 5.71, 9.76, 4.78. Since the sections vary from 10,000 words to 3,000, we feel that the sentence averages are not so bad as we expected. Such averages as 535, 563, 518, or 9.33, 9.16, 9.76, show at least interesting coincidences. We hardly get anything more to the purpose before Dryden. Cowley, for example, varies wildly in his essays.

Dryden's *Satire* yields 256 words, while two combined essays, *Translation* and the *Parallel between Poetry and Painting*, yield 277 words. Defoe's *Essay on Projects* shows 1.90 sentences, and *Crusoe* 1.87, which is delightfully close; but the sentence so shoots up in *Crusoe* as to make the word-length of the paragraph thrice as great heie as in the *Essay*. Swift's sentence, as we have seen, stays at 40, but *Gulliver* shows a paragraph of 234 words, against 185 in the *Tale of a Tub*. Johnson helps us in the word-length, showing 102 for the *Rambler*, 92 for *Rasselas*; but meantime the sentence has gone down a third. Hume is not unsatis factory. The first 105 paragraphs of the *History* (26,197 words) yield an average of 249 words; the next 95 paragraphs (21,578 words) yield an average of 226 words. We try the *Vicar of Wakefield* by chapters, not expecting too much. The word results, omitting fractions, run: 177, 183, 289, 161, 309, 302, 181, 298, 570, 236, 106, 215, 232, 344, 209, 182, the sentence average running, 27, 35, 28, 31, 26, 28, 25, 28, 25, 24, 25, 21, 22, 29, 26, 28. If we average the averages of the first eight chapters against those of the second eight, we shall have 237.96 words or 8.30 sentences

for the first eight, and 262.07 words, or 10.23 sentences for the second eight.

Evidently Dryden and Hume are the only men thus far on whom we can put much reliance.

Coming to the present century we examine first *Ivanhoe* by chapters. The averages run: 129, 73, 106, 62, 56, 55, 98, 70, 61, 53. The sentence average is more stable, thus: 2.92, 2.03, 3.33, 2.19, 1.88, 2.16, 2.61, 2.25, 2.13, 2.11. Evidently Scott clung with some monotony to the ideal of two sentences a paragraph. The first five *Essays of Elia* yield the following results: 171, 134, 230, 147, 125. The averages by sentences are: 7.12, 5.00, 8.00, 5.57, 5.94. We try Irving's *Sketch Book*, the first five sketches. Result: 157, 140, 137, 83, 104. The averages by sentences are: 5.14, 6.25, 4.94, 3.33, 3.65. Thus far our own century is no improvement—if improvement it be called—on the eighteenth.

We try Macaulay; the *History of England* by volumes. Results: 258.11, 251.52, 325.44, 336.50, 306.90. This is remarkable. The averages for the first two volumes are practically the same. Here the writer was governed by something very like a rigid rhythmical law. A similar, but less strong, rhythmical sense, appears in the last three volumes. But why the sudden rise between the second and third volumes? Two reasons suggest themselves. As Mr. Stephen somewhere remarks, Macaulay's fullness of knowledge began to hamper him a little in the later volumes. In other words, he became somewhat verbose from plenitude of things to say. Since, now, Macaulay wrote primarily with the paragraph unit, the diffuseness would naturally affecat unit first. He would naturally keep to his sentence length—or does so, at any rate—but would use more propositions to amplify a given integral thought. Another reason, though perhaps rather remote, suggests itself. Volume two was finished by 1848. Four years later (July, 1852), after the materials for the third volume were collected and partly written up, Macaulay broke down in health from the disease that finally ended

his life. For months before that time there are ominous passages in his journal and letters, complaining that the task of composition is a burden, that he is no longer capable of vigorous exertion. Now I do not wish to be understood as maintaining the existence of any very close connection between paragraph-length and heart-disease. But a tired man is likely to be loquacious, if he tries to talk, and when a writer has incomplete control of his brain he is likely to be at first diffuse in his composition, and later, incoherent. I am aware that Trevelyan says of Macaulay: "The habit of always working up to the highest standard within his reach was so ingrained in his nature, that, however sure and rapid might be the decline of his physical strength, the quality of his productions remained the same as ever. Instead of writing worse, he only wrote less. Compact in form, crisp and nervous in style, these five little essays are everything which an article in an Encyclopædia should be."[1] The five essays referred to are: *Atterbury*, 1853, *Bunyan*, 1856, *Goldsmith*, 1856, *Doctor Johnson*, 1856, *William Pitt*, 1859. It can hardly be granted that these essays are as compact and crisp in style as the earlier essays. It seems to me that proof enough to invalidate Trevelyan's position on this point lies in the fact that Mr. Gerwig found that the percentage of simple sentences in the early essays is much higher than in these later ones. It is worth while to quote Mr. Gerwig's figures, which show a steady decrease in the percentage of simple sentences. Now this decrease took place as Macaulay's physical strength failed; the figures are therefore favorable to the theory I have set concerning the rise in paragraph-length.

Work.	When written.	Number periods.	Av. Pred. per period.	Simple sent.
Macaulay,[2] *Royal Soc. of Literature*	1823	100	2.03	44
Dante	1824	100	2.15	38
Milton	1825	895	2.07	38
Machiavelli	1827	693	1.88	47
History, Essay on	1828	719	2.18	40

[1] *Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay*, p. 664.

[2] *University Studies*, Vol. II., No. 1, p. 22.

Work.	When written.	Number periods.	Av. Pred. per period.	Simple sent.
Dryden	1828	100	2.65	29
D'Arblay	1843	918	2.31	32
Addison	1843	1331	2.22	32
Atterbury	1853	240	2.35	34
Bunyan	1854	245	2.19	31
Goldsmith	1856	263	2.29	33
Average			2.17	36

We shall hardly find another author as stable in his averages as Macaulay. Carlyle shows pretty nearly the same average in two books, *Sartor* (166.90) and the *Revolution* (160.31) ; but the average in an early essay, *Richter*, 1827, is 250.62. Emerson's *American Scholar* yields 184.60, the *Divinity School Address* 210.91 (10.10 sentences) and *Self Reliance* 201.12 (10.04 sentences).

We may not, therefore, conclude from the small number of paragraphs we have been able to examine, that the paragraph-length is relatively as constant as the sentence-length. But in Macaulay and proportionately in authors of regular methods, there is a general tendency toward approximate uniformity in the paragraph-averages of different sections of work.

CHAPTER IV.

RECENT INVESTIGATIONS IN PROSE-FORM. THEIR BEARING ON THE HISTORY OF THE PARAGRAPH.

§ I.

The recent investigations that have most bearing on the history of the paragraph are those of Professor L. A. Sherman,[1] on the questions of literary sentence-length in English prose, the coördination, subordination, and suppression of clauses, and the new articulation of clauses. Professor Sherman has demonstrated that the English sentence has dropped about one-half its length since Shakspere's time; he holds that in the matter of connectives, our prose has passed successively through a coördinative, a subordinative, and a suppressive stage; and that it has shown very great decrease in formal predication.

Manifestly each of these lines of investigation has its bearing on the development of the paragraph. The relation of the short sentence to the paragraph is a vital one, and whatever causes have produced the one have doubtless affected the other. The question of the historical use of conjunctions — especially of inter-sentential conjunctions — bears directly upon the history of coherence in the paragraph. The question of the decrease of predication affects the paragraph quite as vitally as these preceding questions, though not quite so apparently. For, if an author omits many predications within the sentence he has a type of mind which will tempt him to omit predications *between* sentences, *i. e.* to omit transitional sentences. Clearly the omission of transitional sentences affects very emphatically the coherence of the paragraph. We shall therefore examine Professor Sherman's theories at some length.

[1] *Analytics of Literature*, Chapters xix-xxvi. *University Studies*, Vol. I., Nos. 2 and 4.

First, then, regarding the origin and tendency of the short sentence. This sentence Sherman attributes to the introduction of conversational style into literature. The explanation seems to me correct, and the point important. Some stress, however, must be laid on the probability, already pointed out on pages 44–46, that the final adoption of the short sentence and the paragraph was partly due to despair on the part of the periodic writers. These could not go on forever without seeing the hopelessness of trying to introduce full Latin idiom into English; nay, even of thinking with logical precision in a kind of sentence devoid of most of the means of coherence so richly present in the Latin sentence.

But Professor Sherman has also demonstrated that as the short sentence is introduced the average sentence-length acquires a very strong tendency to become a constant quantity in successive groups of, say, 500 periods or more. From this interesting fact he concludes:

"The evidence seemed to indicate the operation of some kind of sentence-sense, some conception or ideal of form which if it could have its will, would reduce all sentences to procrustean regularity."[1]

But it seems to me that this statement implies rather more than is warranted by the mere tendency toward constancy in successive large groups of periods. Is this tendency finally to destroy the long sentence? How are we to account for the long sentence in the midst of such an oral style as Macaulay's? Is it due merely to a survival of classical influence? When our prose has quite acquired conversational urbanity is the long sentence, whether periodic or loose, to be a thing of the past?

Perhaps the paragraph has something to do with the answer to these questions. A sentence is long or short in Macaulay according to its importance in the paragraph. A dozen clauses may be bundled together in one period to show that the whole group is no more emphatic than the neighboring

[1] *University Studies*, Vol. I., No. 4, p. 353.

proposition of half a dozen words. For the sake of this sense of proportion, Macaulay will make almost the same words a whole period in one paragraph, a mere clause in the next. In the best modern paragraphs I think it is, in general, true, that the distance between full stops is inversely as the emphasis of each included proposition. If this be the case, the distances between periods will not soon be reduced to approximate uniformity, however much influence the oral tendency may have upon the order of words in the sentence.

It will further on be seen that, while the English sentence-average has pretty steadily decreased, and while it has kept the tendency towards constancy that was fully developed by Swift's day, yet, *within* the limits of the given series of sentences that yields a given average, the degree of variability has steadily increased. Macaulay's long sentences are very long, as indeed Sherman has noted. It is perhaps a possible thing that the time will come when the sentence-average will no longer be a constant quantity in each author, but will be wholly regulated by the paragraph-structure.

§ 2.

We are now ready to examine the bearing upon the paragraph of the decrease in the use of conjunctions and of the decrease in predications. But at the outset we find both of these phenomena referred to by Professor Sherman as belonging to the "analytic" or "oral" style. Before we can make it clear whether these phenomena benefit or hurt the paragraph-structure, we must know the exact meaning of these terms "analytic" and "oral," as applied to style. This we must know, even at the risk of a long and tiresome detour.

Analysis means psychologically the process of abstraction—the conscious recovery of the intermediate term or terms in the process of association. Analytic thinking proceeds step by step, with full consciousness of the relation between parts; a style that incarnates such thinking may be called analytic; such a style is abstruse, philosophic. On the other hand a thinker may proceed

by relatively concrete terms; he may not see the third term in the process of association, but may pass intuitively to his remote conclusion. In so far as a style reproduces this sort of thinking it may be called synthetic or intuitive.

But it is possible and natural to use the terms, in criticism, with a force exactly opposite to the strict psychological ones. Sherman[1] speaks of an analytic style as *synonymous* with an intuitive style. He is evidently brought to this apparent paradox by having previously spoken of the short sentence as analytic, the long one as synthetic. Yet his words on this point seem also to have some psychological implication: —

"The analytical principle as observed in Channing and Macaulay appeared to mean, Put in a simple sentence no more than can be brought before the mind pictorially or symbolically in a single view. If this meaning be yet but potential, not yet translated into successive propositions, let it be realized to the mind and expressed by instalments in some logical order, each fact or judgment, since an integral part of the whole, in a sentence by itself. But the synthetic principle amounts to an impulse to develop the whole meaning in some way within the limits of a single sentence."[2]

In this explanation of the analytical principle Professor Sherman evidently means that the analytic style tends to ratiocination —tends to follow the steps of the thought and express them all so as to conduct the reader by easy stages. But is not this kind of analytic manner the exact opposite of the analytic manner described by Sherman elsewhere? "The analytic manner communicates as we have seen by points, but has nothing to do with making the points large or small, frequent or widely separated. It is the business of the reader to fill them out to a superficies of sense."[3] "Analytic or intuitive styles differ according to the leap or omission of thought

[1] *Analytics*, p. 303.

[2] *University Studies*, Vol. I., No. 4, p. 355.

[3] *Analytics*, p. 301.

between. It is the length of the leap rather than the shortness of the periods that makes an author seem laconic. No one is conscious of Bartol's staccato quality in passages where his thought is most sustained. Channing, when he writes sentences as short, but with lesser gaps of meaning, seems as smooth as Newman."[1]

Evidently, then, the terms analysis and synthesis as applied to style are likely to create confusion. For the immediate purposes of this paper it seems better to substitute other terms, granting, if need be, that the new terms are not intrinsically better and are open to being called pedantic.

Let us have four new terms, two corresponding to analysis and synthesis *in form*, two to analysis and synthesis *in thought.* To the style in which the sentence of maximum frequency is short—say twenty words or less—let us assign the name Segregating. The opposite of this style, then, the style that brings its clauses together in whole blocks (as old Thomas Fuller would have said) or (as Minto has improved the expression) in flocks, will be the Aggregating style. When a style proceeds by leaps, omitting the intermediate steps, we may (speaking psychologically, not metaphysically, of course) call it Intuitive; and its opposite, which omits no step, we may call Redintegrating. Nay, if this last named manner proceeds not by real and rational analogies but by mere association of contiguity, we may indulge in so large a name for it as Impartially Redintegrative. We may save the word Abstract chiefly for the style whose vocabulary is abstract; and Concrete for the opposite style.

According to this cumbrous, but, I hope, definite terminology, Macaulay's style would be at once segregating and redintegrating. Macaulay asks you to supply nothing but conjunctions; nay, he often expands into a sentence of transition a relation that De Quincey would get rid of with a *however*, and that Emerson would leave you to guess at. Landor would be intuitive, and, except in his most sustained passages, would doubtless

[1] *Analytics*, p. 303.

be segregating as well. Carlyle in the *French Revolution* would be intuitive and segregating, in *Sartor Resartus* intuitive and aggregating. De Quincey would be redintegrating and aggregating, in spite of strong flashes of imagination now and then.

So much for the word analytic ; now for the word oral.[1] Professor Sherman speaks of the analytic sentence as belonging to the oral style. By analytic sentence in this sense he means primarily the short sentence. "What makes short-period styles is the oral sentence-sense given free play as in ordinary talk."[2] This is easily understood and easily believed.

But there are other characteristics of the oral style. We gather from one part of Professor Sherman's discussion that the oral style is analytic, in the psychological sense — that it tends to explain its subject by giving the successive steps by which the main conclusions are reached. "Though it is much more convenient to put integral thoughts in single sentences, such form manifestly handicaps every reader to whom the thoughts are new. What I may have in my mind cannot be transferred bodily to another's. I can only use a series of signs from which the reader reconstructs the fabric I have builded in my brain. But before he can put together a thought identical with my own, I must evidently take mine to pieces, and signify to him each part, and how it must go into place. Thus, while the attainment of the meaning to be expressed is a synthetic process, the first step in the act of expression is clearly analytic."[3] In other words, the oral style, in order to make perfectly clear to the reader the thought that has been intuitively perceived, introduces a string of inter mediate predications leading to a final and chief predication.

But in another place, Professor Sherman leads us to infer

[1] All discussion of the nature of oral style must of course be inadequate until the psychologist and the physiologist settle by experiment certain elementary questions regarding the actual sentence of conversation. *cf.* p. 158.

[2] *University Studies*, Vol. I., No. 4, p. 363.

[3] *Analytics*, p. 287.

Neither Sherman nor — as far as I can detect — Lewis has considered that an oral style presupposes in strictness a hearer rather than a reader.

apparently the opposite. He has said that the course of English prose reveals a great decrease in the use of verbs; that, "If we note the conversation of men dexterous with language, or the style of writers not too formal or self-conscious, we shall observe many expressions like 'when a boy,' or 'if in London,' or 'because of the failure,' etc. Each of these stands for what would have been expressed in the stage just before by complete clauses: as, 'when I was a boy,' 'if I am or shall be in London,' 'because A or B failed,' and in a stage yet earlier by propositions joined by coördinate connectives."[1] Now he says: "The suppression of clauses and economy of predication, we cannot doubt, are further manifestations of the same instinct, which, as we have seen, has relieved the English sentence of half its weight since Shakespeare's times, and is now interposing its veto against a higher average than two predicates per sentence." By "weight" Professor Sherman means both the number of clauses or predications that sentences exhibit, and the number of words in their sentence-averages.

In his chapter on "The Weight of Styles," Professor Sherman develops at some length this matter of predication-suppression; the investigation has been carried still farther by the recent thesis of Mr. G. W. Gerwig,[2] *On the Decrease of Predication and of Sentence Weight in English Prose.* The result of the investigations goes to show a steady increase in percentage of simple sentences. In many authors it shows a very high per cent. of "clauses saved" — *i. e.* predications implied but not expressed. The means by which notions can be conveyed without formal predication are many: absolute constructions; appositives; conjunctions without copulas; prepositions for conjunctions, copulas, or conjunctions plus copulas; phrases for clauses; suggestive words for phrases; present and past participles. All of these devices, with the exception of the use of present and perfect active participles for temporal, conditional and concessive

[1] *Analytics*, p. 277.

[2] *University Studies*, Vol. II., No. 1.

clauses,[1] Professor Sherman apparently thinks of as belonging to the organic oral style.

If now we revert to Professor Sherman's first reference to the oral style as a process of analyzing complex units into integral parts, and compare this view with the conception of the oral style as suppressive of predication, are we not conscious of a lurking contradiction — perhaps an undistributed middle in that phrase, oral style? In the first case we have a style that assumes comparative ignorance on the part of the reader, and only average acuteness. In the second we have a style that assumes more and more knowledge, more and more intuitive power on the part of the reader, and if we push the theory we may have a style that would be possible only between imaginative geniuses. In the first kind of oral style the reader supplies next to nothing in the way of interpretation; in the second kind the reader supplies next to everything. In the first sense Macaulay, except for an occasional very long period, would be the typical oral writer. In the second sense perhaps Carlyle in the *French Revolution* would be the type. The sentence-length in the *History of England* is the same to a word as that of the *French Revolution;* but the actual meaning conveyed by Carlyle's sentence is certainly several times as much as that of Macaulay's.

Now, which of these styles is the true oral style? Macaulay's is far the easier to read, even if we make allowance for certain idiosyncrasies in Carlyle's vocabulary and structure. The simple fact is, indeed, that half of Carlyle's idiosyncrasy lies in the way he evades predication by the use of significant, though odd and irregular words. Since we must settle the question for ourselves, so far as immediate use of terms is concerned, I should say that Macaulay's style has the better claim to the adjective oral. He knew that the use of many condensed expressions — clause-evasions — was likely either to retard the immediate progress of understanding, or to vitiate seriously the comprehension of the

[1] *Analytics*, p. 309, Footnote. Here these particular participial uses are referred to as for the most part inorganic and unoral.

thought if the rate of reading were increased. He assumed small literary training or appreciation on the part of his audience. To put it bluntly, he wrote down to them.

For a readable style must not be heavy — *i. e.*, must not convey unnecessary notions—nor, again, can it be very weighty — *i. e.*, convey many new notions in each sentence. But clause-evasion, while it increases ease of reading when the clause suppressed can be instantly supplied, does not permit the slow stream of thought to eddy around the idea, as De Quincey would say, and so grasp it if new. In Macaulay the percentage of clause-evasion is not high; according to Mr. Gerwig, the saving by "substitution of present and past participles or by the use of appositives," amounts in the *Essays* to 5.06 per cent. White, of Selborne, saves twice as much, Dr. Barrow nearer thrice, though both wrote longer sentences and used more predications than Macaulay. Greely, writing far fewer simple sentences than Macaulay, yet reaches 17 per cent. of clause-evasions.

The oral style, then, as we shall use the term, will show the segregating sentence, but the redintegrating method — short sentences, closely consecutive. It will show an absolutely high proportion of simple sentences, but not an absolutely high proportion of clauses saved. When the short sentences omit the minor steps of the logical order and there is made a strong demand on the reader's interpretative powers, we shall speak of the style as intuitive, with oral sentence-length. Emerson and Bartol would be assigned to this style.

It might, indeed, be maintained that it is difficult to prove the short sentence an absolute necessity to the oral style, even in this limited sense. It might with some show of reason be asserted that the real oral unit is the short, loose clause; that the long, loose sentence, with its succession of brief propositions, represents a very common phenomenon of conversation. In ora narrative, for instance, the speaker often groups together great numbers of clauses in this way, letting his voice fall only at the end of the series. This would occur at least partly in proportion

as the apprehension of the audience was quick. With a duller audience it might be necessary to let the voice fall after each short clause, inflection thus aiding comprehension. But we may consider this loose sentence as a species intermediate between the bold oral style and the subtly subordinative literary style.

There is still another way of defining oral style — namely, to make it a relative term that alters in value with the mental powers of the audience. For in conversation our style is supposedly dictated, to a large extent, by the rate of mental response on the part of the hearer. We predicate intermediate steps — we explain, in short — or we assume such intermediate steps, according to the presence or the absence of the appreciative flash in the hearer's eye. Thus, in talking to a person as well informed as we, we proceed with lightning rapidity. We not only omit predicates, both immediate and intermediate, but we indulge in all manner of contractions and elisions, many of them highly unliterary, almost illiterate; nay, we convey as much by stress and gesture as by word. This is one kind of oral style, to be sure; if we carry the theory far enough we can secure an oral style that is not style at all, as, for instance, in talking to a superior who will guess one's meaning from one's first word. Thus the oral style would increase in intuitiveness just in proportion to the intuitive powers of the audience.

In the actual case of the history of our literature the oral style, in this relative sense of the word, has undergone certain manifest changes according to the change in audience. Beginning with the change from the scholastic audience of the sixteenth century to what Mr. Bagehot would call the masculine, common-sense audience of the eighteenth, the oral style would be progressively analytic — *i. e.*, segregating and redintegrating. Proceeding from the Augustan prose to the latest subtleties of what Mr. Saintsbury would call "marivaudage," the oral style would be progressively synthetic — *i. e.*, intuitive and segregating for one species of it, intuitive and aggregating for another species.

The most of Professor Sherman's remarks tend toward a definition of oral style as thus relative and elastic. He says, "Heaviness then is a relative term. The styles of those who, like Newman, address the educated exclusively, will not be heavy to their proper public though unintelligible to common readers."[1] But again, exactly to the contrary of this: "To comprehend a style which condenses clauses to phrases requires as much literary preparation as to read Keats."[2] With these sentences compare his one explanation (p. 57) of the style as analytic, and his other explanation of it (p. 58) as clause-suppressive. But in his latest article on the subject he has a sentence or two which look toward calling a halt to the extension of the term to all intuitive styles. "Some of the most polished of present stylists studiously eschew seeming better than conversational writers. The style of the future is likely to be yet more informal and easy than the best examples of this sort now extant. It will not probably abound in numerical averages as low as Bartol's or Emerson's and will be less disjointed and staccato. An informal organic sentence need not be long, but must not be weighed down with predications. Effective individual styles not hard to find in the periodical literature of these days will average, perhaps, as high as twenty words of numerical length, yet show not above 1.60 predications per sentence, nor less than 65 per cent. of simple sentences."[3]

This is as near as Professor Sherman comes to discussing the question of what percentage the oral style should show of implied predications and *what percentage of simple sentences to a given complex thought.* The passage is at least less trustful of the intuitive manner being properly oral than this sentence from the Analytics: "Hence the ideal style will have a maximum number of intuitive sentences; and that style is lightest that comes nearest to the first impressions of the mind." In the limited view of the oral style taken in our own discussion, "the style that

[1] *University Studies*, Vol. I., No. 4, p. 363.

[2] *Analytics*, p. 296.

[3] *University Studies*, Vol. I., No. 4, p. 361.

comes nearest to the first impressions of the mind" will never be the lightest until the popular audience becomes one of literary experts. That the increasing culture of the people perhaps tends towards such an event may be true. But meantime the oral style of the future, while not sacrificing quite so much for clearness as Macaulay's, will probably be very far more expansive than Emerson's.

To focalize the discussion upon the question of the paragraph is now easy. The oral style proceeds, as we have seen, by expanding into short sentences a given integral thought. When, with Temple, the paragraph may be said to acquire unity, each paragraph comes to represent an integral thought thus internally segregated. The principle to be formulated then is: *From the moment of the establishment of unity, in the development of the English paragraph, the oral sentence-structure means decreasing the number of predications in the period and increasing the number of propositions in the paragraph, in proportion to the author's conception of his reader's intuitive power: it being further premised that the intuitive power of the writer exceeds that of the reader.*

We have, therefore, found from this long and diffuse discussion, that the oral structure, *i. e.* a redintegrating and segregating style, is an essential feature of the best paragraph; though we shall not deny that good paragraphs may have a large number of intuitive statements. We have now to inquire how far the omission of conjunctions is consistent with such a style; whether *coherence* is hurt or helped by this omission.

Professor Sherman says: "As there are no conjunctions in the mind — that is, no pictorial or symbolic representations of them as ideas — the style that most nearly follows thought will omit them when possible, or where formal merely."[1] There certainly can be no doubt that many of the most effective recent styles show a minimum of conjunctions. But is it quite sure, that because conjunctions do not occur to the mind as substantive images, they are usually formal and useless? It is a hard thing

[1] *Analytics*, p. 305.

— some have said an impossible thing — to say how a complex thought "looks" in the mind. But it is probably safe to say that the minute we try to transfer that elusive thing, a thought, into the mind's eye, it seems to take the form of a mental image in which the notions are in some way grouped or graded. We are conscious that some ideas are principal and some subordinate. The more clearly we preceive these inter-relations of ideas, the more analytic and logical is our thinking. To see them at all clearly in their grouping requires a quiet eye, a dispassionate mind. The moment thought is disturbed by emotion away fly the delicate middle-shades of the picture; we see the substantive points in the stream of thought, but we see them so strongly that we do not notice their inter-relations. Now conjunctions are the result of an effort to express these un-named relations. The sense of relation may, indeed, be so strong that a mind like De Quincey's will take a long sentence in the effort to capture a gradation that the conjunction is not equal to. But when the mind is impassioned the sense of proportion between ideas is badly disturbed. The mind cares nothing for the inter-relation of facts — it wants the facts themselves. Accordingly impassioned prose — the literature of the will — may omit conjunctions with good effect. There are also a few relations so obvious that the conjunctions which express them can safely be omitted in any prose. Such is the relation of cause and effect, which is sufficiently conveyed by juxtaposition of cause and effect in separate clauses. But for the most part prose cannot be accurate without the use of conjunctions. Prose that omits them runs the risk of over-statement or under-statement. Prose that can safely run this risk is limited to a field that forms but a small part of the best literature.

Accordingly we are not surprised to see that, of the men whom Professor Sherman quotes as illustrative of the new articulation, most of those who show low percentage of conjunctions are not the ones whom we praise most as stylists. The list includes Gladstone, Lowell, Emerson, Theodore Parker, Bartol, T. T.

Munger, and Dr. Holmes. I am not saying that these men are poor stylists; but I am saying that they could hardly have been able — with their sparing use of conjunctions — to get the exquisitely true and clear effects that Newman, Pater, and Arnold secure. But let us also confess that presence of conjunctions in quantities is no proof of subtlety; else why should Donald G. Mitchell stand next, in Sherman's list, to Newman, and before Pater? Nor let any man accuse me of putting down Lowell as a lesser critic than Arnold, simply because Lowell's thought is occasionally too fertile for his style to be exquisitely true and clear.

We now turn to consider the oral style as affecting *proportion* in the paragraph. The hurt that the oral style has done on the whole to the proportion of the paragraph, is, out of all comparison, less than its beneficial effect. But in such writers as use the short sentence to a maximum degree, the emphasis of the paragraph is evenly spread over each proposition. The question will be discussed with somewhat more fullness under the head of Macaulay. For the present it is enough to say that the asyndetic structure and the exclusive use of the short sentence are "terse and intense forms," and as such have their dangers. It is hardly enough to say, with Sherman, [1] "We are not to write always in terse and intense forms. The intermediate notes are normal both to those who have as yet not passed beyond them, and upon occasion to all of us." It is much nearer the truth to say as Sherman at last does: [2] "Indeed, the ideal style is either coördinative, subordinative, suppressive, asyndeton, and at times even, for a little perhaps, synthetic, according to selective acts of the mind that are indeterminate, or at least not yet determined."

Yes, man lives by many a generous idea that can never be put into short sentences.

[1] *Analytics*, p. 312.

[2] *Analytics*, p. 312.

CHAPTER V.

ALFRED TO TYNDALE.

The related paragraph plays no structural part in Old English prose. There is no conscious attempt to advance by stages. The chief merit of the prose is sequence — not exactly coherence, which assumes some logical method — but general consecutiveness. In this quality and in the short sentence there are, however, present two prerequisites of paragraph structure. But this old prose is by no means utterly formless. In much of it there is a kind of instinctive sentence-grouping that reveals the natural tendency of the language toward the paragraph and away from the long period. If this seems fanciful to anyone let him take the unbroken text of the preface to Alfred's version of the *Cura Pastoralis* and try whether it be harder to determine the natural divisions of this discourse, or those of a chapter in Capgrave or Malory.

The Old English writers are, however, the originators of our isolated paragraph. By this I mean that many of their so-called chapters are so short as to illustrate the structure of the isolated paragraph. Chapters of 200 words, like many in Alfred's *Bede*, are not chapters in the modern sense; they are tiny whole compositions, corresponding as inventional units to that particular modern editorial paragraph which, set off by itself, is at once complete in itself and related to its neighbors.

The longer pieces of prose are usually broken up by the paragraph-marks of the rubricator. Whether the author ever dictated the position of these marks it is impossible to say. There are certain autograph manuscripts that contain such marks, but the fact proves nothing. There were four distinct uses of the marks: (*a*) to note a logical section; (*b*) to note an emphatic point; (*c*) formally to distinguish sacred names; (*d*) to orna-

ment and distinguish titles, colophons, etc. Of course manuscripts differ in the degree of success with which these points, especially the first, are attained. Some are very stupidly divided, others very cleverly. In some the emphasis mark predominates, in others it is almost absent. In most manuscripts all four principles are apparent.

The habit of marking for emphasis, whether at the beginning of a rational section or in the midst of it, was not without its influence in after days. The emphasis-tradition is in full play even in Milton. It is partly responsible for one glaring fault of the sixteenth century — that of beginning a paragraph one sentence late, so to speak; of not noticing the turn in the discourse till this arrives at an emphatic new point.

In spite of the emphasis-principle, it is not rash to say that the Old English paragraph has in a general way good unity of subject.[1] Coherence and proportion and mass it has not.

ALFRED.

Of works by Alfred there are but three contemporary manuscripts, namely, the Hatton and Cotton MSS. of the translation of Gregory's *Pastoral Care*, and the Lauderdale MS. of the *Orosius*.

The last named MS. forms the basis of Sweet's text of the *Orosius* (E. E. T. S. 79). Sweet has broken the text into paragraphs that make natural steps in the story. Out of curiosity I made a count of words, sentences, paragraphs, sentence-length and paragraph-length in the first book, according to the Lauderdale MS. and Sweet's pointing. The result was 9862 words, 381 sentences, 66 paragraphs; average sentence-length, 25.8; paragraph-length in words, 151.68, in sentences, 5.8. The limits of

[1] I have felt very strongly the difficulty of making other than very general statements concerning the presence or absence of unity in an author's paragraphs. It is not a very hard matter to decide whether or not a paragraph has digressions; but it is a far harder task to observe and state all the principles on which a composition may properly be divided. In the main, I have attempted to distinguish but two general types of unity — the purely logical and the rhetorical or picturesque.

word-length in the paragraph (34–453) show a field of variability less wide than Channing's or De Quincey's. If we take the sentence-length as in any sense organic (as I, for one, should be inclined to do), the figures go to show that Alfred did not know enough Latin to hurt his English *structure*, many commentators to the contrary notwithstanding. To illustrate, let me quote a passage (Sweet's ed., p. 171). In translating, the king has paraphrased (rather freely) a Latin sentence of forty-six words, by a very fair English paragraph of four sentences or ninety-one words.

Anno ab urbe condita CCCCLXXXIII, Mamertinis auxilia contra copias et Ap. Claudium consulem cum *exercitu* misere Romani: qui *tam celeriter* Poenos *superavit*, ut *ipse rex* ante se *victum* quam congressum fuisse prodiderit; qui *exin*, *cum pacem rogaret*, ducentis argenti talentis *multatus*, *accepit*.

Æfter þæm þe Romeburg getimbred wæs feower hunde wintrum 7 Lxx(x)III, sendon hie him Appius Claudius þone consul mid fultume. Eft, þa hie togædereward foron (mid heora folcum), þa flugon Pene, swa he eft selfe sædon, 7 his wundredan, þæt hie ær flugon ær hie togædere genealæcten. For þæm fleame Hanna, Pena cyning, mid eallum hio folce wearð Romanum to gafolgildum, 7 him ælc geare gesealde twa hund talentana siolfres: on ælcre anre talentan wæs Lxxx punda.

In the translation of the *Pastoral Care*, the paragraph-mark plays no part. But the preface falls naturally into excellent sentence-groups that show something like real coherence and explicitness of reference.

The translation of the *Boethius* is not paragraphed in the MS. There are a few sections, *e. g.* in *Otho*, a. vi., before § 2, chap. 37; § 4, chap. 39; § 2, chap. 40. The paragraphing of the Bohn text is entirely the work of the editor.

The Old English version of *Bede's History* has until recently been ascribed with confidence to Alfred, on the authority of Ælfric and William of Malmesbury. Dr. Thomas Miller, however, in his recent edition (E. E. T. S. 95, pp. lvi., lvii.) believes

it to be of Anglian origin. Miller's text is collated from (*a*) the Tanner 10 of the Bodleian, (*b*) the Corpus Christi College, Oxford, (*c*) the Cambridge — Kk. 3, 18. The Cambridge alone numbers the chapters. In making a count from Book I., I have therefore followed the chaptering of the Cambridge. I have a few times departed from Miller's pointing, but not to make any sentence shorter. The *Quæstiones* of Augustine, placed by Miller in Cap. 27, I have not counted, since in the MSS. they stand at the end of Book III. The first book then contains 6898 words,— since only twenty-one of the original thirty-one chapters remain in the Cambridge MSS. This gives an average of 222.5 words to the paragraph, the limits of fluctuation being 49–838. There are 7.84 sentences in the paragraph. These figures, like those of the *Orosius*, are suggestive of nineteenth century lengths.

There are few exceptions to unity in the paragraphs of the *Bede*. The style is less flexible and subordinating than that of the *Orosius*, the coördinative stage of the language being rather painfully evident. There are 506 *ands* in the first book, or one to every twelve words.

WULFSTAN.

The *Homilies* of Wulfstan, written in vigorous native prose, are extant in numerous manuscripts. None of the homilies shows many paragraphs — most have two or three. The general structure of the prose is logical. As Napier[1] has pointed the sentences and placed the indentations, both sentence and paragraph are longer and yet compacter than those of the *Orosius*.

ÆLFRIC.

The manuscripts of Ælfric's *Lives of Saints* are not paragraphed. The chapters of the *Latin Grammar* are numerically divided into sections, and there are a few other paragraph-marks. But the book is not literature and its paragraphs are not to be considered.

[1] *Wulfstan*, herausgegeben von Arthur Napier, Berlin, 1883.

Sweet, in editing selected *Homilies* from the Cambridge MS. (unparagraphed), has broken the text into sections, which I have counted, again out of curiosity. The first nine homilies contain 18,854 words, 723 sentences. The sentence-length is therefore 25.8 words; the paragraph-length is 176.2 words, 6.75 sentences. Both sentence and paragraph are slightly longer than Alfred's (also punctuated by Sweet); but if we consider the increase in learning that occurred in the intervening century, it is surprising that the increase in the length of the sentence is so small.

Ælfric's style exhibits decided advance over his predecessors in power of graceful transition. One paragraph leads to another, and there are varied devices of explicit reference.

THE ANCREN RIWLE.

After a long period barren of prose, we come to the *Ancren Riwle*, 1220. Here we have an alert and cultivated style. The MSS. are divided systematically into books, and these into simple capital-paragraphs. The main fault of this style is the abrupt transition between these paragraphs.

In the *Ancren Riwle*, the English sentence-length is still untouched by Latin influence. The first 61 paragraphs (509 sentences, 12,049 words) yield a sentence of 23.67, a paragraph of 197.5. The sentence is the same, within a quarter of a word, as that of Macaulay's *England.* The paragraph is four words longer than that of Emerson's *Self Reliance*, eight words shorter than that of Arnold's *Literary Influence of Academies.*

THE AVENBITE OF INWYT.

Dan Michel's *Ayenbite of Inwyt*, 1340, is a wooden piece of prose. The paragraphing is systematic to the extreme, each section being introduced by a set phrase (usually a numerical one) and forming one step in the long list of virtues and vices. The average length of the sections is only 131 words, yet a quarter of them have no unity. The sentence average is low— only 21 words. It is noticeable that the paragraphing does not

follow that of the French original, if that happens to be represented by MS. Cleopatra Av. Fol. 17,713.

MANDEVILLE.

The *Voiage and Travaile* was written about 1356. The English version was first printed by Pynson. The edition of 1725 (7) based upon Cotton MS., Titus c. xvi, and collated with other MSS. and printed versions, is the standard edition, and was reprinted by Halliwell-Phillips, 1839, 1866, 1883.

This editor in his Additional Notes says cheeringly: "The chapters are very differently divided in various MSS. Some have no divisions at all." I have, however, counted ten paragraphs, from Halliwell's edition of 1839, to show something of the sentence-length of this early and important piece of prose. The first ten paragraphs average 337 words, 9.5 sentences, the sentence-length being 35.48. Although this is a higher average than any we have yet found, and manifestly shows Latin influence, it is still suspiciously short for the time and the man, and leads us to fear editorial tampering.

WICLIF.

Wiclif's *Bible* is divided into chapters, but not into paragraphs or "verses." Most of his other works are scantily paragraphed. In these original works his unit of composition was evidently large and its construction logical. So good is the analytic consecutiveness of his work that it would be possible to divide it into reasonable stadia. By modern principles of punctuation his average sentence is not excessively long; it varies from 30 to 35 words in different essays. This moderate length is the more noticeable because the diction is freely latinized.

CHAUCER.

The prose works of Chaucer are four: the translation of *Boethius, De Consolatione Philosophiæ*, the *Melibœus* and the *Persones Tale;* the *Treatise on the Astrolabe*, dedicated to his son.

The *Boethius* has been edited by Morris (E. E. T. S.) from the Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 10,340, and the Cambridge Univ. Lib. MS., I., 3, 21. In the Cambridge MS. the parallel oblique virgules (//) are used in place of the ¶. In the Additional MS. the rubricator has been so lavish with his vermilion, that but for his rational work in the latter part we should think him gone paragraph-mad. At first every sentence begins with the mark. Of the first 100 paragraphs only three have two sentences each, one has three, and ninety-six, one! The average length of these 100 is 29.51 words. Later on, *e. g.*, Morris, p. 164 ff., the paragraphing is good; but, if we take the MS. as a whole, evidently most of the paragraphs are false. Some ardent Chaucerian monk thought every sentence worth emphasis; and nine times in 100 paragraphs he puts for emphasis a second mark within the line.

The two prose pieces in the *Canterbury Tales* are differently divided in different MSS., but always somewhat arbitrarily. The judgment shown by the rubricators of the *Melibœus* is particularly bad. The paragraphing of the *Persones Tale* is better, though not uniformly so. By the Harleian MS. this tale yields a paragraph-average of 8.26 sentences,—about 290 words. Chaucer's prose sentence in this tale is only a word shorter than Mandeville's. On the other hand the sentence of the *Boethius* is considerably shorter than Mandeville's.

The *Astrolabe* is so far from being a piece of orderly prose, much less literature, that I have not attempted to find in it a paragraph-sense so manifestly lacking even in Chaucer's best writing.

PECOCK.

Reginald Pecock's *Repressour of Over Much Blaming of the Clergy*, was edited by Churchill Babington, and published in the Rolls series in 1860. The paragraph-marks, alternately red and blue, are distributed in the Canterbury MS. with no particular skill. The modern editor, like so many other modern editors, has felt free to print his text without a trace of these marks, and

to substitute paragraphing of his own. The effort only assures us that Pecock's unit was the long period. Babington's paragraphs average about 262 words, and he is not able to reduce the sentence to less than 61. Pecock's work is one of the first examples of purely controversial prose. His order of procedure is formal, and his good logic makes his work divisible into rough stages.

CAPGRAVE.

The MS. of Capgrave's *Chronicle* I have not been able to consult. The edition of Hingeston (Rolls series, 1858) prints a page of it in facsimile. Here the first letter in each sentence is marked by a red stroke. For this or for some other unaccountable reason, Hingeston tends to paragraph each sentence by itself.

MALORY.

Caxton's *Le Mort Darthure* was admirably edited and reprinted in 1889, thanks to the conscientiousness of Dr. Oskar Sommer. The most of the chapters are unbroken, as is the long preface of Caxton. The paragraphs in the remaining chapters are indicated sometimes by Caxton's mark [P. 11, Fig. 36] at the head of a line after spacing in the preceding line, sometimes by the mere mark in the midst of a line, sometimes by the mark and a short space in the midst of a line. The narrative is remarkably sequent, and the chapters have a certain unity. The paragraph-marks, delicious as their glossy thickness looks to the eye of the book-lover who turns the pages, are quite as likely to serve the purpose of mere emphasis as to guide the eye to a new section. But it is half the pleasure of reading to watch these signboards of Caxton's naïve taste, and see how unerringly he plumps you down a fat mark at the exciting moment.

FABYAN.

Pynson's edition (1516) of Fabyan's *Concordance of Histories*, was carefully reprinted by Henry Ellis in 1811. In this edition the paragraph-mark is used only before titles, etc.; indentation marks the paragraphs. In the first part of the book these are

short; the breaks become rarer as the writer approaches the events of his own day, and when he moves out of his usual cold and formal style into some show of enthusiasm he forgets to paragraph at all. In the early part of the work the unity of subject is almost unimpeachable; in the latter part there is no paragraph-unity whatever. The sentence is ponderous, and often confused with the paragraph. Sherman found its average length to be 63.02.

MORE.

The first English version of the *Utopia* was made by Ralph Robinson. Robinson's second edition (1556) has been reprinted by Arber. The ¶, in shape much like Caxton's, appears before each main section. Indentation is employed but sparingly, but always when the words are those of a new speaker in dialogue. The real steps are indicated by marginal notes.

More's best English appears in the *Historie of Richard III.*, where the idiomatic short sentences give something like proportion to the long sections. His most logical paragraphing, however, occurs in the polemical tracts. Here the steps are short, the arrangement of the sentences is compact, and the whole effect animated.

CHAPTER VI.

TYNDALE TO TEMPLE.

Before Tyndale the paragraph cannot be said to have any structural character. Those qualities which the old English prose did contribute to the modern unit, namely, the qualities of consecutiveness and loose order of propositions, came to their first culmination of development in the style of Tyndale. And in the long period from Tyndale to Temple we have the battle-ground where the principles of the modern unit were victorious in a contest with various enemies. At the beginning of this period stands our first tolerable paragrapher, Tyndale; at the end of it stands our first recognized organizer of the paragraph, Temple. The old English traditions represented in Tyndale were perpetuated by one line of vernacular writers throughout the Elizabethan and Jacobean period, and opposed by another line. The contest has ended when we reach Temple, and the older tradition is victor.

TYNDALE.

The Obedience of a Christian Man.

Total paragraphs considered....................	100
Average words per paragraph..................	204.48
Average sentences per paragraph................	6.45
Average words per sentence....................	31.72
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs..........	8
Limits of fluctuation in paragraph word-length....	33–450

In Tyndale's *New Testament*, 1525 (Arber's reprint), the Caxton mark is uniformly employed, and yet nearly always it is preceded by a spaced line. The index is also used, both for emphasis and for reference. The paragraphs are shorter than those of the 1611 version, and are not subdivided.

Of the *Obedience* I consulted Day's edition, 1572. The paragraphing is admirable for Tyndale's time, and good if it is Day's

and not Tyndale's. At least 75 per cent. are loose. Each topic is logically expanded by illustration, defense, etc. Of the 347 paragraphs in the book about 25 per cent. are of the periodic type, and perhaps 10 per cent. follow a strictly inductive order.

Parallel construction occurs frequently, owing partly to imitation of Hebrew models, partly to the writer's natural oratorical directness. It is often extended to groups of paragraphs—each being made to correspond in arrangement with its predecessor. The following example will give an idea of the internal parallelism; the order of course is periodic. "Who dried up the Red Sea? Who slew Goliath? Who did all those wonderful deeds which thou readest in the Bible? Who delivered the Israelites evermore from thraldom and bondage, as soon as they repented and turned to God? Faith verily, and God's truth, and the trust in the promises which he had made. Read the xith of Hebrews for thy consolation."

LATIMER.

First two Sermons before Edward. (Arber reprint.)

Whole number of paragraphs		116
Whole number of words		13621
Whole number of sentences		666
Average words in paragraph		117.42
Average sentences in paragraph		5.74
Average words in sentence		20.45
Sentence-length of first sermon		23.76
Sentence-length of second sermon		18.+
Paragraph-length of first sermon		242.68 (28 ¶s)
Paragraph-length of second sermon		77.55 (88 ¶s)
Average predications per sentence	(Gerwig)	4.75
Per cent. of simple sentences	(Gerwig)	13
Per cent. of clauses saved	(Gerwig)	2.78

Latimer's style, as appears partly from the sentence-length, is colloquial and vernacular. Accordingly when his paragraphs are good they are modern in tone and are really admirable. But great unevenness marks them in unity, as in length. The coher-

ence is due, not to connectives, but to the impassioned rush of the thought.

CRANMER.

Answer to Gardiner, I., *The Sacrament.*

Total paragraphs considered	100
Total words considered	13,775
Average words per paragraph	137.75
Average sentences per paragraph	3.70
Average words per sentence	37.22
Per cent. single-sentence paragraphs	17

Cranmer is our first great master of the loose sentence. It is not uncommon to find in him a loose sentence of more than 100 words, put together with much skill in avoidance of tags — a skill elsewhere unknown in his day — and with a sense of prose rhythm highly remarkable in any day. Since his paragraph is short, this gift at the long loose sentence is often no help to his paragraph. In the best sections the rhythm extends to the whole, sentence modifying sentence as subtly as Ruskin's do.

Cranmer's sequence is such as might be expected from a clear and orderly mind. The rare dislocations occur, as in the case of Tyndale, from unconscious reversion to certain fixed moral themes. The coherence is largely dependent upon modern devices — inversions, demonstratives, etc., rather than conjunctions. *And* is the one coördinate that is abused as an initial connective. The per cent. of initial illatives is small, probably not over five per cent. The great majority of the paragraphs are loose.

ASCHAM.

Toxophilus, 1544. Arber's reprint, 1868.

Total paragraphs considered	100
Total words considered	13,585
Total sentences considered	315
Average words per paragraph	135.85
Average sentences per paragraph	3.15
Average words per sentence	43.13[1]
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	9
Limits of fluctuation in word-length of paragraph	10–564

[1] Sherman found 49.60, for 500 periods.

Scholemaster, 1570. Arber's reprint, 1870.

Total paragraphs	329
Total words	c. 47,250
Average words per paragraph	c. 143.62
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	18
Per cent. of simple sentences	19
Average predications per sentence (Gerwig)	3.49
Per cent. of clauses saved	4.31

Though the *Scholemaster* was not printed till Ascham had been dead two years, the paragraphing shows no signs of having been tampered with; for the method in this book is the same as that in the *Toxophilus*, written twenty years before, namely that of paragraphing the smallest possible stadia; and the word-length is about the same in both books, although the first is dialogue. The shortness of these stadia has led Professor Sherman[1] to say that out of 329 paragraphs in the *Scholemaster* Ascham admits 148 false ones. I suppose Professor Sherman means that these brief paragraphs should have been grouped into larger ones. He further says that in at least fifty-five cases the period and the paragraph are wrongly treated as one. For one I should defend a good share of these single-sentence paragraphs as either marking true stadia or good transitions. Some of the others I should agree in assigning to bad logic. The rest may be explained by remembering the emphasis-tradition which we have noticed as a legacy from Old English rubricators. Such sentences as the following Ascham paragraphed (sometimes with the obsolete ¶) not out of logical confusion, but to make them prominent, in accordance with a use of the paragraph then perfectly understood but now forgotten:—

"This he confesseth himself, this he uttereth in many places, as those can tell best who use to read him most."

"The like diligence I would wish to be taken in Pindar and Horace, an equal match for all respects."

"Budæus in his commentaries roughly and obscurely, after

[1] *Analytics*, p. 291.

his kind of writing; and for the matter, carried somewhat out of the way in overmuch misliking the imitation of Tully.

"Phil. Melancthon, learnedly and truly.

"Camerarius largely with a learned judgment, but somewhat confusedly and with over-rough a style.

"Lambucus largely, with a right judgment, but somewhat a crooked style."

The trouble with Ascham's style is, however, less that his paragraphs are too short than that his sentences are too long. A sentence of nearly fifty words leaves no room for proportion in a paragraph of 140.

The *naïveté* of Ascham's manner precludes any complex coherence, and involves great abuse of conjunctions. Sherman[1] has noted 'that 61 out of 329 paragraphs in the *Scholemaster* begin with *ands*; and that[2] 24 paragraphs begin with *buts*, six with *yets*. If now we observe the use of sentence-connectives (not clause-connectives) in 300 sentences of the *Toxophilus*, we shall find that 168 of the 300 periods are connected by conjunctions or brief conjunctive phrases. The list is varied, and serves to make the reference very explicit, in spite of the abuse of coördinatives. Nearly all of these connectives are initial, as will appear from the list given below, where the internal sentence-connectives are placed in the second column. From the total number (181) 13 should be deducted for repetitions (by double connectives), to get the number of connected sentences.

SENTENCE-CONNECTIVE.	Initial.	Interior.
But (yea but)	23	..
For	30	..
And	49	..
In dede	4	..
Also	..	6
Yet	8	2
Contrariwise	1	..
So	4	..
Thus	1	..

[1] *Analytics*, p. 271.

[2] *Analytics*, p. 427.

SENTENCE-CONNECTIVE.	Initial.	Interior.
Now	7	..
Therefore	15	2
Then	3	1
Will	6	..
First	1	3
Again	4	..
Furthermore	1	..
Moreover	2	..
Wherefore	1	..
At the last	..	1
Likewise	2	1
Nor	2	..
To be short	..	1

Ascham's rhythm in the sentence and the paragraph is monotonous. He has plenty of balanced Euphuistic sentences, that help his coherence, but the balance is monotonous. And where else in the language but in the *Scholemaster* can be found an author who will write you *seven* consecutive paragraphs of exactly twenty-five sentences each, the group being followed by three paragraphs of just fifty sentences each ? I half suspect that Ascham (or the printer) told those groups off on his fingers.

On the whole, Ascham's place is midway between the vernacular writers to whom the paragraph is a natural structure, and the Latinists, who have no paragraph-sense at all.

HOLINSHED.

Chronicle, 1577.

Total paragraphs considered	200
Average number words per paragraph	c. 204

The marginal note is rarely used; the old mark ¶ (single-stemmed) less rarely.

The paragraphing of *Holinshed* is monotonously regular. The narrative paragraphs are often good in unity and in concentration — as for example the well-known account of Macbeth. In the descriptive passages there are numerous digressions, and the dramatic grouping of details, that marks the best narrative passages, is lacking.

STOW.

Summarie of the Chronicles of England, 1561.

Total paragraphs considered	200
Average words per paragraph	c. 186
Average sentences per paragraph	c. 3.26
Average words per sentence	c. 57
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	41

The paragraphing of Stow's *Chronicle* (1561) is inorganic and false. The author unnecessarily confounds the sentence with the paragraph. The best that can be said of the style is that its profuse use of subordinating conjunctions keeps the coherence tolerably good.

LYLY.

Euphues, B. I., *Euphues and his Euphœbus, Euphues and Athos, Letters.*

Total paragraphs considered		279
Total sentences considered		1600
Average words per sentence	(Sherman)	36.83
Average words per paragraph		c. 211.03
Average sentences per paragraph		5.73
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs		33
Average predications per sentence	(Gerwig)	3.50
Per cent. of simple sentences	(Gerwig)	17
Per cent. of clauses saved	(Gerwig)	10.21

The paragraphing of *Euphues,* B. I., and *Euphues and his Euphœbus,* is regular, 4.87 sentences being the average in the first case, 4.10 sentences in the second. In *Euphues and Athos* the average rises to 5.54 sentences, and in the diffuse style of the *Letters* it mounts to 10.44 sentences. Taking *Euphues* as Lyly's typical piece of prose, we find some improvement over Ascham in general paragraphic structure. The sentence has shortened and the paragraph lengthened. Lyly's sentence, however, is still in bondage to the colon, and we find a very high per cent. of single-sentence sections.

The unity of the paragraphs is wider than Ascham's—the per cent. of false sections is reduced. But there are plenty of

digressions. Paragraphing for emphasis is rare, although the obsolete paragraph-mark is occasionally found in the text. A common violation of unity occurs in paragraphing a sentence that introduces a speech. In the formal manner of *Euphuism* such introductory sentences are felt as transitional paragraphs.

Of Lyly's coherence a good word may be said in one particular. If, on one hand, the balanced structure tends to make the flow of sequence intermittent, on the other, the habitual parallel construction constantly assures the reader of the general onward movement. Other means of coherence are slighted; particularly, initial connectives.

The less said of Lyly's proportion and massing, the better. His excessive illustration spoils both. His introductions are tedious, and, though there is usually a sentence-topic, the attempt to find it is sometimes to hunt for a needle in a haystack.

GOSSON.

Gosson's *School of Abuse* shows a sentence of about 60 words and a paragraph of something like 288. The paragraph is the unit of division, since there are no chapters. Gosson's *Euphuism* is strong enough to keep his paragraphs good in parallel structure. But his divisions are mechanical, and the unity so defective that only the marginal notes keep the reader from floundering hopelessly.

SIDNEY.

Arcadia, 1590.

Total paragraphs considered	200
Average words per paragraph	c. 444
Average sentences per paragraph	5.92
Average words per sentence	c. 75
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	10

Defense of Poetry, 1595.

Total paragraphs	79
Average words per paragraph	235.30
Average sentences per paragraph	6.05
Average words per sentence	38.80

Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs		10
Per cent. of simple sentences	(Gerwig)	10
Average predications per sentence	(Gerwig)	3.98
Per cent. of clauses saved	(Gerwig)	9.27

Saintsbury's criticism of Sidney as one of the first authors of great popularity to introduce the "sentence and paragraph heap," is entirely just as regards the *Arcadia*. The sentence reaches enormous lengths and is endlessly jointed and rejointed to do the work of the paragraph. The number of paragraphed sentences is not high, however,— a fact noticeable in the worst offenders in the matter of the clause-heap.

Unity is but indifferently observed in the *Arcadia*. Chapters are preceded by a list of subjects of the paragraphs ; these topics, though often felicitously put, are manifestly not matters of prevision.

In turning from the *Arcadia* to the *Defense*, we turn to an utterly different structure. The sentence drops nearly one-half its length. Most of the tags disappear. The new style is incomparably better than the old.

In his recent edition[1] of this work, Professor A. S. Cook apparently regards most of the original paragraphs as lacking unity. Of the original 79 paragraphs he breaks up 37 into several paragraphs each. He has likewise thrown together many others, so that the total number of paragraphs in Cook's edition is 93. Usually these changes do improve the unity, although sometimes, even when the logical unity is thus increased, a certain loss is felt in the distribution of emphasis.

In Sidney's edition there are 8 single-sentence paragraphs. It is a curious fact that in Cook's edition this number is more than doubled. That a modern editor should make 19 such sections as against an original 8 shows clearly enough how flexible the idea of a paragraph as a group is today, as it has always been.

Praise may be given the general sequence of Sidney's paragraph : there is no difficulty in following him, even when he

[1] Sidney's *Defense of Poetry*, ed. A. S. Cook, Boston, 1890.

rambles. Explicitness of reference is secured by free use of connectives; in the *Defense* something like 35 per cent. of his sentences begin with conjunctions. Parallel construction of successive periods is frequent.

WEBBE.

A Discourse of English Poetrie, 1586. Arber reprint, 1870.

Total paragraphs considered (Arber, pp. 21–36, 52–72)	75
Average words per paragraph	c 154
Average words per sentence	c 50.50
Average sentences per paragraph	3.10
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	14

Webbe's *Discourse* is paragraphed in most erratic fashion. The unity of the longer paragraphs is, strange to say, better than that of the short ones. In his task of enumerating and characterizing the English poets, Webbe abandons all paragraph method. A glance at the sentence-length as compared with the paragraph-length shows that Webbe marks no advance in general structure, but rather a retrogression.

PUTTENHAM.

The Art of English Poesie, 1589, generally ascribed to George Puttenham, is systematically written, but its paragraphing is inorganic and without significance. The unit of composition is the short chapter. The fourteenth chapter has but 72 words; in like manner, many other chapters are so short as to form isolated paragraphs and so are left unbroken. When Puttenham does paragraph he is often moved to do so for emphasis.

SPENSER.

View of the Present State of Ireland, written c. 1596, published 1633.

Total paragraphs considered	200
Total sentences considered	503
Average words per sentence	(Sherman) 49.8
Average words per paragraph	c 125.20
Average sentences per paragraph	2.51
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	48

Average predications per sentence............	(Gerwig)	5.44
Per cent. of simple sentences..................		8
Per cent. of clauses saved....................		6.74

The most divergent views are held today regarding Spenser's prose-style. One recent writer declares his prose "practically unreadable;"[1] another calls Spenser's "an excellent prose style;"[2] says that "it is unaffected, clear, vigorous, straightforward;" "that it is perfectly simple and by its very simplicity impressive and forcible."

As is usually the case, the truth probably lies between these extremes. Spenser is far easier to read than Hooker, whom there have always been some people to read; he is free from obscurity or serious ambiguity. On the other hand, he is by no means perfectly simple, but often very complex; at times the most careful attention is necessary to keep the main idea of the sentence clearly in mind through the long series of clauses.

Spenser belongs to the line of classicists who were beginning the experiment of extreme sentence-lengths. In this respect, therefore, and in the comparative shortness of his paragraph, he makes no advance. On the other hand, we are surprised to find how few of his very long periods are really periodic. Evidently a punctuation by strict modern standards would reduce the sentence very greatly without hurting the syntax at all.

It surprises one to see how straightforward and close-knit is the development of topic. The sequence is admirable. It is assisted by a very large proportion of conjunctions and by many initial relatives. Out of 300 sentences, 164 are connected by conjunctions or conjunctive phrases. The list is as follows, the number of connected sentences being found by deducting from the total number (181) 17 for repetitions (due to use of double-connectives):

Connective.	Initial.	Interior.
But..........................	39	..
So..........................	12	10
And..........................	30	..

[1] Sherman, *Analytics*, p. 274.

[2] John W. Hales, in Craik's *English Prose*, Vol. I., p. 455.

CONNECTIVE.	Initial.	Interior.
Then	5	11
Therefore	5	3
For	13	..
Indeed	1	4
True it is	1	..
Also	..	9
Neither	2	1
Yet	3	2
Thus	2	1
Yea	1	0
Besides	2	2
Lastly, etc	2	3
Notwithstanding	1	..
And yet	3	..
Nevertheless	3	..
Now	5	1
Now then	1	..
Again	..	1
Or	1	..
Thus far	..	1

From what has been said it is easy to infer that there is little proportion in Spenser's prose. There is no skillful varying of short sentences with long. The frequent use of illatives and of subordinating conjunctives proper does, indeed, convey some sense of logical prominence given to the main proposition ; but, on the other hand, the very frequent use of initial relatives (Spenser's besetting fault) goes far to destroy the proportion thus obtained.

In sequence alone, then, and in the looseness of his sentence-structure, is Spenser in the line of paragraph development.

HOOKER.

Ecclesiastical Polity, 1594–1618.

(Gerwig.)

Average predications per sentence	4.12
Per cent. of simple sentences	12
Per cent. of clauses saved	8.73

Mr. Vernon Blackburn, in the first volume of Craik's *English*

Prose, refers to Hooker as a man who "perpended every paragraph."[1] I cannot possibly make out what this means. It seems to me that of all cultivated men who ever wrote English, Hooker perpended paragraphs the least. The early editions of the *Ecclesiastical Polity* are, so far as I know, quite without indented paragraphs. The Stansbye edition in the Astor library (1639?) shows sixteen main sections in the first book, but no sub-sections. These sections average 1875 words each. Manifestly a related paragraph of 45.31 sentences, the sentences being on the average 41.23 words long, is no paragraph at all. The paragraph-length — section-length — is a little shorter in the second, third, and fourth books, and decidedly shorter in the fifth — the one in which Hooker's hand is least evident. Keble, finding himself lost in these wastes of words, broke up the whole text in his edition of 1836; the paragraphs thus formed average about 260 words. Can it be that Mr. Vernon Blackburn is referring to these paragraphs when he says that Hooker perpended each?

The real truth about Hooker's paragraphs is that he made none; that, as Minto puts it, "each sentence stands on its own bottom."[2] Not that there are no short sentences; there are as many as in Cardinal Newman.[3] But the long sentences are exceedingly periodic, complex and involved. Hooker's *Polity* stands as the most deliberate attempt to abandon the paragraphic tendencies of the vernacular and mold English prose to the syntax of the Ciceronian period.

HAKLUYT.

Principal Navigations, 1598.

Average predications per sentence		4.22
Per cent. of simple sentences	(Gerwig)	12
Per cent. of clauses saved		17.54

In Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations, &c., of the English Nation*

[1] P. 467.

[2] *Manual*, p. 220. Minto speaks, however, as if Hooker made paragraphs.

[3] *Cf.* Sherman, *University Studies*, Vol. I., No. 4, p. 363.

(ed. of 1599) the paragraphing is as mechanical as in Stow or the early chroniclers. The voyages are usually reported in the form of a ship's log, each day's record paragraphed by itself. Again, in some parts of the book the habit of "itemizing" reduces paragraphs on the one hand to a few words; while in other parts there are frequent long sections, broken only by the marginal note.

GREENE.

The Elizabethans were perplexed as to the right way of paragraphing conversation. Sidney relapsed into hopeless confusion on the subject. Greene in his earlier work observes no distinct method except now and then to make a transitional step between the stadia that contain dialogue. But in *Menaphon* (1589), the book that marks the change from Greene's exaggerated Euphuism to his more truly individual manner, the author holds before himself the rule of paragraphing each successive speech. Accordingly in this book the paragraph-length is much lowered: the average is hardly over 70 words, while in the first part of *Mamillia* (1583) it had been about 240, and as late as *Pandosto* (1588), had approached 200. Though the paragraph-length does not much rise in the pamphlets written after *Menaphon*, neither does it decrease. There is no steady improvement after *Menaphon*, in the paragraphing of dialogue.

The reader soon learns to expect little in point of unity in Greene's paragraphs. Each begins a new step, but too frequently the writer fails to see when the step ends. Again, over-illustration hurts both the unity and the proportion.

The coherence of Greene's paragraphs is fairly good. The movement is light and sometimes rapid, and the Euphuistic parallelism does not retard the general progress. Proportion, however, is wholly missing. Greene was guilty of numerous clause-heaps, and of unnecessary single-sentence sections. The general loose structure of his sentence does not save him from the bane of his day — the excessive use of intermediate punctuation.

NASH.

Nash is in nearly every point a better paragrapher than Greene — faint as this praise may be. The proportion of wholly amorphous paragraphs is small in the *History of Jack Wilton*. Nash's pamphlets are arranged with something like real orderliness. The units are tolerably long in most of his work: from about 260 words in the *Anatomy of Absurdity* the paragraph descends in the introduction to Greene's *Menaphon* to about 250, falls still nearer the 200 mark in *Pierce Peniless*, and reaches its lowest point, say 160 words, in *Have With You to Saffron Walden*. There are more short sentences than in Greene, and the transition between them is more accurate.

LODGE.

Lodge's sentences are short, and the sequence between them is good. But the writer is utterly without paragraph-method. There is no unity in the sections of the *Defense of Poetry, Music and Stage Plays.* Those of the *Alarum against Usurers* are short and often false. The *Historie of Forbonius and Prisceria* has one only merit — it paragraphs long speeches by themselves, placing between each a short transitional paragraph. In *Rosalynde* the story runs wild — freshest and brightest of narratives running on heedless of whither away. Dialogue makes no difference. Paragraphs come only when the pen gives out.

RALEGH.

In the 1666 edition of the *History*, the mark §, in its early type form, divides chapters into long sections, called by Ralegh paragraphs. Each of these is subdivided by indentation. But curiously enough, Ralegh often subdivides a paragraph into what he calls sections, indicating each by reference marks, as ‖ or †. Thus he leaves no name for the indented paragraph, and exactly reverses the modern meaning of the words paragraph and section.

Ralegh makes amazing show of systematic arrangement; but the analysis is often arbitrary and inexact. On the one hand

this poor analysis, on the other his utterly unwieldy and elephantine periods, make him an exceedingly bad paragraphist.

THE AUTHORIZED VERSION.

No English version of the Bible was broken into "verses" until 1551, when Robert Stephens of Paris printed an edition with paragraphs similar to Tyndale's (already mentioned), and marginal figures indicating sub-sections of the paragraphs. The *Geneva Bible*, c. 1560, was the first to indent these sub-sections. The *Authorized*, 1611, followed the *Geneva* in this respect. The main sections in the chapters were indicated by the mark ¶, which, oddly enough, does not occur after the twentieth chapter of *Acts*. This last named fact prevents me from giving exact averages for the length of these paragraphs, for while the whole number of words in both *Testaments* has long ago been counted by patient hands, I have not been able to get the statistics of the text minus the unparagraphed portion; and it goes without saying that there is nothing to gain by making a count. The paragraphs of the *New Testament* average, I should say, not far from 560 words, 7 verses, each. There is nothing necessary in these divisions, and they have been departed from by other editions, such as the *Cambridge Paragraph Bible* of Dr. Scrivener, and by the *Revised Version*.

BACON.

The Advancement of Learning, 1605.

Total paragraphs considered	110	
Average words per paragraph	204.67	(Ed. of 1633.)
Average words per sentence	60.03	(Ed. of Aldis Wright.)
Average sentences per paragraph	3.41	
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	32	(Ed. of 1633.)

Essays.

Average words per sentence	(Sherman)	28+
Average predications per sentence	(Gerwig)	3.12
Per cent. of simple sentences	(Gerwig)	19
Per cent. of clauses saved	(Gerwig)	2.87

It is an immense pleasure to emerge from the mistiness of

early Elizabethan prose into the *lumen siccum* of the *Advancement.* Although it is evident that the sentences are latinized and excessively long, yet there is a very remarkable skill evident in the grouping of them. Whether consciously or not, Bacon employed all the power of a great rhetorician to reconcile the period and the paragraph. The intellectual style of the *Advancement* was favorable to the experiment; there was no need of short sentences appealing to the will or to the picturesque imagination; the experiment succeeded as far as it could ever succeed. The paragraphs are not too short; they are methodical and orderly; the sequence is secured by explicit reference in the shape of demonstratives and conjunctions, and above all by the logic of a great dialectician. Not a paragraph lacks unity. But with it all we are conscious that the transitions are painfully formal and mechanical; and that there is a lack of variety in structure not compensated for by brilliant rhetoric. There is no living web of discourse. The period and the paragraph have come into conflict as units, and their antagonism has for the nonce been frozen by logic into stony civility. There is a stiff monotony in Bacon's way of opening a paragraph with, "Now as to the first point," and closing it with, "Thus much for the first point."

When we turn to the *Essays,* we find the spell broken and the period driven off the field. The average sentence has 28 words; a sentence epigrammatic, of course, made of mere glints and gleams of truth, but still capable of arrangement in the paragraph. The author is not, however, aiming at sequence, or even at lucidity. The changes are abrupt. Bacon felt this, and, to show the relatively isolated nature of many of the paragraphs, placed the old ¶ before each when the lack of coherence between paragraphs was particularly noticeable.

THE CHARACTER-WRITERS. JONSON.

In our speaking of the history of the isolated paragraph, the character-writers, Hall, Earle, Overbury, Breton, etc., must not be left out of account. In some of them, particularly Breton,

much method is manifested in these short paragraphs that characterize various worthies and unworthies. Breton's habit is to begin each character in the same way as every other, with a bold sentence summing up the main vice or virtue of the subject. This topic is then emphasized in several short sentences, by no means necessarily in logical progression. In all these writers the sentence is short, and affects the apothegmatic, Theophrastian tone. The sequence is accordingly such as might be expected between apothegms. In some of the writers Euphuistic parallelism is prominent. This is especially true of Overbury; but Overbury's general structure is stiff and sometimes incoherent. I do not take it that the early journalistic isolated paragraph owed much to these writers, though the satiric paragraph of Pope's day was not without its resemblance to these earlier, but less personal pasquinades.

In speaking of the isolated paragraph we must rank Ben Jonson as a really important author, though one whose influence on contemporary prose was small. Many of the detached fragments of the *Timber* are complete whole compositions in miniature. The sentence is short, and its structure is surprisingly simple and direct. The paragraph coherence is nearly always admirable, notwithstanding Jonson's tendency toward epigram.

LORD BROOKE.

Life of Sir Philip Sidney, 1652. (Brooke died, 1628.)

Total paragraphs considered	200
Average words per paragraph	c. 150
Average sentences per paragraph	c. 2.7
Average words per sentence	c. 55.53
Average words per paragraph in first 35 paragraphs	158.66
Average words per sentence in first 35 paragraphs	55.53
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs in 200 paragraphs	35

Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke, is one of the worst offenders in the matter of inorganic single-sentence paragraphs. His actual percentage of such is not so high as that of certain other authors, but Brooke's paragraphed sentence is a heap of clauses extremely

awkward and involved. In the matter of unity Brooke is better than Sidney, and worse, though less formal, than Bacon. Really false paragraphs are rare, but transitional sentences properly introductory of a new section are often given in the preceding. All in all, Brooke's style, like Bacon's, is an illustration of the futility of any compromise between the paragraph and the long period as units of discourse.

BURTON.

Anatomy of Melancholy, 1621.

Total paragraphs considered	100
Total words considered	38,057
Total sentences considered	948
Average words per paragraph	380.57
Average sentences per paragraph	9.48
Average words per sentence	40.14
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	18

If excessive variability in stylistic averages goes to show mental irregularity, then Burton's paragraph-length would prove him mad. The word-length of the *Anatomy* varies from 39 to 2529. Evidently there is little system here. When quotations press forward to Burton's pen, paragraph-method is a dead letter. On the other hand, when he is framing at leisure a section of original discourse, there is visible a stylistic spirit really new. Burton's sentence average is not greater than Swift's, and as Burton's long sentences are exceedingly long, it is plain that he uses counterbalancing short propositions to an extent elsewhere unknown among scholars of his day. It is indeed not far from the truth to say, with Mr. Saintsbury,[1] in his latest utterance, that the arrangement of Burton's sentences is often "distinctly terse and crisp."

In his long sentences Burton takes minute pains to subordinate, by conjunctions and demonstratives, the lesser clauses: often, however, with poor success. But the number of initial connectives is moderate. Out of 300 sentences, 64 begin with conjunctives, and there are 15 interior sentence-connectives:

[1] Craik's *English Prose*, Vol. II., p. 117.

in Ascham there were 168 sentence-connectives in 300 sentences. The list in Burton is given below. To get the number of connected sentences 15 is to be deducted from a total 79, for repetitions.

Connective.	Initial.	Interior.
And	19	..
Besides	4	..
But	13	..
For	6	..
First	..	1
However	2	..
In a word	1	..
In conclusion	1	..
In like sort	..	2
Nay	1	..
On the other	..	1
Otherwise	1	..
Or	3	..
Thus	2	2
So	7	..
Then	..	1
Therefore	..	7
Yea	1	..
Yet	3	1

We may say, therefore, that while Burton's paragraph-structure is variable in merit, and while he is guilty of many amorphous clause-heaps, he marks an advance toward one secret of proportion (the short sentence), and toward the modern method of sentence-connection.

MILTON.

Areopagitica, 1644.

Total paragraphs considered		33
Total words considered		17,948
Total sentences considered		354
Average words per paragraph		543.88
Average sentences per paragraph		10.73
Average words per sentence		50.70
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs		10
Average predications per sentence	(Gerwig)	4.87
Per cent. of simple sentences	(Gerwig)	6
Per cent. of clauses saved	(Gerwig)	9.31

Milton ridiculed the short sentence and despised the loose order. His own sentence is highly periodic and involved: he stands with Hooker and Clarendon at the extreme of the classical movement. Some of his prose works, as the *Defense of the People of England*, are practically without paragraphs. Others, as the *Eikonoklastes*, have a mechanical paragraph — used for formal enumeration of points in an argument. Such paragraphs are likely to be of one sentence, and amorphous. The *Areopagitica* is the best paragraphed of all the works, though not so freely paragraphed as the *Reformation in England;* yet few even of the sections of the *Areopagitica* are really units.

It must be noted, however, that Milton is distinctly subject to one tradition, that of paragraphing for emphasis. Thus, in the *Eikonoklastes* (ed. of 1649, p. 200) there is one sentence that is broken into twelve paragraphs. These mark the various "articles" that state the conditions on which the king, Milton asserts, is ready to capitulate with God.

CLARENDON.

History of the Great Rebellion, published 1704–1707. (Clarendon died, 1674.)

Total paragraphs considered	100
Total words considered	21,732
Total sentences considered	290
Average words per paragraph	217.32
Average sentences per paragraph	2.90
Average words per sentence	74.94
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	28

In Clarendon the classical experiment is wrecked. Other men had written long sentences — Spenser, for instance. But Spenser's clauses follow each other like cars in a railroad train; each could be uncoupled and sent singly on its way. Clarendon's long sentence may be likened to the same train "telescoped;" where framework and ornament, ribs of wood and rods of iron, are jammed together and inextricably twisted out of all resemblance to any orderly thing.

Clarendon, however, did not, like Milton, utterly disregard

the paragraph. He repeated the rash compromise of Bacon and Brooke, and failed signally. After his day the experiment was never fully repeated. Clarendon's paragraph-length is 217 words, his sentence 74; manifestly a paragraph of this length could not coexist with a formless sentence of 74 words.

JEREMY TAYLOR.

The Liberty of Prophesying, 1647.

Total paragraphs considered	109
Total words considered	54,787
Total sentences considered	1035
Average words per paragraph	502.63
Average words per sentence	52.93
Average sentences per paragraph	9.49
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	6

It was good service that Coleridge rendered the fame of Taylor by showing the great bishop to be not half so unintelligible as some rhetoricians had held. But Coleridge, who admired Milton's prose almost as extravagantly as Landor did, would have it that Milton is clear enough; he fails to show how much more lucid Taylor is than Milton.

Taylor's sentence is less periodic than Milton's and far less involved than Clarendon's. But his sentences are long and there is the wildest abuse of conjunctions. Often the orator himself sees that the sentence is inadequate to his unit of thought, and leaves the period in hopelessly incomplete syntactical shape. Taylor's chosen unit is the period, but he does not try to reconcile it with the paragraph, and is himself conscious that he is in confusion on the whole question of structure.

SIR THOMAS BROWNE.

Religio Medici, 1643.

Average words per paragraph	c. 340
Average sentences per paragraph	10+

Hydriotaphia, 1658.

Total paragraphs considered	107
Average words per paragraph	125.08
Average sentences per paragraph	3.78
Average words per sentence	33.09

The paragraphs in both the *Religio* and the *Hydriotaphia* are numbered as "sections." The *Religio* has a comparatively diffuse flow, natural in an autobiographical work first written for the eyes of friends only. The *Hydriotaphia*, written nearly a quarter of a century later, shows more of curious care, and the condensed language of a maturer mind. The change in the style is accompanied by a shortening of the paragraph from about 340 words to 125.

Browne is often assailed as a Latinizer, and in one sense the criticism is true of his syntax as it is of his vocabulary. Browne used every Latin construction to which English would lend itself; but he knew the limits, as Milton and Taylor and Hooker did not. He almost never spun a web of involutions. He knew when both sense and rhythm required a full stop. Consequently his sentence is not long, not so long even as De Quincey's; it may be added that there are in it far fewer unnecessary connectives than in De Quincey's.

The sections of the *Hydriotaphia* have better unity than can be found in Elizabethan prose outside of Bacon. The sequence and coherence are not relatively so good. Yet it may be questioned whether any other writer so aphoristic has so well succeeded in keeping logical articulation between sentences. Each group of Browne's strange gems has a general hue and harmony of its own.

In point, then, of unity, of sentence-length, and of logical rather than formal articulation between sentences, Browne marks an immense advance over the men with whom Coleridge classed him as a corrupter of English. In one other respect he marks advance; namely, in the rhythm of successive clauses, and, to a less extent, of successive sentences. Milton had a dawning sense of the necessity of an occasional short sentence as a rhythmical relief from the roll of the period. Browne carried this principle of variety still farther, uniting with it a sense of tone-color that has never been surpassed.

HOBBES.

Leviathan, 1651.

Total paragraphs considered	200
Average words per paragraph	c. 116.40

Average sentences per paragraph	c. 2.96
Average words per sentence	c. 39.26
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	35

Hobbes marks no improvement in the matter of sentence-length as related to the paragraph. His sentence, indeed, is only 39, but his paragraph is not large enough to hold a unit of this size. It must nevertheless be admitted that the sense of unity in Hobbes's sentence is highly developed for the time, and that the paragraphs are usually units, though not always properly amplified. But the chief virtue of these paragraphs is their precision of articulation, both internal and external. The coherence is eminently good, though the massing is so poor and the formal predications so awkwardly numerous that the reader's progress is but slow.

LORD HERBERT.

Autobiography, written c. 1643.

Total paragraphs considered	40
Total words considered	9983
Total sentences considered	132
Average words per paragraph	249+
Average sentences per paragraph	3.30
Average words per sentence	75.60
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	25

Lord Herbert's *Autobiography* was not published till 1764, when Walpole edited and printed it. How closely the paragraphing follows the MS. I do not know.

Mr. Saintsbury has said of Lord Herbert, "The writer displays an art, very uncommon in his time, in the alternation of short and long sentences, and the general adjustment of the paragraph.[1] Mr. Saintsbury is usually not far from the truth in his comments on prose structure, but surely in the present case he has overestimated Lord Herbert's paragraphic tendency. Out of the first 132 sentences in the *Autobiography* only seven fall below 20 words, and the average is 75 words, a length reached but once in the worst days of the paragraph, hitherto. These figures are enough to limit seriously the force

[1] *History of Elizabethan Literature*, p. 439.

of Mr. Saintsbury's dictum. It may, however, be granted that this dictum is not without some foundation; for Lord Herbert has a knack of making a paragraph of two or three sentences, the first very long, the second moderately short. There is an exceptional example of this in the sixth paragraph; here the first of the two periods has 329 words, the second but 27. In the thirty-sixth paragraph there is another exceptional example, where the introductory sentence has 20 words, the second and only other has 552. Here therefore we find a nascent sense of paragraph rhythm, and this is really Lord Herbert's contribution to the development. In other respects he marks no advance; his monotonously ponderous periods and enormous paragraphed sentences belong to the conflict between period and paragraph.

WALTON.

Life of Hooker, 1665.

Total paragraphs considered	106
Total words considered	19,842
Average words per paragraph	187.19
Average sentences per paragraph	2.9
Average words per sentence	64
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	25

Complete Angler, 1653.

Total paragraphs considered	200
Average sentences per paragraph	1.5
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	73 (dialogue)

In spite of his colloquial tone, garrulous Isaac Walton belongs only too evidently to the older prose. He is not one of the Latinists, but his sentences are very long and guileless of unity. His numerous single-sentence paragraphs are nearly all clause-heaps, except in the *Angler*, when conversation controls them.

Walton's style is childlike in its abuse of coördinating conjunctions; it belongs in this respect almost as far back as Mandeville; 80 sentences out of 300 begin with *and*. The list of sentence-connectives from the *Angler* is as follows: The number of sentences connected (out of 300) is 130, or 16 less than the whole number of sentence-connectives.

Connective.	Initial.	Interior.
And	80	..
But	25	..
Nay	5	..
Thus	2	..
First	3	8
Also	..	6
Well	5	..
Hence	1	..
However	..	1
Therefore	..	2
Then	1	2
On the contrary	1	1
Indeed	1	..
So	..	1
Now	1	..

In the matter of unity, Walton's paragraphs are hardly defensible. Mr. Lowell's remark on Walton's poetic style, that he has "a habit of leaving the direct track of narrative on the suggestion of the first inviting by-path,"[1] is equally true of Walton in his prose.

FULLER.

Worthies of England, 1662.

Total paragraphs considered	100
Total words considered	8677
Total sentences considered	370
Average words per paragraph	86.77
Average sentences per paragraph	3.70
Average words per sentence	23.45
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	20

Fuller's paragraphs are light and short, but mechanical rather than literary. He advances with regularity and order, completing each step with a satisfied air of precision. But not half the paragraphs are built of fully developed sentences; verbs are omitted with the utmost nonchalance, and the section often degenerates into a mere list of particulars. Fuller's sentence is short and pointed, though he exhibits no great skill in its adjustment in the paragraph.

[1] Lowell, *Latest Literary Essays*, Boston, 1892.

Fuller is not free from digressions, but, as Minto observes, he is always conscious of his digression, and takes care to return explicitly to the original topic. By far the larger number of sections state the topic first. Fuller's regularity in the use of the deductive order makes him the precursor of Johnson and Macaulay.

On the whole, Fuller is distinctly in the new line of paragraph development. In sentence-length and in general method he is the most modern man of his time.

SELDEN.

Table Talk, 1689. (Selden died, 1654.)

Total paragraphs considered	81
Average words per paragraph	72.97
Average sentences per paragraph	2.17
Average words per sentence	33.58
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	43

Selden's *Table Talk* was published thirty-five years after the author's death. The arrangement of the *dicta* was made by Selden's amanuensis, Milward. Milward usually groups under one heading several related remarks, something in the style of Bacon's *Essays*. All Selden's paragraphs are indeed relatively isolated. They are not often organic wholes, but are mentioned here as being in the line of general sentential development, the sentence being 33 words.

HOWELL.

Mr. Joseph Jacobs, in his recent edition of James Howell's *Familiar Letters*, regards Howell, rather than Dryden, as the father of the short sentence. It may be admitted that Howell had a knack, more pronounced than that of Lord Herbert, of occasionally alternating an exceedingly long sentence with a short one. But as for Howell's being the father of the short sentence it is enough to say that in the original edition of the pamphlet, *England's Tears for the Present Wars*, the sentence average is actually 77 words, one of the very highest in the history of our prose. Nor yet had Howell advanced otherwise to the modern

conception of the paragraph. He had no proper sense of unity or proportion.

COWLEY.

Essays, from sixth edition, 1680.

Cromwell has 14 paragraphs, 12,574 words.

Proposition for the Advancement of Experimental Philosophy has 51 paragraphs, 5132 words.

Average words per paragraph—*Cromwell*		898.14
Average words per paragraph—*Philosophy*		100.62
Average words per sentence (two essays)	c.	48.37
Average words per sentence—*Cromwell*	c.	38.01
Average words per sentence—*Philosophy*	c.	54.43

Cowley's prose is transitional; his early sentence is long and unmethodical; his later much shorter and more homogeneous. The sections in the earlier editions (for the paragraphing in the later ones, even Grosart's, cannot be trusted) are very irregular and inorganic. Cowley is not actually disorderly, but he has no proper sense of paragraph method. He will in one chapter paragraph a single sentence for emphasis (*e. g. Essay on Liberty*, ed. of 1680, p. 82; *Essay on Solitude*, p. 92); in the next chapter he will allow a paragraph to run on for six pages. Cowley is in the line of advance, but distinctly so in one particular only. He spares initial connectives and depends for sequence on logical succession. Of the 57 sentences (Lumby's ed.) in the *Essay on Greatness*, not one begins with *and*, only two begin with *but*, and only seven with subordinating connectives, including relative adverbs.

BUNYAN.

The Pilgrim's Progress, 1678–1684.

Total paragraphs considered		200
Total words considered		12,520
Average words per paragraph		62.60
Average sentences per paragraph		1.98
Average words per sentence		31.61
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs		61
Average predications per sentence		3.91
Per cent. of simple sentences	(Gerwig)	10
Per cent. of clauses saved		5.92

The dialogue form of the *Pilgrim's Progress* of course determines in a large measure the length of the paragraph in this work. We have in *Grace Abounding* an example of Bunyan's sustained prose; but the paragraph of *Grace Abounding* I have not been able to examine in any early edition.

We find at last in the *Pilgrim's Progress* a sentence which belongs to the essential paragraph structure. Bunyan has mastered the short sentence. He can vary it with longer ones — not very periodic ones — and produce effects of severe variety and of sober rhythm. The most important outcome of the age that ends with Bunyan is this short sentence. The vernacular stream that has found its way through the obstacles of the age emerges bright and strong in Bunyan. When the next period of development sets in the writers gradually bring this short sentence into the service of the longer thought-integer, and so the new unit of style is evolved.

CHAPTER VII.

TEMPLE TO DE QUINCEY.

TEMPLE.

Heroic Virtue, 1692.

Total paragraphs considered	184.
Total words considered	28,775.
Total sentences considered	538.
Average words per paragraph	156.30
Average sentences per paragraph	2.90
Average words per sentence	53.40

Advancement of Trade in Ireland, 1692.

Total paragraphs considered	40
Average words per paragraph	226 +
Average words per sentence	54 +

It is probably useless to dispute whether, as Mr. Saintsbury says, Temple was a follower of Dryden, or whether, as Mr. C. D. Yonge thinks, Dryden imitated Sir William. Both men were probably indebted to Jonson, Cowley, and even Bunyan, though from Sir William's sentence-length one would hardly think so. What is certain for our purposes is that Temple's first important work, the *Observations on the Netherlands* (1672), is far more carefully paragraphed than the *Essay of Dramatic Poesy* (1667); and again that in ordering of matter Dryden's best work cannot compare with Temple's best.

Temple's sentence is indeed too long; it is longer than Dryden's and more than twice as long as Fuller's. But the clauses follow the simple oral form, and for the first time in our prose we have a balance and a cadence that are not manifestly artificial. This unobtrusive balance and the parallel construction of sentences are an immense help structurally to the coherence of the paragraph. Of course the balance will now and then degenerate into an artificial pointedness that, by tending toward epigram, hurts

the sequence. But the predominating effect is that of close-knit prose. Another virtue, most important historically, marks Sir William's sentences. Though long, they rarely lack unity.

Temple's coherence depends very largely on structure. Of 300 sentences in the *Heroic Virtue* only 51 are joined by conjunctions. The list follows; it will be seen that double connectives are not used, for the whole number of connectives is the same, within one, as the whole number of connected sentences. It is perhaps true that the brevity of the list shows French influence.

Connective.	Initial.	Interior.
And	13	..
Besides	1	1
But	12	..
Also	..	1
For	6	..
In short	1	..
It is true	1	..
Likewise	..	2
Finally	..	1
Nor	1	..
On the other side	2	..
So	3	..
Therefore	..	1
Thus	3	..
Yet	2	..

Sir William's contribution may be described as an increase of coherence by structure; and of skill in transition between paragraphs.

DRYDEN.

Translation, 1685. *Satire*, 1693. *Parallel between Poetry and Painting*, 1695.

Average words per paragraph in *Essay on Satire*	256 +
Average words per paragraph in *Translation* + *Parallel between Poetry and Painting*	261 +
Whole number words in *Satire* + *Translation* + *Parallel*	49,969
Whole number sentences in *Satire* + *Translation* + *Parallel*	1300

Whole number paragraphs in *Satire* + *Translation* + *Parallel*	180
Average words per paragraph in *Satire* + *Translation* + *Parallel*	277.55
Average sentences per paragraph in *Satire* + *Translation* + *Parallel*	7.22
Average words per sentence in *Satire* + *Translation* + *Parallel*	38.44
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs in *Satire* + *Translation* + *Parallel*	11 +

Dramatic Poesy, 1667.

(Gerwig, for 521 periods.)

Average predications per sentence	4.89
Per cent. of simple sentences	6
Per cent. of clauses saved	4.88

The fame of Dryden as our first great prosaist is not enduring without challenge. Mr. Saintsbury[1] and Mr. Gosse[2] credit Dryden with full mastery of English prose; on the other hand Mr. Minto[3] referred to his genius as the reverse of methodical, and Mr. Sherman[4] calls him almost as formless as Spenser.

It is true that Dryden brought to the writing of prose a vigor unknown before; that he exhibited a rich vocabulary of simple speech, and a general felicity of diction; that he was not equaled in his day in power of varying the structure of the sentence and giving it flexibility and balance. On the other hand, it is not quite the whole truth to say with Saintsbury that his slovenliness in sentence-structure is only occasional. Dryden was singularly uneven in his sentence-writing, and it is safe to say that no single piece of his prose is free from impossible periods.

With every deduction Dryden nevertheless remains the most potent individuality in modifying the sentence to reasonable proportions. He stands as a dividing line between the old sentence and the new. But as a paragraphist he is inferior to Temple. His genius is a vagrant one, and he sins incessantly against the

[1] *Specimens of English Prose*, p. xxii.

[2] *History of Eighteenth Century Literature*, p. 91.

[3] *Manual*, p. 334.

[4] *Analytics*, p. 292.

cardinal law of unity. There are indeed plenty of good paragraphs in Dryden, but the good ones are nearly always short.

It is a curious fact that in spite of lack of logical severity in the analysis of the whole composition, and in spite of the very great fluctuation in his paragraph-lengths, Dryden had some sense of rhythmical proportion in distributing his matter by paragraphs. The word-length of the paragraph in *Satire*[1] is the same within five words, as in the combined essays, *Translation* + *Parallel*. Dryden had indeed, as everyone knows, a distinct feeling for "the other harmony of prose." This rhythmical sense gives us, along with the cadence of the sentence, a feeling for parallel construction. To this his paragraphs often owe a coherence that goes far to make up for his digressiveness. He depends for coherence largely on the order of words, and this regard for order of words helps to make him the most forcible of the early prosaists. He does not rely on initial sentence-connectives. Out of three hundred sentences, only twelve begin with *and*, eighteen with *but*; while subordinatives are still more sparingly employed.

His sentences[2] improve as his style matures; few authors show so much change. The improvement is not so marked in the matter of paragraph unity; the sound thinking of later life does not seem much to check his fits of irrelevance.

LOCKE.

Essay on Human Understanding, 1690.

Total paragraphs considered	200
Whole number words	40,545
Whole number sentences	814
Average words per sentence	49.8
Average words per paragraph	202.7
Average sentences per paragraph	4.07
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	18 +

It must be admitted, even by those who think that Locke crossed the line where writing ceases to be literature, that he

[1] I choose late essays as exhibiting Dryden's matured style.

[2] Sherman puts Dryden's sentence at 45+; it seems to me this must be an average from the early prefaces.

is the most orderly writer of his day, though his method is purely formal. The early editions of his works are very carefully analyzed by chapters and sections, the latter being marked §. The section usually coincides with the paragraph, but not always. Many editions have marginal summaries of sections, and tabular summaries in the table of contents.

In general the paragraphs have good unity. The paragraph is short relatively to the sentence, but Locke does not, like Hobbes, paragraph tiny stadia for emphasis. His failure to reach the rhetorical paragraph lies largely in the fact that his paragraph lacks proportion. He dwells on the unimportant at the expense of the important. Half his introductions are too long. Nor is his coherence so good as might be expected in a writer who has so much to say about the value of consecutiveness in thought. He often brings illustrations from a distance and introduces them abruptly.

DEFOE.

Essay on Projects (1697), omitting numerical accounts.

Total paragraphs considered	200
Whole number words	16,978
Whole number sentences	342
Average words per sentence	49.64
Average words per paragraph	84.89
Average sentences per paragraph	1.71
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	62

Robinson Crusoe (1719), 200 paragraphs.

Total words	28,327
Total sentences	360
Average words per sentence	78.68
Average words per paragraph	141.63
Average sentences per paragraph	1.87
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	60

If Locke is, in certain formal respects, the best paragrapher of his day, Defoe is in all respects the worst. He really knows no difference between the sentence and the paragraph; he paragraphs for emphasis only. The sentence of *Robinson Crusoe* is nearly as long as the paragraph of the *Essay on Projects.* It

would be hard to find another writer of such irregularities in sentence-length.

Defoe's coherence in narrative is good, for his pictorial imagination is exceedingly vivid, and his diction and method those of swift, lucid conversation. But in argument all this is changed. Here he neglects every device of transition and pours out his ideas in the most haphazard way. In argument he is vigorous enough, but his vigor is wasted by utter disregard of method.

SWIFT.

The Battle of the Books, 1704 (written 1698).

Total paragraphs	31
Total words	9234
Total sentences	232
Average words per sentence	39.80
Average words per paragraph	297.86
Average sentences per paragraph	7.48

The Tale of a Tub, 1704 (written 1698).

Total paragraphs considered		100
Total words considered		18,577
Total sentences considered		456
Average words per sentence		40.74
Average words per paragraph		185.77
Average sentences per paragraph		4.56
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs		15
Average predications per sentence	(Gerwig,	3.69
Per cent. of simple sentences	for 500	13
Per cent. of clauses saved	periods.)	9.23

Travels of Lemuel Gulliver, 1726.

Total paragraphs considered	200
Total words considered	46,844
Total sentences considered	1171
Average words per sentence	40.00
Average words per paragraph	234.22
Average sentences per paragraph	5.85
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	15

The unity of Swift's paragraphs is usually all that could be desired. Now and then, however, a paragraph will be so long as to obliterate, apparently, any sign of topic. These rare para-

graphs are almost inexplicable when compared with his usual sections. Professor Cesare Lombroso would, I fear, find the eccentricity of madness in them, as he did in the inversions of the Dean's conversation.

Swift's command of proportion by paragraph-punctuation is small. It is noticeable that the proportion of very short sentences (sentences under 15 words) is not large—6.3 per cent. in the *Tale of a Tub*, 6.4 per cent. in *Gulliver*. The average of the sentence is constant, in works separated even by 28 years: the three books mentioned show a variation of less than a whole word in sentence average, though the paragraph-averages of different books differ enormously.

The superb coherence and emphasis of Swift's style are due largely to the straightforward, logical order of the thought, and the skillful placing of important words at the end of a sentence or paragraph. Swift is the first author to show in the paragraph much of what Wendell calls Mass. His sentences often fall at the close like taps of a steam-hammer, and sometimes the taps seem concentrated in one great blow at the end of the paragraph.

Connectives he uses less than does any of his predecessors. The list from Gulliver is as follows—showing only 39 formally connected sentences out of a total of 300.

Connective.	Initial.	Interior.
But	14	..
Therefore	..	2
Likewise	..	4
However	6	1
Whereupon	2	..
Besides	1	..
Also	..	1
Thus	..	1
So	..	1
Now	3	..
For	2	..
Indeed	..	1

ADDISON.

The Freeholder, 1715–1716.

Total paragraphs considered...................... 200

Total words considered	34,651
Total sentences considered	898
Average words per paragraph	173.25
Average sentences per paragraph	4.49
Average words per sentence	38.58
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	14

Spectator.

(Gerwig, for 500 periods.)

Average predications per sentence	3.67
Per cent. of simple sentences	12
Per cent. of clauses saved	3.72

Addison's unity is usually faultless. His coherence depends largely upon word-order and sentence-structure; of 300 sentences only 13 begin with *and*, 16 with *but*. His massing, when compared with Swift's, is defective. In brief, the paragraph structure is easy and flowing, correct in unity, defective in emphasis.

Addison's favorite paragraph is loose, with one or two introductory sentences. Deductive specimens are not infrequent. The topic is often developed by repetition from changing points of view,—what Scott and Denney have termed the alternating method. The method is frequently overdone.

Addison had little sense of the value of the short sentence, either as a means of emphasis, or as a way of varying paragraph rhythm. His rhythm remained a somewhat monotonous sentence-rhythm. Less than 4 per cent. of his sentences fall below 15 words. There is no wide variation in the number of sentences to the paragraph: thus, 44 out of 200 paragraphs have three sentences each.

SHAFTESBURY.

Characteristics, 1711.

Total paragraphs considered	100
Total words considered	15,490
Total sentences considered	578
Average words per paragraph	154.90
Average sentences per paragraph	5.78
Average words per sentence	26.80
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	3
Limits of fluctuation in paragraph word-length	44–341

Per cent. of sentences of less than 15 words		26
Per cent. of simple sentences	(Gerwig,	28
Average predications per sentence	for 650	2.61
Per cent. of clauses saved	periods.)	4.02

Had he chosen, Addison might have learned much from the well-bred style of his contemporary, Anthony Ashley Cooper; and particularly he might have learned variety. Shaftesbury used the short sentence without stint, and often with fine effect. His percentage of sentences falling under the length of 15 words is the highest before Burke. His sentence is more variable than that of any author of his own time; and he much surpasses in this even Bolingbroke. It is to be admitted, nevertheless, that Shaftesbury was not fully master of the short sentence. Many of his sentences are so brief that they utterly lack unity.

In several other paragraphic virtues Shaftesbury is correct, though never firmly and surely so. His unity is good, the paragraph being very short. He follows the loose order definitely enough to give his topic in the course of the first two sentences. He is coherent, making one sentence follow, without need of connective, from the preceding.

He has his faults, however. His massing is such as to obscure the emphatic words. Though his sentences do not need connectives, there is an abuse of initial coördinatives. His list of initial connectives is as follows, showing 79 initially connected sentences out of 300; the list would not be much increased if the interior sentence-connectives were added:

For	20	However	1
But	26	Thus	1
And	21	Now	1
Yet	2	Nor	1
Nor	2	Or	1
So that	2	On the other side	1

All in all Shaftesbury may be regarded as contributing the ele ment of variety in sentence-length. His paragraph-length is not so variable.

BOLINGBROKE.

Letter to Sir William Wyndham, 1753.

Total paragraphs considered	173
Total words considered	34,199
Total sentences considered	981
Average words per paragraph	197.68
Average sentences per paragraph	5.67
Average words per sentence	34.86
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	5
Per cent. of sentences of less than 15 words	13

Study of History.

(Gerwig, for 977 periods.)

Average predications per sentence	3.65
Per cent. of simple sentences	14
Per cent. of clauses saved	3.72

It may freely be granted that Bolingbroke's style is in some respects vicious; that, as Mr. Gosse says, it is "grandiloquent, and yet ineffectual."[1] These faults affect unfavorably the emphasis of his paragraph; and yet, after every deduction, Bolingbroke is distinctly a modern paragrapher.

He knows the value of the short sentence, though he does not use it freely enough. Only 13 per cent. of his sentences fall below the length of 15 words; yet he alternates long propositions and short ones, with telling effect.

The unity of his paragraphs is generally unassailable. He looks to the transition between sentences, and, what was then more rare, to the transition between paragraphs. He balances sentences, sometimes to windy lengths, but does not let the coherence seriously suffer. He carefully eschews connectives, indeed rather too carefully.

Above all he *depends* more on the paragraph than do his predecessors. He is always making sentences that are unintelligible except in the light of the larger unit. He delights, as Macaulay does, in a preliminary generalization so sweeping and so indefinite as to require a multitude of subsequent propositions to unravel

[1] *History of Eighteenth Century Literature*, p. 174.

the puzzle. He has deliberately adopted the paragraph unit, and it is evident that from the study of him some of the best English paragraphists, notably Burke and Macaulay, have their cue, slight as that cue is.

RICHARDSON AND FIELDING.

We saw that the Elizabethans developed no fixed method of paragraphing dialogue, though Greene and Nash tend irregularly toward the modern method of setting off each speech. In eighteenth-century novels the question is still in dispute, though not in utter confusion.

Richardson in general paragraphs each speech. He does not use quotation marks. Rarely he gives the dialogue in dramatic form, prefacing each speech merely with the speaker's name. Some of the paragraphs are exceedingly short, even when they form part of a monologue. Though it is asserted that Richardson did not read French, it is hard to believe that he was not influenced by French models in paragraphing. Else how could he, a practical printer, bring himself, say, to a series of 13 paragraphs, averaging 28.38 words (as in *Clarissa*, Vol. 2, Letter xxiii.)? This is certainly *Marivaudage* in structure, even if Pamela be not indebted to *La Vie de Marianne* for its plot.

But Richardson wrote in letter-form, a style that seems always to produce degeneration in the paragraph-conscience. Fielding, writing under no such artificial scheme, is a better paragrapher than his predecessor. The paragraph word-length in *Tom Jones* is 101.86, or 2.43 sentences of 41.92 words. The percentage of paragraphed sentences is high (38 per cent.), but this fact is not due principally to dialogue; the great novelist studied carefully the unity of his narrative paragraphs. His principle in dialogue is, I think, something like this: paragraph primarily for unity, breaking up monologue or massing dialogue *if the speeches are short and the movement rapid;* when the dialogue is leisurely, paragraph each speech. An example of breaking up monologue may be seen in Mr. Allworthy's Homily to Jenny, chap. vii., Book i. Examples of the massing together of short speeches

when the movement is impassioned or hurried, may frequently be found. Thus, B. iv., chap. 14, paragraphs 12, 13; B. v., chap. 4, paragraph 2; B. v., chap. 6, paragraph 17; B. vi., chap. 6, paragraph 1.

JOHNSON.

Rambler, 1750–1752.

Total paragraphs considered	94
Total words considered	9600
Total sentences considered	218
Average words per paragraph	102.13
Average sentences per paragraph	2.32
Average words per sentence	44.03

Rasselas, 1759.

Total paragraphs considered	58
Total words considered	5357
Total sentences considered	174
Average words per paragraph	92.36
Average sentences per paragraph	3
Average words per sentence	30.78

Rasselas + *Rambler*.

Total paragraphs considered	152
Total words considered	14,957
Total sentences considered	392
Average words per paragraph	98.40
Average sentences per paragraph	2.58
Average words per sentence	38.15
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	27
Per cent. of sentences of less than 15 words	9

Lives of the Poets, 1779–1781.

(Gerwig, for 500 periods.)

Average predications per sentence	3.23
Per cent. of simple sentences	16
Per cent. of clauses saved	7.09

Everybody knows that Johnson's style varies in different works. This variation follows a steady chronological development toward the vernacular: the *Rambler*, 1750–1752, is the most latinized of his works; the *Lives*, 1779–1781, is the least latinized. *Rasselas*, 1759, stands midway in development.

The sentence drops one-third of its length between the *Rambler* and *Rasselas*, but the paragraph drops only one-tenth. I have no complete count for the *Lives*, but should guess that the sentence still grows considerably shorter, and that the paragraph remains approximately *in statu quo*.

Johnson's paragraph is remarkably short. In the *Rambler* there are but 2.32 sentences to the paragraph; the two rises to three in *Rasselas*. The fewness of the sentences per paragraph and the high percentage (27 per cent.) of paragraphed sentences are phenomena not due in either case to dialogue. Johnson was exceedingly particular that each paragraph should form an integer; beyond this he cared not how few the sentences.

His favorite order is loose, with a large share of deductive paragraphs. He loves a short introductory sentence, and when the chance permits he likes to make this sentence a generalization far wider than can be substantiated from the subsequent details.

In the matter of proportion by varying short sentences with long Johnson in his later work is by no means weak. Even in the earlier works the percentage of sentences of less than 15 words is considerable — 9 per cent. in *Rambler* and *Rasselas*, while the *Lives* shows 16 per cent. of simple sentences.

As to coherence, it is common to accuse Johnson, as De Quincey did, of "plethoric and tautologic tympany of sentence;"[1] or to say with Coleridge that his antitheses are usually verbal only.[2] But, at least in *Rasselas* and the *Lives*, the style is after all highly coherent. The antithesis is of course elaborate, but it has the effect of parallel construction and is not seriously retarding. The directness of the thought and the skill of the balance do away with the necessity of formal connectives. Few men have used initial connectives less than Johnson did, and none has depended less upon them. Of 300 sentences in *Rasselas* 25 only are joined by formal conjunctives, whether initially or internally. The list is short. *And* occurs but once.

[1] *Works*, X., 128.

[2] *Table Talk*, Nov. 1, 1833.

Connective.	Initial.	Interior.
Thus	3	1
But	10	..
However	1	1
So	1	1
Yet	3	1
Therefore	..	3
And yet	1	..

Johnson's chief contribution to the development is this management of coherence without the use of connectives. Contrast the day when Walton showed eighty initial *ands* to 300 sentences, and the time when Johnson wrote but one *and* to the same number — 300. When Johnson did use connectives, they were never formal. As Coleridge said, "You cannot alter one of them without spoiling the sense."[1] Johnson likewise fixed permanently as a model the loose order, with a preference for the deductive type.

JOSEPH BUTLER.

The involutions of the sentence in the *Analogy* are often impassable, as Emerson would say, and utterly opposed to paragraph structure. Butler is mentioned here merely for the fact that he has a larger percentage of strictly inductive paragraphs than almost any other writer in the language. It may be added that when his sentences are short they usually need the light of the whole section to make their bearing plain.

HUME.

History of England, Vol. I., 1754.

Total paragraphs considered	200
Total words considered	47,775
Total sentences considered	1200
Average words per paragraph	238.87
Average sentences per paragraph	6
Average words per sentence	39.81
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	1
Limits of fluctuation in paragraph word-length	48–697
Per cent. of sentences of less than 15 words	5

[1] *Table Talk*, July 3, 1833.

Per cent. of simple sentences	(Gerwig)	12
Average predications per sentence		3.29
Per cent. of clauses saved		14.71

Dr. Johnson declared that Hume's style was not English, but French. If he meant by this that Hume was careful to use *le mot propre*, and that the study of French models had taught him more sententiousness than was then common in an English writer, and again that Hume aimed always at lucidity, why, then, Dr. Johnson was right. But in general structure Hume is not French: his sentences and paragraphs are too long, too monotonous. Johnson's own sentence was nearer French models, in the one point of length, than Hume's was. Johnson's paragraph is but half the length of Hume's. Johnson's own use of the very short sentence was better and more Gallic than Hume's: Hume shows but 5 per cent. of sentences fall ing below the length of fifteen words, while Johnson shows 9 per cent. Hume has French lucidity, but he is stately, measured, cold. Johnson, unconsciously following Gallic precedent, delights in short single-sentence sections, even to the extent of 27 per cent. of his whole number. Hume disdains a paragraph of less than five sentences, and writes but one per cent. of paragraphed periods. Johnson, out of 152 paragraphs, shows many successive paragraphs of one sentence, many of two, but none of five. Hume, out of 200 paragraphs, shows many successive groups of five sentences, but none of one, none of two. Johnson shows no successive groups of more than six sentences each; but Hume shows such groups of seven, of eight, of nine. As regards structure, therefore, Dr. Johnson's dictum hardly holds; though no one could dispute that dictum in the matter of Hume's vocabulary.

Hume is impeccable in paragraph unity from the point of view of subject analysis. His unity depends on the philosophic scheme, the previsedly careful articulation of framework. It is not the picturesque unity of Macaulay.

In spite of occasional extreme sententiousness, and his very sparing use of sentence-connectives, Hume's coherence is always

good. The sententiousness is never left unexplained. If the reader is ever delayed it is by the balance of the sentence, but he is never seriously checked by this. In Hume the formal balance breaks in upon the sequence as waves pass beneath a boat and lap it sharply, but only to drive it onward.

Hume's favorite order is loose, with a tendency to eschew initiatory sentences. The topic sentence is likely to be somewhat indefinite, becoming clear with the first amplifying sentences.

To sum up: Hume represents the long paragraph adapting itself to the Johnsonian balanced sentence. His integers of style are larger than Johnson's, but less unwieldy than Gibbon's. He is retrogressive in percentage of very short sentences.

STERNE.

A Sentimental Journey, 1768.

Total paragraphs considered	200
Average words per paragraph	71.37
Average sentences per paragraph	1.95
Average words per sentence	36.50
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	55
Limits of fluctuation in word-length of paragraph	5–208

Sterne is in many respects the most eccentric of our prosaists. M. Scherer would have it that he is wilfully sensational and meretricious — a literary mountebank. I should like to find some method in his madness, even at a point where he seems maddest: *i. e.* his habit of making a chapter of a few words. Chapter xiii., vol. ii., of *Tristram*, contains one paragraph, three sentences (in dialogue) — a total of 29 words. Chapter xxvii., vol. iii., has two paragraphs, four sentences, 83 words. Chapter v., vol. v., has one paragraph, one sentence, 16 words. Chapter xxxix., vol. v., contains one paragraph, two sentences, 30 words. There are a dozen other chapters similar in length to these. All this is freakish enough, but is not so very odd in view of Sterne's long study of French models, from which he had learned the trick of the tiny paragraph. He chose to emphasize a thought by paragraphing it, as Anglo-Saxon scribes had done, long before — and it was but one bold step further, in the process of emphasis by

mechanical means, to make a chapter of the paragraph as he had made a paragraph of the sentence. It is hardly to the point for a critic to complain that these chapters are logically incomplete. Sterne was analyzing, not logically, but rhetorically; fastening attention on these small stadia simply for the imaginative suggestions involved in their pregnant brevity. I must, for one, confess to thinking the thing sometimes shrewdly done. Sterne is a lawless wight, but his recusancy has given us some things both quaint and good.

There is little else of importance to note of Sterne's paragraphs. In managing dialogue he follows Fielding.

HUGH BLAIR.

The only reason for mentioning Blair amid so many of his betters is that he wrote popular lectures on rhetoric, in which he said a deal about proportioning the sentence, but nothing about the paragraph; and one is curious to see if such men as Blair, Campbell, and Kames, personally followed paragraph law. Blair's smooth Shaftesburian style leads him securely from sentence to sentence; he writes nearly six monotonous sentences to the paragraph; he follows the loose order of procedure in the paragraph, and observes the law of unity. In brief, it is strange that such mildly correct rhetoricians as he, wrote respectable paragraphs, but, amid the multitude of their stylistic theories, had no theory of the process.

GOLDSMITH.

Vicar of Wakefield, 1766.

Total paragraphs considered	107
Total words considered	23,390
Total sentences considered	868
Average words per paragraph	218.59
Average sentences per paragraph	8.11
Average words per sentence	26.94
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	8
Limits of fluctuation in word-length of paragraphs	25–976
Per cent. of sentences of less than 15 words	15

The Bee, and *The Citizen of the World.*

(Gerwig, for 500 periods.)

Average predications, per sentence	2.95
Per cent. of simple sentences	18
Per cent. of clauses saved	6.35

In Goldsmith we have a respectable degree of variability in sentence-length, and therefore of one chief element of proportion — though other sense of paragraphic proportion Goldsmith had none. The general sentence-length is low, and 15 per cent. of the sentences fall below 15 words; on the other hand there are a few periods of more than 100 words.

Goldsmith's narrative sequence is perfect, little needing nor much using connectives. He has not such unity as some descriptive and narrative writers of the day, Fielding, for instance. He follows Fielding carelessly in the handling of dialogue.

BURKE.

On Conciliation with America, 1775.

Total paragraphs considered	145
Total words considered	23,907
Total sentences considered	916
Average words per paragraph	164.87
Average sentences per paragraph	6.31
Average words per sentence	26.09
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	18
Limits of fluctuation in word-length of paragraph	16–559

On the Sublime and Beautiful, 1756.

Total paragraphs	101
Average sentences per paragraph	11.68

Burke's *Sublime and Beautiful* is divided into parts headed as sections. These are rarely broken by indentation and are so short as to constitute relatively isolated paragraphs. Relatively, because it happens that one section may grow out of another, and accordingly begin with such a word as *but* (*e. g.*, part 3, § 15, part 4, § 12) or *hence* (*e. g.*, part 5, § 6). In length the sections vary from five lines to as many pages, the average number of sentences being eleven.

But it is in his oratory that Burke's paragraphs are remarkable. He exhibits here such qualities as make him the best paragrapher our literature produced before the present century.

His unity is simple (as opposed to that of compound paragraphs) and organic. His paragraph bears the test, as Wendell has pointed out,[1] of having its substance expressed in one organic sentence.

For purposes of oratorical emphasis and oratorical rhythm, he has completely mastered the short sentence. His percentage of sentences of less than fifteen words is higher than the highest yet reached. Shaftesbury's was 26 per cent., Burke's is 29 per cent. "Blithe, crisp sentences" Burke is fond of using at the beginning and the end of a paragraph. Of 145 paragraphs in *Conciliation*, 22 per cent. begin with a sentence of less than 15 words; 11 per cent. with a sentence of less than 10 words. The effect is striking. Here are certain such terse introductions: "The proposition is peace." "My idea is nothing more." "My next objection is its uncertainty." "First, the people of the colonies are descendants of Englishmen." "The march of the human mind is slow." "My next example is Wales." "This is an assertion of fact." Genung, a good observer, has noted[2] in Burke the fine effect produced by putting last in a paragraph a single terse, summarizing sentence. It is in the body of the paragraph that Burke introduces his shortest periods — those of one, two, three, four, five, six words each. These come in sometimes like veritable thunder-claps, enforcing the long, preceding propositions or forcing attention to those about to come.

We inspect Burke's coherence. This he owes but little to formal contrivances. *But* is the only initial connective that appears frequently; the oratorical mood is, perhaps, inclined to exaggerate the prominence of adversative ideas. Burke gives small heed to conjunctions, but he is explicit in his reference, usually making each sentence contain some word that refers closely to the preceding sentence; this word is very often one

[1] *English Composition*, p. 124. [2] *Practical Rhetoric*, p. 209.

repeated from that preceding sentence. Again, he secures coherence by regular construction. His sentences rarely contain sudden and awkward change of method. No contemporary author employed parallel construction with such freedom, such variety, such subtlety of effect. At its best, the tide of his style moves with most rapid sweep, each thought starting in the same line as its neighbor, each sentence pushed on by the preceding, each falling to the point in swift succession, like waves on the beach. Now and then there is a redundance of words that quiets the movement, but does not alter its method. In this movement there is no conflict of unmanaged masses of thought, as in Taylor, no choppy sea of antithesis, as in Johnson at his worst. Angus speaks of sentences "each a complete thought, easily separable from the rest of the paragraph,"[1] as common in Johnson and Burke; but the remark is hardly just to Burke. Burke's coherence, again, is enhanced by the order of his sentences and words. The great orator had, to a degree uncommon even in the most eminent orators, the power of marshalling his propositions in a specious order. His emotion never ran away with him; he drove straight at his hearer's intellect — did so too constantly for his highest immediate success. There is always the impression of a convincing chain of logic.

In short, Burke is the earliest great master of the paragraph, and in impassioned prose he still remains a master of the paragraph. But for his lingering sense of the prime importance of balancing and rounding the sentence he is a nineteenth-century paragrapher, and one of the best.

GIBBON.

Rome, Vol. I., 1776.

Total paragraphs considered	200
Total words considered	48,748
Total sentences considered	1562
Average words per paragraph	243.74
Average sentences per paragraph	7.81
Average words per sentence	31.21

[1] *Handbook of the English Tongue*, § 736.

Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	0
Per cent. of paragraphs of two sentences	25
Limits of fluctuation in word-length of paragraph	49–484
Per cent. of sentences of less than fifteen words	10

Gibbon's paragraphs may be said to have unity, if we admit that historical narrative tends toward a compound unit. Gibbon not infrequently subdivides his paragraphs by numerals, and often we feel that the undivided long sections contain subordinate stadia.

He is retrogressive in the matter of sentence-length. Only 10 per cent. of his sentences fall below the 15-mark. His stately and sonorous periods have a harmony of their own, but it is not paragraph harmony. His sentences have much proportion, his paragraphs little. We admire the comprehensive analysis of the discourse into chapters and paragraphs, but we do not quite feel that the paragraph is an organism. It is a well-defined cage in which the splendid sentence is confined.

His movement is not rapid, but the sequence is in general sure. Demonstratives are numerous. When an introductory pronoun would be ambiguous he adds a noun, seldom a repeated one, but rather a synonym.

Inversions, so frequent in Burke, are infrequent here. Conjunctions the author utterly despises, depending on the sheer inertia of his rolling sentences to carry the thought ahead. No other writer examined shows so small a list of sentence-connectives. The abandonment of them is Gibbon's only contribution to the development; and it may be questioned if the contribution is a real or a permanent one, depending as it does on balance in the sentence. Here is the list — showing but 17 connected sentences out of 300:

Connectives.	Initial.	Interior.
But	9	..
Yet	3	..
However	..	2
And yet	1	..
Nor	1	..
And thus	1	..

It may be added that Gibbon's usual order is loose, but that a really deductive paragraph is rare. It is a mistake to suppose that Gibbon abounds in abstract general statements. He is, indeed, fond of the abstract noun, as Minto [1] has remarked ; but he does not make sweeping generalizations in the Johnsonian manner.

PALEY.

Moral and Political Philosophy, 1785.

Total paragraphs considered	200
Total words considered	14,771
Total sentences considered	392
Average words per paragraph	73.85
Average sentences per paragraph	1.96
Average words per sentence	37.68
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	58
Limits of fluctuation in paragraph word-length	6–575

The averages given above from Paley are lower in paragraph-length than many parts of Paley would yield. The paragraph-length would, nevertheless, have been reduced still further but for a few cases where a single sentence, broken by Paley into several paragraphs, was counted as a single compound one.

Paley is the most prominent instance among modern writers of a man who paragraphed on the theory of emphasis. His mechanical devices for securing prominence were numerous—different kinds of type, numerals, etc. But the man that takes up only mechanical means for securing emphasis, usually perishes by the same means: he loses in proportion what he gains in emphasis. Paley is a shining illustration of this fact. Minto, by the way, who has written about Paley's method of analysis, does not, I believe, note all of his mechanical devices. Paley used double spacing to separate groups of paragraphs. Thus B. i., chap. 7, B. ii., chaps. 4, 7, 12. Another device is the very short chapter, as B. i., chap. 1, which has three paragraphs, three sentences, 76 words.

Paley's coherence depends upon conjunctions more than one

[1] *Manual*, p. 484.

would expect from so great a logician. The construction of his sentences and the order of words helps his coherence little or nothing.

SCOTT.

Ivanhoe, 1820.

Total paragraphs considered	551
Total words considered	39,340
Total sentences considered	1224
Average words per paragraph	71.39
Average sentences per paragraph	2.22
Average words per sentence	32.14
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	45
Limits of fluctuation in paragraph word-length	3-338
Per cent. of sentences of less than 15 words	14

Hazlitt was not far wrong when, in criticising the early style of the author of *Waverley*, he said: "There is neither *momentum* nor elasticity in it; I mean as to the *score*, or effect upon the ear."[1] That style gained in vigor as years went by, but, except in the most impassioned passages, the sentences continue to ramble to the last. Even the dialogue is not equal to checking the diffuseness. An average of 31 words to the sentence, with only 14 per cent. of sentences under 15 words, is no help to the popularity of a novelist.

In Scott the paragraphing of conversation proceeds by the modern method uniformly.

His narrative and descriptive paragraphs have a certain unity always, and at times reveal a very high degree of picturesque grouping. The general straightforward coherence of his paragraphs is not to be disputed.

COLERIDGE.

The Friend, 1809.

Total paragraphs considered	100
Total words considered	29,241
Total sentences considered	777
Average words per paragraph	292.41
Average sentences per paragraph	7.77
Average words per sentence	37.6

[1] On the *Prose Style of Poets*, ¶ 2.

Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	8
Limits of fluctuation in paragraph word-length	45–758
Per cent. of sentences of less than 15 words	17

Poetry, Drama, Shakespeare.
(Gerwig, for 500 periods.)

Average predications per sentence	3.33
Per cent. of simple sentences.	19
Per cent. of clauses saved	11.10

At the beginning of the present century the journalistic short sentence was becoming popular. It had not, however, crept into the work of the literary dictators, and it is a little surprising that Coleridge should attack with such severity as he did, in the third issue of the *Friend*, a form of sentence that was not influencing the great reviews. Jeffrey was writing a sentence of Elizabethan proportions; De Quincey's sentence could hardly be spoken of as having anything in common with the "fashionable Anglo-Gallican taste" that Coleridge hated and that De Quincey, on the unconscious principle of elective affinity, praised. How little real hold the very short sentence acquired may be seen later—considerably later, to be sure—when in 1840 De Quincey was uttering his lament that "the too general tendency of our sentences is toward hyperbolical length."[1]

At any rate, Coleridge resolved not to cater much to French models. In the third essay of the *Friend* he admits that he may have injured his own style by solitary, inarticulate meditation, and by over-admiration for the Jacobean prosaists: but he then turns to attack the short sentence. "It is true that these short and unconnected sentences are easily and instantly understood: but it is equally true that wanting all the cement of thought as well as of style, all the connections, and (if you will forgive so trivial a metaphor) all the hooks-and-eyes of the memory, they are easily forgotten; or rather, it is equally impossible that they should be remembered."

The practical—or impractical—result of this philosophizing appears in the style of the *Friend*. Here is Brandl's com-

[1] *Essay on Style.*

ment. "He reveled also in abstract expressions, and built up the most involved periods in the attempt to forestall every variety of objection. The paragraphs are so perversely arranged that the point is difficult to find; and the arrangement of chapters lacks all order."[1] The perverseness of the paragraphs comes from an attempt — not a victorious attempt — to follow the intricate order of the thought as it occurred in the writer's mind: hence also the large percentage of imperfectly developed inductive paragraphs.

Some qualification must be made of the statement that Coleridge's sentences are involved. There are splendid exceptions in quantities, where he actually succeeds in performing difficult evolutions without ambiguity or obscurity. Again, Coleridge is not without some command of the short sentence. Of 777 sentences, 17 per cent. average less than 15 words. He can, when he needs it as a foil to a long and difficult period, use the disintegrating sentence with an oral force and directness like Emerson's. He tends, indeed, to put his paragraph-topic in a short sentence, for emphasis.

Coleridge is "sequacious," even when he rambles; seer though he is, he omits no step; his style is not only redintegrating, but, at times, almost impartially so — as if narcotism had touched his selective faculty. He uses more "hooks-and-eyes" than any writer of his time, more, I presume, than any great English *littérateur* of the century. Of 300 sentences in the *Friend*, 100 are formally connected — up to that day a higher proportion than that of any man after Walton. The list of formal connectives is as follows, the initial connectives being double the interior in number:

Connective.	Initial.	Interior.
For	12	..
Again	2	..
Therefore	..	11
But	26	..
In short	1	..
Then	..	5

[1] *Life of Coleridge*, trans. Lady Eastlake, p. 300.

Connective.	Initial.	Interior.
At least	..	2
And	5	..
And yet	1	..
Now	3	..
Too	..	3
Indeed	1	5
Thus	2	2
Accordingly	1	..
It is true	1	..
Nor	1	..
On the contrary	1	..
On the other hand	1	1
Hitherto	1	..
Yet	4	..
Consequently	1	..
In other words	1	..
Lastly	1	..
However	..	2
Add to	1	..
So	2	..
Moreover	1	..
Likewise	..	1
First (etc.)	..	2
Further	..	1

JEFFREY.

Alison on Taste . revised form, *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 1824.

Total paragraphs considered	100
Total words considered	27,608
Total sentences considered	545
Average words per paragraph	276.08
Average sentences per paragraph	5.45
Average words per sentence	50.65
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	3
Limits of fluctuation in paragraph word-length	54–665
Per cent. of sentences of less than 15 words	6

In spite of its undeniable verboseness, Jeffrey's style was considered brilliant and sprightly. How such a verdict could be passed on a style whose average sentence is fifty words, with only 6 per cent. of very short sentences to vary the monotony, is

hard for a modern reader to see. The secret lies in the comparative absence of periodicity. Jeffrey's huge sentences are mere groups of clauses. Many clauses are oppositional; these are often set off by dashes. Jeffrey went as far in the direction of aggregating loose clauses as Macaulay went in the direction of segregating them. Otherwise, in the case of these two men, one style is almost as modern as the other. Jeffrey's length of paragraph is not far from Macaulay's. As a structural unit Jeffrey's lacks emphasis, from neglect of the short period: Macaulay's lacks gradation of emphasis, from his neglect of the moderately long period. Jeffrey makes clauses out of periods; Macaulay makes periods out of clauses.

Jeffrey's usual paragraph order is loose. His subject is often delayed, however, by verbose introductions. He has no sense of the importance of the first sentence and the last. His coherence is good but not graceful. There is occasional abuse of coördinate conjunctions.

LAMB.

Essays of Elia, 1822.

Total paragraphs considered	87
Total words considered	14,386
Total sentences considered	529
Average words per paragraph	165.35
Average sentences per paragraph	6.08
Average words per sentence	27.19
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	15
Limits of fluctuation in paragraph word-length	15–726
Per cent. of sentences of less than 15 words	41

The gentle Elia was in his own day the uncomplaining target of much windy criticism as to his mechanology. Lamb's sentence and Lamb's paragraph were short, and therefore a source of worry to De Quincey, who complained that "the most felicitous passages always accomplished their circuit in a few sentences;"[1] and again that Lamb had no proper sense of the epic;—that "the solemn planetary wheelings of the *Paradise Lost* were not to his taste."[2] Though this could hardly be denied, a few essays of Lamb

[1] *Works*, V., p. 234. [2] *Works*, V., p. 236.

show that he really had some command of the long paragraph. such are, "*The Sanity of True Genius*," and, "*On the Genteel Style of Writing*." But still, Lamb is likely to digress when he attempts a long section. Indeed, he usually avoids the long section, preferring to digress by paragraphs,—and so charmingly that we would not have him do otherwise.

The unity of the short paragraphs is usually a rhetorical unity. He sometimes uses the short section purely for emphasis, and in all cases he is shy of logical division. Indeed, Professor Hunt represents Taine as maintaining that "Lamb aimed to destroy the great aristocratical style as it sprang from methodical analyses and court conventions."[1] If this remark refers to the passage given below,[2] from the *Histoire*, it is not quite exact. These words of Taine about the grand aristocratic style were written of the romantic school, and with reference to poetry. Lamb's name happens to stand near in the context, but it is Lamb the author of *John Woodvil*, Lamb the devotee of the sixteenth century.

[1] *English Prose and Prose Writers*, p. 367.

[2] Speaking of "l'école romantique anglaise," Taine says: Ils avaient rompu violemment avec la tradition, et sautaient par-dessus toute la culture classique pour aller prendre leurs modèles dans la Renaissance et le moyen âge. L'un d'eux, Charles Lamb, comme Sainte-Beuve, avait découvert et restauré le seizième siècle. Les dramatistes les plus incultes, Marlowe par example, leur paraissaient admirables, et ils allaient chercher dans les recueils de Percy et de Warton, dans les vieilles ballades nationales et dans les anciennes poésies étrangères, l'accent naïf et primitif qui avait manqué à la littérature classique, et dont la présence leur semblait la marque de la vérité et de la beauté. Par-dessus toute réforme, ils travaillaient à briser le grand style aristocratique et oratoire, tel qu'il était né de l'analyse méthodique et des convenances de cour. Ils se proposaient "d'adapter aux usages de la poésie le langage ordinaire de la conversation, tel qu'il est employé dans la moyenne et la basse classe," et de remplacer les phrases étudiées et la vocabulaire noble par les tons naturels et les mots plébéiens. A la place de l'ancien moule, ils essayaient la stance, le sonnet, la ballade, le vers blanc, avec les rudesses et les cassures des poëtes primitifs. Ils reprenaient ou arrangeaient les mètres et la diction du treizième et du seizième siècle. Charles Lamb écrivait une tragédie d'archéologue qu'on eût pu croire contemporaine du règne d'Élisabeth, etc.

[2] *Histoire de la Littérature Anglaise*, Paris, 1887. Tome quatrième, p. 286.

For all this, it is entirely true that Lamb was not devoted to logical analysis in prose.

Lamb's use of the short sentence was incomparably freer, and as Mr. Pater might have said, "blither," than that of any of his predecessors. In sentence-length, indeed, he exhibits all the variability of insanity. His sentences fretted De Quincey: "Lamb had no sense of the rhythmical in prose composition. Rhythmus, or pomp of cadence, or sonorous ascent of clauses, in the structure of sentences, were effects of art as much thrown away upon *him* as the voice of the charmer upon the deaf adder."[1] Some of Lamb's "sentences and periods" made the author of the *English Mail Coach* "shriek with anguish of recoil." Doubtless to De Quincey the most abhorrent of these "sentences and periods" were those of two or three words, verb to be supplied from the reader's store of predicates. One can imagine the Opium Eater thrown into hysteria by Lamb's way of setting forth the bachelors of the South Sea House: "Hence they formed a sort of Noah's ark. Odd fishes. A large monastery. Domestic retainers in a great house, kept more for show than use." For my own part, I confess to being, just at this minute, in the mood to like this indefensible sentence-making. How the device flashes the conceits upon us! We catch the first delicious over-emphasis of discovery—the very conception and birth of quaint fancies in the mind of a humorous genius.

In spite of now and then a long but harmless parenthesis, Lamb knew the value of the paragraph structure—knew it better than Coleridge did, or De Quincey. Hardly one of his shorter sections but is an artistic whole. The order is loose. The mass is often perfect—the topic striking the eye instantly, and the paragraph ending with words that deserve emphasis.

What shall we say of his coherence? Coleridge, speaking in 1833, doubtless thought of *Elia* as one of "those modern books in which, for the most part, the sentences in a page have the same connection with each other that marbles have in a bag; they

[1] *Works*, V., 235.

touch without adhering."[1] But where would be Lamb's charm if his sentences were a third longer, and thick with "hooks-and-eyes"? The fact is that Lamb's style, on any subject Lamb would have been willing to touch, would be easier to follow than Coleridge's, no matter how far afield the whimsical Elia might wander. For there are no long intervals between Lamb's propositions, no involved restrictions of those propositions, no necessity of supplying anything except a few obvious verbs and the sense of a few freakish vocables.

LANDOR.

Imaginary Conversations (*Sovereigns and Statesmen*).

Total paragraphs considered	200
Total words considered	17,697
Total sentences considered	696
Average words per paragraph	88.48
Average sentences per paragraph	3.48
Average words per sentence	25.43
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	34
Per cent. of sentences of less than 15 words	22

Any statistics drawn from the *Conversations* are of course modified by the dialogue form. This explains the large number of paragraphed sentences, and the brevity of the paragraph. Though the *Conversations* yield Landor's most brilliant style, we shall base what we have to say of the structure more upon the pieces of continuous prose than upon these dialogues, which are so good in dramatic ἦθος as sometimes to seem anything but characteristically Landorian.

Landor is uneven in the matter of unity. He can keep severely to one topic, but he often forgets. He will begin an important paragraph on, say, Laura's decreasing coldness towards Petrarca, and, after illustrating this point by a remarkably inapposite account of the lady being kissed at a ball by Charles of Luxemburg, will proceed to tell you in the same paragraph of Petrarca's travels and visits in the following summer.[2] Generally, however, Landor's frequent digressions proceed by whole paragraphs.

[1] *Table Talk*, July 3, 1833.

[2] See *Works*, VIII., 438.

In the matter of proportion Landor has very considerable merits, though by no means the highest. He pays little attention to proportion by bulk; but he uses the semicolon and the period with great skill to secure right distribution of emphasis. Here, however, the principle of euphony often interferes. No author ever surpassed Landor in such tricks of melody as introducing at the end of a resounding period a very brief colon clause for cadence.[1] These skillful variations sometimes misplace the thought emphasis. When, however, the two principles coincide in the application, the effect is perfect. The felicitous combination occurs oftener in the short than in the long paragraphs. In the longer ones we sometimes feel that the writer is caring nothing for precision — only for the infinite variety of prose modulation which he himself describes — that "amplification of harmonies, of which even the best and most varied poetry admits but few."

Landor's style is intuitive and segregating; the incoherence of it is its weakest point. Mr. Sidney Colvin somewhat, but not greatly, over-states the case when he says: "The best skeleton type of a Landorian sentence is that which we quoted some pages back on Lord Byron: 'I had avoided him; I had slighted him; he knew it; he did not love me; he could not.' No conjunctions, no transitions; each statement made by itself, and their [*sic*] connection left to be discovered by the reader . . . But whether to the sequence of propositions in an argument, or the sequence of incidents in a narrative, Landor's style is less adapted."[2] Mr. Leslie Stephen[3] speaks of Landor rounding off transitions gracefully. I cannot quite make out what this means, unless it means transition in melody. The rest of the passage in Stephen forms a good comment on Landor's coherence, and not less directly on his unity: "He is so desirous to round off his transitions gracefully, that he obliterates the necessary indications of the main divisions of the subject. When criticising Milton or Dante,

[1] A friend reminds me, in this connection, of Swinburne's fondness for ending a stanza with a short line.

[2] *Landor*, *English Men of Letters*, p. 223.

[3] *Hours in a Library*, 3d series, p. 245, London, 1879.

he can hardly keep his hand off the finest passages in his desire to pare away superfluities. Treating himself in the same fashion, he leaves none of those little signs, which, like the typographical hand prefixed to a notice, are extremely convenient, though strictly superfluous. It is doubtless unpleasant to have the hard framework of logical divisions showing too distinctly in an argument, or to have a too elaborate statement of dates and places and external relations in a romance. But such aids to the memory may be removed too freely. The building may be injured by taking away the scaffolding."

His coherence is often helped by parallel construction ; but, again, the movement is a little retarded by the perfect balance of the sentences, as we have seen in older authors. In his later reading of Landor, Mr. Lowell "began to be not quite sure whether the balance of his sentences, each so admirable by itself, did not grow wearisome in continuous reading,—whether it did not hamper his freedom of movement, as when a man poises a pole upon his chin."[1]

The minor breaks in Landor's coherence are usually due, not to false logic, but to a habit of vague reference and allusion. Landor assumed a high degree of literary information and appreciation on the part of his audience. He felt himself to be writing for the few. The chosen guests who were to "sup late" at his feast would be willing, for the sake of the elect *camaraderie*, to dispense with overmuch table-service.

IRVING.

Sketch Book, 1820.

Total paragraphs considered	129
Total words considered	14,220
Total sentences considered	532
Average words per paragraph	110.23
Average sentences per paragraph	4.12
Average words per sentence	26.73
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	17

Irving is in his way a skillful paragrapher. No matter how

[1] *Latest Literary Essays*, p. 45; *Works*, Boston, 1892.

great the license of his subject, he always gives an impression of unity. He follows the loose order almost exclusively, keeping his statement of details closely within the limits prescribed by his opening sentence. His transitions are faultless, the number of connectives being greater, however, than the placing of words requires.

About one-quarter of his sentences are shorter than 15 words, and nearly one-half (41 per cent.) are under 20 words. He adapts the short sentence to the smooth and graceful manner of Addison. He does not, indeed, ever succeed in flashing out a complex thought in a telling and emphatic way; but as a type of the urbane, leisurely, correct manner, he is exemplary.

CHAPTER VIII.

DE QUINCEY TO HOLMES.

Although we have included in the preceding chapter several writers of the nineteenth century, all of these, with the possible exception of Landor, belong properly, in structure, to the eighteenth. De Quincey's stands as a dividing style between the two periods. The new period differs from the old, not in kind but in degree. In the nineteenth century the paragraph is organized as in the eighteenth, but acquires greater concentration. The emphasis of the short sentence is more keenly felt and more effectually employed. The unity is more organic. The coherence depends less and less on formal connectives. The question of mass receives its first serious attention.

DE QUINCEY.

Opium Eater, 1822.

Total paragraphs considered	89
Total words considered	31,634
Total sentences considered	815
Average words per paragraph	355.42
Average sentences per paragraph	9.16
Average words per sentence	38.81[1]
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	14
Per cent. of sentences of less than 15 words	13
Limits of fluctuation in paragraph word-length	13–1441
Average predications per sentence (Gerwig, for 500 periods.)	3.69
Per cent. of simple sentences (Gerwig, for 500 periods.)	14
Per cent. of clauses saved (Gerwig, for 500 periods.)	5.49

When we ask ourselves whether De Quincey's paragraphs are units we find it necessary to limit the word unity more closely than usual. Classical unity, severe, selective, exclusive, he rarely shows. On the other hand his essays were preceded by the most

[1] Sherman finds 33+. My own count is from the second American edition, purporting to give the original text.

careful analysis, and there is no doubt that he considered each paragraph with regard to unity. We may say of his longer paragraphs that the best show unity in somewhat wide variety, while in all cases he returns consciously, from digressions within the paragraph, to the topic. As a rule his long and numerous digressions proceed by whole paragraphs.

In the matter of proportion he is deficient. He expands the unimportant at the expense of the important. His use of the short sentence is usually half-hearted. No author who writes but 14 per cent. of simple sentences can obtain the highest effects in paragraph-structure. De Quincey, for purposes of rhythm, will give you numerous terse clauses within the sentence, but he fails to distribute the emphasis of his paragraph justly by means of the terse period. There are some exceptions to this general dictum, however. In *Levana and Our Ladies of Sorrow* we have most effective emphasis-proportion; nothing could be finer.

De Quincey's coherence is notoriously good. Mr. Stephen puts the general verdict thus: "He is careful to show you the minutest details of his argumentative mechanism. Each step in the process is elaborately and separately set forth; you are not assumed to know anything, or to be capable of supplying any links for yourself; it shall not even be taken for granted without due notice that things which are equal to a third thing are equal to each otner; and the consequence is, that few people venture to question processes which seem to be so plainly set forth, and to advance by such careful development."[1]

Few authors are so redintegrating. The criticism which De Quincey applies to a certain style, quoting a French expression from Archbishop Huet, is applicable to his own style; he had that *flux de bouche* which "places the reader at the mercy of a man's tritest remembrances from his own school-boy reading."[2] Let me again quote Mr. Stephen, from the same page as before. "He is utterly incapable of concentration. He is, from the

[1] *Hours in a Library*, p. 364, London, 1874.

[2] *Works*, X., 236–237 (Edinburgh ed.).

very principles on which his style is constructed, the most diffuse of writers. Other men will pack half-a-dozen distinct propositions into a sentence, and care little if they are somewhat crushed and distorted in the process. De Quincey insists upon putting each of them separately, smoothing them out elaborately, till not a wrinkle disturbs their uniform surface, and then presenting each of them for our acceptance with a placid smile. His very creditable desire for lucidity of expression makes him nervously anxious to avoid any complexity of thought. Each step of his argument, each shade of meaning, and each fact in his narrative, must have its own separate embodiment; and every joint and connecting link must be carefully and accurately defined. The clearness is won at a heavy price."

The means by which this unusual "sequaciousness" is secured are many. First, of course, De Quincey rarely states a truth in its intuitive form, or at any rate rarely without explaining that form afterwards. Thus he uses a large number of clauses to elaborate a given idea. Then he employs with great art the devices of sentence-structure that lend coherence. No author uses parallel structure more freely and subtilely, shifting the mode just before it becomes mannerism. He inverts sentences and clauses constantly—hardly any writer more. Besides having at command all these structural contrivances he is opulent in connectives. Of 300 sentences in the *Opium Eater* 75 are formally joined. The list is as follows:

CONNECTIVE.	Initial.	Interior.
For	6	..
However	4	24
True it is	1	..
Accordingly	1	1
Nay	1	..
Therefore	..	3
Hence	1	..
And	3	..
Thus	1	..
But	12	..
Or	1	..

Connective.	Initial.	Interior.
Yet	1	1
Also	..	1
On the contrary	..	1
So	1	1
Moreover	1	..
Nevertheless	..	1
Now then	1	..
Thereupon	1	..
Indeed	1	5

Everyone knows that De Quincey had much to say about prose rhythm. His theory stands midway between a theory of rhythm in the period and a theory of rhythm in the paragraph as a whole. To his remarks about the cumulative effect of the *rhythmus* of succeeding clauses (quoted in our section on Lamb) may be added the following, in which the writer is thinking of melody, quite as much as of sequence in thought: "It is in the relation of sentences, in what Horace terms their '*junctura*,' that the true life of composition resides. The mode of their *nexus*—the way in which one sentence is made to arise out of another, and to prepare the opening for a third,—this is the great loom in which the textile process of the moving intellect reveals itself and prospers."[1] Again, speaking of Kant's elephantine period: "Parts so remote as the beginning and end of such a sentence can have no sensible relation to each other: not much as regards their logic, but none at all as regards their more *sensuous* qualities,—rhythmus, for instance, or the continuity of metaphor."[2]

De Quincey himself exemplified his own theories of melody. In the short paragraph of his impassioned prose he has something that may be called an organic paragraph rhythm. Such a paragraph will begin with a short cadence or two, followed by a longer one, and will end in a reverberating roll of dactyls, cretics, tribrachs, anapæsts, what not. Much more rarely it will begin with a long, swinging cadence, followed by a shorter and a shorter, till the whole movement comes down to a short stop as

[1] *Works*, X., 258.

[2] *Works*, X., 259.

with a clash of cymbals. The first movement may be illustrated by the following paragraph, from the *Vision of Sudden Death:*

"The moments were numbered; the strife was finished; the vision was closed. In the twinkling of an eye our flying horses had carried us to the termination of the umbrageous aisle; at the right angles we wheeled into our former direction; the turn of the road carried the scene out of my eyes in an instant, and swept it into my dreams forever."

In the longer paragraphs—the best ones of the impassioned style—there is most dexterous variation of cadence, the alternation of long and short going on till the music merges in one long rolling surge, only to emerge at the end as in lapping waves. Such is the harmony in the description of *Our Lady of Sighs.* On the whole, however, there is no deliberate harmonic organization of the long paragraph as a paragraph.

De Quincey's finest effects of melody, as indeed of his thought, are effects of suspense. He is never really rapid in mental movement, or at least not forcibly rapid; but he delights in the evocation of a vivid train of images (face to face with an impending conclusion) in a way to reproduce the lightning-like, multiform impressions of the mind when under excitement. Similarly his rhythm may be held back. Thus, in one of the last paragraphs of the *Vision of Sudden Death,* he gets a peculiar effect of suspense by ending thus, "But the lady—" and beginning the next paragraph with a repetition of the same words. In the second section of the *Dream Fugue*—the section ends in the midst of a sentence—the last sentence advances by soft monosyllables—on tiptoe, so to speak; it stops with a comma, and the next section drops into the swinging rhythm once more. Thus:—"and afterwards, but when I know not, nor how,

Sweet funeral bells from some incalculable distance," etc.

One other witness to De Quincey's rhythmical sense should be mentioned. He studiously avoids repeating the same number of sentences in succeeding paragraphs. Thus he has no successive groups of three, or four, or five, or six sentences; and there

is in the *Opium Eater* only one case of a succession of (two) groups of seven and one case of a succession of (three) single-sentence paragraphs.

MACAULAY.

Essays. Milton, Machiavelli, Dryden, History.[1]

Total paragraphs considered		325
Total words considered		67,158
Average words per paragraph		206.67
Average words per sentence		c. 23.05
Average sentences per paragraph		c. 8.96
Average predications per sentence	(Gerwig, from 5604 periods.)	2.17
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs		1
Per cent of simple sentences		36
Per cent. of clauses saved		5.06

History of England.

Total paragraphs		3338
Total words		974,550
Average words per paragraph		291.96
Average sentences per paragraph		12.44
Average words per sentence	(Sherman)	23.43
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs		2
Per cent. of simple sentences	(Gerwig, from 40,000 periods.)	34
Average predications, per sentence		2.30

The popular impression that Macaulay is the best of paragraphers is probably not far from the truth. The great rhetorician bestowed unlimited pains upon his paragraphs, and no preceding writer began to equal him in conscious appreciation of the importance of that structure.[2]

His unity is rhetorical, rather than logical; but as such it is nearly always unimpeachable. The sections that contain real digressions are few indeed.

In the matter of proportion by bulk he is nearly always admirable. He knows his principal point, and it is on this that he enlarges. His emphasis-proportion is consciously paragraphic.

[1] For the total number of words in the *Essays* (except *History*) and in the *History of England* I am indebted to Professor Sherman.

[2] *Cf.* Trevelyan's account of Macaulay's laboriousness. *Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay*, London, 1886, p. 502.

He reveals very great variability in sentence-length,[1] and drives home his main topic and his main conclusion in simple sentences. When he masses clauses it is to relieve each of emphasis and show the unity of the group as amplifying some previous terse generalization. He shows such deliberate observance of this principle that he forms the first basis for the generalization made in a former chapter: in the best modern paragraphs the distance between periods is inversely as the emphasis of each included proposition.

Nevertheless, in this matter of distribution of emphasis, Macaulay is not faultless. It has been the general verdict of critics that he not infrequently over-emphasizes; that he magnifies clauses into sentences. On the other hand, a writer so well able to give a reason for his faith as Professor Sherman, defends Macaulay's short sentence at a point where most critics would consider it least happy. Thus:

"This impulse to analyze and energize,—to keep the author's meaning out of the reach of the reader save one notion at a time, leads Macaulay in his earlier compositions to go against the fashion of his day and fall foul of the semicolon as a help to thought. Hence such sentences as these are not infrequent: 'Like the former he was timid and pliable, artful and mean. But like the latter he had a country.'—'Shallow is a fool. But his animal spirits supply, to a certain degree, the place of cleverness.'—'There are errors in these works. But they are errors which a writer, situated like Machiavelli, could scarcely avoid.' Professor Sherman adds in a footnote: "This method of punctuation is manifestly truer to the thought, and will perhaps prevail in time. We are naturally about as loath to give up the eighteenth-century punctuation as its natural spelling. As to

[1] Sherman (*University Studies*, I., 4., p. 348) has noted Macaulay's fondness for groups of sentences of 17 words each. But Sherman also notes (*Analytics*, 284) that Macaulay's commonest sentence-lengths are those of 11, 13, 14, 15; and that in the essay on History the sentence of maximum frequency is 14 words (*University Studies*, I., 4., p. 360). Macaulay has, on the other hand, a good many sentences of more than 100 words.

the excuse of subordinate conjunctions for making semicolon clauses, we can go back and learn something from old Homer. When a sentence is to follow as the explanation of the preceding statement, it is his favorite practice to introduce it without a 'because' or 'since,' and thus allow the reader the satisfaction of perceiving the relation for himself. Still Homer does not slight conjunctions: he merely avoids abusing them."[1]

For one, I do not see how the punctuation in these passages from Macaulay is manifestly truer to the thought than semicolons would have been. I can hardly believe that in Macaulay's rapid antithetic thinking these contrasts could possibly have been segregated before pen touched paper. Only the habit of exaggerating contrasts for stimulus to the reader's mind, could have permitted the dropping of the semicolon in a connection where the act throws a relatively unimportant clause into the same importance as the short topic sentence. The point about Homer must be admitted; but though Homer is fond of asyndeton for explanatory purposes, we are not sure that he could have borne it to hear one of his rhapsodes drop his voice wherever a conjunction was omitted.

Macaulay's coherence is dependent upon structural devices. The paragraph once accepted by the reader as a unit in the light of whose topic each sentence is to be read, Macaulay's style is indisputably sequent. True, there is no blending of colors in the picture: the sentences lie like stones in a mosaic, as Mr. Stephen puts it, or like marbles in a bag, as Coleridge would have put it. But there are no gaps in the mosaic, and though the pieces are distinct, they are numerous and rightly set. Parallel construction is almost the rule with Macaulay, and it is often mechanical and noticeable. Inversion is frequent. Connectives are few — fewer by far than in any man hitherto who has not been enslaved to the balanced sentence. The list runs thus, showing but 47 formally connected sentences in a total of 300.

[1] "Some Observations on the Sentence-Length in English Prose," *University Studies*, Vol. I., No. 2, p. 126.

Connective.	Initial.	Interior.
Nor	3	..
Yet	7	..
For	3	..
Therefore	..	1
But	15	..
It is true	2	..
Also	..	1
Thus	1	..
On the other hand	1	..
Too	..	1
However	..	1
At length / At last	2	2
Indeed	..	7

His coherence is impaired at times by one of his methods of organization. Most of his paragraphs are loose ; but occasionally in the midst of one he will abruptly introduce an intuitive statement or a generalization, proceeding afterward to resolve this in redintegrating manner. Sometimes, indeed, the riddle is left unresolved : Mr. Leslie Stephen's sensibilities were much jarred by Macaulay's abrupt and unexplained contrast, to the effect that Boswell was the greatest of fools and the best of biographers.

This habit of introducing an enigma and then resolving it step by step gives us a type of paragraph that is pseudo-deductive yet really periodic. It is a common type in the *Essays*. In the *History* we find a comparatively large number of truly periodic structures, where the writer begins his paragraph remotely and proceeds by the natural order of development to a new conclusion. Whether the order is deductive or inductive, it often happens that the very first sentence is a summary of the preceding paragraph, the transition being greatly expanded.[1]

Macaulay had a very definite sense of paragraph rhythm, though his movement is too much staccato. He has also a keen sense of the importance of variety in paragraph-length. Here he

[1] On this point and that of the abrupt introduction of a general statement, see Minto's admirable analysis of Macaulay's style, *Manual*, p. 89 ff.

is perhaps the most intelligently variable of all our prosaists. He knows how to relieve the attention by variety, and to drive home in a short paragraph the details accumulated in a preceding long one. His percentage of paragraphed sentences is low, but he does not hesitate to use this device to mark a brief but emphatic stadium.

The question of constancy in paragraph-length has already been discussed (pp. 49, 50) with reference to Macaulay, the author who in stylistic *averages* is perhaps the most stable of all who have written English prose.

CARLYLE.

Jean Paul Richter, 1827.

Total paragraphs considered	34
Total words considered	8521
Total sentences considered	270
Average words per paragraph	250.62
Average sentences per paragraph	7.94
Average words per sentence	31.56
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	5

Essays.

(Gerwig, for 500 periods.)

Per cent. of simple sentences	18
Average predications per sentence	3.12
Per cent. of clauses saved	7.08

Sartor Resartus, 1833–1834.

Total paragraphs considered	100
Total words considered	16,690
Total sentences considered	476
Average words per paragraph	166.90
Average sentences per paragraph	4.76
Average words per sentence	35.06
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	12
Limits of fluctuation in paragraph word-length	27–488

French Revolution, 1837.

Total paragraphs considered	100
Total words considered	16,031
Total sentences considered	671
Average words per paragraph	160.31

Average sentences per paragraph................	6.71
Average words per sentence.....................	23.89
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs...........	3
Per cent. of sentences of less than 15 words........	28
Limits of fluctuation in paragraph word-length.....	24–374

Carlyle's most orderly paragraphs belong to the period of his life when Goethe's influence over him was freshest and strongest. For order in the paragraph is due largely to an ascendency of the intellectual element over the emotional; and Carlyle's emotions were never so well-tempered — or least ill-tempered — as when he saw most clearly the mastery that Goethe had of his own nature.[1] Thus the *Life of Schiller* is sequent and orderly in a degree surprising to the reader who has of late fed on the *French Revolution*. In this early time Carlyle saw life steadily and achromatically. But as his egotism waxed strong with his days, as his impatience of the world increased and his hopes of reforming it decreased, he became subject to starts of the wildest incoherence. In such papers as the *Latter Day Pamphlets* he is wholly under the influence of his habitually strongest emotions; he raves. As Minto says, "Some pages remind us of his vivid descriptions of chaotic inundations, that hide or sweep away all guiding posts. Very seldom can we gather from the beginning of a paragraph what is to be its purport. No attempt is made to keep a main subject prominent."[2]

Minto finds that in Carlyle's writing of history, the case is very different. "The arrangement is almost the perfection of clearness. When the bearing of a statement is not apparent, he is careful to make it explicit. In each paragraph the main subject is for the most part kept prominent,—his defiance of ordinary syntax giving him great facilities for a distinct foreground and background. He begins his paragraphs with some indication of their contents. Further, he is consecutive, and keeps rigidly to

[1] Somewhere, (I think in a letter) Carlyle likens Goethe's emotions in their number and variety to the hues of the landscape, but his intellect to the sun that irradiates and controls them all.

[2] *Manual*, p. 152.

the point." It may be said that this is high praise, and that in the case of the *Revolution* nearly every point that Minto makes should be slightly modified.

The sentence-length of the early essays is moderately long—in *Richter*, 31.56. Between 1827 and 1833 Carlyle was developing his own peculiar ideas of emphasis; and the study of German models increased his sentence, which appears in *Sartor* as 35.06. The sentences of *Sartor* are full of parentheses and involutions. Of Teufelsdröck's periods the writer himself said, "Perhaps not more than nine-tenths stand straight on their legs; the remainder are in quite angular attitudes; a few even sprawl out helplessly on all sides, quite broken-backed and dismembered." Between 1834 and 1837 Carlyle came under a new influence, the French. Though his style in the *Revolution* cannot be called in any sense Gallic, he had at least profited by his studies; the sentence of the *Revolution* is a third shorter than that of *Sartor*; to be exact, it stands at 23.89. I regret that I have no figures from the *Friedrich.* Sherman, as we have noted in § 4 of Chapter 3, says that "Carlyle showed no change for worse or better, in respect to sentence proportions, between the Edinburgh *Essays* and his *Frederick the Great.*" In this case the average of Carlyle's sentence has again risen under study of German models; but the sentence of the *Frederick* is surely a different and far better sentence in point of carrying power than the somewhat Johnsonian sentence of the *Essays.*

The word-length of Carlyle's paragraph follows just the course that might be expected. In 1827 it is 250.62. In *Sartor* the long period becomes temporarily as prominent a unit as the paragraph, and the latter sinks to166.90. The ensuing study of French reduces the sentence but leaves the paragraph about *in statu quo* (160.31). It should be added that the increase in the impassioned quality of the prose would be another reason why the early length of the paragraph would decrease. Impassioned prose cultivates short units; De Quincey's new "impassioned prose," with its long sentence and paragraph, was merely imagi-

native prose. The course of the single-sentence paragraph corresponds roughly with the movement of the sentence-length, increasing from 5 per cent. in *Richter* to 12 per cent. in *Sartor*, and in the *Revolution* dropping to 3 per cent.

Minto's general remarks on the structure of Carlyle's sentence are just—as that the sentence is an exaggeration of the loose style,—"consisting, for the most part, of two or three coördinate statements, eked out by explanatory clauses either in apposition or in the 'nominative absolute' construction." But it is a most striking fact that, by the use of these devices and an enormous number of significant phrases and words, Carlyle's later style is perhaps the weightiest in the language. The amount of suppressed intermediate predication is unprecedented ; and when we take into account the subjects that Carlyle treated, the number of facts he was bound as an historian to express, all other intuitive styles, it seems to me, will appear in comparison with his, diffuse.

It is a curious fact that Carlyle's coherence seems at first blush to depend as much on connectives as De Quincey's. The fact is, however, that Carlyle in his later works conveys several times as many notions to the sentence as De Quincey does,[1] and saves clauses in ways that De Quincey never dreamed of—no, not in his wildest opium dream after an evening with the "sentences and periods" of poor Lamb. Carlyle's connectives, again, are far more vital than De Quincey's, and sometimes represent relations that De Quincey might have spun into clauses, and that Macaulay surely would so have treated. The list is from the *Revolution*, showing 75 formally connected sentences in 300.

Connectives.	Initial.	Interior.
So	4	2
But	10	..
Indeed	..	5
For	11	..
Thus	3	1
However	2	2

[1] I wish Mr. Gerwig had given us the per cent. of clauses saved in the *Revolution*. The per cent. in the *Essays* is only 7.08, while De Quincey's is 5.49.

Connective.	Initial.	Interior.
And	5	..
Likewise	1	..
Too	..	4
Or	1	..
Nevertheless	1	2
Moreover	..	1
Neither	2	..
And yet	2	..
Nay	5	..
Also	..	3
Accordingly	1	1
In like manner	..	1
Lastly	1	..
Then	1	3
On the whole	1	..
At least	..	1
Again	..	1
Whereupon	1	..

Carlyle has on the whole a wide variety of means for articulation, notably that of massing significant words at the beginning and end of sentences. He seldom repeats a word for coherence, as Macaulay and Arnold and a host of others do; by ordering his words he makes repetition unnecessary.

In his historical writing Carlyle is a great master of the law of proportion, as concerns both the paragraph and the whole composition. He combines Hume's power of making a paragraph illustrate a given philosophical idea, and Macaulay's power of heightening that impression by pictorial means. He moulds his material, fuses his facts, emphasizes the salient, subordinates the unimportant. In elaborating large plans, he constantly reduces his macrocosm to microcosm to be sure of making his point; he reiterates his central truth; he does not disdain numerous formal but living summaries.

In the matter of distribution of emphasis by varying sentence-length he improved steadily. His earliest work shows about the same percentage of simple sentences as De Quincey's. The *Revolution*, on the other hand, shows nearly 28 per cent. of sentences under fifteen words, with an unusual

tendency toward sentences of less than 8 words. With a percentage of short sentences no greater than Burke's, Carlyle manages to distribute his emphasis with masterful effect.

NEWMAN.

Idea of a University, 1854.

Total paragraphs considered	200
Total words considered	50,896
Total sentences considered	1228
Average words per paragraph	254.48
Average sentences per paragraph	6.14
Average words per sentence	41.44
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	6

Apologia.

(Gerwig, for 500 periods.)

Per cent. of simple sentences	16
Average predications per sentence	2.97
Per cent. of clauses saved	4.50

Newman's paragraphs are the result of the most careful analysis on the part of their writer. In them unity, usually philosophical, often complex, is severely observed.

The style is highly redintegrating, in spite of the aggregating sentence and bookish vocabulary. But it can never be called impartially redintegrating, as one is sometimes tempted to call De Quincey's. The most careful selection of thought is made, and whatever subsidiary matter may have been generated in the act of composition is sternly repressed in the writing. In this matter we may compare Newman and De Quincey — both artistic minds. Both men are interested in the various phases of the material they use for any given purpose, though of course Newman less than De Quincey in the sensuous qualities. But De Quincey cannot express one phase of his interest at a time; Newman can.

We find Newman not indeed depending upon connectives for coherence, but using them freely for increased accuracy. Thus Sherman found 131 initial connectives in 500 sentences[1]

[1] *Analytics*, p. 304.

—a proportion higher than Coleridge's, indeed perhaps the highest of our time. Newman's proportion by bulk is all that could be desired. His distribution of emphasis by sentence-length is faulty; but it must be remembered that he is appealing to the intellect rather than the emotions.

EMERSON.

Divinity School Address + American Scholar + Self-Reliance.

Total paragraphs considered		122
Total words considered		24,267
Total sentences considered		1,179
Average words per paragraph		198.91
Average sentences per paragraph		9.66
Average words per sentence		20.58
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs		3
Average predications per sentence	(Gerwig,	2.23
Per cent. of simple sentences	for 1438	41
Per cent. of clauses saved	periods.)	3.01

English Traits.

Total paragraphs considered	200
Average sentences per paragraph	6.74

If we hold ourselves, in a definition of unity, to meaning by the word oneness of subject, we may admit Emerson's paragraphs to have unity. More than half the time, at least, every sentence bears on the point concerned.

Sequence in the analytic (*i. e.* redintegrating) sense he had none. There is no tracking him. You are conscious that he has arrived, and from a place worth coming from, for his hands are full of gems; but no other man can find out his way, nor can he. He was always complaining that he had no system; speaks of his own "impassable paragraphs, each sentence an infinitely repellent particle." He has little close ordering of words for coherence, few inversions, few parallelisms of structure. Out of a desperate desire to indicate relations, he uses 49 sentence-connectives to 300 periods; but not always do they catch and hold the true relation. Here is the list:

CONNECTIVE.	Initial.	Interior.
Thus far	1	..
But	14	..
Thus	1	1
Indeed	..	1
And	7	..
Finally	..	1
Too	..	3
Yet	2	..
In fine	..	1
Or	1	..
Hence	3	1
On the other part	1	..
Then	..	3
So	3	..
Therefore	..	1
For	2	..
First	1	..
However	..	1

How then, without sequence, does our author make himself clear? His statements are intuitive; but we shall find that he has a curious alternating method of intuitive statement which amounts to resolution of the main idea. The paragraph contains a half-dozen intuitive sentences, each stating the main idea from a different point of view; so that perforce some of the steps omitted in one statement are supplied in another, if only by the great variety of associations. Emerson must state the point intuitively; but he does so under so many metaphors that he is sure somewhere to hit your experiences, your quickest road to apprehension.

What of his proportion? There is little of it, whether by bulk or by sentence-variation. He has 41 per cent. of simple sentences, and something is sure to be over-emphasized. But in the intuitive manner the lack of proportion is not so keenly felt as elsewhere.

CHANNING.

Self-Culture, 1838.

Total paragraphs considered		60
Total words	(Sherman)	19,009

Total sentences	(Sherman)	750
Average words per paragraph		316.81
Average sentences per paragraph		12.50
Average words per sentence		25.35
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs		0

Lenox, Napoleon, Milton.

Average predications per sentence	(Gerwig, 2000 periods.)	2.47
Per cent. of simple sentences		34
Per cent. of clauses saved		6.55

Sherman has noted that Channing began the use of the short sentence at about the same time as Macaulay, and in nearly as great proportion. But to my mind Channing's emphasis-proportion in the paragraph is more rational, though less brilliant, than Macaulay's. Channing knew the worth of the semicolon ; Macaulay did not. On the other hand Channing's paragraphs are too long to be well massed. Nor is the right bulk always assigned to the main ideas. We can find little fault with Channing's unity, and little with his coherence. The latter quality depends largely upon logical redintegration and upon the ordering of words. Connectives are used but sparingly.

BARTOL.

Radicalism and *Genius: Father Taylor.*

Total paragraphs	(Sherman)	45
Total words	(Sherman)	13,385
Total sentences	(Sherman)	805
Average words per paragraph		297.44
Average words per sentence		16.63
Average sentences per paragraph		17.89
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs		0

Radical Problems.

Average predications per sentence	(Gerwig, 1500 periods.)	2.10
Per cent. of simple sentences		44
Per cent. of clauses saved		7.60

Radicalism.

Words per paragraph	231.64

Genius: Father Taylor.

Words per paragraph	360.38

I have included Dr. Bartol because he is one of the extreme examples, among reputable writers, of the frequent use of simple sentences.[1] His percentage of simple sentences is indeed so high in proportion to the whole number in the paragraph, that I can hardly admit that there is any right distribution of emphasis. Nor is there any proportion by bulk: the writer is as likely to pour out six sentences on an unimportant point as six on an important one. Nor have his paragraphs any necessary unity. Many are manifestly heterogeneous; some indeed seem merely mechanical. Nor, again, can we praise the general coherence of Bartol's style. Granted that now and then, when he is driving home a series of coördinate statements bearing on one subject, he runs smoothly along; at other times he proceeds by leaps and in no particular direction, like a boy from tuft to tuft in a marsh,—forever jumping, but never arriving.

LINCOLN.

Letter, 1863, published *Century Magazine*, May, 1889.

Total paragraphs	12
Total words	1659
Total sentences	91
Average words per paragraph	138.25
Average sentences per paragraph	7.60
Average words per sentence	18.23

I consider a passage from Abraham Lincoln merely to show the proper use of the very short sentence. The letter is quoted and praised by Earle, and it forms a good contrast, in point of method, to the work of the last author considered.

The sentence is a little longer than Bartol's; but the paragraph is 138 words as against Bartol's 297. Each of Lincoln's paragraphs is an organism. Each is knit together by perfect logical sequence, perfect unity. There is no modulation of emphasis, for by the nature of the subject there can be none. The letter is a challenge. Each sentence is meant to go home

[1] The highest average given by Mr. Gerwig is 58 per cent. of simple sentences—in Mr. J. A Symonds's *Greek Poets*. It is most extraordinary that Symonds should also show 10 per cent. of clauses saved.

like a shot. The whole appeal is to the will, and in cases of this sort it may be of the very essence of style to eschew the fine shades of meaning that should exist in an intellectual type of discourse.

DICKENS.

Old Curiosity Shop.

Total paragraphs considered	300
Total words considered	15,202
Total sentences considered	639
Average words per paragraph	50.67
Average sentences per paragraph	2.13
Average words per sentence	23.78
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	43

Dickens has more than once been criticised for lack of powers of construction and arrangement. Such criticisms apply often to his large plans; but they are not just to his powers of analysis within the chapter. The unity of his narrative and descriptive paragraphs is organic and highly picturesque. There are slips at times, but again, there are whole chapters of the most subtle paragraph-unity — of a kind that none but the great novelists can secure, a kind that no essayist dreams of.

His coherence is the coherence of oral style. There are very few connectives; their place is taken by explanatory clauses and sentences. Occasionally we feel that the style is diffuse, but obscure never — some bad grammar notwithstanding.

Next to his coherence the best paragraphic quality of Dickens is his emphasis. This arises largely from his skillful ordering of words and a keen eye for the point where he should stop his sentence. He rambles when rambling is in order; but no man can make a shorter cut. The extent to which he uses the short sentence is not excessive for a novelist: in the *Old Curiosity Shop*, with all the conversation included, the percentage of sentences of less than 15 words is 40 per cent.

The melody of Dickens's prose is equable and flowing, with a tendency to metre now and then. He has no right feeling for the paragraph as a rhythmic whole.

GEORGE ELIOT.

Daniel Deronda.

Total paragraphs considered	212
Total words considered	16,233
Total sentences considered	725
Average words per paragraph	76.57
Average sentences per paragraph	3.42
Average words per sentence	22.39
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	27

In its averages George Eliot's style approaches that of Dickens, except that the less elaborate philosophizing of the latter keeps the word-average of his paragraph down. But the sentence of the two writers is nearly the same, and George Eliot's percentage of sentences of less than 15 words is the same, within 3 per cent., as Dickens's. Of the two writers the balance in the matter of the short sentence is in favor of the woman, who has 43 per cent. Evidently there is here quite as much variability in the female style as in the masculine.[1] It should be noted, however, that George Eliot's short sentences tend to occur together; the same is true of her long sentences. In the dialogue the sentence is short; in the narrative it is long.

We may say that George Eliot's paragraphs have unity, barring an occasional philosophical digression. We may say that they show logical coherence, excepting now and then one where a remote conclusion is introduced before it is analyzed.

KINGSLEY.

Alton Locke.

Total paragraphs considered	200
Average words per paragraph	79.19
Average sentences per paragraph	3.34
Average words per sentence	23.72
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	39

It is curious that the sentences of Kingsley and Dickens should differ but a small fraction of a word and that George

[1] In view of Mr. Havelock Ellis's recent thesis that greater variability in mental power is shown by the male sex than by the female, it would be an interesting study to investigate the comparative variability of masculine and feminine styles.

Eliot's should vary but a single word from these two. It will be remembered that likewise Macaulay coincides, within a word, with these writers in sentence length. Again, Kingsley and George Eliot differ but three words in paragraph-length. Evidently the style of popular narrative and description finds 23 a favorite sentence;[1] while the same style when broken by conversation tends today to a paragraph of more than 50 and less than 100 words. I say today: but in the immediate present many good popular narrative styles are falling below the 23-mark.

LOWELL.

Carlyle.

Total paragraphs	25
Total words	11,196
Total sentences	356
Average words per paragraph	447.84
Average sentences per paragraph	14.24
Average sentence-length	31.45
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	4

Dante.

Total paragraphs considered	50
Average words per paragraph	668.30

Lessing.

Total sentences		683
Average predications per sentence	(Gerwig, for 683 periods.)	2.54
Per cent. of simple sentences		23
Per cent. of clauses saved		4.76

When we come to read Lowell's noble essay on Dante we are tempted to acknowledge in his paragraphs a certain colossal unity; at a little distance from the charm of the style we dare to speak of that unity as prolix; later, we begin to wonder whether there is any unity at all in a paragraph of, say, 2183 words. It is hard to make out Lowell's theory of the paragraph. Apparently he had a most elastic idea of the elasticity of that unit, and felt

[1] Why this is so remains to be determined. Indeed, the whole question of literary sentence-length must soon be minutely discussed from the point of view of the psychologist and the physiologist, as well as from that of the rhetorician.

that if he looked to a proper alternation of emphasis by sentence-variation and kept up a general flow of coherence, his paragraphic duty was done.

At any rate, it is easy to praise his emphasis, varied by 23 per cent. of simple sentences and by skillful inversions that put the main idea first. And we may praise his coherence, depending as it does upon closeness of logical relation, and eschewing formal connectives. Sherman found but 59 initial conjunctions in 500 periods. For all our author's general orderliness, however, the reader must be well equipped to get the pith of Lowell's finer prose. His words are meaning-crammed, and there is no pains taken to elaborate in short oral sentences that which a college-bred man should remember or understand. Once more, we must admit that Lowell loves a digression, and will take it when the material he handles is suggestive; he carries us with him, to be sure, but we feel that the principle of logical sequence is for the time set aside for mere association by contiguity.

RUSKIN.

Sesame and Lilies.

Total paragraphs		151
Total words		27,120
Total sentences		814
Average words per paragraph		179.60
Average sentences per paragraph		5.39
Average words per sentence		33.31
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs		13
Average predications per sentence	(Gerwig, for 718 periods.)	3.50
Per cent. of simple sentences		18
Per cent. of clauses saved		6.63

Ruskin early began to boast of his analytic powers, and not without reason. His works are divided and subdivided with great elaboration, the later ones more intelligently but less elaborately than the earlier. He usually employs the words *paragraph* and *section* synonymously, preferring, however, the former term. The section-mark § he often places before divisions that he calls paragraphs. He is fond of compound paragraphs, numbering

the main paragraph and indicating by indentation the subdivisions. In his first edition of collected works he divided the text into "paragraphs," numbering these consecutively through the volumes.

The paragraphs, even of the *Modern Painters*, are almost never heterogeneous, although Ruskin's later changes in these early works result in breaking up a few of the sections. In the *Modern Painters* the sections are longer than in the *Sesame and Lilies* and later works.

The sequence of Ruskin's early work is marred by dislocations rather than by digressions. Many paragraphs in the *Modern Painters* would be bettered much by mere re-arrangement of the sentences or groups of sentences. In the comments made in the Brantwood edition (1891), on his early works, Ruskin appreciates the bad arrangement of some of the paragraphs, and even goes so far as to declare the "terrible confusion" of others. For his coherence Ruskin relies in his earlier works much on connectives, but in his later works less and less. He was never afraid of *and*, however, and does not hesitate to begin a sentence or a paragraph with a coördinate conjunction. I doubt if any other writer uses conjunctions less conventionally and more effectively. Other means of coherence Ruskin employs with very great variety and freedom from mannerism: notably parallel structure, veiled beneath changing phrases of introduction.

Of emphasis-distribution the paragraphs of the *Modern Painters* show but little. Ruskin had an early 'notion of returning as far as he could to what he thought the better style of old English literature, especially to that of his then favorite, in prose, Richard Hooker.'[1] Such a notion was hardly favorable to the development of proportion in the paragraph. I have no count for the *Modern Painters*, but dare estimate that the percentage of simple sentences is less than 15 per cent. In *Sesame and Lilies*, indeed, it is but 18 per cent. Some of the sentences of the *Modern Painters*, particularly in the second volume, were inexcusably

[1] Preface to *Sesame and Lilies*, collected works, 1871.

long, and destructive to proportion. Thus Ruskin, commenting on the original sentence in which he enunciated the chief types of unity in art, says: "Yes, I should rather think so [that the types should be considered separately]; and they ought to have been *named* separately, too, and very slowly; and not upset in a heap on the floor, as they are in this terrific two-pages entence."[1] In another place there is lack of proportion caused by the nonchalant introduction of an important theory as a subordinate part of a sentence. The fact does not escape the reviser's eye; he says: "This rather astounding paragraph was anciently parted from the preceding text only by a semicolon. I have fenced it, at least, with two full stops; for it is in fact the radical theorem not only of this book, but of all my writings on art."[2] The same critical and artistic discrimination that made these comments possible, largely removes the necessity of any such comments hereafter upon Ruskin's later books. In these, the units of presentation—both sentence and paragraph—are not long, are not confused, are not lacking in emphasis. At his best he is one of the very best paragraph writers of this or any day. No author would better repay a minute investigation. He has not been surpassed in the art of concentrating "victoriously intricate" periods in artistic wholes; or, to speak more accurately, of amplifying a given topic in a paragraph whose interior arrangement reveals the most complex proportion.

HERBERT SPENCER.

Philosophy of Style.

Total paragraphs	68
Total words	11,983
Total sentences	404
Average words per paragraph	176.22
Average sentences per paragraph	5.94
Average words per sentence	29.66
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	4
Per cent. of sentences of less than 15 words	17

[1] Brantwood ed., II., 129.

[2] Brantwood ed., II., 49.

Spencer's averages are interesting as belonging to a scientific manner, — the manner, moreover, of the author to whom is due the theory that economy of attention is the governing principle of style. We find the discourse carefully analyzed into short paragraphs. These are mostly loose in structure,[1] a definite conclusion being offered in the first sentence and defended in those following. Evidently Spencer's theory of periodic structure as the more economical, stops short of the paragraph.

It is interesting, again, to note that, while Spencer's sentences rather favor the periodic type, they are not long; like the short paragraphs, they are for the untechnical reader, if not for the popular one. The variability in sentence-length is quite as great as could be expected from a style appealing so little to the emotions: the percentage of sentences of less than 15 words is 17 per cent.

The coherence and sequence of Mr. Spencer's prose are philosophical and correct. The use of connectives is less than might be supposed. Of the connectives that he does employ Mr. Bain[2] pointed out as characteristic the phrases, *Yet another*, *Once more*, for adding to a cumulation already very much extended.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

The Function of Criticism at the Present Time.

Total paragraphs	34[3]
Total words	10,939
Total sentences	324
Average words per paragraph	321.73
Average sentences per paragraph	9.55
Average words per sentence	33.76

[1] Of Spencer's use of the compound type we have spoken, chap. II., § 3.

[2] *Rhetoric*, § 161.

[3] In this case, as hitherto, quotations are considered as belonging to the paragraph in which they are introduced, and not as separate paragraphs, even when indented. This, of course, only when they are introduced as an integral part of the paragraph. Arnold usually indicates such a relation by preceding he quotation with the colon and dash (:—).

Literary Influence of Academies.

Total paragraphs	37
Total words	9,883
Total sentences	281
Average words per paragraph	267.10
Average sentences per paragraph	7.58
Average words per sentence	35.17

Function of Criticism+Literary Influence.

Total paragraphs	71
Total words	20,822
Total sentences	605
Average words per paragraph	293.26
Average sentences per paragraph	8.52
Average words per sentence	34.41
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	5

Culture and Anarchy.

Total paragraphs considered	100
Average sentences per paragraph	6.68
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	4

Essays, 500 periods.
(Gerwig, for 500 periods.)

Average predications per sentence	2.77
Per cent. of simple sentences	20
Per cent. of clauses saved	4.51

It is a pleasant task to re-read the *Essays in Criticism* to see whether the measure and proportion that Arnold found his chief delight in praising extends in his own prose to the organization of the paragraph. The result of our reading is, on the whole, satisfactory. Arnold's paragraphs, while they have not the very highest variety in unity, do have admirable measure and proportion.

The paragraph is usually loose, with an introductory sentence of transition. A large proportion are deductive: Arnold loved to regard the paragraph as a means of illustrating a general rule —he was not particular to advance a large body of particulars and base an induction upon these. We may quote on this point his own words about another matter: "Here, as everywhere else,

the rule, the idea, if true, commends itself to the judicious, and then the examples make it clearer still to them. This is the real use of examples, and this alone is the purpose which I have meant mine to serve."[1]

The coherence of Arnold's paragraphs is well-nigh perfect in its way. It arises primarily from an oral structure—a close logical method, redintegrating in idea, slightly aggregating in sentence. It is true that Sherman found 137 formally connected sentences in a total of 500; though some of Arnold's initial connectives are deliberately superfluous, used to give conversational tone—I refer to such words as "well," "now." But the fact is that Arnold uses not only a goodly number of conjunctions, but also a very great variety of transitional phrases and clauses. He is always aiming at the relations of things: he would rather paint no picture at all than one without the significant half-tones, the shadings that by their cool gradations make apparent the truth of the landscape. He will not even trust you to remember, under the mere stimulus of a pronominal word, exactly what a given substantive meant; he must explicitly repeat the substantive. Then another phase of his orderly, redintegrating method should be mentioned: I remember no other English prosaist who has so mastered the art of placing words in a way to secure sentence emphasis without hurting either the just order of the thought, the just proportion of the thought, or the just idiom of the language. To be sure, he is often reduced to the device of gentle exclamation; but with what accuracy he puts the important words first and last in the sentence! yet with how few breaks between propositions, how little exaggeration of the inconsequential, how little violence of normal English structure! He is not, however, quite successful in so arranging the parts of the paragraph that the chief things shall be seen first. One other method of coherence Arnold affects, that of parallel construction. Few writers use it more extensively. Others, as De Quincey, keep the reader less aware of its presence; still others, as Macaulay,

[1] *Literary Influence of Academies*, p. 77.

thrust it more prominently before the reader's eye. Arnold usually exhibits with it his habit of repeating words for explicitness of reference.

The Hellenists will have it that the finest measure and proportion are not visible, when they really exist, except on the closest scrutiny. Arnold's distribution of emphasis by sentence-length may perhaps claim some such praise in this respect as would be given to a good picture. For one, I should not guess before counting that Arnold writes 20 per cent. of simple sentences. His brief propositions do not come in series: the nature of his subjects and of his method never makes them superfluously emphatic and conspicuous; and so one is likely, in a general reading, to underestimate their number and importance. But they are used with the greatest discretion. Again, it should be noticed that Arnold is hardly surpassed in the art of varying emphasis within the sentence itself. Here, long periodic clauses are succeeded by short loose ones; or, a long period may consist of a half-dozen loose propositions that a less discriminating man would have signalized by full stops.

WALTER PATER.

Style.

Total paragraphs	37
Total words	8450
Total sentences	219
Average words per paragraph	228.37
Average sentences per paragraph	5.97
Average words per sentence	38.54
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	1

Appreciations, 500 periods.

(Gerwig, for 500 periods.)

Average predications per sentence	2.74
Per cent. of simple sentences	26
Per cent. of clauses saved	13.74

In Ruskin, Newman, and certain other writers, there is to be noted a decided reaction toward the long sentence. This movement reaches in Mr. Walter Pater perhaps the limit at which the paragraph and the long period can be reconciled. Mr. Pater

is conscious of the tendency of his style towards complexity and minute qualification, and he therefore conscientiously keeps to the unity of the paragraph. What is even more noticeable, he uses a large percentage of appositional clauses and phrases, that, while they have partly the effect of parentheses, yet avoid the multiplication of predications and connectives. It is a weighty style, a correct style, a beautiful style in its fitting of word to notion; but it has a wholly different order of procedure from that introduced by Macaulay.

The coherence, always present, but seen by the reader at some expense to his attention, depends equally upon order of words and upon connectives; very little indeed upon parallel structure. Of 300 sentences in the *Appreciations*, 66 are formally connected. The proportion of *ands* is startling. Thus:

Connective.	Initial.	Interior.
On the other hand	1	1
Then	..	4
And	21	..
Yet	3	..
So	2	..
For	7	..
Further	..	1
Again	1	2
Hence	1	..
Well	3	..
But	12	..
Still	2	1
So far	1	..
Too	..	2
Also	..	2
At least	1	..
Indeed	..	1
Now	1	..
Thus	.	2

The percentage of simple sentences is such that the distribution of emphasis is provided for mechanically, and a tribute should be paid to the often exquisite precision with which the right clause is made to bear the paragraph stress.

J. R. GREEN.

History of the English People.

Total paragraphs considered	200
Average sentence-length for 200 sentences	29.04
Average words per paragraph	c. 456.75
Average sentences per paragraph	15.75
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	0

I have included some statistics for the style of Mr. J. R. Green, to illustrate one of the newer types of historical writing. The sentence is much longer than Macaulay's, the paragraph very much longer than Macaulay's. The single-sentence paragraph is abolished. The variety that Macaulay secured by varying the length of the paragraph and its structure is lacking here. The paragraphs are not well massed. The element of variety being made little of, an attempt is made to supply its place with that of intensity and weight. There are no waste sentences. The short sentences are sententious, and the long ones, while admirable in accuracy, are sometimes a little heavy. The coherence is good, but it is the coherence of severe method, and depends neither on connectives nor on transitional clauses. After all, it is a noble style, though not an easy one.

BARRETT WENDELL.

Paragraphs (chap. iv., in *English Composition*).

Total paragraphs considered	55
Total words considered	9363
Total sentences considered	365
Average words per paragraph	170.23
Average sentences per paragraph	6.63
Average words per sentence	25.65
Per cent. of single-sentence paragraphs	5

We have spoken of Professor Wendell as a recent theorizer on the paragraph. Since he has treated the subject in a literary way, shunning the pedantry of technicalities, and since he manifestly aims at producing superior massing and emphasis, let us see what numerical results his practice gives. The chapter on the paragraph yields a sentence of 25. Nearly 24 per cent. of all

the sentences fall beneath the length of 15 words. The paragraph reaches but 170 words. Evidently the theory of Mass, when put in practice, tends toward keeping the paragraph to very moderate length. To mass well a long paragraph is a most difficult task.

HOLMES.

The style of Dr. Holmes is typical of certain popular writing. which, though not properly intuitive, omits formal predication as often as possible, and since it is not concerned with the finer restrictions of thought, omits connectives with the greatest freedom. Holmes delights in appositive phrases and clauses, and in verbless sentences. In 500 periods Sherman found but 5 initial connectives. My own count, from 300 sentences in the *Autocrat*, yields a percentage very much higher—27 initial connectives in 300 periods. The list runs thus :

Connective.	Initial.	Interior.
But	8	..
However	..	1
And	4	..
So	1	1
First, secondly	4	..
Or	3	..
Thus	2	..
Yet	1	..
On the contrary	1	..
In short	1	..
Once more	..	1
On the whole	1	..
Too	..	1
At length	1	..

CHAPTER IX.

THE PROSE PARAGRAPH: SUMMARY.

It is the object of this chapter, not to state in essay form, woven together of all the judgments hitherto expressed, a complete view of the history of the prose paragraph, but to arrange in a somewhat mechanical way the more important of the theses that I propose.

CHAPTER I.

1. (Page 12.) The modern reference-mark, ¶, (sixth in the printer's list of reference-marks) is probably descended, not, as held by Mr. Maunde Thompson, from the original Greek gamma, but from the Latin mark P.

2. (Page 15.) The modern so-called section-mark, §, is probably derived, not from the original gamma, as held by Blass, but from the Latin P; surely not from the combination of two *ſſ*, as taught by certain text-books. The type of this mark is probably of Italian origin, 1467–1473.

3. (Page 14.) Indentation is probably not due, as the popular bibliophilic tradition asserts, to the omission of printed capitals to permit the insertion of rubricated ones, but to the example of those manuscripts where it is used without reference to rubrication.

CHAPTER II.

4. (Page 22ff.) While, for purposes of pedagogy, the writing of single-sentence paragraphs should largely be discouraged, in view of the natural tendency of students toward impartial analysis, it is nevertheless not correct to say, with Earle, "that the term paragraph can hardly be applied to anything short of three sentences, though rarely a complete and satisfactory effect is produced by two." For, although there has been a pretty steady decrease, in 300 years, in the use of the paragraphed

sentence, most of the eminent writers of English prose have not hesitated to use this device, not merely to mark a transition but to signalize a stadium.

5. (P. 30ff.) The only really new phases of rhetorical theory since Bain's "six rules," are Wendell's theory of Mass, and Scott and Denney's theory of Proportion. Wendell's theory of Mass is: "A paragraph whose unity can be demonstrated by summarizing its substance in a sentence whose subject shall be a summary of its opening sentence, and whose predicate shall be a summary of its closing sentence, is theoretically well massed." Scott and Denney's theory of proportion is perhaps sufficiently implied in the following sentence: "Statements which standing alone would properly be independent sentences, are frequently united into one sentence when they become part of a paragraph." The theory implies also the converse of this statement.

6. (P. 30–32, 167.) (*a*) Wendell's theory of Mass is not applicable to any large proportion of existing paragraphs, and is difficult of application except in short paragraphs. Scott and Denney's theory of Proportion is true of those writers who have a conception of the paragraph as an organic whole,—Burke, Macaulay, Arnold, for example. The principle is so strongly operative in the best prose of today that we may probably go so far as to say: in general it is true that in the best modern paragraphs the distance between periods is inversely as the emphasis of each included proposition. (*b*) It will follow as a corollary from the principle last enunciated, that the tendency (noted by Professor Sherman) of English prose to reduce the sentence to procrustean regularity of length, cannot indefinitely persist.

CHAPTER III.

7. (P. 37ff.) In the history of English prose there has been, for relatively the same kinds of discourse, no pronounced increase or decrease of the average total number of words per paragraph.

8. (P. 42.) The paragraph of today contains more than twice as many sentences as did that of Ascham's day. Indeed, if

we accept Macaulay's *England* as a present-day norm, the past increase in sentences per paragraph in three hundred years has been far more than one hundred per cent.

9. (P. 35ff.) In a list of 73 representative English prosaists, the average word-length of the paragraph falls in the case of each of 52 authors between the limits of 100 words and 300 words. Of these 52 authors, 25 show each an average falling between the limits of 200 words and 300 words; while 27 show each an average falling between the limits of 100 and 200 words. Of these two groups it would be unwarrantable to say that either is superior to the other in paragraph structure. The first includes many authors who are superior in delicacy and variety of proportion — Arnold, Newman, Pater; the second includes many who are superior in terse emphasis — Bolingbroke, Swift, Carlyle, Lamb. But one of the greatest masters of terse emphasis, Macaulay, belongs in the first group, and one of the greatest masters of delicate and varied proportion, Ruskin, belongs in the second. Most of the writers whose average rises above 300 words are poor paragraphers, De Quincey and Channing being exceptions. Most of those whose average falls below 100 words are writers in whom dialogue predominates, Fuller, Defoe, and Paley being exceptions.

10. (P. 35ff.) In a list of 71 representative English prosaists, 5 show an average number of less than 2 sentences to the paragraph; 11 show an average of more than 2 and less than 3 sentences; 11 show an average of more than 3 and less than 4 sentences; 6 show an average of more than 4 and less than 5 sentences; 9 show an average of more than 5 and less than 6 sentences; 10 show an average of more than 6 and less than 7 sentences; 6 show an average of more than 7 and less than 8 sentences; 3 show an average of more than 8 and less than 9; 4 show an average of more than 9 and less than 10; one averages 10 +; two average 12 +; one averages 14 +; one 15 +, one 17 +. The favorite numbers of sentences are therefore 2 + and 3 +, each of which occurs 11 times. Then, in order of frequency,

come 6 +, 5 +, 4 +, and 7 +, 9 +, 8 +, 12 +, 14 +, and 15 + and 17 +. Dialogue-writing affects this list but very little. Of the romancers, Irving shows the highest average of sentences, 4.12.

11. (P. 43.) There has been from the earliest days of our prose a unit of invention much larger than the modern sentence, and always separated, in the mind of the writer, from the sentence-unit, of whatever length. In other words English writers have thought roughly in long stages before they have analyzed such stages into smaller steps.

12. (P. 44ff.) The paragraph as we know it comes into something like settled shape in Sir William Temple. It was the product of perhaps five chief influences. First, the tradition, derived from the authors and scribes of the Middle Ages, that the paragraph-mark distinguishes a stadium of thought. Second, the Latin influence, which was rather towards disregarding the paragraph as the sign of anything but emphasis—the emphasis-tradition being also of mediæval origin; the typical writers of the Latin influence are Hooker and Milton. Third, the natural genius of the Anglo-Saxon structure, favorable to the paragraph. Fourth, the beginnings of popular writing—of what may be called the oral style, or consideration for a relatively uncultivated audience. Fifth, the study of French prose, in this respect a late influence, allied in its results with the third and fourth influences. The course taken by the conflict of the second principle with the rest, resulting in the intermediate unit of the amorphous paragraphed sentence, is summarized, pp. 44–47.

13. (P. 47ff.) Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, there is, in authors of regular methods, such as Hume and Macaulay, a perceptible but not a strong tendency towards reducing the average length of the paragraph to approximate constancy, in successive large groups of paragraphs. The author in whom the tendency is most pronounced is Macaulay. Here the tendency is so strong as to give a difference of only six words in the average paragraph word-length of the first and second volumes of the *History of England*.

CHAPTER IV.

14. (P. 52ff.) (*a*) The recent investigations of Professor L. A. Sherman, in the development of the short sentence in English prose, are of much importance in their bearing upon the history of paragraph structure ; but by referring to the short sentence as "analytic," and again, in following the course of the development, by referring to the style of such intuitive (or synthetic) authors as Emerson as "analytic," the writer leads us into temporary confusion. From this it seems best, for the purposes of our discussion, to escape by the invention of certain new terms, as . *segregating*, applied to a style where the sentence of maximum occurrence is short, say, twenty words or less ; *aggregating*, to a style where the favorite sentence is long ; *redintegrating*, where the method of procedure is psychologically analytic ; *intuitive*, where the method is psychologically synthetic—omitting the steps of approach, the intermediate predications. (*b*) (p. 57ff.) The value of Professor Sherman's conclusions regarding the '*oral' style* are slightly impaired for us by the confused terminology mentioned in (12). The consequence of his theory concerning the decrease of predication is the application of the term 'oral' alike to styles redintegrating and intuitive. It seems better to limit the term 'oral style' to one in which the short sentence is employed, but the thought is psychologically redintegrating.

15. (*a*) The oral style as we now understand it—produced by the expression of redintegrating thought in a segregating sentence—is the style most favorable to the paragraph structure. (*b*) We may indeed almost define the oral style in terms of the paragraph. Thus : From the moment of the establishment of unity, in the development of the English paragraph, the oral sentence-sense means decreasing the number of predications in the period and increasing the number of propositions in the paragraph, in proportion to the author's conception of his reader's power of interpretation.

16. (P. 63ff.) The articulation of clauses without connectives is a help to the coherence of the paragraph in only one of two

cases : (*a*) where the style is impassioned ; (*b*) where the place of connectives is supplied by transitional phrases or clauses. Thereore it is not likely that the decrease in the use of connectives—a decrease explained by Professor Sherman in his *Analytics of Literature*, chapter 26,—will continue indefinitely in prose that expresses proportioned and modulated thought.

CHAPTER V.

17. (P. 67.) Though the paragraph plays no structural part in Anglo-Saxon, it is not rash to say that the paragraphs indicated by the rubricator have, in general, unity of subject, the exceptions being due to causes explained in (18).

18. (P. 66.) There were four distinct uses of the paragraph-mark, in Anglo-Saxon prose : (*a*) to mark a logical section ; (*b*) to note any emphatic point ; (*c*) to distinguish formally sacred names ; (*d*) to ornament and distinguish titles, colophons, etc.

19. (P. 70ff.) (*a*) The Anglo-Saxon prose sentence corresponds in length roughly with the sentence of the nineteenth century. (*b*) The Anglo-Saxon prose sentence increases slowly in length, and when it becomes the Middle-English sentence, reaches, under Latin influence, a length nearly as great as that attained by the latinized sentence of Jacobean times.

20. No English writer before Tyndale has any sense of the paragraph as a subject of internal arrangement.

CHAPTER VI.

21. (P. 75ff.) In Tyndale we find the earliest writer who can be said to be in any sense a good paragrapher.

22. The most important men after Tyndale in the period from Tyndale to Temple, are Bacon, Hobbes, Browne, and Fuller, in respect of unity ; Lord Herbert, Burton, and Bunyan, in distribution of emphasis by variability of sentence-length ; Burton in the matter of coherence without formal connectives; Fuller in the establishment of the deductive paragraph order.

CHAPTERS VII–IX.

23. The unity of the paragraph becomes nearly unimpeacha-

ble in such men as Addison, Shaftesbury, Bolingbroke, Johnson, Hume, Burke. Only the best paragraphers of the nineteenth century, Macaulay, for example, surpass these authors in this respect.

24. Proportion in the paragraph pretty steadily increases from Temple to Arnold, both in the way of assigning due bulk to the amplification of important ideas, and in the way of distributing emphasis by varying sentence-length. The following list will illustrate the latter point, by showing in the first column the percentage of each author in the use of sentences of less than fifteen words, in the second the average sentence-length. In starred authors the percentage[1] of simple sentences, usually one or two points higher than the per cent. of sentences under fifteen words, is substituted in the first column.

	Per cent. of sentences of less than 15 words.	Sentences considered.	Sentence-length.	Sentences considered
Temple	2	704	53.40	538
* Dryden	6	521	38.44	1300
Locke	8	814	49.80	814
Defoe	8	360	38.68	360
* Swift	13	500	40.00	1171
* Addison	12	500	38.58	898
* Shaftesbury	28	650	26.80	578
* Bolingbroke	14	977	34.86	981
Johnson	9	218	38.15	218
* Hume	12	500	39.81	1200
* Goldsmith	18	500	26.94	868
Burke	29	916	26.09	916
Gibbon	10	1562	31.21	1562
Paley	17	392	37.68	392
Scott	14	1224	32.14	1224
* Coleridge	19	500	37.60	777
Jeffrey	6	545	50.65	545
Lamb	41	529	27.19	529
Landor	22	696	25.43	696
Irving	24	532	26.73	532
* De Quincey	14	500	38.81	815
* Macaulay	34	40,000	23.43	41,579

[1] Mr. Gerwig's figures.

	Per cent. of sentences of less than 15 words.	Sentences considered.	Sentence-length.	Sentences considered.
* Carlyle	18	500	31.56	270
* Newman -	16	500	41.44	1228
* Emerson	41	1438	20.58	1179
* Channing	34	2000	25.35	750
* Bartol	44	1500	16.63	805
* Lowell	23	683	31.45	356
* Ruskin	18	718	33.31	814
* Arnold	20	500	34.41	605
* Pater	26	500	38.54	219

25. Coherence by parallel construction of sentences, beginning in crude form in the paragraphs of the sixteenth century Euphuists — Lyly, Nash, Lodge, and their fellows — is reduced to a flexible and strong principle in Temple, Swift, Shaftesbury, Bolingbroke, Johnson, Hume, Gibbon, and Burke. It is weak in Dryden, Locke, Defoe, Sterne, Goldsmith, Paley. In the next century it continues weak in Scott, Coleridge, Jeffrey, Irving, Emerson, Carlyle; reviving in De Quincey, Macaulay, Arnold. It is neglected by many popular writers of the present day.

26. Coherence secured by so ordering words in the sentence that the mind shall pass from one sentence to another without check, is an art little observed in the sixteenth century. In the seventeenth it is perhaps strongest in Fuller and Burton. In the eighteenth century this principle is tolerably strong in Temple, Defoe, Shaftesbury, Bolingbroke, Fielding, Sterne, Goldsmith. It is very strong in Swift and Burke. It is relatively weak in Johnson, Gibbon. In the nineteenth century the principle is relatively active in Lamb, Macaulay, Newman, and is at its best in Carlyle, for one type, and in Arnold, for another.

27. Coherence secured by the use of connectives is in most active force in the earliest periods of our prose. From the sixteenth century till the opening of the nineteenth it declines, reaching its ebb in the balanced sentences of Gibbon. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the principle became strongly operative in the reactionary prose of Coleridge, but has again declined. Today there are two tendencies, one continuing the

decline, the other emphatically but intelligently reacting. The popular prose of the last twenty years tends to drop sentence-connectives. Another stream of writing, represented by the classical prose of Arnold, uses connectives freely but vitally. The present discussion holds that the dropping of inter-sentential connectives cannot successfully be accomplished without danger to one essential prose merit — the merit of reproducing the restrictions and modulations which must characterize good prose of the intellectual type. The table on page 178 presents in outline the progress of the usage regarding inter-sentential connectives.

The table shows certain interesting facts respecting the relative use of different conjunctions by different authors. Walton uses the highest number of *ands*. Swift, Johnson, Macaulay use no *ands* at all; Gibbon uses but one. Pater curiously exhibits more *ands* than any other man since Walton; but his use of them is not formal merely. Coleridge registers the highest percentage of *buts* since Spenser, while De Quincey practically eschews this word and exhibits about as large a number of interior *howevers* as Coleridge of initial *buts*. Initial *therefore* is little used since Ascham, and interior *therefore* not extensively — Coleridge heading the list with eleven.

28. The favorite type of paragraph in the history of our prose has been the loose type, although certain writers, as Butler in the eighteenth and Macaulay in the nineteenth, have shown some facility in the periodic type.

29. There has been, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a general tendency to make the topic-sentence of the paragraph short, but not to reduce it to laconic brevity.

30. The better paragraphs of the nineteenth century are far more organic, far more highly organized, than the better ones of the eighteenth.

31. The paragraph structure is, in proportion to the complexity and size of the thought conveyed, more economical of attention than the long periodic sentence; and the rise of the paragraph structure is in no small degree due to this fact.

The first column under each author sho[illegible]e second column, the number of connectives that, though standing within the sentence, connect sentences, not clauses. *The basis of computation in each author is 300 sentences.*

	Ascham		Spenser		Burton		Walton		Temple		Swift		Johnson		Gibbon		Coleridge		De Quincey		Macaulay		Carlyle		Emerson		Pater		Holmes	
	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
and	49		30		19		80		13						1		5		3				5		7		21		4	
also		6		9				6		1		1								1		1		3				2		
for	30		13		6				6		2						12		6		3		11		2		7			
yea			1		1																									
nay					1		5												1				5							
likewise	2	1								2		4						1					1							
so, so that	4		12	10	7			1	3			1	1	1			2		1	1			4	2	3		2		1	1
in like manner (sort)						2																		1						
first, etc.	1	3				1	3	8										2							1				4	
again	4			1													2							1			1	2		
besides			2	2	4				1	1	1																			
then	3	1	5	11		1	1	2										5					1	3		3		4		
too																		3				1		4		3		2		1
further																		1										1		
moreover	2																1		1					1						
furthermore	1																													
add to																	1													
in short, to be short		1							1								1									1			1	
in a word					1																									
on the whole																							1						1	
contrariwise / on the contrary	1						1	1									1			1									1	
on the other (hand) (side)						1			2								1	1			1				1		1	1		
hitherto																	1													
so far																											1			
thus far				1																					1					
in other words																	1													
or, or else			1		3														1				1		1				3	
neither			2	1																			2							
nor	2	1							1						1		1				3									
but, yea but	23		39		13		25		12		14		10		9		26		12		15		10		14		12		8	
yet	8	2	3	2	3	1			2				3	1	3		4		1	1	7				2		3		1	
once more																														1
nevertheless			3																	1			1	2						
still																											2	1		
however					2			1			6	1	1	1		2		2	4	24		1	2	2		1				1
notwithstanding			1																											
it is true			1						1								1		1		2									
at least																		2						1			1			
finally / lastly (at last) / at length		1	2	3						1							1				2	2	1			1			1	
therefore	15	2	5	3		7		2		1		2		3				11		3		1				1				
wherefore	1																													
thus	1		2	1	2	2	2		3			1	3	1			2	2	1		1		3	1	1	1		2	2	
and still / and yet			3												1		1						2							
accordingly																	1		1	1			1	1						
hence							1												1						3	1	1			
well	6						5																				3			
now	7		6	1			1				3						3		1								1			
indeed	4		1	4			1					1					1	5	1	5		7		5		1		1		
thereupon																			1											
whereupon											2												1							
consequently																	1													
otherwise					1																									
Total sentences formally connected	168		164		74		130		51		39		25		17		100		75		47		75		47		66		31	

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APPENDIX.

NOTES ON THE VERSE PARAGRAPH IN MIDDLE ENGLISH.

In this dissertation as presented in June, 1894, was included a final chapter of notes on the development of the paragraph in English verse. The following pages give such of those notes as pertained to the Middle-English period. The rest of the original chapter is not printed, but reserved to form the basis of a fuller treatment at a later day. This unprinted material includes statistics of the paragraph-length of the blank verse of Milton, Cowper, Wordsworth, Tennyson, and Browning; but the statistics would be but mere lumber here without a more adequate discussion of the æsthetic question involved than was possible for me to make. What Professor Corson has done for the "stanza" of Milton's blank verse should be done for the long poems of all the authors just mentioned. Careful consideration ought also to be given to the fundamental question whether originally the logical unit, the sense unit, had in literature any strong influence in the development of the rhythmical unit, the stanza. As a preliminary study I have tried to learn whether the paragraph-mark had any metrical significance in our older poetry.

The paragraph-mark does not occur in the oldest Anglo-Saxon poems. Neither is its place supplied by the colored initial, although colored initials do occur at the beginning of the main divisions. With the close of the twelfth century, however, we find both initial and mark used evidently with some metrical significance. To learn how far the use extends we examine about twenty authors, noting just where the scribes put paragraph-marks in the MSS.

The Poema Morale.

The *Poema Morale* (1170 A. D., Zupitza; 1200–1225, Ten Brink) is written in rhymed septenars. These fall into strophes of four lines each, each strophe being introduced by a rubricated initial. At least this is strictly true of the Digby MS. (Bodleian A. 4.); the same regularity does not characterize the Trinity College MS. used by Morris, for here a rubricated letter often appears, apparently without significance, in the midst of a strophe.

The Ormulum, c. 1200.

The fifteen-syllable lines of the *Ormulum* are written in the MS. continuously as in prose, the metrical point being placed at the end of the fourth foot of each verse. The *Ormulum* has, however, the paragraph-mark (see cut, p. 11, Fig. 12). The length of the paragraph is exceedingly variable, depending entirely upon the scribe's rather arbitrary ideas of the logical divisions and of the emphatic points. The Holt-White edition gives only the longer logical divisions, disregarding very many of the MS. marks. In the Holt-White edition, beginning with the "Dedication," the first 60 paragraphs run as follows with respect to number of short lines:[1] 156, 28, 66, 30, 55, 8, 106, 30, 58, 20, 88, 58, 206, 162, 168, 12, 34, 16, 46, 19, 36, 8, 26, 148, 188, 343, 52, 200, 48, 54, 82, 56, 352, 172, 46. 56, 93, 80, 82, 20, 116, 92, 156, 68, 114, 54, 90, 124, 102, 32, 144, 148, 82, 152, 456, 158, 328, 612, 200, 228.

Nothing in these figures points to a strophic grouping; nor does anything in the verses themselves, although occasionally short passages are repeated with studied effort at musical effect.

Layamon's Brut, c. 1205.

Layamon's Brut is, in all MSS., almost without paragraphing. Both MSS. used by Madden muster together 14 marks, for the whole 30,000 lines. The signs occur too rarely to have either metrical or structural meaning, and are merely equivalent to marginal index-figures, pointing out important things. In MS. Cott. Otho, c. xiii., initials are used to mark divisions, but the divisions are too long to be considered as paragraphs.

The Story of Genesis and Exodus, c. 1250.

The song known as the *Story of Genesis and Exodus* is preserved in a unique MS. in the library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. The MS. is divided by red initials into 101 short paragraphs, the brevity of which is in keeping with the light and easy movement of the poem. The average number of lines in the paragraph is 40.4, but there is great variability in the individual sections. I can see no signs of any strophic arrangement in the rhymed couplets of this poem. The same rhyme is, however, occasionally continued through several verses.

The paragraphs are respectively of the following numbers of lines: 12, 16, 6, 58, 20, 16, 28, 8, 34, 14, 14, 4, 14, 14, 10, 50, 14, 22, 14, 8, 12, 20, 20, 12, 14, 10, 6, 22, 24, 10, 4, 4, 4, 16, 6, 16, 16, 2, 2, 4, 12, 6, 40, 16, 22,

[1] Ormin's long line is printed by White as a couplet.

8, 104. 12, 10, 6, 72, 12, 42, 42, 28, 86, 14, 26, 36, 12, 58, 16, 34, 8, 24, 8, 4, 16, 18, 60, 6, 20, 34, 20, 46, 116, 14, 26, 6, 8. 24, 26, 4, 10, 6, 28, 16, 26, 14, 4, 52, 36, 14, 28, 22, 8, 10, 8, 10, 62, 26, 28, 26, 40, 80, 54, 80, 46, 14, 18, 14, 4, 16, 12, 18, 10, 66, 26, 14, 82, 8, 42, 6, 6, 4, 12, 6, 18, 30, 22, 16, 14, 8, 10, 30, 8, 12, 18, 20, 12, 26. 20, 34, 8, 16, 34, 10, 10, 4, 8, 6, 42, 18, 30, 38, 24, 32, 4, 4, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 18, 16, 4, 38, 44, 16, 16, 4, 12, 8, 30, 16, 6, 18, 16, 10, 16, 26, 44, 16, 14, 12, 76, 36, 12, 28, 14, 14, 10, 8, 28, 10, 8.

King Horn, c. 1280.

King Horn, according to the Cambridge University Library MS. (Gg. 4.27.2) used by Lumby (E. E. T. S.) falls into seven divisions, separated by rubrical initials. These divisions are again broken by paragraph-marks, colored red. The following table exhibits the length of each paragraph in lines, the paragraphs being grouped in capital paragraphs, represented here by Roman numerals:

I.	II.	III.	IV.	V.	VI.	VII.
24	16	18	14	38	20	20
		52	12	20	20	8
				28	18	10
				18	12	18
				44	40	12
				24	34	26
				12	10	12
				12		18
				20		58
				14		70
				32		16
				12		38
				14		16
				4		70
				14		20
				20		10
				8		8
				12		32
				22		28
				12		58
				24		16
				20		26
				16		28
				6		42
				18		10
				44		30
						32

Of the 66 paragraphs only 26 are indivisible by four. This fact, taken as a hint, leads us to read the text with a view to seeing whether

or not every four lines makes a stadium. The result of our reading helps us to accept as at least probable the conjecture of the late Dr. Wissman, that there was an original strophic arrangement by fours. This arrangement seems to have been suggested to Wissman[1] by the occasional recurrence of the same rhyme in groups of four: *e.g.*, 127–130; 227–230, etc.

Havelok the Dane, c. 1280.

Havelok the Dane (Skeat, E. E. T. S., from the unique MS., Laud. Misc. 108 Bodl. Lib.) has, if we omit Skeat's conjectured v. 46, 3000 verses, which fall into paragraphs by 96 rubrical initials. The paragraph-mark is used but once, then introducing the third section, and employed, I fancy, to avoid a capital *thorn*. So far as unity of subject is concerned, the paragraphing is excellently done. The paragraphs are respectively of the following numbers of lines: 26, 78,[2] 28, 16, 12, 22, 20, 6, 16, 14, 20, 20, 6, 26, 16, 10, 20, 6, 34, 10, 39,[2] 18, 80, 20, 84, 42, 42, 16, 36, 26, 46, 22, 30, 18, 176, 14, 64, 66, 18, 10, 10, 68, 32, 7, 250, 26, 14, 32, 52, 94, 8, 10, 36, 6, 34, 48, 6, 44, 4, 30, 10, 10, 14, 38, 10, 20, 12, 20, 14, 18, 4, 10, 24, 22, 42, 24, 26, 6, 20, 58, 24, 54, 54, 16, 118, 24, 10, 20, 30, 12, 6, 72, 14, 6, 14, 16, 24.

Although the large number of sections divisible by four might suggest the presence of strophic arrangement, none such appears on examination. The poem was not, like *Horn*, fitted for musical recitation.

Guy of Warwick, 1300–1325.

The various MSS. of *Guy of Warwick* differ widely in the length of their main divisions. In the Auchinleck MS. the twelve-line stanzas are usually introduced by the paragraph-mark. The mark occurs only three times in the Cambridge Paper MS., namely at lines 7487, 11,267, 11,337. Zupitza, however, in his edition from the MS. last named, inserts the paragraph-mark many times, in order to break up the long divisions.

Sir Bevis of Hamtoun, 1300–1325.

In the *Romance of Sir Bevis of Hamtoun* (Auchinleck MS.), the paragraph-mark is placed before the third and sixth lines of the six-line

[1] *King Horn. Untersuchungen zur Mittelenglischen Sprach- und Litteraturgeschichte.* Strassburg, 1876. P. 63.

[2] Skeat's conjectured line 46 is omitted. At 410, 411, the lines are perhaps corrupt, for they do not rhyme. This fact may account for the odd number of lines, 39.

stanzas, for the first 474 lines. With the 475th line the metre changes to the couplet, and hereafter the mark subdivides the main sections, which are marked by initials. I cannot discover that the mark has any metrical import after 474.

The real paragraphs of the poem are the capital paragraphs (*cf.* p. 29). The first of these consists of nine six-line stanzas; the second, of nine; the third, of fourteen; the fourth, of seventeen; the fifth, of fourteen; the sixth, of sixteen. Each group has a certain unity of its own. The rest of the paragraphs are of varied length and indifferent unity. They indicate no strophic tendency. The count runs as follows, by lines: 54, 54, 84, 102, 84, 96, 110, 60, 94, 32, 66, 72, 80, 52, 28, 68, 82, 44, 82, 88, 50, 52, 40, 60, 110, 136, 78, 188, 62, 42, 30, 184, 68, 64, 206, 108, 40, 72, 94, 10.

The Bruce,[1] c. 1376.

Both the two important MSS. of the *Bruce*, the Cambridge and the Edinburgh, show the paragraph-mark; but the paragraphing does not agree closely in the two. I cannot see that the mark has any metrical import in either MS. Pinkerton, who edited the *Bruce* in 1790, divided it into twenty books, instead of the long and irregular paragraphs. Jamieson, 1820, preferred a division into fourteen books; while Inness, 1866, following the MSS., divided his text into paragraphs, 150 in all.

Cursor Mundi,[2] 14th c.

There is no meaning in the paragraphing of the various MSS. of the *Cursor Mundi.* Each successive scribe was positive that the unity of his predecessors' paragraphs was faulty, and so each placed the marks differently. Thus, Fairfax MS., 14 Bodleian, has, in the first 1000 verses, twelve capital paragraphs, seventy-one paragraphs. Cotton Vesp. A iii. Brit. Mus., has, in the first 1000 verses, two capital paragraphs and five paragraphs. Göttingen MS., theol. 107, has in the first 1000 lines no capital paragraphs, sixteen paragraphs. MS. R. 3. 8. Trin. Col., Cam., has in the first 1000 lines seven capital paragraphs, fifty paragraphs.

The Legend of Celestin, c. 1360 (?)

The Legend of Celestin[3] (MS. Laud. L 70, fol. 118 b) is written in

[1] *The Bruce*, or *The Book of the Most Excellent and Noble Prince, Robert de Broyss, King of Scots.* Ed. Skeat, E. E. T. S.

[2] *Cursor Mundi.* Ed. Morris, E. E. T. S.

[3] Ed. Horstmann, *Auglia*, I., p. 67.

strophes of five lines, rhyming a a a b b. The paragraph-mark occurs only at the beginning of a strophe, thus serving as a metrical index. But it does not begin every strophe. In the companion piece, *Susanna*, the mark introduces each thirteen-line strophe. The capital paragraphs of the *Celestin* include respectively the following numbers of strophes: 3, 2, 2, 2, 2, 3, 3, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 2, 3, 3, 2, 3, 1, 3, 2, 2, 2, 2, 1, 3, 2, 3, 3, 1, 3, 3, 3, 3, 3, 3, 2, 3, 1, 3, 2, 2, 3, 2, 3, 1, 2, 3, 1, 3, 2, 3, 2, 2, 3, 3, 2, 3, 3, 2.

Joseph of Arimathie,[1] c. 1350.

In *Joseph of Arimathie* (Vernon MS. fol. 403) the alliterative verse is written like prose. The whole poem is, however, marked off into lines and half-lines by three devices: (*a*) small capitals; (*b*) paragraph-marks; (*c*) metrical dots.

The paragraphs are indicated by capitals. The paragraph-mark serves two purposes, namely, that of a metrical sign, and that of an emphasis mark, or index. It is noticeable that these two uses usually coincide in result, *i. e.*, each paragraph-mark usually notes the beginning of a line, and at the same time calls attention to something important. The length of the capital paragraphs is successively as follows, no strophic tendency appearing: 3,[2] 16, 17, 16, 11, 10, 14, 20, 8, 20, 38, 6, 31, 16, 30, 19, 18, 18, 21, 29, 19, 32, 36, 22, 17, 29, 37, 51, 9, 41, 12, 10 12, 20.

The Wars of Alexander.[3]

The Wars of Alexander has 27 passus, the last incomplete. Skeat reckons a total of 5677 vv. The number of verses to the passus runs thus: 213, 311, 198, 158, 240, 336, 263, 286, 313, 288, 239, 167, 191, 264, 192, 120, 239, 240, 119, 192, 145, 191, 169, 216, 192, 144, 51 (incomplete). But it must be remembered that in all the alliterative poems lines were frequently lost in the copying; thus the following lines appear in the Dublin MS., but not in the Ashmole: 1633, 1766, 1767, 2168, 2724, 2842, 2980, 3167, 3267, 4002. If we add these missing lines, our count of verses in the successive passus will stand: 213, 311, 198, 158, 240, 336, 264, 288, 314, 288, 241, 168, 192, 265, 192, 120, 240,

[1] *Joseph of Arimathie*, otherwise called the *Romance of the Seint Graal*, ed Skeat, E.E.T.S.

[2] The MS. is imperfect before this ¶.

[3] *The Wars of Alexander*, an alliterative romance, translated chiefly from the *Historia Alexandri Magni de Prœliis*, ed. Skeat, E.E.T.S.

240, 119, 192, 145, 191, 169, 216, 192, 144, 51 (incomplete). Although this change has made one of the even numbers odd (264–265) it has greatly raised the sum of evens, which (omitting the incomplete last passus) now stands 18 out of 26, or 69 per cent. This is a curious thing in verse supposed to be alliterative merely, and not strophic. We look farther — to the paragraph-marks.

The paragraph-marks are distributed as follows in the Ashmole MS., the Roman numeral indicating the passus, the Arabic the number of the line in the Skeat text:

I. 23, 95, 190.
II. 214, 334, 406, 478.
III. 525.
IV.
V. 881, 905, 1024.
VI. 1121.
VII. 1505.
VIII. 1958.
IX.
X. 2415, 2439, 2463.
XI. 2727, 2755, 2775, 2799, 2823.
XII. 2894.
XIII. 3037, 3085, 3180.
XIV. 3252, 3299, 3420.
XV. 3540, 3564, 3576.
XVI. 3762.
XVII. 3780.
XVIII. 4163, 4211, 4235.
XIX. 4259.
XX. 4378.
XXI. 4644, 4692.
XXII. 4715.
XXIII. 4906.
XXIV. 5075, 5103.
XXV. 5291.
XXVI.
XXVII. 5656.

Therefore the numbers of lines per paragraph, by the marks of the Ashmole, are: 22, 72, 95, 24, 120, 72, 72, 47, 356, 24, 119, 97, 384, 453, 457, 24, 24, 264, 28, 20, 24, 24, 71, 143, 48, 95, 72, 47, 121, 120, 24, 12, 186, 18, 383, 48, 24, 24, 119, 266, 48, 23, 191, 169, 128, 188, 365. If now we count the initial at the beginning of each passus as taking the

place of the mark, when that is lacking, and if we add in their proper places the ten extra lines found in the Dublin MS. but lacking in the Ashmole, the list just given will stand thus: 22, 72, 95, 24, 120, 72, 72, 47, 198, 158, 24, 120, 97, 336, 48, 216, 240, 48, 314, 96, 24, 24, 144, 121, 28, 20, 24, 24, 24, 48, 120, 24, 48, 96, 24, 48, 48, 121, 48, 72, 24, 12, 84, 102, 18, 240, 144, 48, 24, 24, 119, 192, 74, 48, 23, 191, 169, 28, 188, 192, 144, 29.

The merest glance at these numbers shows that the even ones greatly predominate. This predominance suggests a possible strophic arrangement. The suggestion is strengthened by several curious things noticeable in the Ashmole MS. First, of the twenty-seven passus, only ten begin with the paragraph-mark. These ten are passus ii., iii., v., vi, xix., xx., xxii., xxiii., xxiv., xxv. Why only ten so begin is not plain; of course it may be a matter of chance, but, again, there are three passus, iv., ix., xxvi., that contain no paragraph-mark at all. I cannot understand the reason of this, unless it be that the mark was inserted now and then *merely as a metrical regulator;* and I grant this to be but a poor reason for the omissions.

But at any rate, on the suspicion that the mark means something metrically, as it did in *Joseph of Arimathie*, we look for the smallest paragraph. It turns out to be one of four lines, Dublin, 2795–2799. No paragraph smaller than twelve lines occurs in the Ashmole. Using four as a divisor we discover that 73 per cent. of the paragraphs in the revised list given above, are divisible. Immediately we begin to read to see if each four lines form anything like a stadium.

The first paragraph contains twenty-four lines. Its natural subdivisions seem to be 1–3, 4–7, 8–10, 11–14, 15–18. 19–23. So far, so good. This paragraph breaks into six divisions of respectively 3, 4, 3, 4, 4, 4, lines. We further discover that the first three lines have *f* as the letter of alliteration, the next four have *l*, the next three have *c* (*k*), the next four *w*, the last four *r*. It would be easy here to say that the first and third divisions have lost each a line, but the sense is perfect as the text now stands. We find no other groups of lines with the same alliteration. As we continue the reading we find that by no means does every fourth line mark a stadium. We therefore double the number, and read for groups of eight. The result is surprisingly persuasive that there is a genuine strophic arrangement by eights. There are indeed cases where the eighth line does not end a sentence, but the great majority of these groups of eight do mark real stadia. We may at

least conclude that there is a strong tendency in this poem to write alliterative verses in strophes of eight; but that the rule is not without many exceptions.

I have tried to test this hypothesis still further by considering the whole text as divided both by the paragraph-marks of the Ashmole, and by the initials of the Dublin. The result, however, is not so assuring as the paragraphing of the Ashmole alone. It is entirely possible that the original poem was divided regularly into eight-line groups, but in the present state of our knowledge it seems rash to reject so many good verses and add so many conjectural ones as would be necessary to render all the passus divisible by eight.[1]

William of Palerne, c. 1350.

The *Romance of William of Palerne* is preserved in a unique MS. in the library of King's College, Cambridge. The paragraphing in this MS. is done by the use of small blue and red initials. A quire is missing at the very beginning of the poem, and although Skeat in his E. E. T. S. reprint of Madden's edition substitutes for the lost lines the original French, I have begun my count at the first of the English divisions. The paragraphs run as follows as to number of lines:

78, 29, 52, 9,[2] 28, 34, 113, 39, 49 (folio 10 lost) 54 (folio 10 lost) 52,[3] 42, 49, 102, 119, 38, 79, 74, 26, 24, 27, 61, 75, 162, 20, 100, 53, 49, 66, 60, 101, 65, 122, 91, 72, 63, 36, 51, 84, 119, 29, 21, 95, 92, 25, 26, 61, 51, 35, 56, 73, 61, 32, 36, 54, 93, 42, 63, 64, 75, 40, 39, 35, 21, 44, 46, 45, 40, 45, 47, 65, 32, 34, 99, 43, 48, 38, 45, 137, 65, 44, 63, 40, 43, 30, 43, 99, 84, 64, 32. 32, 54, 64, 46, 70, 39, 14, 20.[2]

Only 55 per cent. of these numbers are even, a proportion not large

[1] After writing this account in August, 1893, I learned that in *Englische Studien* (1892) Max Kaluza has discussed *Strophische Gliederung in der Mittelenglischen rein alliterirenden Dichtung*. Kaluza, proceeding from a different point of view from my own, arrives at the conclusion that the *Wars* was written in strophes of 24! To reach this conclusion he has to add *83 verses* to Skeat's (and Stevenson's) 5677 verses. This process gives 5760 lines, which is indeed a multiple of 24, and not only of 24 but of 48 and 72, for that matter. Kaluza does not utterly ignore the paragraph-mark, though he does ignore the initials of Dublin. He merely says that the mark stands only four times in the midst of a strophe (of 24): 3576, 3762, 5103, 5655. Surely he must have overooked 2755, to say nothing of many cases in Dublin.

[2] These two paragraphs begin with small letters.

[3] I restore a line which Skeat thinks may be lost, at 500.

enough to point to any regular strophic arrangement. The text reveals here and there a logical unit of four lines, but the grouping was hardly a conscious one.

The Destruction of Jerusalem.

The Destruction of Jerusalem, another of the alliterative poems of this period, is preserved in various MSS. Cotton Caligula A II, is divided into quatrains by the paragraph-mark, which here becomes chiefly a metrical sign. The poem is broken into sections by four divine invocations (vv. 438, 888, 1104, 1332).

The Boke of Curtasye.

The Boke of Curtasye (Sloane MS. 1986, Brit. Mus.) is written in rhymed couplets. The paragraph-mark indicates a predominating strophic arrangement in four-line groups. In the third main section, however, the paragraphing is irregular. The number of lines in the successive strophes of the whole poem runs as follows: I. 8, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4. 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4. 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 1. II. 8, 4, 4, 4, 4, 6, 4, 4, 6, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 8, 6, 6, 4. 6, 6, 4, 4, 6, 4, 8, 4, 4, 10, 4, 4, 6, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 6, 4, 8, 4, 6. III. 10, 18, 16, 10, 6, 12, 8, 4, 12, 7, 11, 14, 8, 6, 7, 7, 14, 20, 4, 8, 10, 10, 22, 10, 18, 6, 10, 6, 22, 8, 54, 20, 12, 19, 43, 26.

The Vision of William concerning Piers the Plowman, 1363.

The mark is occasionally used in the MSS. of *Piers the Plowman* with purely metrical meaning. In such cases it is employed, as in *Joseph of Arimathie*, to divide a long line into two short ones.

The mark is also used in all the MSS. with its usual force, but without any strophic significance. The paragraphing of the various MSS. differs. To illustrate: the Vernon MS. has 28 paragraphs in the second passus (208 lines) while the MS. Phillips 8321 has 10 paragraphs for the same passus (252 lines). In the third passus (281 lines) Vernon has 55 paragraphs. For the same passus (349 lines) Laud. 851 has 58 paragraphs. Of the three MSS. mentioned, the Vernon is the most justly divided, the Phillips least. The MS. of Trin. Col. Cam. (1315.17) has perhaps the shortest paragraphs of all. Laud., Rawlinson (Poet. 38. Bodl.), Trin. Col., and others, have breaks between paragraphs, a device which of course adds to the beauty and legibility of the page. MS. Bodley 814, Oxford, is of early date, but shows no interparagraphic breaks.

The Destruction of Troy.

The alliterative romance of the *Destruction of Troy* (E. E. T. S. 39 and 56, Panton & Donaldson) is from a unique MS. in the Hunterian Museum of the University of Glasgow. The paragraph-mark is not used in this MS. and the divisions indicated by initials are rather too long to be called paragraphs. These divisions are however often broken up into paragraphs by spacing and the insertion of an explanatory phrase, *e. g.* "The Onsuare of Jason to Medea."

The Staciouns of Rome, c. 1460.

In the *Staciouns of Rome* the real paragraphs are indicated by rubrical initials. About one-half of these capital paragraphs are subdivided, and very skillfully, by the marks — alternately red and blue. I fail to discover any strophic arrangement beyond the rhymed couplet. The following table exhibits the length, in lines, of the sub-paragraphs, each brace equaling a capital paragraph.

{6, 10} {10, 8, 2, 2, 1, 1, 1, 1, 2, 2} {6, 6} {6, 6} {8, 8, 6} {10, 14} {18} {12} {22} {12} {20} {16} {16}

{16} {8, 8, 8, 20} {8, 18, 10, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 2, 2, 4} {8} {8, 4, 6} {20, 14} {12} {14} {10, 12} {4} {12} {8, 2} {16, 4, 2, 4, 4, 2, 22, 6}

{16} {12} {6} {4} {14} {12, 10} {4} {24} {18} {6} {8} {10} {10} {8} {8} {12} {10} {8}

Morte Arthure.

In the Thornton MS. the *Morte Arthure* is broken into 80 paragraphs by initials. The length of these paragraphs by lines is respectively as follows: 25, 52, 3, 8, 50, 65, 57, 16, 33, 45, 25, 108, 7, 32, 16,

40, 15, 54, 14, 43, 486, 395, 20, 8, 42, 37, 14, 92, 14, 26, 22, 20, 8, 26, 27, 33, 26, 63, 28, 167, 40, 12, 29, 45, 48, 37, 24, 143, 84, 73, 26, 65, 46, 27, 12, 31, 52, 44, 22, 26, 30, 132, 118, 31, 16, 88, 189, 33, 27, 24, 55, 13, 17, 26, 22, 28, 35, 53, 42, 107, 85.

Although the 80 paragraphs average 54.3 lines, there is wide fluctuation in length—8–486. Of the 80 paragraphs 24 are numerically divisible into strophes of four lines. We examine these to see if the division is anything more than a numerical one. By altering occasionally the punctuation of Perry (E. E. T. S.) we reach the following subdivisions, each of which may be said to form a minor stadium.

¶ v. 62–v. 77=52=8+8+4+4+4+8+8+4+4.
¶ v. 288–v. 308=16=4+4+4+4.
¶ v. 522–v. 553=32=8+8+4+8+4.
¶ v. 554–v. 569=16=4+8+4.
¶ v. 570–v. 609=40=8+4+4+4+8+4+4+4,
¶ v. 1617–v. 1636=20=4+12+4.
¶ v. 1637–v. 1644=8=8.
¶ v. 1912–v. 1919=8=4+4.
¶ v. 2290–v. 2329=40=4+4+4+4+8+6+4+6.
¶ v. 2330–v. 2341=12=8+4.
¶ v. 2416–v. 2463=48=4+4+4+4+6+10+8+8.
¶ v. 2525–v. 2668=143=4+4+4+4+4+4+4+4+4+8+4+10+6+4+6 +7+4+8+6+4+4+4+4+10+4+8+4+6.
¶ v. 2669–v. 2752=84=4+6+4+4+6+6+4+8+4+6+5+10+12+5.
¶ v. 2990–v. 3001=12=12.
¶ v. 3033–v. 3084=52=4+4+4+4+6+8+4+4+6+8.
¶ v. 3085–v. 3128=44=4+4+4+4+6+4+8+6+4.
¶ v. 3488–v. 3503=16=16.
¶ v. 3504–v. 3591=88=6+6+8+4+8+8+6+8+4+4+4+6+4+4+4 +4.
¶ v. 3841–v. 3864=24=4+4+4+4+4+4.
¶ v. 3998–v. 4025=28=12+4+12.
¶ v. 4263–v. 4348=85=13+16+4+4+4+4+4+3+12+6+10+5.

It is evident hat there is a strong tendency toward a strophe of four lines. But the poet does not hesitate to alternate with this quatrain groups of six, or eight, or even sixteen verses, or again certain irregular groups of odd numbers. The paragraphs that are not evenly divisible by four show about the same proportion of four-line groups. For example the ¶ 2525–2668 = 144 − 1[1] = 143 gives the following

[2] Perry has unquestionably missed his count at 2592.

groups: 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 8, 4, 10, 6, 4, 6, 7, 4, 8, 6. 4, 4, 4, 4, 10, 4, 8, 4, 6.

Chaucer.

The MSS. of Chaucer vary greatly in their paragraphing. The Ellesmere MS. uses both initials and paragraph-marks. In the *Prologue* the initials are used almost exclusively. Later on the initial seems to be used as marking a more important division than the ¶, but it is not plain that the capital paragraphs form organized wholes of which the ¶ marks subdivisions. The Petworth MS. likewise shows both initial and ¶, the former less rarely than the latter, and less rarely than the initial in Ellesmere. On the other hand the Hengwrt, Cambridge, Corpus, and Lansdowne MSS. use the ¶ regularly and the initial rarely. In Ellesmere it often happens that where an initial stands in the text, the ¶ occurs opposite to the initial in the margin, and precedes a marginal note.

The following table shows the distribution of paragraph-marks and initials, in the *Prologue* and the *Knight's Tale*, for the three MSS., Ellesworth, Petworth, and Lansdowne. No particular value is claimed for the table, except as it shows how nearly all the scribes pitched on the important points, while differing widely concerning the minor subdivisions. Except in the case of Ellesmere, where initials are marked C, I have not distinguished between capital and ¶ The figures are the numbers of lines in the Furnivall six-text edition.

Ellesmere.		Petworth.	Lansdowne.	Ellesmere.		Petworth.	Lansdowne.
c	1	1	1	c	331	331	331
c	19	..	..	c	361	361	361
c	35	..	..	c	379	379	379
c	43	43	43	c	388	388	388
	51	51	..	c	411	411	411
	73	..	..	c	445	445	445
c	79	79	..	c	477	477	477
c	101	101	101	c	529	529	529
c	118	118	118	c	542	542	542
c	165	165	163		545	545	..
c	208	208	208	c	567	567	..
c	270	270	270	c	587	587	587
c	285	285	285	c	623	623	623
c	309	309	309	c	669	669	669

Ellesmere.	Petworth.	Lansdowne.
c 715	715	715
747	747	743
769	769	769
783	..	784
788	..	788
810	..	810
817	..	..
829	..	..
..	837	837
859	859	859
875	..	..
c 893	893	893
905	..	..
912	..	915
931	..	..
952	952	952
c 975	..	975
981	..	..
1001	..	..
1005	..	..
..	..	1025
1033	..	..
..	1049	1049
..	..	1056
1092	..	1092
1123	..	1112
1126	..	..
1128	..	..
1152	..	1152
..	..	1162
c 1187	..	1187
1209	..	..
1219	..	..
..	..	1234
1251	..	..
1275	..	1275
..	..	1295
1303	..	1303
1313	..	1313
..	1325	..
1334	..	1334
1337	..	..
c 1347	1347	1347
c 1355	1355	1355
..	1361	..
1380	..	1380
1399	..	1393
c 1451	1451	1451
1459	..	..
1462	1462	1462
1469	..	..
1475	1475	..
1488	1488	1488
c 1491	..	..
..	1497	..
..	1519	..
1528	..	..
1540	1540	1540
..	1559	..
1574	1577	1574
1596	1596	1596
1620	..	..
c 1623	1623	1624
1649	..	..
1661	..	..
c 1663	1663	..
1673	..	..
1683	..	..
1696	..	1690
1714	1713	1714
1742	..	1742
1748	..	..
1785	..	1785
1799	..	..
c 1829	..	1829
c 1845	1845	1845
1853	..	..
1870	..	..
1881	1881	..
1893	..	..
1895	..	..
1914	..	..

Ellesmere.	Petworth.	Lansdowne.	Ellesmere.	Petworth.	Lansdowne
1918	..	..	c 2373	2373	2373
1943	..	..	2375	..	..
c 1955	1951	..	c 2421	..	2421
1967	1967	1967	2438	..	..
1975	1975	..	2453	..	..
1995	..	..	2479	..	..
2005	..	..	c 2483	..	2483
2011	..	..	c 2523	..	..
2017	..	..	2533	..	..
2021	..	..	2537	..	2537
2024	..	..	2543	..	..
2027	..	..	2555	..	..
2031	..	..	c 2561	..	..
c 2041	..	2041	2569	..	..
c 2051	2051	2051	..	..	2577
2056	..	..	2584	..	..
2062	..	..	2595	..	2595
2065	..	2065	2599	..	..
2069	..	..	2621	..	2623
2073	..	..	2636	..	..
2075	..	2075	2652	..	..
2083	..	..	2657	..	..
c 2089	2089	..	c 2663	..	2663
2095	..	..	2668	..	..
2117	..	..	c 2671	..	2671
c 2155	2155	2155	2676	..	..
2190	..	2187	2684	..	..
2197	..	..	2700	..	..
c 2209	2209	2209	2707	..	..
c 2221	2221	2221	2731	..	..
2251	..	2251	..	2741	2743
2261	2261	2261	c 2743	..	..
2271	2271	..	c 2765	..	2764
2281	..	..	c 2783	..	..
2289	..	..	c 2817	..	2816
2297	2297	2297	2827	..	..
2331	..	..	2837	..	..
..	2339	..	c 2843	.	..
2349	..	..	c 2853	.	2853
..	..	2357	2882	.	2882
c 2367	..	2367	c 2913	..	..

Ellesmere.	Petworth.	Landsowne.
2947	..	..
2963	..	..
c 2967	..	2967
c 2987	..	2987
c 3017	..	..
3021	..	..
3027	..	..
3035	..	..

Ellesmere.	Petworth.	Lansdowne.
3041	..	..
3043	..	..
3057	..	..
3067	..	..
3075	..	3075
3090	..	..
3097	..	