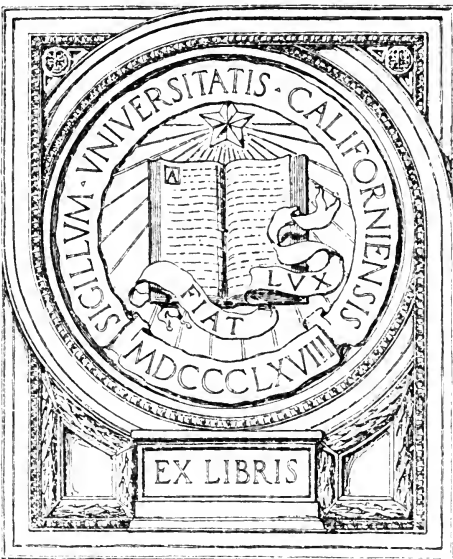


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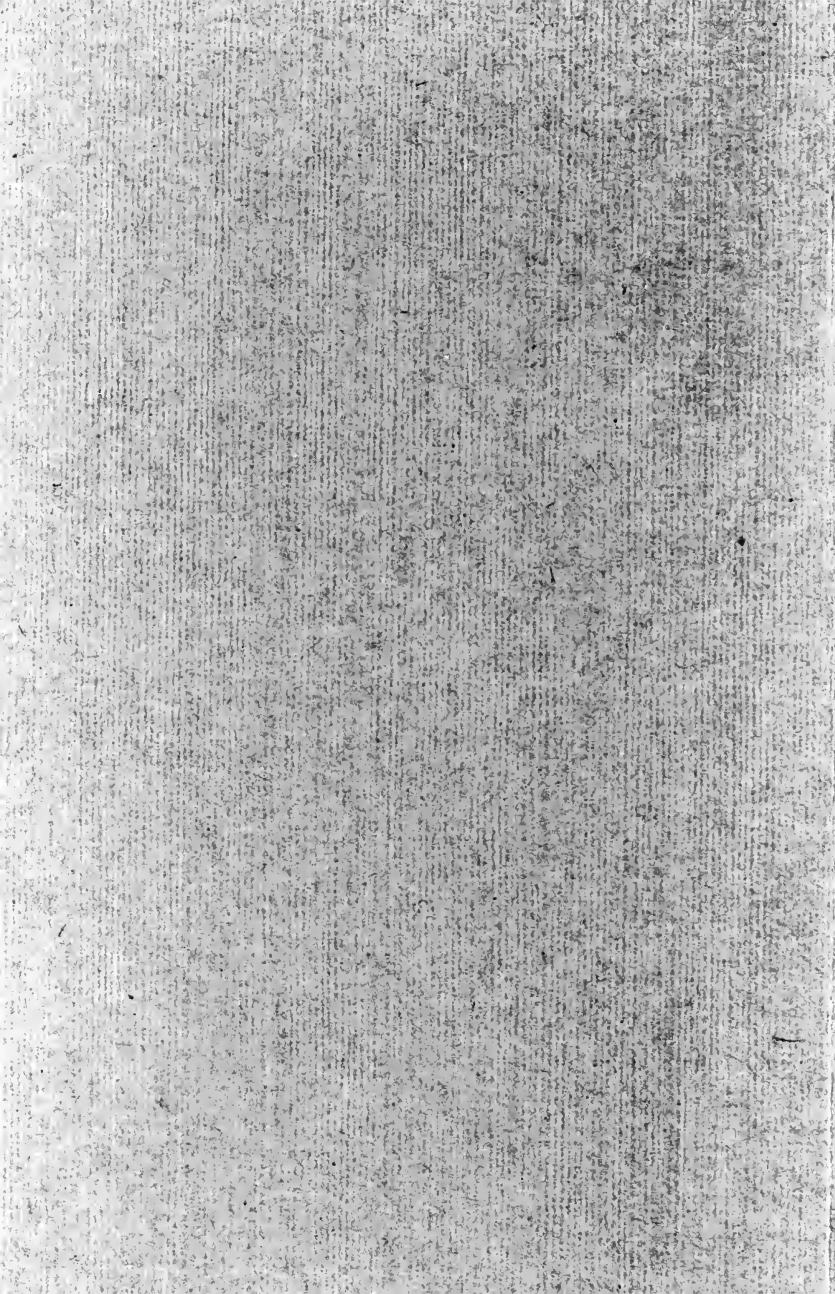
A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY
OF THE
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND LITERATURE
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

BY
EDWARD PAYSON MORTON



CHICAGO
R. R. DONNELLEY & SONS CO.

1910



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TO
MY FATHER AND MOTHER

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INTRODUCTION

This study is an attempt to examine some considerable quantities of English non-dramatic blank verse, with the hope of pointing out some conventions in the use of the metre, and of checking up some of the current notions about the subject. I have confined myself to non-dramatic blank verse (not excluding, of course, occasional comparisons with dramatic blank verse, and with other verse forms) because in the drama the verse is for the most part a secondary feature, inasmuch as the dramatist wishes ordinarily to get an illusion of life or of reality, and therefore subordinates or modifies his verse to suit dramatic necessities. It is true that historically English blank verse acquired its flexibility through the drama, but the blank verse written by Milton and his successors is a very different thing from the blank verse of Shakspeare's later plays or of those of the other dramatists of that generation. The failure to discriminate between dramatic and non-dramatic blank verse has led often to debating whether such and such a device is admissible, when as a matter of fact it is found almost entirely in dramatic blank verse, and there for dramatic rather than metrical reasons. For example, the question of six-beat lines in blank verse reduces itself to something like this: In a verse-form like the rigid heroic couplet, for instance, a six-beat line at the end of the couplet was often, like a triplet, a concession to the limitations of the verse-form. In the drama, a line divided between two or more speakers might be a beat long

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or a beat short (that is, it might be made up of two three-beat phrases, or two two-beat ones, or a four and a two) without disturbing the swing of the rhythm, because the auditors would not notice an excess or deficiency that was hidden by the break between the speeches. Hearers, moreover, would not be as sensitive as readers to occasional six-beat lines in the middle of speeches. In non-dramatic blank verse, however, the demand for, or the opportunity for metrical license of this sort is lacking, and six-beat lines, even possible ones, are so few as to be negligible.

When looked at from a purely theoretical point of view, blank verse is the most flexible and adaptable of our English verse-forms, because it has the fewest arbitrary metrical requirements. Stripped of various minor rules which, as we shall see, change somewhat from generation to generation, blank verse demands of the poet merely five-beat lines with a prevailing iambic swing. It sets no restrictions upon sentence-length or paragraph-length, as do stanza-forms, and even the heroic couplet. It lends itself equally well to short, pithy, sententious, or staccato sentences, and to long flowing periods. It serves unobtrusively as a vehicle for quiet pedestrian material, raised above prose chiefly by the rhythm; or for the expression of moods so intense, or grave, or delicate, that more formal devices might stamp them as declamatory or insincere.

This very fact, that blank verse makes so few requirements, has led to two errors of attitude, both sometimes serious. In the first place, it is worth while to avoid praising blank verse in terms of dispraise of other forms. For example, blank verse seems to offer peculiar advantages to both poet and reader in various long poems, such as disquisitions like the *Excursion* or the *Ring and the Book*; or

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narratives like *Sohrab and Rustum*; or mixtures of both like *Paradise Lost*. But let us recall the unflagging ease and vivacity of Chaucer's *Troilus*, which is in the rhyme-royal stanza; of Byron's *Don Juan*, in *ottava rima*; of the *Faery Queen*, in a still more intricate stanza; of *Endymion*, or if that be thought too like blank verse in its technique, of Dryden's *Palamon and Arcite*, or of Pope's *Homer*, which still grips high school boys as it did Pope's own generation. In the second place, it is necessary to discriminate between effects which are really the result of metrical technique and effects which are primarily rhetorical, and which are prominent in blank verse just because of the unobtrusiveness of its metrics.

Most of the conventions of non-dramatic blank verse, in fact, spring from its very unobtrusiveness. Inasmuch as the five beats and the iambic rhythm are practically its only fundamentals, its users have generally been careful to keep both. Indeed, with no rhyme to indicate line-rhythm, or to affect sentence-length or structure, four-beat or six-beat lines are not only unnecessary, but disturbing. At least the poets seem to have felt so, for fractional lines and alexandrines are very few indeed in the poets here studied.¹ Moreover, rhymeless measures in other than five-beat lines have proved both difficult and unsatisfactory. Even in *Samson Agonistes*, the choral passages are accompanied by rhyme and assonance: 'blank verse odes' like Thomas Fletcher's or James Ralph's (which are simply lawless Pindarics carried a step farther by the omission of rhyme) are

¹ Cowley, in the couplets of his *Davideis*, introduced incomplete lines, and in a note reminded his readers that he was following Virgil. Cowley also informed his readers that his occasional alexandrines were used deliberately, and not carelessly.

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few in number; and Collins's *Ode to Evening* is the one exquisite success of a long series of attempts from Milton down. Collins's ode illustrates incidentally the advantage in blank verse of the five-beat rhythm, for more than one critic has printed stanzas from Collins in three lines instead of four, finding nothing in the cadences of the two short lines to distinguish them as separate lines. 'Lyric blank verse,' therefore, whether we include all rhymeless lyric poems, or apply the term only to such five-beat passages as Tennyson's "Tears, idle tears," makes use of various special devices *because of* its lyric purpose, and should consequently be as sharply discriminated as dramatic blank verse from the verse we are here concerned with.

A word is necessary about the choice of poets whose blank verse is here studied. Milton, Wordsworth, Keats, Browning, and Tennyson—all of them but Keats extensive users of non-dramatic blank verse—demand a place in any comparative study. To these I have added others, partly by design, partly at haphazard. Surrey and Gascoigne I have put in, both because they were very early practitioners, and because their pioneer crudities are often illuminating. Young should be added, it seemed to me, because it is interesting to compare some extremely popular 18th century blank verse with what we now find most admirable. Young, of course, suggested comparison with Thomson, and Thomson with his predecessor Philips and with his friend Mallet, whose *Excursion* promised possible contrasts with Wordsworth's. Newcomb, Blair, Glover, Somerville, Shenstone, and Watts owe their presence here not to any special importance, but to the accident that interest in them for other reasons led me to examine their blank verse and to add their little 'sum of more.' In Cowper I felt I was adding an-

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other 18th century poet whose blank verse has always been spoken of with respect; Landor came in because I was curious to see what kind of blank verse he published in the year of the "Lyrical Ballads." Shelley, Arnold, and Swinburne—especially the last two—offer interesting experiments. For a *history* of English non-dramatic blank verse, this list of poets would be only a beginning, but for a study of its technique primarily, I think I have a wide enough range, both in time and character, to justify some conclusions. In all cases I have taken either complete poems or large enough masses of the longer ones to make me feel that my statements about *those particular poems* are based on definite knowledge. Browning and Tennyson alone, of these poets, have written a variety of poems in blank verse during a long period of years; in the case of the others, then, I am usually justified in speaking of the men rather than of individual poems. Long ago I discovered, in the case of the heroic couplet, that very mediocre poets often illustrate technical details better than great poets, because the small men are less skilful in concealing their art. A similar comparison between great and poor poets in blank verse seemed likely to be equally profitable, although Newcomb's is the only instance in this list of a *long* poem which has not still its admirers or was not highly praised in its own generation.

It is necessary also, I imagine, to say a word about the facts I present, and their significance. I have taken pains, and frequent checking up of portions of my work has led me to think it reasonably accurate. None of my conclusions, however, depends upon absolutely final winnowing out of a few small grains. I find, for instance, only one feminine ending in the *Seasons*; I should not be disturbed if some one else found a half dozen more, because the signifi-

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cance of the matter lies not in there being only one but in there being so few that Thomson must have definitely avoided them. I have given my figures exactly, as an evidence of good faith, and not because the precise fractions are significant. It is of no importance, for example, that Somervile should have 20.70% of his lines endstopt, and Mallet only 20.69; it is significant, however, that those men should come in a group with many others who have between 15 and 30% of their lines endstopt. And this leads to a caution about my inferences: the same reason which has led me to examine long passages keeps me from laying stress on differences between poems which are not of considerable length. The variations between different books of *Paradise Lost*, for instance, are often greater than those between two or three minor poets. The danger of drawing definite generalizations from brief passages is illustrated by the table which Professor Mayor printed on page 208 of the second edition of his "Chapters on English Metre." Frequently he records greater variations between different passages from Tennyson than he finds between Tennyson and either Milton or Browning. That the reason for such differences may be accidental and not metrical was aptly illustrated by the experience of a student who was perplexed to find that in one scene of *As You Like It* only 28% of the lines were endstopt, while in another over 50% were endstopt. The reason was that, although the two scenes were of about the same length, one consisted of ten speeches, of which only four ended within the line; while the other had twenty-seven speeches, of which but five ended within the line, so that a mere difference in the length of the speeches—in the liveliness of the dialogue—affected materially the details of the versification.

I. LINES

In order to avoid confusion I shall begin by defining my terms and explaining their limitations.

Run-on lines are lines which without punctuation at the end "run-on" into the next.

Endstopt lines are lines which end with some punctuation *other than a comma*.

Commastopt lines (which need no definition) I have kept separate for two reasons. In the first place, although some commastopt lines undoubtedly have, in some poets, at least, the force of endstopt lines, while others are almost as certainly run-on, any attempt to apportion them means hopeless entanglement in the meshes of the personal equation. In some cases, Tennyson, for example, I have tried distributing the commastopt lines and I found that, while the proportions of run-on and endstopt lines did not materially change, my results were less definite. In the second place, commastopt lines are neutral in the sense of not being emphatically either run-on or endstopt, and I feel pretty sure that the proportion of such neutral lines counts distinctly in the general effect of the verse. (See p. 21.) At least, I hope my division may make my figures serviceable to readers of various opinions. Those who think that *any* punctuation at the end of the line means an endstopt line, have only to add my percentages of endstopt and commastopt lines. Those who think that even a comma does not necessarily keep a line from being run-on, will find in my figures for commastopt lines some basis for spec-

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ulation as to the proportion in which such lines may be found.

In the case of run-on lines, it seems to me that my percentages are perfectly definite. To the objection that some lines which have no punctuation at the end are nevertheless not run-on, it may be pointed out that two or three factors may combine to give us gradations which we must all recognize, though it does not seem to me feasible to tabulate either their frequency or their proportions. For example, the end of a line may, without punctuation, coincide with the end of a syntactical phrase, which would make the reader pause appreciably longer than if the line ended in the midst of a syntactical group.

———and by success untaught
His proud imaginations thus displaid (P. L. 2. 9-10)
is an example of the first, and

High on a throne of royal state, which far
Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind (P. L. 2. 1-2)
of the second. There is a similar difference between instances like

———yet our greatemie
All incorruptible (P. L. 2. 137-8)
and

———or when we lay
Chain'd on the burning lake (P. L. 2. 168-9)
where the initial stressed syllable of the next line forces a pause. The most hurried type of run-on line, frequent in Shakspeare's later plays, is rare in non-dramatic blank verse—at least it is so infrequent and unobtrusive that I have no instances in mind. I mean the light or weak ending, as in

It should the good ship so have swallow'd and
The fraughting souls within her (Temp. 1. 2. 12-13)
or

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Thy father was the Duke of Milan and
A prince of power. (Temp. 1. 2. 54-5)

It may be argued that the sense of line-rhythm was more constant or stronger in Milton than in Wordsworth or Browning or Tennyson, and that therefore my figures for Milton would not mean quite the same as for the other men. But assuming that line-rhythm is stronger in Milton than in the others—as I think it is—the absence of punctuation at the end of the line serves the same function in both groups, although with the same difference of effect that there is between Milton's stately, sonorous manner and the easier, more colloquial vocabulary of the *Prelude* or the *Excursion*. Indeed, I find no obviously and primarily *metrical* differences; the same thing is evident if you compare Milton's paragraph about the Verse, prefixed to *Paradise Lost*, with Wordsworth's Preface to the second edition of the "Lyrical Ballads." Diction, in short, makes itself felt in the movement of either prose or verse, and in verse of whatever sort. Therefore, I am inclined to maintain that counting as run-on *only* lines (and *all* lines) which have no punctuation at the end, gives a definite and unquestionable set of facts.

In the case of endstopt lines, my percentages are not quite so satisfactory. Periods, colons, semi-colons, and, ordinarily, question marks, are clear indications of a marked pause in the sense or the syntax; but exclamation points, and parentheses, and dashes are less certain. (Where there is a double mark like ,— or), or !—, I have felt safe in counting a full pause.) My practice has been to count these various marks always as full stops, so that I have, if anything, somewhat exaggerated the proportions of endstopt lines. However, various attempts to determine the proportions of these am-

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biguous marks have led me to conclude that their total number is not great enough to make significant changes in the results.

Unbroken lines are lines with no punctuation within the line, though I do not try to discriminate between the four varieties illustrated in these lines from the fourth book of the *Prelude*:

- “——— and at once
- 1 Some lovely Image in the song rose up
Full-formed, like Venus rising from the sea;
 - 2 Then have I darted forwards to let loose
 - 3 My hand upon his back with stormy joy,
 - 4 Caressing him again and yet again.” (ll. 112-17)

I have made various attempts to find out whether the proportions of the varieties just illustrated bore any significant relation to each other, or to the individual poet's use of them, or to the proportions of other metrical details, but without tangible results. At first thought, unbroken lines would seem likely to vary in inverse ratio to run-on lines, because a large proportion of lines without internal pause would force the pauses to the end of the line, and vice versa. The case of Gascoigne, who has only 17.64% of his lines run-on, and 70.56% unbroken, seems entirely in point, but his case, as we shall see, like Surrey's, is exceptional. Again, Newcomb and Philips, who have most run-on, have fewest unbroken lines; but Akenside and Swinburne, who have over 50% of their lines run-on, have also over 40% unbroken. Except in men who go to extremes in the use or avoidance of run-on lines, unbroken lines have no essential relation to run-on lines, but are indications, according as they are many or few, of the extent to which the poet emphasizes or disguises line-rhythm. The proportion of unbroken lines is important, too, in connection with cæsuras, as indicating rapidity of movement.

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It may be urged that all these matters, so far, are mere records of variations in sentence-length. In one sense that is true, for in blank verse sentence-structure practically determines the flow of the verse. In the heroic couplet, on the contrary—to take for illustration another five-beat iambic verse-form—rhetoric rarely dominates the verse, but the verse usually compels a limited type of sentence-structure or, perhaps, attracts chiefly men of certain markedly similar habits of thought and expression. The exceptions to this are cases like that of Keats, and, so far as I know, always of men who treat the couplet as if it were blank verse, and reduce the rhyme to an almost purely decorative function. These men, it may be noted, come always in periods of extravagance or revolt, and are therefore not representative users of couplets. In a discussion of the couplet, then, we should often be pointing out the ways in which the poets adapted themselves to the *demands* of the couplet; in our discussion of blank verse, we shall be chiefly engaged in showing how various poets have availed themselves of the *opportunities* of the form. In taking account of these things, then, it is necessary—and this is a point often neglected or blurred—that we should discriminate between what is rhetorical and what is really metrical, but we shall find that varying habits of sentence-structure affect or exhibit metrical peculiarities.

It may be urged, too, that this method merely records vagaries of punctuation, that poets and printers alike had notions both eccentric and inconsistent. True, both poets and printers are eccentric, and what is worse, inconsistent, but these very things more or less clearly record significant details in which past generations did not have our precise point of view. An illustration or two will help.

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When Ben Jonson declared that he "loved Shakspeare (this side Idolatory) as much as any man," he capitalised a common noun and used parentheses where we should be content with commas, and should print (as some of his editors have) "loved Shakespeare, this side idolatry, as much as any man." We have not changed the sense, but I feel sure that we have changed the emphasis, and that Jonson's capital and parenthesis, however customary and conventional they may have been, represented to him a somewhat stronger sense of the interjectional quality of the modifying phrase, and a somewhat more emphatic conception of the heresy he disclaimed in "Idolatory," than the modern reading gives. It is true that the 18th century men punctuated far more elaborately than we do, but that I am sure was something more than a mere convention; it indicated a habit of mind, a habit, if you will, of attention to the details of a matter rather than to the larger groupings. In the *Night Thoughts*, for instance, one of the most profusely punctuated of the poems, the punctuation is no mere excess of pointing; it is an index of Young's habits of expression. In short, I am convinced that punctuation is not merely a matter of printing, but that it is indicative of a mental habit, and in the long run measures fairly well a poet's sensitiveness to long or short groups—to details as details, or to details as parts of a whole. When Milton wrote

"Rocks, Caves, Lakes, Fens, Bogs, Dens, and shades of death,"
(Par. Lost, 2. 621)

it may be that his punctuation was formal merely, and not intended to force a slow reading of the line and prevent the hasty pairing that the rhythm would suggest. But when he wrote

"——— and chase

Anguish and doubt and fear and sorrow and pain
From mortal or immortal minds" (Par. Lost, 1. 557-9)

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it looks as if the omission of the punctuation were deliberate; at least the omission admits of a swifter reading than otherwise.¹

The very fact that blank verse and heroic couplets of the same period, when subjected to the same sort of examination, exhibit marked and fundamental differences of treatment, goes to show that the punctuation of a given generation is on the whole significant, and that freaks due to careless printers are rarely if ever numerous enough to vitiate the general results.

A feminine ending (called also double, or redundant) is an extra unstressed syllable at the end of the line after the fifth metrical beat. The chances for difference of opinion are relatively few. Such words as 'heaven,' 'given,' 'striven,' I have counted as monosyllables at the end of the line inasmuch as they are usually so in the middle, as are also all words in -ire and -ower. 'Being' I have counted always a monosyllable; 'spirit' always a dissyllable.² The most puzzling cases are adjectives in -able. In spite of Mr. Bridges' comments, I have not counted

¹ On the question of the blind poet's supervision of details of printing, see Canon Beeching's Preface to the Oxford edition of Milton.

² In books I and II of *Paradise Lost*, 'Heaven' occurs over 180 times, and in only some half dozen cases *must* it have two syllables, as in 2. 772: "Driv'n headlong from the pitch of Heaven, down." In some fifty cases it seems intended for one syllable, and in the rest may have one or two according to how you read the line.

'Being' ends a line 14 times in *Paradise Lost*, and once in *Paradise Regained*; in the body of the line it occurs six times in *Paradise Lost* and once in *Paradise Regained*, but in only one instance *must* it have two syllables: "My being gav'st me; whom should I obey." P. L. 2. 865. (In Young, 'being' ends a line only four times.)

'Spirit' ends a line in only five instances (all in *Paradise Lost*). It *must* have two syllables only 24

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them feminine, because they are only possible cases, and are relatively few in number—Mr. Bridges gives only five instances in Milton.

Unstressed endings are such words as 'Providence,' 'enterprise,' or 'supremacy,' which by ending the line with a logically unstressed syllable, soften the line-emphasis. Many trisyllables like 'inexpert,' 'understand,' or 'comprehend,' are obviously not unstressed; many others, especially when found in a set of lines clearly ending with emphatic syllables, are troublesomely doubtful. As I have tried to count only words which seemed indubitably unstressed, my figures *should* represent minimum percentages. (Words like 'sanctuary,' which at the ends of lines are both unstressed and feminine endings, are sometimes found, but are not used often enough to be significant. See p. 31.)

In Table I, the names in each column are arranged in a descending scale of percentages, and similar percentages are put side by side in the four columns. This arrangement shows at a glance the extent to which the poets vary or agree, as well as whether a particular poet is moderate or extreme in his use or avoidance of any device; it also makes obvious some comparisons in the use of the various devices. In Milton's case, for the sake of more accurate comparison, I have given in each column not only his average, but also the figures for *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*.

In Table II, the correspondences between the percentages of the different columns have made it possible to arrange the poets in three groups: in the first, all

times in *Paradise Lost* and three times in *Paradise Regained*; e.g.: "From thence a Rib, with cordial spirits warm." P. L. 8. 466. Or: "One day forth walk'd alone, the spirit leading." P. R. 1. 189. In 64 instances in *Paradise Lost* and 11 in *Paradise Regained*, 'spirit' may have one or two syllables, for it is always followed by an unstressed syllable; e.g.: "Can perish; for the mind and spirit remains." P. L. 1. 139. Or: "To which my Spirit aspir'd, victorious deeds." P. R. 1. 215.

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of the poets have under 20% of their lines run-on; in the second, between 20 and 30%; and in the third, above 30%. In each group the order of names is chronological. The figures for each poem under Chaucer, Dryden, and Pope show how little the figures were affected by different kinds of writing. For Chamberlayne and Keats, however, average figures would conceal metrical differences between poems. The average for the total number of lines I have added to show how misleading the use of such figures might be.

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TABLE I

RUNON ¹	ENDSTOPT	COMMASTOPT	UNBROKEN
Newcomb, 70.18			Gascoigne, 70.56
Phillips, 61.25			
Par. Lost, 58.36	Young, 58.15		
Shelley, 58.05			
Akenside, 56.27			
Milton, Ave., 54.41		Gascoigne, 54.21	
Swinburne, 53.14	Surrey, 52.41		Surrey, 51.26
Somerville, 51.96			
Wordsworth, 48.94		Glover, 47.40	Landor, 44.10
Cowper, 48.55		Mallet, 43.69	Keats, 43.40
Watts, 47.30			Tennyson, 42.94
Shenstone, 45.02		Thomson, 41.28	Akenside, 41.47
Par. Reg'd, 44.78			Swinburne, 40.64
		Blair, 39.94	Shelley, 39.58
		Tennyson, 38.67	Par. Reg'd, 39.32
Glover, 36.60	Blair, 36.76	Arnold, 36.93	Wordsworth, 37.22
Tennyson, 35.91	Arnold, 35.07	Browning, 34.91	Cowper, 37.01
Mallet, 35.62		Watts, 34.84	Browning, 36.05
Landor, 35.42		Swinburne, 34.20	Blair, 35.99
Keats, 34.00		Keats, 34.00	Glover, 35.59
Browning, 33.34		Par. Reg'd, 32.37	Milton, Ave., 32.88
	Landor, 32.60	Wordsworth, 32.06	Thomson, 32.67
	Keats, 32.00	Landor, 31.98	
Thomson, 30.00	Browning, 31.85	Akenside, 30.98	
		Shenstone, 30.59	
	Thomson, 28.73	Shelley, 29.04	Arnold, 29.38
Arnold, 28.00	Gascoigne, 28.15	Surrey, 27.41	Young, 29.20
Blair, 25.30	Tennyson, 25.42	Somerville, 27.34	Par. Lost, 28.92
	Shenstone, 24.39	Cowper, 27.13	Watts, 28.00
	Cowper, 24.32	Milton, Ave., 26.70	
	Par. Reg'd, 22.85	Young, 26.35	Mallet, 21.31
	Somerville, 20.70	Phillips, 25.71	Shenstone, 21.29
Surrey, 20.18	Mallet, 20.69	Par. Lost, 24.73	Somerville, 20.05
	Wordsworth, 19.00		
	Milton, Ave., 18.89		
Gascoigne, 17.64	Watts, 17.86	Newcomb, 17.83	Phillips, 17.41
	Par. Lost, 16.91		Newcomb, 17.39
Young, 15.50	Glover, 16.00		
	Phillips, 13.04		
	Shelley, 12.91		
	Akenside, 12.75		
	Swinburne, 12.66		
	Newcomb, 11.99		

¹ For details as to dates, poems, etc., see under each poet's name, pp. 91 f.

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TABLE II

SOME FIGURES FOR THE HEROIC COUPLET

		LL.	RUN.	END.	COM.	UNB.
Chaucer,	Canterbury Tales, entire.....	13680	13.22	43.95	42.83	
	Prologue, 858.....		10.95	50.35	39.70	64.50
	Knight's Tale, 2250.....		13.90	39.81	40.29	58.80
Marlowe,	Hero & Leander, I and II...	722	16.06	48.06	35.88	55.12
	Browne, Wm. Brit's Past., I, Songs I and IV.....	1590	18.67	42.89	38.44	57.04
Cowley,	Davideis, Book I.....	901	16.53	54.70	28.77	56.38
Oldham,	Satires upon the Jesuits.....	1702	8.46	17.55	73.97	40.18
Waller,	9 Poems, (all over 100 lines)...	1622	15.77	47.72	36.51	50.55
Dryden,	Pal. & Arcite; Abs. & Achit.,... 3458		10.72	51.79	37.49	53.87
	Abs. & Achit, 1031.....		8.43	56.74	34.83	58.97
	Pal. & Arcite., 2427.....		11.70	49.60	38.61	51.70
Pope,	4 Poems.....	3258	8.04	53.86	38.10	48.06
	Ess. on Crit., 739.....		7.57	53.31	39.12	57.90
	Windsor Forest, 434.....		8.52	45.85	45.63	56.91
	Iliad, I, 781.....		10.37	52.49	37.14	51.85
	Essay on Man, 1304.....		6.74	56.89	36.37	37.27
Young,	Universal Passion.....	2497	6.60	63.03	30.35	43.08
9 Poets,	21 Poems.....	29430	12.12	46.19	41.69	
	18858 lines					51.44
Chapman,	Hero & Leander, III & IV...	769	26.40	35.50	38.10	53.18
Wither,	Elegiacal Epist. to Fidelity...	1250	22.72	38.48	38.80	60.96
Cleveland,	5 Poems, (all over 100 lines)...	674	29.82	47.61	22.57	58.60
Randolph,	4 Poems, (all over 100 lines)...	696	27.14	43.53	29.33	50.86
Sandys	Paraphr. on Job, I-XVI, ...ca	1020	20.29	46.07	33.64	50.00
Marmion,	Legend of Cupid and Psyche...	2270	26.56	33.26	40.18	47.57
Godolphin,	Passion of Dido for Aeneas..	454	27.53	38.54	33.93	50.22
Wordsworth,	Ev. Wlk, Descr. Sk's. Ep. to Beau....	1280	27.65	40.85	31.50	59.60
8 Poets,	17 Poems.....	8413	25.73	39.23	35.04	57.30
Bosworth,	Arcadius and Sepha.....	2511	37.19	27.77	35.54	43.21
Chalkhill,	Thealma and Clearchus.....	3150	42.69	23.90	33.41	33.17
Chamberlayne,	Pharonnida, I & V.....	5363	69.18	9.63	21.19	29.97
	England's Jubilee.....	298	54.70	23.14	22.16	45.30
Keats,	Endymion.....	3905	47.11	28.04	24.85	34.57
	Lamia.....	708	32.47	31.36	36.17	38.13
Shelley,	Epipsychdion.....	604	39.90	28.31	31.79	44.86
Browning,	Sordello, I, II, III.....	3036	59.68	16.04	24.28	28.52
6 Poets	8 Poems.....	19575	52.08	20.42	27.50	33.62
23 Poets	46 Poems.....	57418	27.74	36.56	35.70	
	46846 lines					45.04

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The tables of run-on, endstopt, commastopt, and unbroken lines show that the percentages of run-on lines tend toward the top of the column, of endstopt lines toward the foot, and of both commastopt and unbroken lines away from either extreme. It will be noticed, however, that only three percentages go above 60. It was to be expected that most of these poets should have many run-on and few endstopt lines, but it may seem surprising that so few have more run-on or fewer endstopt than Milton. The only two who exceeded *Paradise Lost* were among the earliest of Milton's acknowledged imitators, and of those two, Newcomb is all but unknown, and Philips is usually quoted as a mere burlesquer of an outworn fashion. Were these two men imitating Milton in a mere superficial device of technique, or were they trying a device which only a supreme artist could use successfully? Even Swinburne and Shelley—those past masters in effects of rapidity—fall slightly below *Paradise Lost*. Tennyson, Keats, and Browning, whose blank verse is highly praised, fall far below Milton in their use of run-on lines. In Milton's group are nine men with, in round numbers, between 45 and 55% of run-on lines; but there are also nine men in a group ranging from 25 to 35%. Apparently then, the proportion of run-on lines is a less certain measure of the movement of blank verse than we have been in the habit of thinking; it may be a measure of ease and flexibility, but even then, the proportion necessary is less than one might think. That run-on lines are not essential to give ease and fluidity to five-beat iambic verse is proved by the fact that in the *Canterbury Tales* the percentage of run-on lines is only 13.22.

That Swinburne and Shelley should use fewer endstopt lines than Milton did in *Paradise Lost* is

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not surprising, but it is surely significant either of a change of theory or a practical difficulty in composition, or of both of these things, that besides these two only Newcomb, Akenside, Philips, Glover, and Watts should be in this group. Wordsworth, to be sure, is near Milton, but Tennyson, Browning, and Keats use many more endstopt lines. Browning never approaches the percentages of *Paradise Lost*, and Tennyson does so only in *Timbuctoo*. It should be observed that except at the extreme ends, the proportions of run-on and endstopt lines bear no clear relation to each other, and that only eight of the twenty-three men can be called extremists in both respects.

The table of commastopt lines is in general a corollary of the tables of run-on and endstopt lines, but it will be observed that the poets are practically all massed between 25 and 40%. That is to say, from one-fourth to more than one-third of the lines are neutral in character (according to the reader's point of view, either mildly endstopt, or not markedly run-on). Newcomb and Young have fewest, Young because of excess of endstopt, Newcomb of run-on lines. Gascoigne also has many because he has so few run-on. In both Newcomb and Gascoigne the commastopt lines have to me usually the force of endstopt lines,—in Newcomb because of his excess of run-on lines, in Gascoigne because of an equal excess of unbroken lines. Only Keats, Landon, and Browning have an almost equal balance of run-on, endstopt, and commastopt lines; in Arnold, the proportions vary a little more; but Milton is extreme in all three respects. Keats, Browning, and Tennyson, who have rather more run-on than endstopt lines, have a relatively large per cent of commastopt. Inasmuch as these lines are neutral—not pronounced in either direction—this fact, along with

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their fondness for unbroken lines (see p. 24) may indicate that these 19th century poets had a somewhat subtler ear for the delicacies of line-rhythm than the others.

The fact that only Gascoigne and Surrey, the earliest and least expert of our poets, have more than half their lines unbroken, seems at first glance to bear out the impression that the pause within the line is an important feature of good blank verse. A scrutiny of the list shows, however, that mere quantity of internal pauses is not important, for Newcomb, Philips, Somerville, Shenstone, Mallet, and Watts have fewest unbroken lines, and consequently most lines with internal pause. On the other hand, all of the 19th century poets except Arnold have from 36 to 44% of unbroken lines and Milton has 10% more in *Paradise Regained* than he has in *Paradise Lost*.

A comparison of blank verse with the heroic couplet will serve to mark a few sharp differences in practice, and should help to explain one or two things about blank verse. The 23 writers of couplets represented in the table fall into three groups; those who use under 20% of run-on lines, those who use between 20 and 30%, and those who use over 30%. In the first group, Pope, as might be expected, has very few run-on lines, but the differences in effect between the couplets of Pope, Dryden, and Chaucer, are obviously not to be explained by these details of versification. Except for Oldham, the men in this first group have over 40% of their lines endstopt; indeed, aside from Oldham, the only poets in the table who have under 30% of endstopt lines are the six in the last group. In the matter of run-on and endstopt lines, then, the practice of the couplet is exactly the reverse of that of blank verse.

Only seven writers of blank verse have more than

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40% of their lines unbroken; only Chalkhill, Chamberlayne, Keats, and Browning have so small a proportion of their couplet lines unbroken, so that in this respect, too, the couplet and blank verse have exactly opposite tendencies. As compared with the heroic couplet, unbroken lines in blank verse are fewer, partly because their function is served by run-on lines, for roughly speaking, a decrease in the pauses at the end of the line brings an increase within the line; partly also, as is shown especially by those users of the couplet who go to excess in run-on lines, because the rhyme, even when it serves rather as a decoration than as an aid to rhetorical emphasis, marks the line-rhythm strongly. When rhyme is discarded, the line-rhythm is more or less subordinated to the sense-rhythms which overlay it. The influence of the rhyme shows clearly both in the higher proportions of unbroken lines in the couplet, and in the much more constant relations between run-on and endstopt lines than in blank verse.

When we find blank verse like Surrey's, in which the proportions of run-on, endstopt, and unbroken lines are not far from those of Waller's couplets, we can say at once that these details are the marks of the pioneer who has not learned flexibility.¹ In the blank verse of Newcomb and Milton we find, as we expect, many run-on and few unbroken lines. But Shelley, Akenside, and Swinburne, who have as many run-on lines as Milton's average, and fewer endstopt lines than *Paradise Lost*, have distinctly

¹ Gascoigne, it will be remembered, says in the 13th Par. of his "Notes of Instruction," that "There are also certayn pauses or restes in a verse, which may be called *Ceasures*, whereof I would be lothe to stande long, since it is at the discretion of the writer. . . ." His 70% of lines without internal punctuation may indicate, therefore, that he used his 'discretion.'

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more unbroken lines than Milton; and Young, whose blank verse has couplet proportions of run-on and endstopt, has as few unbroken lines as *Paradise Lost*. Perhaps we may charge a part of these differences to varying habits of punctuation, but certainly not a significant proportion, for the 18th century men show the greatest diversity in their use of both run-on and unbroken lines. The conventional comment on Young—that he merely reflected the couplet habit of his day—is discredited by his small use of unbroken lines in his blank verse as compared with his couplets; in his case, we can fall back upon his rhetoric, his habit of pithy expression.

It should be fairly clear, it seems to me, that the proportion of unbroken lines in blank verse is not, as in the case of commastopt lines, so much a corollary of run-on and endstopt lines as it is a measure or indication of sensitiveness to line-rhythm. Consequently, a relatively high percentage of unbroken lines in a poet like Landor, or in the 19th century men, who have a third or more of their lines run-on, indicates more sensitiveness to, or perhaps, emphasis upon line-rhythm than the earlier men showed. I find some support for this conjecture in the fact that Keats has more run-on and fewer unbroken lines in the couplets of *Endymion* than in the blank verse of *Hyperion*; and that in *Lamia*, which has almost as many run-on lines as *Hyperion*, he has distinctly fewer unbroken lines. Browning, also, with nearly twice as many run-on lines in his couplets as in his blank verse, has nearly 10% fewer unbroken lines in his couplets. These two poets seem to have felt in their blank verse the need of some compensation for the rhyme of their couplets, even though in the couplets they went to great lengths to subordinate the rhyme. In the cases of Shelley and Wordsworth, however, a comparison

NOTE ON PARAGRAPHS

of their blank verse with their couplets indicates that they found that run-on lines in blank verse took the place of unbroken lines in their couplets, although the differences are perhaps not great enough to be significant.

NOTE ON PARAGRAPHS.

One minor feature of non-dramatic blank verse, partly conventional, partly an indication of the extent to which the various poets have observed or tried to conceal the line-unit, is the practice of beginning a paragraph in the middle of a line. Twelve of the poets, in the poems cited, never begin a paragraph within a line. Surrey and Gascoigne do not; Milton in one instance (*Sam. Ag.*, 1563) divides a line among three speakers. Of the 18th century men, Mallet has six instances, Young four (1 in 1st Bk., 3 in 9th); Landor has none in *Gebir*, though in the series called *Hellenics*, nearly half his paragraphs begin within the line. Of the 19th century poets, Keats, Arnold, and Swinburne have none;¹ Shelley begins seven of the 25 paragraphs of *Alastor* in the middle of a line. In Wordsworth's *Prelude*, the percentage of such paragraphs is 14.05; in the *Excursion* it rises to 25.42. Tennyson's practice varies: in *St. Simeon* the proportion is 31.25, in the *Lover's Tale* and the *Princess*, a little over 28; in the *Idylls* 9.17, and in *Arden* only 5.55. Browning has but two cases in the 45 paragraphs of *Pauline*,

¹ Swinburne's avoidance in his semi-lyric, Greek tragedies of paragraphs which begin within the line is in sharp contrast with his practice in *Mary Stuart*. Of the 444 speeches in that play, 187 begin with the 8th syllable of the line, 15 with the 9th, and 38 with the last syllable, so that more than half of his speeches begin not merely within the line, but with noticeable abruptness and emphasis toward the extreme end of the line.

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few or none in most of his shorter poems, 27.43% in the first six books of the *Ring and the Book*, and many in *Balaustion*, *Prince Hohenstiel-Schwangau*, the *Inn Album*, and *Ferishtah*.

✓ Milton's habit of beginning and ending his paragraphs always with a full line may have been one way of making a distinction between epic and dramatic blank verse; even so, it is one of the items which go to show that Milton frankly recognized that he was writing in a regularly metrical verse-form, and avoided practically all the devices which might tend to conceal its character. The 19th century men, on the contrary, instead of exploiting the powers of blank verse as an instrument, seem inclined to experiment with a view to finding out how nearly they can reduce it to the rôle of a mere accompaniment. The differences in paragraph ending between the *Princess* and the *Idylls* may indicate that Tennyson felt the difference between easy, only half-formal narrative and the full flow of epic. Arnold's avoidance of paragraphs beginning within the line is in keeping with the other metrical formalisms of *Sohrab and Rustum*, and like Swinburne's, probably is due to Greek models. It does not seem to me sufficient to say of 19th century non-dramatic blank verse merely that it shows the influence of dramatic conventions and licenses, for while that may be manifestly true of the greater part of Browning's work, because in it the clearly dramatic cast of the poetry would naturally profit by whatever modifications of blank verse the drama had found effective (but see comments on Browning, p. 121), it does not adequately explain Wordsworth's use, or the variations in Tennyson's practice.

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TABLE III
FEMININE AND UNSTRESSED ENDINGS

	Fem.		Uns.
Akenside,	none	Akenside	none
Glover,	none		
Mallet,	none		
Shenstone,	none		
Newcomb,	1 case?		
Thomson,	1 case		
Philips,	1 case		
Landor,	2 cases	Glover,	2 cases?
Arnold,	2 cases	Newcomb,	2 cases?
Cowper,	3 cases		
Swinburne,	3 cases		
Somerville,	0.14%	Cowper,	0.39%
Surrey,	0.54	Mallet,	0.62
Gascoigne,	0.93		
Young,	1.10	Thomson,	1.24
Wordsworth,	1.34	Arnold,	1.33
Par. Lost,	<u>1.4-</u>	Blair,	1.95
Keats,	2.04	Watts,	2.13
Shelley,	2.08	Shenstone,	2.21
Browning,	2.15	Philips,	2.71
Tennyson,	2.33		
Milton, Ave.,	2.81		
Par. Reg'd,	3.72	Swinburne,	3.06
		Young,	3.64
		Par. Lost,	3.8-
		Landor,	3.92
Watts,	4.49	Surrey,	4.27
		Milton, Ave.,	4.37
		Wordsworth,	5.65
		Par. Reg'd,	5.70
		Tennyson,	5.88
		Keats,	8.50
		Gascoigne,	9.07
		Browning,	9.11
		Shelley,	10.27
Blair,	17.47		

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Next to run-on lines, feminine endings are commonly supposed to be the favorite device for subordinating or softening line-emphasis. In one of his latest volumes Professor Saintsbury says of the extra syllable: "At the end it is often beautiful; and, whether beauty or not, is almost inevitable now and then, and most useful constantly. Further, it is a most powerful and important instrument of variation—a natural link or remedy against line-isolation. . . ." ("Hist. of Eng. Pros." 2. 54.) Outside of dramatic verse, however, feminine endings are used only sparingly. The 18th century poets had definite objections to them, for the reason which Dr. Johnson urged in the 88th number of the *Rambler*—"since the narrow limits of our language allows no other distinction of epic and dramatic measures." Akenside, Glover, Shenstone, and Mallet, admit none at all; Newcomb has one doubtful case in over 12,000 lines;¹ Thomson has one case,² and Philips one.³ Landor has two doubtful cases,⁴ and Cowper⁵ and Arnold⁶ two each. Swinburne has three cases; Somerville only five. Surrey and Gascoigne have eleven each, and Young has only a small fraction over one per cent. Wordsworth, with 1.35%, has almost the same proportion as Milton in *Paradise Lost*. The 19th century men, Keats, Shelley, Tennyson, and Browning, have between two and two and one-third per cent each, and Milton's three poems average 2.81. Watts, therefore, with 4.49%, and Blair, with 17.47, are extreme as compared with the others, but even Blair comes only to

¹—ever, in 8.134; in 25 other instances of —ever at the end of a line, it is printed —e'er.

²—feature, *Autumn*, 269.

³—prowess, *Blenheim*, 96.

⁴—iron, Bk. II, —heron, Bk. VII.

⁵—Apollo, —inextinguishable, both in *Iliad* I.

⁶—estuaries, —rivers.

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about the average of Shakspeare's middle period, and does not use more than half as many as Shakspeare does in the *Winter's Tale* or the *Tempest*. In the cases of practically all the poets in our list who wrote plays as well as non-dramatic verse, the number of feminine endings in the plays is many fold that in the other poems. The quantity in the dramatic verse is usually, I should say, so great as to have been definitely sought for. Those poets who entirely avoid feminine endings in their non-dramatic verse must have gone to some trouble. But does the presence of one or two per cent mean avoidance, or are we to take that as a normal proportion when the device in question is neither sought nor avoided? The details in Milton's case indicate that he was inclined to avoid them in *Paradise Lost*. Browning, who used them freely at first, later entirely avoided them (see details under Browning, p. 121). A normal proportion of feminine endings would be, I take it, the percentage of lines in which the poet would find it easier to leave the extra syllable than to avoid it. Such a proportion (for which there is doubtless some mathematical law of probabilities) would be always modified in the individual poet both by his habits of composition and by his theories as to the beauty or advisability of feminine endings. My own conjecture is that Milton was a little more inclined to avoid them than the 19th century men were, who in this, as in some other matters, went a little farther than Milton in subordinating the verse-form.

The 19th century poets show this tendency in the quality of their extra syllables even more clearly than they do in their number. In *Paradise Lost*, Milton uses in his feminine endings some 80 words and 20 endings, which in every case are relatively light syllables, such as (to give those most frequently used) -ing (more often than any three others),

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-en, -est, -er, -ed, -il, -it. In contrast with Milton's practice, in the *Tempest*, I. ii, Shakspeare, although he uses for the most part syllables that are light, has also such words as *royalty*, *deafness*, *library*, *royalties*, *confederates*, *tribute*, *midnight*, *darkness*, *business*, *fortunes*, *dulness*, *topmast*, *Nep-tune*, *torment*, *subject*, *island*, *conscience* and *com-fort*. Wordsworth, Tennyson, and Browning as a rule use light syllables, but Wordsworth uses such words as *moments*, *judgment*, *sadness*, and *timbrel*; Tennyson such words as *blossom evasion*, *eleventh*; and Browning such words as *amusement*, *conjunc-ture*, *England* (cf. Shakspeare's use in *Rich. II* and *Hen. V*), *falsehood*, *forward*, *godsend*, *household*, *loathsome*, *repugnance*, *sunrise*, *tincture*, *threshold*, *weakness*, and *witness*. Cases like these seem to me deliberate 'licenses,' borrowed from the dramatists, without the dramatist's justification, and therefore obtrusive out of all proportion to their actual number, for one such case would attract more attention from readers than twenty where the extra syllable was light.

A less obtrusive way of softening line-rhythm than the use of feminine endings consists in ending the line with a word of three or more syllables, with the normal word accent on the antepenult—words such as 'ministers,' 'questionings,' 'alchemist.' This use of words is equivalent to making (or does make) the last foot of the line unstressed. (See Dr. Johnson's comment, p. 86.) In Milton, 4.37% of the lines have these unstressed endings; the 18th century poets objected to them (theoretically, at least) as much as to feminine endings, and Akenside, Glover, and Newcomb avoid them entirely;¹ Cowper and Mallet have very few; Thomson, Somerville, and

¹ Glover and Newcomb have each two doubtful cases.

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Blair between one and two per cent; Watts, Shennstone, and Philips, under three per cent. Arnold for the most part avoids them, but the other 19th century men use them more freely than Milton,—Keats and Shelley in particular.¹

Words like 'sanctuary,' 'testimony,' 'secretary,' which are both unstressed and feminine, occur occasionally, but so rarely that they are obviously accidental, and merely unavoids—clearly not sought for.² In Tennyson, for instance, the feminine and unstressed endings together amount to less than 8% and of this number only about one-fifteenth are both feminine and unstressed;³ in Wordsworth's *Prelude*, the feminine *and* unstressed are only one-seventy-first of the total 8.75%; Keats has *no* endings which are both; Shelley has only two.⁴

A comparison of the relative proportions of feminine and unstressed endings shows that Watts and Blair alone have a marked excess of feminine endings, and that Surrey and Gascoigne in the 16th century, Young in the 18th, and all of the 19th century men but Arnold, have a marked excess of unstressed endings.

¹ Surrey stands nearest to Milton, and Gascoigne uses more than twice as many; the reason in their case is partly that secondary stresses had then hardly become so light as later (compare the common Elizabethan scansion of 'o-ce-an,' 'promo-ti-on,' etc.), partly that the versification of these pioneers was inelastic. I do not know why Gascoigne should have twice as many as Surrey.

² The only possible exception to this statement that I have come upon is Swinburne; in *Mary Stuart*, 22 out of 68 feminine endings are words like 'secretary.' Although I have no figures for other plays, I think that *Mary Stuart* is exceptional in this respect even in dramatic verse.

³ Only 3 cases in the *Lover's Tale*, and 10 in *Arden*.

⁴ In the 471 lines of the *Tempest*, I. ii, Shakspeare has only 3.

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Theoretically, the proportions in which feminine and unstressed endings are distributed among the run-on, endstopt, and commastopt lines should be important. In Keat's *Hyperion*, where run-on, endstopt, and commastopt lines are about equally distributed, two-thirds of the feminine endings are in endstopt lines, more than one-fourth in commastopt, and only about one-twentieth in run-on lines. Unstressed endings are a trifle fewer in run-on lines than elsewhere. In Shelley's *Alastor*, although run-on lines are nearly five times as numerous as endstopt, only a little over one-third of the feminine endings are in run-on lines—hardly so marked an avoidance as Keats's, but still significant. Unstressed endings are distributed in about the same proportions as the run-on, endstopt, and commastopt lines. In Tennyson's *Lover's Tale*, one-half the feminine endings come in the two-fifths of the lines which are run-on, with fewest in the endstopt. Unstressed endings, show a marked preference for endstopt lines, and some avoidance of run-on lines. In *Enoch Arden*, three-tenths of the lines are run-on, and contain not quite two-tenths of the feminine endings. Unstressed endings show some avoidance of endstopt lines, with corresponding frequency in commastopt lines. In Blair's *Grave*, the one poem in our list in which the feminine endings are so numerous as to be obviously sought for, the 17.47% are distributed almost exactly as the run-on, endstopt, and commastopt lines are, with a very slight excess in endstopt lines, and fewer in commastopt. In the 471 lines of blank verse in the *Tempest*, I. ii, there are 173 feminine endings—36.73%. These are distributed almost exactly as the run-on, endstopt, and commastopt lines are, with a slight excess in run-on, taken from the endstopt.

Of these five poets, then, Blair and Shakspeare,

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who use feminine endings to a marked degree, distribute them impartially; Tennyson wavers a little, for he seems to have a slight preference for feminine endings in run-on lines in the *Lover's Tale*, and a slight avoidance of them in *Arden*. Shelley pretty clearly, and Keats very obviously, avoids them in run-on lines. One would expect fewer feminine endings in run-on lines than elsewhere, for theoretically at least they would disturb the swing of the rhythm more than if they came in endstopt lines, since, in that case, the rhetorical pause would give the reader a chance to take a fresh start in his rhythm.

Evidence is lacking, so far as I can find, to show conscious use of any two devices in combination, or any avoidance of such use. Poets who have wished to break down or subordinate line-rhythm in blank verse have usually done so chiefly by the use of only one device. Milton, for example, has some 55% of run-on lines, but hardly enough feminine endings to have any marked effect. Blair, again, who has only 25% of run-on lines, has 17.47% of feminine endings—less than half as many run-on lines as Milton, and more than six times as many feminine endings (or nearly thirteen times as many as in *Paradise Lost*).

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This "rimles verse," as Gascoigne called it, offers opportunities both for rhetorical repetition of a word or phrase and for occasional rhymes. Blair's *Grave*, which closes with a couplet, is the only one of the poems here studied which has the 'rhyme-tag' familiar to readers of Shakspeare. About Milton, Mr. Bridges has this rather vague sentence: "Rhyme occurs in *Paradise Lost* (see I. 146. 8. 51; II. 220. 1; IV. 24-7), but only as a natural richness among the

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varieties of speech; and it would seem that it cannot be forbidden in a long poem but by the scrupulosity which betrays art." ("Milton's Prosody," 87.) In *Paradise Lost*¹ I have noted some seventeen instances of rhyme, such as —destroy, —joy, in 9. 477-8. In seventeen other cases, the same word or phrase is repeated, as in 4. 20-21:

"for within him Hell,"
He brings, and round about him, nor from Hell,"

or in 12. 202-3:

"Before them in a Cloud, and Pillar of Fire,
By day a Cloud, by night a Pillar of Fire."

These are surely mere rhetorical repetitions, of a kind which one might expect to find much more often. There are also about a dozen places in the poem where the same word or phrase is repeated, not in the next line, but in the second, as in 2. 787. 9:

"I fled, and cry'd out Death;
Hell trembl'd at the hideous Name, and sigh'd
From all her Caves, and back resounded Death."

In another dozen instances, Milton repeats a word in different form: e.g. —eyes, —eye, in 6. 847-8; —breathed, —breathe, in 9. 193-4; —invoke, —invokt, in 11. 586-7; or —deal, —dealt, in 12. 483-4.

Some of these cases, both of rhyme and of repetition, link sentences, as in 4. 26-7:

"Worse; of worse deeds worse sufferings must ensue.
Sometimes toward Eden which now in his view
Lay pleasant."

or in 11. 593-4:

"The bent of nature; which he thus expressed.
True opener of mine eyes, prime Angel blest."

Compare these passages with two in Book VII:

¹ In the number and character of its rhymes and repetitions, *Paradise Regained* is like *Paradise Lost*, with no change or 'relaxation' of practice.

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"Be gather'd now ye Waters under Heav'n
Into one place, and let dry land appeer.
Immediately the mountains huge appeer
Emergent." (283-6)

"By tincture or reflection they augment
Their small peculiar, though from human sight
So far remote, with diminution seen.
First in his East the glorious Lamp was seen,
Regent of day." (367-71)

In both of these last passages, the repetition seems pretty clearly accidental, for in neither case does it contribute to the effectiveness of the passage, and it would not have been hard to avoid, since 'were seen' would serve in place of the second 'appeer,' and 'appear'd' in place of 'was seen.' One wonders if such instances do not indicate pauses in Milton's work of composition; as if the repeated word or syllable were an echo of the passage read to him before he took up his task for the day.¹

¹ In opposition to this view, a friend observes: "Both of these seem to me to promote concatenation of thought. In the latter case it almost has the function of 'videlicet.' The fact that the echo could easily have been avoided shows that it was not accidental (in the work of so careful a poet). Milton loved echoes—using them, I believe, for the purpose of superadding harmony to melody by the overtones accompanying the echoes. My favorite examples of this are P. L. 2. 559-60, and 641-56." The first passage runs:

and reason'd high
Of Providence, Foreknowledge, Will, and Fate,
Fixt Fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute.

The second is the one which begins:

Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet.

In these two passages, as in many others in Milton, both the beauty of the echo and the conscious use of it are undeniable; but it is to be observed that even in the second passage ("Sweet is the breath of morn") where there is a surprising amount of skilful repetition of words and phrases, Milton has only three instances of repetition at the ends of lines (though in no instance

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The other poets, so far as I have observed, have even fewer rhymes than Milton, and in those they have, the first rhyme-syllable is likely to be unstressed, like this, from the beginning of Tennyson's *Lover's Tale*:

"Filling with purple gloom the vacancies
Between the tufted hills, the sloping seas
Hung in mid-heaven,"

or this from Shelley's *Alastor*, 159-60:

"And lofty hopes of divine liberty,
Thoughts the most dear to him, and poesy."

Keats has four instances of repetition, Shelley two, Tennyson six in *Arden*, and ten in the *Lover's Tale*.

In contradiction to Mr. Bridges, Professor Saintsbury says of rhyme that "in English non-dramatic blank verse it is nearly fatal; but would only be found out in practice." ("Hist. of Eng. Prosody," 2. 227 n.) Mr. Bridges seems to imply that a careful poet would leave in a few rhymes, in order not to seem too careful; Professor Saintsbury seems to imply that a novice might introduce occasional rhymes deliberately, thinking them an added grace to his verse. I do not think that either critic states the case precisely enough. Rhetorical repetition, even when emphasized by putting the repeated words at the ends of lines, seems as legitimate and effective in verse as in prose; but I have not come

in consecutive lines): 'sweet' ends lines 641 and 645; 'sun' ends 642 and 651; 'night' and 'moon' end respectively lines 647-8 and 655-6. That is to say: the effectiveness of the passage does not depend upon any rhyme, and the repetition of whole phrases, and even of whole lines, lessens the effect which the repetition at the ends of the lines usually has. If the reader will compare these passages with some of Arnold's, in which the repetition is definitely conscious, it will be clear, I think, that Milton does not avail himself of rhyme or repetition at the end of the line to enforce his rhetorical devices. (See p. 119.)

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upon a single instance in these poets (aside from Blair's concluding couplet) where the rhyme did not seem to me either accidental or careless—never a definite, consciously permitted device of the poet.

II. CÆSURAS

Thus far we have been discussing details of blank verse which affect chiefly the lines as units or as parts of larger groups. Cæsuras come next in order because they serve a double function in blank verse: they contribute, especially in connection with run-on lines, to modify the line-rhythm, and within the line itself they serve to emphasize the various cadences and modulations.

A cæsura is a break within the line, and in blank verse always coincides with the end of a syntactical group or phrase. I have taken account only of those marked by punctuation—and of all those so marked. Ordinarily, it is true, one of two or more pauses within the line is the principal one; often, too, this principal one is so clearly dominant that the others may be almost or entirely neglected. Ordinarily, too, lines which have no internal punctuation demand or may have a cæsura. But it is plainly wrong to assume either that every line has a cæsura (although the poet may make it so delicate that only a microphone can detect it), or that every line has only one cæsura of which we need to take account. Some years ago I undertook to record the cæsuras in some 2,750 lines of the *Idylls*, and although I believed in my innocence that a cæsura was as essential to the line as the end of the line itself, I came upon twenty-five or thirty lines in which I could not find a cæsura. In confining myself to cæsuras which the poet (or sometimes his printer) has marked by punctuation, I do not assume either that cæsuras so marked are invariably emphatic, or that lines

without internal punctuation have no cæsuras. I know that many cæsuras which are marked by punctuation are no more emphatic than many which are not marked, but I confess myself unable to sift out these instances. With that admission, that there are unquestionable degrees of delicacy of break of which I attempt no record, I believe that I have eliminated from my figures my own personal equation, and that in keeping a record of unbroken lines I have furnished any dissatisfied reader of this essay with the means of estimating the precise amount of my delinquency. I may add, however, that if examining four or five thousand lines, say, of a ten-thousand line poem gives a fairly accurate idea of a poet's metrical peculiarities (and I have tested that time and again), then I have given a fairly accurate notion of Milton's use of cæsuras in *Paradise Lost* by reporting the 8,500 cæsuras which he has marked by punctuation. Such cæsuras as there are in his unbroken lines—a scant thirty per cent of the whole—are practically certain to be like the others in their distribution; at least I have found that my own attempts to record cæsuras in unbroken lines do not vary materially from the proportions in lines where the cæsuras are marked by punctuation. Moreover, in reporting unbroken lines I have indicated what would not be distinguishable otherwise, namely, the proportion of cases in which Milton, for example, has made his cæsural pauses noticeably delicate in their effect, just as counting "strong pauses" furnished a record of cæsuras which are exceptionally emphatic.

Strong pauses are those breaks in the line indicated like endstopt lines by punctuation other than a comma. Their importance, as will appear later, depends rather upon their distribution than upon their frequency.

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If one cæsura in a line serves to mark the larger cadences, two or more should tend to subordinate or disguise the line-rhythm. Of Milton's cæsuras Mr. Bridges writes ("Milton's Prosody," 24): "There are sometimes two or more breaks to a line: the frequency of these with the severity of the breaks, is a distinction of Milton's verse." For the 'severity' of the breaks, see page 56; the 'frequency' I have tested for some of the poets, with these results:

TABLE IV

	Per cent of lines with 2 cæs. 3 or more.	Total.
Young: Night Thoughts, 1-3, 5-7, 17-98	4.82	22.80
Arnold: Sohrab and Rustum..... 17.40	1.99	19.39
Tennyson: 7 of the Idylls..... 14.54	3.71	18.25
Browning: Pauline, Bp. Bloug., R. & B., 1-2..... 13.42	2.05	15.47
Landor: Gebir 12.18	3.11	15.29
Wordsworth: Prelude, 1-5, Excur- sion, 3-4 11.46	2.31	13.77
Keats: Hyperion 11.32	2.15	13.47
Blair: The Grave..... 11.60	1.69	13.29
Glover: Leonidas 11.00	1.44	12.44
Milton: Paradise Lost, 1-2, 4-5, 7-8 9.19	1.84	11.03
Swinburne: Atalanta and Erech- theus 9.81	1.31	11.02
Shelley: Alastor 8.61	1.66	10.27
Gascoigne: The Steele Glas..... 4.92	0.42	5.34

Eight of these men distinctly exceed Milton in 'frequency' of breaks, and seven of the eight (all but Glover) have three or more cæsuras in more lines than Milton. But the proportion of lines with more than one break is not very great, for even in Young, whose figures are double those of Milton, under one-fifth of the lines have two cæsuras, and under one-twentieth have three or more. Moreover, as might perhaps have been expected, in the few men of whom I have record (Arnold, Keats, Shelley,

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and Gascoigne), one of the two or more pauses is after the 4th or 6th syllable in more than two-thirds of the lines.

These lines with two or more cæsuras are practically corollaries to the distribution of cæsuras, for of those who distribute their cæsuras most widely, Swinburne alone falls below Milton; and of those who exceed Milton, Glover is the only one who falls below him in the distribution of cæsuras. There appears, too, a similar relation between lines with two or more cæsuras and unbroken lines, for all of these men who have more lines than Milton with two or more cæsuras exceed him in the proportion of unbroken lines.¹

As to the first of these functions of the cæsura, its ability to modify the line-rhythm is greater in blank verse than in other forms, as is evident even in *Endymion*, and overwhelmingly convincing in stanzas, especially in metres longer or shorter than five beats. The nature of this modification is significant. A comparison of the records for the 88,000 lines of blank verse, which form the basis for this section of our study, with some 23,000 lines of heroic couplets, makes it clear that neither rhyme nor varying proportions of run-on and endstopt lines have any effect on either the number or the distribution of cæsuras. In the blank verse, for instance, the percentage of lines with cæsuras after the first syllable ranges from 0.78 in Milton to 6.20 in Arnold; after the 2d syllable, from 3.89 in Cowper to 13.08 in Arnold; after the 8th syllable, from 1.18 in Gascoigne to 12.52 in Arnold; and after the 9th syllable, from 0.17 in Blair to 3.61 in Browning. For the couplets, the figures run: after the 1st syllable, from 1.54 in Chamberlayne to 6.72 in

¹For the distribution of cæsuras, see p. 52; for unbroken lines, see p. 24.

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Wither; after the 2d syllable, from 3.52 in Browne to 7.43 in Cowley; after the 8th syllable, from 1.26 in Dryden to 7.01 in Chamberlayne; and after the 9th syllable, from none in Mrs. Behn to 3.69 in Chamberlayne. But, although cæsuras may be just as numerous and just as widely distributed in rhymed as in blank verse, and though neither quantity nor distribution seems to hold any relation to either run-on or endstopt lines, it is obvious that all three of these things (rhymed, run-on, and endstopt lines) have a considerable effect on the emphasis of the cæsuras. In couplets, where the rhyme enforces the line-rhythm (the rhyme is so sure to mark the line-rhythm, even in very free couplets, that it is not necessary here to dwell upon the added effect of endstopt lines in couplets) the cæsuras, unless they are marked by strong pauses, rarely count in the movement of whole passages. In blank verse, however, the very absence of the rhyme means that the cæsuras will vary in their effect on line-rhythm according as the endstopt lines are numerous or few. In Gascoigne, Surrey, and Young, for instance, cæsuras have relatively little effect in modifying line-rhythm, but in Milton and most of the others, cæsuras do have an important effect just because the line-rhythm is so little enforced by the customary devices.

In Tables V and VI, I have for convenience indicated cæsuras as 'after' a syllable, instead of 'in the middle' or 'at the end' of a foot—after even syllables if at the end of a foot, after odd syllables if in the middle of a foot. (I do not, however, believe that syllable-counting is a sound principle of English verse, even for the poetry of those generations which certainly thought of it as syllabic.) Cæsuras in trisyllabic feet I have counted as coming in the "middle," whether they fall after the first or

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- 8 Me from attempting. Wherefore do I assume
(P. L. 2. 450)
9 Whatever doing, what can we suffer more?
(P. L. 2. 162)

The important question is whether the unstressed syllable before the *cæsura* is extra-metrical or not. In the first two lines, because the two sections of the line belong to different paragraphs or to different speakers, it seems more reasonable to call the syllable extra-metrical than to assign it to the following foot. In lines 3 and 4, the strong pause inclines one to the same explanation, but in lines 5 and 6 it is certainly not hard to say simply that the *cæsura* comes in the middle of a trisyllabic foot. Lines 7 to 9 may be scanned so as to bring the *cæsura* either between unstressed syllables or in the middle of a dissyllabic foot, according as you emphasize the metre or the rhetoric. When read by themselves, the rhetoric seems obviously dominant, but when read with their context—with groups of lines in which the rhythm is strongly marked—the decision is not so easy. If we start with lines 1 and 2, we may argue that lines 3 to 6 are clear extensions of the extra-metrical syllable to less emphatic instances, and we may point out that the unstressed syllable in the feminine ending is considered extra-metrical whether it is followed by punctuation or not. If we start with lines 5 and 6, however, we may argue that in lines 1 to 4 the increased emphasis of the *cæsura* has led us to overlook the real fact, and we may point out that lines like 5 and 6 are in the majority—nine-tenths in *Paradise Lost*, two-thirds in the *Idylls*; and in addition that, so far as I have observed (I admit that my investigation is not exhaustive), this 'extra' syllable is never a heavy syllable, like so many found in feminine endings (see p. 30). Moreover, I have come upon

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no line in which a cæsure after an unstressed syllable is followed by *two* unstressed syllables—that is to say, I have noted no instance in which, considering the metre alone, the syllable before the cæsure *must* be extra-metrical. Nevertheless, I incline to think that the dramatists looked upon this type of cæsure as an extension of the use of the feminine ending (and we can be fairly certain that John Fletcher at least thought that the redundant syllables at the end of the line were extra-metrical); that Milton was at most very sparing in using this device and very careful about the character of the extra syllables; and that Tennyson tended somewhat to the 'license' of the dramatists.¹

Another question, quite as important as that of extra-metrical syllables, is: Just what part has the cæsure in the *time* of the line? To begin with, it is worth while to point out one or two differences between the cæsural pause and the line-pause. The

¹ It is, to be sure, possible to avoid the term extra-metrical, by saying that the foot preceding the cæsure is an amphibrach (x'x). That, however, is only an apparent avoiding of the difficulty, for in the first place, such feet occur in the line only before a cæsure or at the end of the line (as feminine endings), and feminine endings occasionally have two redundant syllables. It is just as reasonable to suppose that the extra syllables are additions to the end of the line or to a section of it, and not mere variations in the feet.

These cæsuras have sometimes been called 'epic,' but very inaptly, for, as has been often remarked, they are at least as common in the drama as in the epic, and they are certainly not important features of any non-dramatic blank verse which I have examined. For example, in six books of *Paradise Lost* I found only 52, of which 18 are doubtful cases (because they involve the scansion of words in -able); in the *Night Thoughts* I found none at all; in three books of the *Prelude* I found 3, and in two books of the *Excursion* only two; and in four of the *Idylls* I found only 38.

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line-pause is clearly metrical but has a strong effect upon syntax and rhetoric in that (even in the drama) the line-pause rarely is made to cut into the midst of a grammatical or syntactical phrase; when it does so we have a 'light' or a 'weak' ending, and these endings, it may be observed, are the last devices by which the dramatists minimised the difference between verse and prose. In five-beat verse at least, the pause at the end of the line has no place in the time of the verse, although its strength or lightness may contribute to the rapidity or slowness of a passage.

The cæsural pause, on the other hand, has both rhetorical and metrical functions. Its metrical importance is more obvious in alexandrines and septenaries than in the five-beat line. Its rhetorical importance is evident when we recall that the cæsura invariably corresponds (in serious verse) to a break, however slight, between grammatical or syntactical groups. Its effect upon the time of a verse is like that of *retardo* in music. For example, in a line like the always quoted

Rocks, Caves, Lakes, Fens, Bogs, Dens, and shades of
death (P. L. 2. 621)

the six cæsuras call for a slower reading of the line than would be given to

Of happiness and final misery.² (P. L. 2. 563)

But—and this is the important point—both lines have five beats; in other words, the cæsura does not

¹ Coventry Patmore is the only critic I know of who maintains that the line-pause of the five-beat line is equivalent to an extra foot.

² I do not forget that in both these lines the quality and the collocation of the syllables have as much effect on the movement of the lines as the presence or absence of cæsuras, but these considerations do not affect my present point.

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affect either the number of beats or the number of syllables used to fill the time of those beats—is not used as equivalent to a *rest* in music, but only to modify the rate of delivery. In the *Princess*, III, 42, Tennyson has this line:

“Why—these—*are*—men”; I shuddered; “and you know it.”

Here we have the usual five beats upon alternate syllables, but I doubt if any one would have found fault if Tennyson had made each of his dashes count as a rest and had ended his line with “shuddered,” thus:

“—Why—these—*are*—men”; I shuddered.

But I have found not one instance in non-dramatic blank verse where the cæsural pause counts in the time of the line by serving as a rest. (I do not mean to say that such lines are unknown, or undesirable, or impossible; I merely record that in the poets here discussed I have found no line which I could scan that way. Perhaps I may add that in this matter as in some others, I am not concerned to maintain the entire absence of such lines; the important fact is that they are very few.) The only lines I have found in non-dramatic blank verse which call for rests to fill out the time are the very rare nine-syllable lines, in which the time is made up, not by a cæsural pause, but by the line-pause. (For comments on monosyllabic feet, see p. 77).

In blank verse, then, the metrical importance of the cæsura seems to me almost entirely due to its rhetorical function of indicating logical or prose rhythms. In this constant accommodation between rhetoric and metre, or, to put it in other words, in this superimposing of the irregular prose rhythm upon its common denominator, the regular metrical rhythm, we have the same opportunity for delicate

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charm that we shall find later in the effort to fit combinations of syllables to the arbitrary time of the metre. (See p. 68.) The *importance* of the cæsural pause in blank verse is not likely to be overestimated, but the *necessity* of its presence as an essential part of practically every line has always been overemphasized by the metrists. Happily, in this as in so many other things, the poets have not always been able to make their practice agree with their precepts, even when they thought they were observing them most closely.

TABLE V

CÆSURAS I

POET	POEMS	TOT.	CÆSURAS.		
		LL.	TOT.	MID.	END.
✓ Milton,	Paradise Lost and Paradise Re- gained.	12628	9844	34.00	66.00
Surrey,	Aeneid, Books II and IV.	2011	1169	18.82	81.18
Gascoigne,	The Steele Glas.	1179	459	17.65	82.35
Akenside,	The Pleasures of Imagination.	1999	1339	48.80	51.20
Blair,	The Grave.	767	575	28.00	72.00
Glover,	Leonidas.	7321	5722	53.80	46.20
Mallet,	The Excursion, and Amyntor and Theodora.	2383	2254	32.13	67.87
Somerville,	The Chase, Field Sports, Hobbinol	3560	3085	18.39	81.61
Thomson,	The Seasons.	5422	3815	34.34	65.66
Young,	The Night Thoughts, Books I to VII.	5902	5823	42.12	57.88
Cowper,	The Task.	5185	3262	42.99	57.01
Landor,	Gebir.	1733	1260	50.39	49.61
Keats,	Hyperion.	883	636	40.00	60.00
Shelley,	Alastor.	720	522	31.41	68.59
Wordsworth,	Excursion; the Prelude, Books I to VII.	13020	10257	45.77	54.23
Arnold,	Sohrab and Rustum.	902	825	33.00	67.00
Browning,	Pauline, Bp. Blougram, R. & B., I, II, III, VI.	8750	6831	51.51	48.49
Tennyson,	The Idylls of the King.	11322	8127	46.14	53.86
Swinburne,	Atalanta in Calydon, and Erech- theus.	2350	1580	56.13	43.87

The total lines number 88037. Mid. means percentage of cæsuras at the middle of feet. End. means the percentage at the end of feet.

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TABLE VI

CÆSURAS II

POET	PERCENTAGE OF CÆSURAS AFTER								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Milton	1.00	8.89	10.06	22.52	11.10	24.98	10.83	9.48	0.87
Surrey	4.61	11.20	3.93	52.60	4.87	13.60	4.79	3.76	0.68
Gascoigne . .	4.57	13.94	3.05	61.65	3.92	5.88	3.26	3.05	0.65
Akenside . . .	2.53	6.12	5.75	19.86	20.01	21.21	19.85	4.10	0.59
Blair	4.34	9.04	3.47	21.56	10.08	35.30	9.91	6.08	0.17
Glover	3.32	8.05	4.85	18.71	25.23	11.83	18.71	7.58	1.66
Mallet	2.75	6.65	5.37	29.90	14.81	26.39	8.25	5.00	0.88
Somerville . .	1.84	5.64	2.85	28.55	8.20	38.37	4.63	8.03	0.77
Thomson . . .	6.97	7.36	3.74	26.84	13.70	25.19	7.75	6.00	2.14
Young	5.46	10.32	7.10	23.92	15.86	17.37	11.55	7.77	2.15
Cowper	1.62	6.19	9.81	21.67	14.65	22.25	15.42	6.89	1.44
Landor	5.39	12.22	10.80	13.17	14.36	15.08	17.77	9.12	1.90
Keats	3.00	11.80	9.77	20.28	12.42	21.54	14.77	5.18	1.25
Shelley	2.87	9.19	5.55	23.56	7.85	24.90	12.64	10.91	2.49
Wordsworth	6.61	8.55	7.45	19.27	15.92	16.50	13.08	9.90	1.87
Arnold	6.78	14.30	9.00	18.00	9.00	21.09	7.80	13.70	0.36
Browning . .	7.48	8.85	10.35	17.42	16.39	13.10	13.67	8.94	3.61
Tennyson . .	6.92	9.39	11.60	21.39	11.02	13.61	13.39	9.52	3.25
Swinburne . .	8.67	10.50	7.02	12.53	11.51	8.41	26.07	12.42	1.58

In only one trivial point do all the 19 men in the list agree—in all of them the cæsuræ after the 9th syllable is least used. In only 15 of them does the cæsuræ after the 1st syllable hold 8th place; the exceptions are Gascoigne, Blair, and Thomson, who were rather fond of beginning lines with exclamations; and Swinburne, who was fonder than the others of running a line over just one syllable into the next. Only Swinburne, Tennyson, and Browning, however, manage to get more than 10 per cent of their cæsuræ into those two places, although Thomson comes near them.

In his "Notes of Instruction," Gascoigne said of the cæsuræ, "In mine opinion . . . in a verse of tenne it will be placed at the ende of the first foure sillables," and it will be observed that he lived up

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to his opinion more rigidly than any one else in our list. In opposition to Gascoigne, Professor Corson ("Primer of English Verse," 195) thinks that the pause after the 6th syllable is the normal cæsura, for he calls it "a secondary theme to the primary 5x'." So far as our 19 poets are concerned, in 9 of them the cæsura after the 4th syllable comes first, and in only 7 does the pause after the 6th syllable come first. Milton, who clearly preferred the pause after the 6th syllable (and whose verse was the basis for Professor Corson's statement), is followed by Akenside, Blair, Somervile, and Cowper in the 18th century, and by only Shelley and Arnold in the 19th. On the other hand, Gascoigne and Surrey are followed by Mallet, Thomson, and Young in the 18th century, and by Keats, Wordsworth, Browning, and Tennyson in the 19th, so that Professor Corson's dictum is certainly wrong, if he meant it to cover the general practice of the poets, or even that of the greater poets. The reason why these four 19th century men have not followed Milton is, I suspect, not a definite preference for the pause after the 4th syllable, but the result of a constant effort to avoid the obvious, a fear of monotony, an unwillingness to do as Milton did and recognise that the beaten path has many advantages of smoothness and familiarity.¹

¹Of 14 writers of couplets, only Oldham, Crashaw, and Sandys have more strong pauses after the 6th syllable than after the 4th; only Randolph, Shelley, and Cowley have anything like an even distribution between the 4th and the 6th. Six of them, including Waller, Denham, Dryden, and Pope, have more than twice as many strong pauses after the 4th syllable as after the 6th. These statements are based on only some 13,600 lines, but together with the blank verse, they indicate that the division into 2-3 is distinctly more common than that into 3-2. The tendency of the English alexandrine to break exactly and regularly

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Akenside and Landor are the only men in whose verse the pause after the 4th syllable is not either first or second. In 15 of the men—all but Gascoigne, Glover, Browning, and Swinburne—the pause after the 6th syllable is either first or second; but in only 13 are there more cæsuras after both the 4th and the 6th syllables than elsewhere. Although only 8 men agree in making the pause after the 5th syllable 3rd in order, the tendency to mass the pauses in the middle of the line is shown by the fact that only 6 men—Swinburne, Arnold, Browning, Landor, Tennyson, and Wordsworth—all modern—have under half their cæsuras in the three middle places. Moreover, although only these six men last mentioned, and Glover, have under 40% of their pauses after the 4th and 6th syllables, the tendency of the five-beat iambic rhythm to divide into 2-3 or 3-2 groups as against an equal division after the 5th syllable is marked, in the bigger poets as in the lesser, for Swinburne, Landor, and Glover are the only men who have more cæsuras at any two other places than after the 4th and 6th syllables.

The diversity of practice is shown by a comparison of the places which come first, second, and third. In Mallet, Thomson, Young, and Wordsworth, the order is 4, 6, 5; in Milton, Blair, and Somerville, it is 6, 4, 5; in Cowper and Shelley it is 6, 4, 7; and in Keats and Tennyson, 4, 6, 7. The average of the whole nineteen gives 4, 6, 5, with 7 in 4th place. No two others agree, except that 4, 5, 6, in varying orders have the first three places in nine of the men.¹

in the middle is well known; the 2-3 formula for the five-beat line may be similarly inherent in the structure of the line.

¹ Professor Mayor ("Chaps. on Eng. Metre," 209, of 2d ed.) is right in saying that "the pause after the 4th

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In the relative proportions of cæsuras at the middle and at the ends of feet, Milton is followed pretty closely by Blair, Mallet, Thomson, Keats, Shelley, and Arnold—that is, not by Wordsworth, Browning, or Tennyson, the three most voluminous of the 19th century poets. Surrey, Gascoigne, and Somerville form a group with more than four-fifths of their pauses at the ends of feet; Akenside and Landor come very near an even division, but Glover, Browning, and Swinburne are the only ones who have distinctly more at the middle than at the ends of feet. These figures, again, indicate the tendency of the iambic line to break at the ends of feet. In Akenside, Glover, and Swinburne, the balance in favor of pauses at the middle is due to an excessive fondness for the pause after the 7th syllable.

Although Milton has 47.50% of his cæsuras after the 4th and 6th syllables, he has more than ten per cent in each of five places—after 3, 4, 5, 6, 7—and is followed in this by Young, Landor, Keats, Browning, Tennyson, and Swinburne. (Blair, Shelley, Wordsworth, and Arnold just miss belonging in this list.) Of these men, only Tennyson and Browning follow Milton exactly; Swinburne has his high percentages after 2, 4, 5, 7, 8; Young and Keats (and Blair) after 2, 4, 5, 6, 7; (Shelley's are after 2, 4, 6, 7, 8; Wordsworth's after 4, 5, 6, 7, 8); Landor is

seems to be Tennyson's favourite," for Tennyson has nearly 8% more there than anywhere else; but when he adds that Browning 'prefers' that after the 5th and 7th, he is somewhat in error, for in Browning, although his order is 4, 5, 6, 7, the percentages vary too little to establish any marked preference. About Swinburne, however, Professor Mayor is clearly within bounds when he says that Swinburne used the pause after the 7th syllable in his *Erechtheus* "twice as often as any other pause," for in that poem the pause after the 7th syllable reaches 36.67%, as against 12.69% after the 5th syllable, its nearest competitor.

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unique in having over ten per cent in each of six places, after 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7. Gascoigne, who has over ten per cent only after 2 and 4, and Somervile, who has over ten per cent only after 4 and 6, have the most limited distribution of cæsuras; Surrey comes next with more than ten per cent only after 2, 4, and 6; Arnold has over ten per cent only after 4, 6 and 8, and is thus the only poet of ability who distributes his cæsuras chiefly at the ends of feet. The six who mass their cæsuras most solidly (in only two or three places) are Gascoigne and Surrey—pre-Shaksperian; Thomson, Blair, Mallet, and Somervile—all 18th century men, and all but Thomson negligible. The facts here set forth furnish interesting confirmation of one of the oldest axioms in the criticism of blank verse, namely, that its excellence is largely determined by the distribution of pauses.¹

A simple mode of comparison for the various pauses is to note how the men follow or vary from Milton. Milton has almost exactly one-fourth of his pauses after the 6th syllable; in this he is exceeded or approximated by only Blair, Mallet, Somervile, Thomson, and Shelley. Milton has 22.52% after the 4th syllable; in this he is materially exceeded by five men, and approximated by five others, so that eight fall distinctly below him. After the 3rd, 5th, and 7th syllables, he has about 10% each; Tennyson is the only other poet who has those figures for all three places; though Blair has for the 5th and 7th, and Arnold for the 3rd and 5th syllables. While seven men have more than Milton after the 2d syllable, only Shelley, Arnold, and Swinburne have distinctly more after the 8th syllable,

¹ Although much punctuation increases the total number of cæsuras in Young's case, it does not affect the proportions of their distribution.

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and only Landor, Wordsworth, Browning, and Tennyson come near Milton's figures. After the 9th syllable all the moderns except Arnold have from two to four times as many cæsuras as Milton, and every one of the eighteen poets has more than he after the 1st syllable.

Gascoigne and Surrey, with 61.65% and 52.60% of their cæsuras after the 4th syllable, have broken all records for monotony of pause. Their nearest competitor is Somervile, with 38.37% and Blair with 35.30%, both after the 6th syllable. Gascoigne, Surrey, Mallet, Somervile, and Thomson are the only men with more than 25% after the 4th syllable, and Blair, Somervile, Mallet, and Thomson the only ones with more than 25% after the 6th syllable. Akenside has about 20% each after the 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th syllables, but Glover with 25.23% is the only one who has more pauses after the 5th syllable than elsewhere. After the 7th syllable, Swinburne has 26.07%, more than twice as many as he has anywhere else; his only rivals after the 7th syllable are Akenside, Glover, and Landor, with from 18 to 20%.

On the whole, then, taking mere proportions of cæsuras, without reference to their possible relations to other technical devices, surprisingly few of the men have followed Milton's lead in the details of distribution, though the 19th century men have followed him in distributing over five or six places, instead of massing at two or three as Surrey and Gascoigne did. The 18th century men, though neither so free nor so successful in their distribution as the 19th century men, had—to an extent they are not often given credit for—both a fondness for experiment, and success in avoiding in their blank verse the technical peculiarities of the couplet. The later men have been much more inclined to follow

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Milton in distributing cæsuras than to imitate his bold massing at the places where they would normally fall unless the poet took special pains to avoid those places. It is not too much, I think, to suggest that Milton has the advantage over his 19th century successors in that he is not chargeable, as they are, with preciosity—with avoiding the solidier virtues of the instrument in favor of its showier, more startling nimblenesses.

The cæsuras which I have taken account of are punctuated by marks varying from commas to periods, and naturally those marked by strong pauses will count for more than the others. In the case of *Paradise Lost* it is instructive to put side by side the distribution of the total number of cæsuras and of the strong pauses:

	MID.	END,	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Cæsuras..	34.00	66.00	1.00	8.89	10.06	22.52	11.19	24.98	10.82	9.48	0.87
Str. Pauses	31.91	67.64	0.17	5.98	8.23	24.70	13.37	29.62	9.89	7.34	0.25

The significant thing is that the strong pauses tend more than the cæsuras to the middle of the line, for after the 4th, 5th, and 6th syllables, Milton has 67.69% of his strong pauses, as against 58.69% of cæsuras in general. Newcomb, the only other writer of blank verse whose distribution of strong pauses I have noted, masses 72.58% after the 5th, 6th, and 7th syllables (he is like Akenside, Glover, Landor, and Swinburne in his frequent use of the pause after the 7th syllable), and 57.08% after the 4th, 5th, and 6th syllables. The scanty records which I have for the distribution of strong pauses in heroic couplets confirm this tendency toward the middle of the line. In 13,653 lines of couplets by 14 poets, the percent of strong pauses after the 4th, 5th, and 6th

¹ These percentages I have compiled from the table in Corson's "Primer of English Verse," 194-5.

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syllables averages 70.16, with a range of from 50 in Shelley's *Epipsychidion* to 87.50 in Denham's *Cooper's Hill*. Omitting Marvell and Shelley (the only ones who fall below Milton's percentage), the average is 73.74—not so much above Milton as one might expect. Because of this massing of strong pauses near the middle of the line, the cæsuras near the ends are not often marked by strong punctuation; in other words, the cæsuras near the ends of the line are used chiefly for the subtler modulations. Although this tendency of the five-beat iambic line to break most often and most 'severely' at the middle is strong, it is well to bear in mind that one pronounced pause in the less usual places is as emphatic as a score in the middle, so that a poet who indulged very freely in strong pauses near the ends of the line would betray a mannerism, as Swinburne does in *Mary Stuart* (cf. p. 25, note).

Mr. Bridges claims for Milton's verse as a distinction the 'severity' of the breaks ("Milton's Prosody," 24). Milton's 'distinction' in this respect is at least not marked, for although he has strong pauses in 23.31% of his lines, Wordsworth has them in 21.17% of his lines, Newcomb in 25.78%, Young in 30%, and Browning in *Pauline*, and *Paracelsus*, in 36.64%. Milton's strong pauses, moreover, occur in only about six-twentieths of the lines which have cæsuras; in Newcomb, in about thirteen-fortieths, in Wordsworth in seven-twentieths, in Young in nine-twentieths, and in Browning in about twelve-twentieths. In the couplets of Dryden, Waller, Pope, and Chapman, the lines with strong pauses amount to about two-, three-, four-, and five-twentieths respectively of the lines which contain cæsuras. These proportions, as already said (cf. p. 42), bear no relation to the percent of end-stopt lines in either couplets or blank verse, for al-

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though Pope and Dryden have almost the same percent of endstopt lines, Pope has nearly twice as many strong pauses as Dryden. In blank verse, Young and Browning, who have the highest percentages of end-stopt lines, have also the greatest number of strong pauses. However, unless my evidence is inadequate and therefore misleading, the difference between the proportions of strong pauses in couplets and in blank verse points clearly to the far greater emphasis of the line-rhythm in the couplet.

When the distribution of cæsuras is compared with the proportions of unbroken lines, I find a relation which may be accidental, though it does not seem so. Landor, the only one who has more than ten per cent of cæsuras at each of six places, has more unbroken lines than any one but Surrey and Gascoigne. Of the six others who have ten per cent in each of five places, Milton and Young have about 29% of their lines unbroken, Browning has 36%, and Keats, Tennyson, and Swinburne over 40%. Whether there is any fundamental connection between these two things I am not sure; at least it is obvious that the men who distributed their pauses most widely were also the ones who learned best the value of long cadences.

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TABLE VII

POET	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL AND 'RUN-ON' CÆSURAS AFTER					
	1	2	3	7	8	9
Milton	1.00	8 89	10.06	10.83	9.48	0.87
	0.46	5.42	7.04	7.30	7.16	0.54
Surrey	4.61	11.20	3.93	4.79	3.76	0.68
	0.42	3.16	0.68	2.14	1.62	0.42
Gascoigne,	4.57	13.94	3.05	3.26	3.05	0.65
	0.21	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.43	0.21
Akenside	2.53	6.12	5.75	19.85	4.10	0.59
	0.15	2.76	4.48	14.86	2.39	0.15
Blair	4 34	9.04	3.47	9.91	6 08	0.17
	0.34	1.91	0.69	3.82	1.72	0.00
Glover	3.32	8.05	4.85	18.71	7.58	1.66
	0.29	3.65	2.51	12.98	5.08	0.87
Mallet	2.75	6.65	5.37	8.25	5.00	0.85
	0.13	1.90	1.77	3.77	2.39	0.48
Somerville	1.84	5 64	2.85	4.63	8.03	0.77
	0.16	2.69	1.84	2 59	4.92	0.42
Thomson	6.97	7.36	3.74	7.75	6.00	2.14
	0.44	2.41	1.65	4.50	3.61	1.18
Young	5.46	10.32	7.10	11.55	7.77	2.15
	0.13	1.54	1.23	2.67	2.79	0.61
Cowper	1.62	6.19	9.81	15.42	6.89	1.44
	0.21	2.78	6.68	10.82	4.87	0.45
Landor	5.39	12.22	10.80	17.77	9.12	1.90
	1.27	4.28	4.12	9.84	4.76	1.19
Keats	3 00	11.80	9.77	14.77	5.18	1.25
	0.62	2.51	2.67	7.54	1.72	0.31
Shelley	2.87	9.19	5.55	12.64	10.91	2.49
	0.76	5.36	3.25	10.34	6.51	0.95
Wordsworth	6.62	8.55	7.44	13.89	9.90	1.87
	1.13	3.96	4.19	8.77	6.68	1.08
Arnold	6.78	14.30	9.00	7.80	13.70	0.36
	1.21	5.69	3.39	3.27	7.39	0.24
Browning	7.48	8.85	10.35	13.67	8.94	3.61
	0.76	2.59	3.61	4.33	3.76	1.46
Tennyson	6.92	9.39	11.60	13 39	9.52	3.25
	0.84	2.31	5.47	5.21	4.73	1.29
Swinburne	8.67	10.50	7.02	26.07	12.42	1.58
	4.49	4.74	3.22	17.97	0.05	0.63

In this table, the first figure in each column is the percent of cæsuras of all kinds which fall after that particular syllable. The second figure in each column is the percent of cæsuras which, after the 1st, 2d, and 3d syllables, come *after* a run-on line, and after the 7th, 8th, and 9th syllables, come *in* a run-on line. For example, in Milton, the cæsuras after the 1st syllable number 1.00%, of which nearly half are 'run-on'; the cæsuras after the 8th syllable number 9.48%, of which about seven-ninths are 'run-on.' The divisor for both sets of figures is the total number of cæsuras. (See the 2d column of Table V.)

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We come now to the most important relation of cæsuras to line-rhythm—their use in connection with run-on lines. Cæsuras near the ends of the line are likely to be more emphatic than others, as we have seen, because of their relatively unusual position. These cæsuras become vastly more emphatic when they come near the end of a run-on line, or at the beginning of a line which follows a run-on line. Run-on lines in which the cæsura is either unmarked by punctuation or falls after the 4th, 5th, or 6th syllable number about one-half of the total run-on lines in nine of the men—Milton, Surrey, Thomson, Cowper, Keats, Shelley, Wordsworth, Browning, and Tennyson. In five—Gascoigne, Akenside, Blair, Mallet, and Somerville—considerably more than one-half are of this kind; in the other five—Glover, Young, Landor, Arnold, and Swinburne—considerably under one-half. That is, to put the matter from the opposite point of view, in Gascoigne and four minor 18th century men, only about one-third or less of the run-on lines have their use emphasized by coming before pauses in the first three places or after pauses in the last three. In nine men, including most of the big ones, about one-half of the run-on lines are used in connection with these emphatic cæsuras. As for the other five—a curious list—in Glover and Young, two-thirds, and in Landor, Arnold, and Swinburne about three-fourths of the run-on lines are so used.

The relation of these emphatic cæsuras to the others is also important. It will be remembered that only six men—Swinburne, Arnold, Browning, Landor, Tennyson, and Wordsworth—have under 50% of their cæsuras after the 4th, 5th, and 6th syllables; and that the others have in those middle places from 54 to 73%. Of those six men who have more than half their cæsuras at the six end places in the line,

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three—Landor, Arnold, and Swinburne—are the men who have three-fourths of their run-on lines in connection with these emphatic cæsuras.

The table of cæsuras in or after run-on lines shows several interesting things, some of them significant. In only Milton and Arnold is the sum of 1, 2, 3 about the same as the sum of 7, 8, 9; in all the others the sum of 7, 8, 9, is distinctly the larger. In Blair and Keats the sum of 7, 8, 9 is almost twice that of 1, 2, 3; and in five others—Young, Thomson, Akenside, Glover, and Swinburne—the sum of 7, 8, 9, is more than twice the sum of 1, 2, 3. Obviously the poets have found it easier, or have thought it more effective to run-on a line after the last few syllables than to run it on only a few syllables into the next. This conclusion grows even more obvious when we compare these figures for what I may call 'run-on' cæsuras with the total number of cæsuras after 1, 2, and 3, and 7, 8, and 9. Of these total cæsuras, ten men have more after 1, 2, and 3 than after 7, 8, and 9, six of them—Surrey, Gascoigne, Thomson, Keats, Arnold, and Tennyson—considerably more; and yet all but Milton and Arnold have a marked excess of 'run-on' cæsuras after 7, 8, and 9. To be sure, Akenside, Glover, and Swinburne, who have the greatest excess of total cæsuras after 7, 8, and 9, are among the seven who have the most 'run-on' cæsuras after 7, 8, and 9; but the other four—Blair, Thomson, Young, and Keats—have more total cæsuras after 1, 2, and 3, than after 7, 8, and 9.

It will be remembered that our nineteen poets agreed in having fewer cæsuras after the 9th syllable than elsewhere; only six of them—Blair, Landor, Keats, Wordsworth, Arnold, and Swinburne—have fewer 'run-on' cæsuras after the 9th syllable than after the 1st; Surrey, Gascoigne, and Akenside have

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about the same in both places; the remaining ten have more after the 9th syllable than after the 1st. Of Milton, Professor Saintsbury once wrote ("Eliz. Lit.," 327): "No device that is possible within his limits—even to that most dangerous one of the pause after the first syllable of a line which has 'en-jambed' from the preceding one—is strange to him; or sparingly used, or used without success." The 'success' of Milton's use of this device will be readily granted; as to the 'sparingly,' the first ten men chronologically have fewer of these pauses than Milton, although Surrey and Thomson have almost as many; but all of the 19th century men, including Landor, have more than Milton,—Landor, Wordsworth, and Arnold more than twice as many, and Swinburne almost nine times as many.

The tendency to run-on the line from a cæsuræ near the end is made plain if we look at the matter from a slightly different angle. Of the cæsuræ after the 1st syllable, Swinburne alone has more than half 'run-on'; of those after the 2d syllable, only Milton and Shelley have more than half 'run-on'; and of those after the 3d syllable, only seven men have more than half 'run-on.' But, of the cæsuræ after the 7th, 8th, and 9th syllables, eleven, twelve, and nine men respectively have more than half in run-on lines.

Since the pause after the 7th syllable is, on the average, the most frequently used of the six minor ones, it is not surprising that fourteen of the men—all but Surrey, Somerville, Young, Arnold, and Tennyson—have more 'run-on' cæsuræ after the 7th syllable than elsewhere. Eight of them show a striking preference for this 'run-on' cæsuræ; Blair, Cowper, Landor, Shelley, and Swinburne have twice as many as elsewhere; Keats has three times as many as after the 2d or 3d syllables; Glover nearly

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three times as many as after the 8th; and Akenside more than three times as many as after the 3rd syllable.

In blank verse, the percentages of 'run-on' cæsuras after the 1st, 2d, 8th, and 9th syllables are 16.16, 33.84, 55.33, and 44.08. For the 18,000 lines of heroic couplets the corresponding percentages are 6.12, 22.38, 37.39, and 51.72. Even after we have allowed for the fact that run-on lines average only about half as many in couplets as in blank verse, we find that here again is emphasized in a minor detail the technical 'shackle' of rhyme, for at the beginning of the line the couplets fall considerably below blank verse in their use of 'run-on' cæsuras, and approximate it at the end of the line. In blank verse, the cæsuras near either the beginning or the end of the line tend to modify the line-rhythm, although (as we may see from the percentages just given) this modification comes more easily—or at least more often—near the end of the line. In the couplet, a 'run-on' cæsura near the beginning of the line not only tends to reduce the emphasis of the first rhyme-syllable, but thereby lessens the effect of the second one, as in:

He ceas'd; but left so pleasing on their ear
His voice, that list'ning still they seem'd to hear.

(Pope: *Odys.* 13. 1)

'Run-on' cæsuras near the end of the line, on the contrary, bring the rhyme-syllables somewhat closer together, and thus re-enforce the effect of the second one, as in:

Not always actions show the man; we find
Who does a kindness is not therefore kind

(Pope: *Moral Ess.*, Ep. 1)

or

'T is with our judgments as our watches,—none
Go just alike, yet each believes his own.

(Pope: *Ess. on Crit.* 1)

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This effect is not entirely lost even where the second line has a cæsure near the beginning, as in:

Yet while my Hector still survives, I see
My father, mother, brethren, all, in thee.

(Pope: Il. 6. 544.)

The tendency of both blank verse and couplets to have more marked cæsuras near the end of the line than at the beginning is not an evidence of similarity but of difference, for in blank verse these cæsuras modify line-rhythm, in the couplet they increase rhyme-emphasis.

III. FEET

In the course of this discussion it has often been assumed that lines of verse are divided into feet and that those feet are iambic. It is now necessary to take up in some detail the question of feet, their varieties, and the conventions of their use in non-dramatic blank verse. As a basis for the discussion, it is well to begin with what seem to me principles so fundamental as to be axiomatic, but which we do not always have clearly in mind. The whole question of feet in iambic verse has long been clouded by anxious and sometimes belligerent discussion as to how we are to scan certain lines. It happens that many of these queer lines, though not all, are taken from the drama, where, I maintain, dramatic requirements subordinate, or modify, or sometimes even destroy the verse pattern.¹ Moreover, the distinctly puzzling lines are relatively few, and may be owing to one or more of half a dozen things which do not involve fundamental principles of verse-structure. For one thing, they may be, according to their context, carelessnesses, to be ex-

¹ It has been suggested by a friend that the drama ought to be the best place to study blank verse, because the very fact that the poet is concerned primarily with the demands of the drama should leave his verse less modified by his probably inadequate theories of what blank verse ought to be. This idea sounds plausible and suggestive, but it seems to me untenable simply because, as even Shakspeare shows, in proportion as the dramatist becomes interested in his play, his blank verse tends to lose most of the things which make it unmistakably verse.

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plained by saying that the poet was so governed by the swing of his metre that he forced into it sets of syllables which do not readily justify their arrangement to all his readers. Or, they may be deliberate discords; or, again, experiments which to some of us are regrettable failures, to others triumphs of technical skill. In any case, however, these lines are exceptional, so exceptional that we shall scarcely profit by looking for rules comprehensive enough to include them all, especially when we recall that "poetic license"—that is, the liberty to ignore a rule on occasion—has been a recognized, though ill-defined, privilege of the poet ever since blank verse came into use in England. I am sure that in many a case the poet would either have us "ask the Browning Society," or say bluntly, "I chose to do it that way."

The lines which would fairly come under one or other of these explanations form the irreducible residuum which is inevitable in any product of fallible human effort. But a great many lines which are puzzling at first glance, explain themselves, if we can get at the simple underlying principle, too often hidden by its Protean manifestations. It will help us at the outset to recall some of the things common to poetry and prose.

To begin with, I suppose it will be granted that the ultimate secret of effectiveness in prose lies in the proper distribution of emphasis, and that the various rules of rhetoric are only specific applications of the general principle. Inasmuch as good poetry is also effective composition, it would be strange if the laws of its effectiveness were not also in some wise dependent on the proper distribution of emphasis. To be sure, poetry has methods and effects which are peculiarly its own, and it is interesting to see how these modify, and are modified by, the

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ordinary laws of rhetoric; but just now we are looking for points of resemblance.

Blank verse, as we have already seen, is like prose in that its sentence length and paragraph length are not definitely affected by the structure of the verse. Moreover, even a cursory reading shows us that Wordsworth and Tennyson and Matthew Arnold, for example, have not found it necessary to use a syntax that is materially different from that of the prose of their time. In prose, a persistent clinging to the normal order in sentence after sentence is monotonous, and therefore inexperienced writers endeavor to change this normal order for the sake of variety. The experienced craftsman, however, finds that any variation from the normal order or syntax attracts attention, and that unless the emphasis so gained is justified, there is an actual loss. In short, the practised writer of prose avails himself of the conspicuousness of variation from the normal sentence in order to get the desired emphasis. The instances cited by Professor J. W. Bright¹ of extraordinary pronunciations (*un*-governed, *pre*-cisely, *Je*-rusalem, and *re*-markable) are exactly cases in point. The ordinary, normal pronunciation fails entirely to give them the emphasis desired, so the resort is at once to a variation from the normal, violent and marked in proportion to the need for emphasis, and justified by that need.²

¹ "Proper Names in Old English Verse," in *Proc. M. L. A.*, XIV, 347-68.

² Professor J. B. Mayor, in his "Chapters on English Metre," 2d ed., p. 219, says: "The typical or standard line of each pure metre consists of so many perfectly regular feet with a marked pause at the end of the line, but with no other pause, at least none of such a nature as to clash with the metre by dividing the feet. Since a series of such typical lines would be found intolerably monotonous, the skill of the versifier is

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In the order of the words of its sentences, also, the best blank verse of the past century does not differ from the best prose. Milton's verse is the only obstacle to making my statement general, but even Milton is only an apparent exception, for his speech was not deliberately perverted to fit his verse, but was the natural, unaffected expression of the man who had for so many busy years been Latin secretary to Cromwell. Precisely in this fact do we find the reason why Milton's verse, which sounds so easy and natural, has not been successfully imitated, for to no Englishman but Milton has Milton's speech been really native. In short, all our good blank verse is like good prose in its syntax and its word-order.

Blank verse is unlike prose in that, in addition to the larger and irregular rhythms found in serious and elevated speech, it has a regular rhythm of foot and line. The foot rhythm is filled normally by an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed one, and as a rule the word-accent and the metrical accents coincide. Obviously, a long succession of such feet would be as monotonous as a succession of sentences

shown by the manner in which he reconciles freedom with law—i.e., by the amount of variety he is able to introduce without destroying the general rhythmical effect." That he does not mean that variety is sought by the poet for its own sake, is shown by his statement on page 18, apropos of cæsural pauses near the ends of the verse, that "the very fact that such a rhythm is usually avoided makes it all the more effective, when the word so isolated is felt to be weighty enough to justify its position." One of his quotations from Swinburne will show its ineffectiveness when unjustified:

Pride, from profoundest humbleness of heart
Born, self-uplift at once and self-subdued
Glowed, seeing his face whose hand had borne such
part. (Marino Faliero, Dedication)

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built on exactly the same plan. It seems just as obvious that any marked variation in the feet would attract attention. The most satisfactory statement of the way in which this variation comes about is that of Mr. T. S. Omond:

"If periods constitute rhythm, they must do so by uniform succession. Syllables do not supply this absolute recurrence; their order of succession is changeful, capricious. They need to be contrasted with underlying uniformity. That substratum seems afforded by time. *Isochronous periods* form the units of metre. Syllabic variation gets its whole force from contrast with these, is conceivable only in relation to these." ("Study of Metre," 4.)

"Syllables exist before verse handles them, and are not wholly amenable to its handling. They cannot be coaxed to keep exact time, and of course cannot be chopped or carved into fragments. From this very inability, poets in their unconscious inspiration draw beauty. They delight us by maintaining a continual slight conflict between syllables and time. It must not go too far, or the sense of rhythm perishes, and the line becomes heavy, inert, prosy. But within limits the contest is unceasing." ("Metrical Rhythm," 21.)

"Accentual scansionists nearly always minimise the difference between verse and prose. For, taking English syllables by themselves, there is really no difference. The difference—a real and true one—lies in the setting. Verse sets syllables to equal time-measures, prose to unequal." (Ib. 24.)¹

The important point here is that just because syllables "cannot be coaxed to keep exact time," the

¹ For a more recent discussion than Mr. Omond's, and an equally admirable one, see Chapters IV and V of Professor Raymond M. Alden's "Introduction to Poetry," New York, 1909.

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time is *more or less completely filled by syllables*. Let us apply this to blank verse, and see how it helps us to understand some details better than we have understood them. Even the ten syllables which go to make up the ordinary heroic line vary in their importance so much that more than one prosodist has tried to indicate their varying weight by marking them 0, 1, 2. It is easy to find lines in which beyond doubt the five even syllables carry both metrical and logical stress, and yet one line moves quickly, another slowly, and although in both the five stressed syllables are indubitably stressed, the stresses are not all of equal weight. We have, therefore, even in perfectly regular lines, as Mr. Omond says, "a continual slight conflict between syllables and time." From the standpoint of rhetoric, these slight variations in the weight of syllables furnish one of the most important and most delicate ways of securing the nicest distribution of emphasis.

The simplest variation from the normal line consists in the substitution of a trisyllabic foot—the slipping in of an extra, unstressed syllable. In some generations (notably in the 18th century) this extra syllable was elided and indicated by an apostrophe, although "apostrophation," as Professor Saintsbury contemptuously calls it, was protested against at least two hundred years ago.¹ In many cases we cannot say positively that the apparent extra syllable is not slurred or elided, for it constantly happens

¹ In 1709, Dr. Wm. Coward wrote, in his "Poetica Licentia discuss'd": "I am of opinion that *Dactyls* and other Feet, as *Anapests*, etc., ought to be allow'd in *English Metre*, though Mr. *Dryden* restrains all to *Dissyllables*. For it's very plain, that *none please the Fancy that offend the Ear* (as the *Dispensarian Poet* says). And the Words, *Delicate*, *Moderate*, *Crucible*, *Generous*, run much better than *Del'cate*, *Mod'rate*, *Cruc'ble*, *Gen'rous*, to make 'em *English Spondees*."

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that our knowledge of how such words as "glimmering" or "several" are *spelled* leads us to think of them as having three syllables, when likely enough we pronounce only two, or two and a fraction—for both the semi-vocalic liquids and what the phoneticians call the "on-glide" contribute delicately but perceptibly to "fill the time." (To many people, "flower," for example, *looks* like two syllables, but "flour" like only one; so with "higher" and "hire.") These trisyllabic feet are usually called anapests or dactyls, and although Mr. Omond recognises clearly that the three syllables are read in what he calls "duple time," I do not think that any one has hitherto pointed out that these anapests which we find in blank verse are nearly always of a kind not characteristic of triple time measures. A standard anapestic line is Byron's

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold.

If we compare this with Tennyson's

Myriads of rivulets hurrying thro' the lawn,
The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
And murmuring of innumerable bees (Princess, VII)

we see that in Tennyson's lines the two unstressed syllables are of unequal weight, that one of them is almost negligible in pronunciation, whereas in Byron's line the two unstressed syllables are clear and distinct, and approximately equal in value. (Byron even crowds in or slurs a third unstressed syllable in */rian came down/*.) It makes no material difference in the effect of Tennyson's lines whether you practically elide the lighter syllables, or merely pronounce them rapidly—in either case the passage gets its desired effect of hurry. Writers of non-dramatic blank verse have confined their trisyllabic feet to this particular type of anapest, which it may

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be worth while to call a 'duple time' anapest. Of course there are instances of the full three syllables, but I know of no writer of blank verse who does not in the main observe this convention.¹

'Duple time' anapests, then, though frequent, are as a rule not sought for, but merely not avoided—cases like "amorous," "delicate," and the like, where it is easier to slip in the extra syllable than to change the word or the rhythm. The proportion of such substitutions, I feel pretty sure, is about what might be expected of poets who neither seek variety for its own sake, nor avoid it when it offers naturally. Such passages as the three lines from Tennyson quoted above, where we are sure both of the artfulness and of the effectiveness, are exceptional. In passages where the movement of the thought is slow, anapests are likely to be few; where the thought or the mood is light and rapid, anapests are likely to come of themselves, though not to so great an extent as one might think, for the reason that a trisyllabic foot is only one of many ways of securing rapidity of movement.

Inasmuch as anapests do not involve any shift of accent, trochees, which do, seem therefore more marked variations from the normal iambus. When the trochee comes at the beginning of the line, however, it does not break the swing of the verse very much, for the almost unavoidable pause at the end of the preceding line keeps the two stresses from

¹ Coleridge's anapestic substitutions in iambs occurred, it will be remembered, not in blank verse, but in four-beat couplets. But the anapests of *Christabel* are, to my ear, in triple time, and the dissyllabic feet (even the occasional monosyllabic ones) are not iambs but "slowed" anapests. Therefore I suspect that the practical limitation of blank verse to "duple time" anapests is not merely a convention, but a fundamental necessity.

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coming abruptly together.¹ For this reason trochees in the first foot are much more numerous than those in all the other places put together. Many dissyllables, such as present participles, when they come at the beginning of the line, are obviously trochaic. But many other possible trochees may just as reasonably be slightly stressed iambs, or so neutral that we say they have 'hovering' or 'distributed' accent, or occasionally they may even be spondees—according to how the reader chooses to distribute the emphasis. These recognisable gradations between obvious trochees and obvious iambs are just like the differences already pointed out in regular iambs—they are delicate adjustments of syllables to an arbitrary rhythm. These adjustments, it may be remarked, are so delicate that attempts to tabulate

¹ I assume the most severe condition—a trochee following a run-on line in which the final syllable is clearly stressed, as in:

——with notice of a hart

Taller than all his fellows (Marriage of Geraint, 149f.)

or

——his quick instinctive hand

Caught at the hilt. (Ib. 209-10)

On the other hand, where the preceding line is stopt, as in:

As slopes a wild brook o'er a little stone,
Running too *vehemently* to break upon it (Ib. 77-8)

or where it ends in an unstressed or feminine ending, as in:

——and in April suddenly

Breaks from a coppice (Ib. 338-9)

or,

——and I *see* her

Weeping for some gay knight in Arthur's hall (117-8)

an initial trochee can hardly be said to break the swing of the rhythm at all. Initial trochees after stopt lines are, I think, most common.

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them result chiefly in recording the reader's elocution.¹

Trochees in iambic verse are essentially cases where the logical and metrical stresses do not coincide, and, especially after the first foot, are sure to attract attention just because they result in striking variations from the normal rhythm or from the normal pronunciation. In such cases, words and rhythm clash, and one must yield, or at least be modified by the other. As a rule the metrical accent yields, because the break in the swing of the verse fits the sense, as in

The prince's blood/spirted/upon his scarf
(Marriage of Geraint)

or

Long lines of cliff/breaking/have left a chasm
(Enoch Arden)

or

¹ In one of his "Chapters on English Metre" (2d ed., pp. 157f.), Professor J. B. Mayor takes up Surrey's blank verse, and in contradiction to J. A. Symonds, who thought Surrey averse "to any departure from iambic regularity," thinks his verse full of trochees. For myself, I think Symonds right and Professor Mayor wrong, for I am as much impressed by the dominance of the metrical rhythm in Surrey as I am by its subordination in the plays of Shakspeare's last period. But the important thing here is not which of the two critics is right; it is that the balance between the syllables and the rhythm is so uncertain that acute and candid critics find in it a basis for radical disagreement. I am quite sure that I am confessing neither conceit nor eccentricity but only a common experience, when I say that I have never yet seen a page of verse scanned exactly as I should scan it. The truth is that this very possibility of giving even the trifling details of the melody an individual interpretation that makes them peculiarly our own, is one of the charms of verse made possible by the "continual slight conflict between syllables and time."

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Sang, and the sand/danced at/the bottom of it.
(Balin & Balan)

It has been contended, notably by Professor J. W. Bright, that we do not find trochees in iambic verse except at the beginning of the line or after a pause. What such prosodists would do with lines like these I do not know; to scan 'spirited' or 'danced at' seems to me preposterous.¹

Instances in which the metrical accent seems to dominate, and the word accent to yield, are relatively not numerous, and are important mainly because they give rise to misconceptions. These instances, so far as I have observed, are of two kinds only. In the first kind the metre does not really dominate, but only appears to do so to modern readers. I mean instances in which words have changed their accent, as in Shakspeare. These instances call for mention here only because to *our* ears there is a clash between the word and the rhythm, in which the rhythm wins, and because we often sacrifice the proper emphasis by ignoring the old pronunciation. A glaring example, to my mind, is Juliet's cry

I have no joy of this *contract* to-night.
It seems to me that a shift of the metrical stress to make it correspond with the modern word-accent (as I have heard capable actresses recite the line) positively spoils the sense. Keep the rhythm and

¹ It is possible to scan these lines with a 'rest' before the medial trochee, thus:

The prin/ce's blood/ x spirt/ed upon/his scarf,
and it is also possible to maintain that, when a medial trochee brings two stressed syllables together, the juxtaposition of itself creates a pause; but it is to be noticed that the foot which is thus made up of a rest and a stressed syllable is invariably followed by a "duple time" anapest. In non-dramatic blank verse, at least, I have found no such lines as

The prince's blood/ x dropped/upon/his scarf.

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joy gets the emphasis it needs; change the rhythm, and *contract* stands out in uncalled-for prominence.

The second kind, also found chiefly in the older poets, consists of lines which are, to say the least, puzzling and uncertain. In Surrey, for instance, as already said, I think the rhythm dominated, and therefore that such lines as

Worship was done to Ceres the goddess,
and

Unto the son of Venus the goddess,
were meant to be perfectly regular. (The matter would be much simpler if we were discussing ballad measures instead of blank verse.) I am not so certain about

That now in Carthage loitereth reckless.

There are a number of such lines in Surrey, so many that they point either to the dominance of the rhythm or else they are the result of deliberate artistic experiment. The latter view is conceivable, although many details of his verse show him to have been a very conservative pioneer (cf. p. 92). Granting, however, that these instances are experiments; other poets have been shy about following Surrey's lead. In Milton, Mr. Bridges finds only three instances of a trochee in the fifth foot:

Beyond all past example and future (P. L. x. 840)

Of thrones and mighty seraphim prostrate (vi. 841)

and the better known

Which of us who beholds the bright surface.

(P. L. vi. 472)

However Milton intended us to read these lines, one thing is evident: they are unusually striking instances of the "conflict between syllables and time." In this very fact, indeed, probably lies the reason why such

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lines are few, although Mr. Bridges thinks */surface* "a very beautiful inversion." In modern blank verse I have noted no such cases at all, although I do not doubt that some may be found. In Tennyson, very rarely, we find a double trochee at the end of the line, as in:

Down the low turret stairs palpitating (Princess)

At least one critic, I suppose, would insist upon scanning */palpitating*. To my ear, */palpitating* is less startling than the instances just quoted from Milton, because the two trochees together have much the effect of a feminine ending.¹

These lines from Surrey, Milton, and Tennyson are, it seems to me, clear illustrations of the fact that such violent wrenchings of the word accent as */goddess* have grown rarer and rarer in our blank verse. The explanation of the change is not merely that there has been growth in taste or skill, but that there has been an increasing subordination of the rhythm. Surrey, I am sure, set his words to rhythm, as he might have set them to music; Tennyson, at the other extreme, makes his rhythm an accompaniment to his words.

These variations from the normal iambus bear only one noticeable relation to the cæsural pause. Occasionally, initial trochees (and dactyls) are emphasized by a cæsura after the 2d syllable, or, to put it the other way, the cæsura is emphasized by the trochee; but such instances are relatively few. In five books of *Paradise Lost*, there are 35 trochees

¹ Abbott and Seeley, in "English Lessons," sec. 138, actually scan "*sta-irs*" in order to make a feminine ending. Here, too, it is possible to allow a 'rest' after "stairs"; but in this as in every other instance I can find, the 'rest' is an alternative merely, and not an indisputable phenomenon, as in "Break, break, break," and many other lyrics.

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and 9 dactyls marked by a cæsure—in 1.13% of the lines; in the *Night Thoughts* the figures are 95 and 1, or 0.98%; in the *Prelude* 66 and 10, or 0.95%; and in the *Idylls* 175 and 13, or 1.66%. The proportion of cæsuras after the 2d syllable emphasized by trochees or dactyls ranges from about one-seventh in *Paradise Lost* to about one-fourth in the *Idylls*. (Dactyls, which bear the same relation to trochees that anapests do to iambs, in blank verse almost never come after the first foot, and are even more certain than anapests to have one of the unstressed syllables very light.)

Since a trochee, except in the last foot, is usually followed by an iamb, the combination x x may have several distinct cadences. The most common one is often called a choriambus:

The sound . . .

$\overset{\prime}{\text{S}}\overset{\text{x}}{\text{m}}\overset{\text{x}}{\text{o}}\overset{\prime}{\text{t}}\overset{\prime}{\text{e}}\text{ on her } \overset{\prime}{\text{e}}\overset{\prime}{\text{a}}\overset{\prime}{\text{r}}.$
(Geraint and Enid)

But, according to the punctuation or the division of words, this arrangement of syllables may seem to divide in one or two other ways, for example:

———she saw

$\overset{\prime}{\text{D}}\overset{\text{x}}{\text{u}}\overset{\text{x}}{\text{s}},/\text{and the } \overset{\prime}{\text{p}}\overset{\prime}{\text{o}}\overset{\prime}{\text{i}}\overset{\prime}{\text{n}}\overset{\prime}{\text{t}}\overset{\prime}{\text{s}}/\text{of } \overset{\prime}{\text{l}}\overset{\prime}{\text{a}}\overset{\prime}{\text{n}}\overset{\prime}{\text{c}}\overset{\prime}{\text{e}}\text{s}$
(Geraint and Enid)

and

$\overset{\prime}{\text{T}}\overset{\text{x}}{\text{h}}\overset{\text{x}}{\text{u}}\text{—}/\text{and not } \overset{\prime}{\text{e}}\overset{\prime}{\text{l}}\overset{\prime}{\text{s}}/.$
(Gareth and Lynette)

or

$\overset{\prime}{\text{D}}\overset{\text{x}}{\text{y}}\overset{\text{x}}{\text{i}}\overset{\prime}{\text{e}}\text{ing } \overset{\prime}{\text{i}}\text{t};//\text{and}/\text{his } \overset{\prime}{\text{q}}\overset{\prime}{\text{u}}\overset{\prime}{\text{i}}\overset{\prime}{\text{c}}\overset{\prime}{\text{k}}$
instinctive hand.
(Marriage of Ger.)

These last two ways give monosyllabic feet as well as anapests and dactyls which seem to have triple rather than duple time. There is another possible monosyllabic foot occasionally found in non-dramatic blank verse, in such lines as Tennyson's

Laid widow'd of the power/*in*/his eye,

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or Shakspeare's line in *Julius Cæsar*,

As fire/*drives*/out fire, so pity pity.

I have already spoken of the instances—very rare in non-dramatic verse—of indubitable syncopation, of nine-syllable lines, with accent on first and last syllables, in which the monosyllable (at beginning or end of line, as you choose) is helped out by the line-pause. In these nine-syllable lines there does seem to be something which corresponds to a 'rest'; in the other instances, however, it is to be noted that the monosyllable is not left to take up the time of a foot either by itself or by means of a 'rest,' but is compensated for, either by adjoining trisyllabic feet, or by a monosyllable so full in sound, so capable of extension, as to fill at least part of the time of the missing syllable.¹

Whatever may be the practice in other measures, therefore, non-dramatic blank verse scrupulously avoids monosyllabic feet in which the remaining time of the foot is filled out by a 'rest.' It is important to notice, in the instances here cited, that the possible differences of opinion are not about what syllables are stressed and what ones unstressed, but only about the almost purely academic question as to just where in those arrangements of syllables we are to mark the feet. It is sufficient, I think, to point out that a simple shift of accent affords a considerable opportunity for delicate adaptation of the movement of the line to the mood or feeling.²

¹ In the lines last quoted, the reader may easily test this point by substituting "strength" for Tennyson's "power," and "heat" for Shakspeare's "fire."

² It seems hardly necessary to mention that a cæsure in the middle of an iambic foot *may* be considered to give the effect of an amphibrach plus a monosyllable. Such refinements only multiply categories without adding to our understanding of the situation.

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The variations from the normal order of unstressed plus stressed syllables, which we have been discussing, are among the ways in which the poets get many of the time-sequences, or cadences, of verse. If these cadences were solely variations in the arrangement of stressed and unstressed syllables, it would be possible to describe and tabulate them, and we should have one more metrical detail which could be reported upon with precision. But these cadences are also a result of the varying collocations of syllables which not only differ among themselves in weight and force, but which in addition vary according to their collocation with other syllables—so that we constantly find gradations which reduce and sometimes obliterate the distinction between stressed and unstressed syllables. However, these cadences are not peculiar to blank verse either in their character or their use, but are common to most English metres and even to much prose—they are properties of groups of syllables, regardless of whether those groups occur in prose or verse. Therefore, in the present condition of our knowledge of the rhythms of English speech, I think I have done all that is necessary as well as all that is feasible, in calling attention to them and in pointing out the few respects in which, so far as I can see, their use in non-dramatic blank verse has conventional limitations.

IV. TONE-QUALITY

One other matter calls for discussion here chiefly because it is often and wrongly assumed to be a part of the technique of blank verse. In moving as we have in this study from the larger, more tangible features of blank verse to its more elusive, less measurable qualities, it may seem to many that we are at last getting a little nearer the heart of the mystery. In one sense that is true, for we are coming to details which help to distinguish the poet from the mere versifier—but, as I think, they are not primarily details of prosody, although they may be found at their best in poetry because verse is an instrument of expression which encourages the very highest skill in arranging words and syllables so as to convey most precisely and delicately whatever shade of thought or feeling the writer wishes to put on record. But that effort toward exact expression, we need to remind ourselves, is a problem of general rhetoric—a matter of prose as well as of verse.

The last refinement of verse, the highest reach of melody, seems to lie in tone-quality. One of the most obvious manifestations of tone-quality—rhyme—is peculiar to verse, but as we have seen, is in blank verse either rare and accidental, or is reduced to a merely rhetorical function of repetition. Two other phases of tone-quality, alliteration and assonance, have structural functions in some verse-forms; but while they are frequent both in blank verse and in prose, they are not essential or even

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invariable components of either, and poets and readers alike seem to agree that they must not be so obtrusive as to suggest structural purpose.

There is another phase of tone-quality, however, more subtle than these, and just as certainly effective, which is often called 'tone-color.' When first heard, the term sounds definite and self-explanatory, but its precise content is difficult to fix, and it is easily confused with other things. It is properly applied, as sufficiently descriptive of one effect of the collocation of sounds, to that part of the total impression which we apprehend immediately and without analysis. (I am speaking now of the process of apprehension, and do not mean to imply that tone-color defies analysis, although no satisfactory studies of it have yet appeared.) The collocation of sounds, it should be noted, by facilitating or retarding the utterance of syllables, contributes to, is perhaps the main source of, the "continual slight conflict between syllables and time." Tone-color, however, although it does effect variations in the rhythm, does not determine the time, and consequently is not a structural element of verse.

Although tone-color is present in varying degrees in prose as well as in verse, we are more likely to expect or demand it in poetry, just because the man who writes in verse thereby announces an artistic intention, whereas the writer in prose may profess to be only a plain, blunt man, and no orator. Mr. Swinburne perhaps had tone-color in mind when he declared that all good poetry must "sing"—surely he did not mean that all good poetry must be lyrical, but only that it must have melody. We have something of this sort in mind, by implication at least, when we discriminate between a poet and a versifier or rhymester. It might be supposed that blank verse, just because its structure includes neither

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rhyme, assonance, nor alliteration, would either tempt poets to enrich it with some of the devices of tone-color, or would lend itself especially well to the display of tone-color. So far as I have observed, however, tone-color, as an almost invariable accompaniment of poetry, is found in blank verse, but not to any exceptional degree.¹

Tone-color, then, may be some particular charm of utterance, characteristic of the individual, like Chaucer's 'liquidity' of diction (as Matthew Arnold called it), or Milton's sonority; it may be almost inseparable from one or more other things—for instance, the 'happy phrase' involves both aptness of idea and attractiveness of sound (tone-color), and in the happiest instances the expression and the thing expressed seem inextricably blended. But it is necessary to discriminate carefully between details like these and such things as for instance the distribution of cæsuras, which indicate mastery of technical details peculiar to the particular verse-form—in this case, blank verse.

¹ One use of the phrase 'tone-color' might be seriously misleading if we attempted to apply it to blank verse. The term is used in music as equivalent to 'timbre,' that quality of sound which enables us to tell one musical instrument from another. Obviously, blank verse has no 'timbre' and is not distinguished from other verse-forms in that way. It would, to be sure, hardly be confused with many other verse-forms, but the basis of discrimination is not tone-color, but the tempo, or the rhyme-scheme, or the line-length, or all three in combination.

V. SUMMARY AND COMMENT

Blank verse, as we have seen, is characterised, as compared with other verse-forms, by a minimum of requirements. Its positive characteristics are only two—iambic feet and five-beat lines. It is without rhyme or stanza-form, the first of which affects sentence-length and structure, the second paragraph-length. Because of this freedom, it may take on a very wide range of rhetorical styles without suffering any essential change or suppression of its structural details. Consequently, the absence of rhyme, which is the most obvious feature of blank verse, is also by far the most important one, for although a decided change in sentence-length or structure will affect the proportions of run-on and endstopt lines, it will not change their character or function. The rhetorical differences between the blank verse of Milton and of Young, for example, show metrically in contrasting proportions of run-on lines, and of endstopt lines, but do not change their character. In the couplets of Pope and Keats, on the other hand, a similar rhetorical difference means similarly different proportions of run-on and endstopt lines, but it also changes the rhyme from its structural function of marking the sense to a decorative one of marking the line-rhythm. Because of this freedom with which blank verse adapts itself to widely different rhetorical styles, it can be used to express almost any mode of treatment or feeling, without raising questions as to its technical suitability. Com-

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pare this adaptability with the demonstrably limited range both of material and treatment to which the 'strict' heroic couplet is suited.

From this structural flexibility of blank verse it happens that we have no 'formal' or 'standard' type of blank verse, as we have, for example, of the 'strict' heroic couplet. This strict couplet is to be found in every generation from Shakspeare down, not sporadically but constantly, and in form as 'severe' as Pope's. But blank verse has no well-defined, clearly recognisable technique, which would enable one to say that Cowper's, for instance, was more or less 'correct' than Milton's, or Wordsworth's than Tennyson's. Again, we cannot say of any blank verse that its author shows remarkable skill in bending the verse-form to serve a theme or treatment apparently alien to its use, in the sense in which we can point out Dryden's management of the heroic quatrain in his *Annus Mirabilis*. Moreover we can rarely assert with technical exactness that a poet has in his blank verse revealed hitherto unexpected capabilities of the form, as we can of Shelley's use of the Spenserian stanza in the *Revolt of Islam*; and on the other hand we cannot often clearly demonstrate that in technical respects any poem in blank verse has found the form most exquisitely adapted to its expression, as we can of Pope's couplets, or Byron's *Don Juan*, or Tennyson's *In Memoriam*. For clearly technical reasons—chiefly the opportunity for dialogue which will sound like real speech, without risking the oratorical or declamatory effect of the couplet—blank verse is of all our verse-forms, the most exactly suited to the drama; but I doubt if we can say of any non-dramatic poem that it ought not to have been written in blank verse, or that its form was ill-chosen, as we can of Owen Meredith's *Lucile*. In

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blank verse the trouble is almost certain to be with the poet and not with his choice of blank verse.

In the twenty-three poets we have studied, the percentages of run-on and endstopt, or even of unbroken lines, seem accidents of technique rather than indications of treatment or measures of skill. For example, we found that Philips and Newcomb were the men who used more run-on lines than Milton; that Young used more endstopt lines than Pope did in his couplets; that Surrey and Gascoigne had more unbroken lines than the rest. In the couplet, on the contrary, the proportions of 'run-on' 2d lines furnish an accurate measure of 'strictness' or 'looseness.' ('Strictness' and 'looseness' I use here in their accepted sense, to indicate whether the couplet is characteristically stopped or free; the terms have no implication now, as they perhaps had at first, of either praise or blame.) That is to say, these devices which undoubtedly affect the flexibility of the verse, do not *in blank verse* have 'standard' proportions within sufficiently narrow limits either to make any one of them by itself a sure measure of the poet's skill, or to establish 'types' of blank verse. The reason is that the absence of rhyme makes these various devices less emphatic and more interdependent than in the couplet. The cæsuras, on the other hand, gain in emphasis by the absence of the rhyme, and though such figures as could be gathered showed that blank verse does not tend much more than the couplet to distribute its cæsuras, their distribution is more important in the movement of the verse, just because they are not subdued by the stronger line-rhythm which the rhyme gives. These two things together—the reduced emphasis of run-on and endstopt lines, and the increased importance of pauses within the line—combine to make the poet's distribution of his cæsuras the one

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detail which serves most nearly as a measure of his mastery of the technique of blank verse.

In spite of the wide field for individual expression offered by blank verse in the poets we have studied we have found a considerable number of conventions, some of them merely traditional, others based on the limitations of the form. Unstressed endings, we saw, were either avoided or used very little by all the men but Browning. The men who avoided them also excluded them from their couplets and looked upon them as a defect in heroic verse whether it rhymed or not. They believed with Dr. Samuel Johnson that "The music of the English heroic line strikes the ear so faintly that it is easily lost, unless all the syllables of every line co-operate together; this co-operation can only be obtained by the preservation of every verse unmingled with another as a distinct system of sounds," although these writers of blank verse did not altogether agree with Johnson that "this distinctness is obtained and preserved by the artifice of rhyme."

In view of this theory of the "faintness" of the music of the English heroic line, some of the contrasts between the practice of these poets in dramatic and non-dramatic verse are especially illuminating. Light and weak endings—an *n*th power of the unstressed ending—which are a familiar device of the drama, are almost unknown in non-dramatic verse. Feminine endings, an important feature of dramatic verse, are either entirely avoided in non-dramatic verse, or are but little used (except by Blair). Moreover, Milton entirely, and the others in the main, use as feminine endings only words or phrases in which the unstressed syllable is very light; whereas, in the drama, the unstressed syllable is frequently heavy. Considering that Arnold alone gets a definite and calculated effect by avoiding feminine endings,

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and that the other moderns do not exclude the heavy unstressed syllable, I suspect that the poets have looked upon feminine endings in non-dramatic verse rather as a convenient 'license' than as a positive artistic device. In non-dramatic verse, too, the so-called "epic" cæsuras, which are akin to feminine endings, are little used as compared with the drama; and lines shorter or longer than five beats are avoided. Practically all the possible alexandrines (and they are surprisingly few in number) can be explained as having two trisyllabic feet, or feminine endings with two unstressed syllables. The anapests and dactyls are almost always 'duple time' feet, and possible monosyllabic feet (except the very rare nine-syllable lines) are invariably accompanied by compensating anapests or dactyls: I cannot say whether or not longer and shorter lines in the drama will finally be explained as due to careless revision by the author or others, but in our present texts they are vastly more numerous than in non-dramatic verse. I do not know, either, whether or not 'duple time' anapests and dactyls are characteristic of all blank verse. In any case these items show that the absence in non-dramatic blank verse of features which mark and strengthen the rhythm has minimised the use of devices which in other measures vary the rhythm, but in blank verse tend to submerge it. Moreover—though the point needs further study—the poets seem to have been about equally careful of the iambic rhythm and of the five-beat line.

Although this study does not pretend to be a history, it does make clear a few changes in the practice of blank verse between Milton and Swinburne. On the whole, after Milton, endstopt and unbroken lines and feminine endings increased; and run-on lines grew materially fewer. There are fewer cæ-

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suras at the ends of feet, and consequently more at the middle of feet; there are not only more cæsuras near the ends of the line, but more of them are emphasized, especially by connection with run-on lines. These decreases in run-on and increases in endstopt and unbroken lines look like an attempt to emphasize line-rhythm, but all the other changes tend in varying degrees to subordinate the line-rhythm. Still there has been no radical change from Milton's day to ours; the 'development' of non-dramatic blank verse has meant only experiments in the delicacies of manipulation. This attention to the subtler effects, this 'sophistication' if you wish, in making the rhythm less marked has brought it about that more feet retain their neutral character, has made varying collocations of sounds contribute their ease or difficulty of pronunciation to a somewhat more perceptible shading of the tempo, to something more tangibly quantitative than before. I am sure that in Surrey the rhythm was dominant, that in Milton it was stronger than in the moderns. In Surrey and Milton we can find, if not parallels, at least approximations to such dominance of rhythm over logical stresses as in

On the light fantastic toe,

or

Where an army in battle array had *marched* out.

In modern blank verse at any rate the contrast between stressed and unstressed syllables has grown less sharp. The change is obvious, but I cannot say how far it is a result of the practice of blank verse, and how far blank verse shares it with modern English verse in general.

What I have said in the last few pages should serve to correct a few common misconceptions as to the importance of particular details of technique. The most serious and widespread is the general no-

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tion, contained by implication in many *obiter dicta* about this or that poet's 'mastery,' that blank verse has many secrets peculiar to itself. We have seen that this notion is generally the result of a failure to discriminate carefully between details of technique peculiar to blank verse, and those common to most good verse or even to most effective composition whether in verse or prose. The chief correction of details is that in the case of both run-on lines and feminine endings we have somewhat overestimated their importance in determining the movement of the verse. Neither device is used so often or is so necessary as is often assumed.

John Milton, as I have shown, with the exception of run-on lines, used less often than the moderns the various devices for subordinating the rhythm. Both historically and technically it is interesting that Milton's treatment of his verse and the tightening of the couplet came in the same generation and were due to the same causes. Indeed there is something ironic in the fact—usually overlooked—that the very details of technique which contribute most to the modern reader's pleasure in Milton's verse are precisely the details which are most clearly attributable to the generation in which Milton wrote—that the same generation and the same tendencies should have produced both that particular type of couplet which the 19th century Romanticists most reprobated, and the blank verse epic which they most unanimously and sincerely admired. Technically, also, it is characteristic of the differences between the two verse-forms that blank verse took the impression of Milton's technique exactly as it took the impression of his rhetoric, without establishing a standard 'type' of blank verse in the sense in which Dryden and Pope established the vogue of a type of couplet.

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Milton's verse has three especial qualities, two of which have been often commented upon. The first of these is his Latin sonority, his 'tone-color,' which I have tried to show is not a quality peculiar to blank verse. The second is his distribution of strong pauses, which has been somewhat overestimated; Milton does distribute his pauses widely and skillfully, but not demonstrably more than some other men. The third, which has not hitherto been clearly recognised, but which contributes greatly to the effectiveness of the other two, is his keeping carefully to a more obvious rhythm than the later men. (It is well to bear in mind that I am here pointing out technical differences of attitude and treatment, which help to explain differences of product, but which do not necessarily involve any question of the relative excellence of the product.) In just this open recognition of the rhythm lies, it seems to me, not only the chief difference between Milton's blank verse and that of the later poets, but also its chief technical distinction. It explains why Arnold's *Sohrab and Rustum*, which is the only poem we have studied in which the technical details are so formal as to have a suggestion of artificiality, is also the only poem which approaches the imposing stateliness of *Paradise Lost*. It means that in this straightforward use of the conventional movements of the verse-form, *Paradise Lost* has something in common with the minuet and the oratorio. It means that Milton frankly accepted the fact that he was using a mode of expression which is not that of ordinary life any more than an oratorio is, and that he used it for precisely that reason—that it is not like ordinary speech. Consequently, where the moderns seem most often concerned with the *ars celare artem*, Milton seized upon the differences between his medium of expression and everyday speech, and made them obvious sources of effectiveness.

VI. THE INDIVIDUAL POETS¹

SURREY, HENRY HOWARD, EARL OF: 1547, *Aeneid*, II, IV.

	Ll.	Run.	End.	Com.	Unb.	Fem.	Uns.
	2011	20.18	52.41	27.41	51.26	0.54	4.27
Tot.			Percentage of cæsuras after				
Cæs.	Mid.	End.	1	2	3		
1169	18.82	81.18	4.61	11.20	3.93		
4	5	6	7	8	9		
52.60	4.87	13.60	4.79	3.76	0.68		

GASCOIGNE, GEORGE: 1576, *The Steele Glas*.

	Ll.	Run.	End.	Com.	Unb.	Fem.	Uns.
	1179	17.64	28.15	54.21	70.56	0.93	9.07
Tot.			Percentage of cæsuras after				
Cæs.	Mid.	End.	1	2	3		
459	17.55	82.35	4.57	13.94	3.05		
4	5	6	7	8	9		
61.65	3.92	5.88	3.26	3.05	0.65		

Surrey and Gascoigne are alike in having less than one-fifth of their lines run-on, although even that proportion is distinctly greater than in the couplets of Waller, Dryden, Pope, or even Chaucer. Surrey, who was translating narrative, has many more end-stopt lines than Gascoigne, who wrote satire, which is presumably sententious. Gascoigne got from his very large proportion of commastopt lines the flexibility, as compared with the couplet, of tying a whole bundle of parallel lines with one sentence. For example, the 14th paragraph, which begins: "This is the cause beleve me now, my Lorde," has 18 parallel

¹ The poets are arranged as nearly as may be in the order in which they wrote.

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lines all in one sentence—a feat of rhetoric that, however much beyond measure it may be, the couplet would hardly permit. Gascoigne has more com-mastopt lines and many more unbroken lines than any one else, and these two details of metre are clearly due to his sentence-structure.¹ In these two men, whose verse is sometimes almost painfully inelastic and uninspired, the relations of metrical technique and rhetoric are somewhat less mistakable than in the work of more capable artists. Both men show a naively mechanical counting of syllables, and leave the impression that they commonly wrenched stresses and word order to fit the metre; certainly they show very little deftness in securing a natural undercurrent of rhythm.²

Both poets use very few feminine endings (only II each), and these are all light syllables such as -ed, -er, -ish, -eth, -ing; Surrey once ends a line with —redoub, instead of —redouble.

Surrey has ten rhymes, one quatrain (2. 1019-22), and two rhetorical repetitions (2. 462-3; 2. 1033-4). Gascoigne has 9 rhymes, and one repetition; in addition he has —past, —passe; and —see, —seas.

Both poets show the stiffness of their versification by having more than half of their cæsuras after the fourth syllable, and more than four-fifths at the ends of feet.

¹ There are over a dozen passages in *The Steele Glas* in which a series of lines begin with the same word, and are parallel in structure. This device is not necessarily either vicious or ineffective; witness Shakspeare's Sonnet 66: "Tir'd with all these."

² Some of Surrey's wrenchings to fit the measure are: *Minerva*, *Minerve*; *Achille*, *Menelae*, *Pyrrhus*; *Anchise*, and *Anchises*; 'lieved for believed; *Moonlight*, *offspring*, *children*, *bloodshed*, *goddess*, *season*, *palace*, *virgin*, *phrensy*.

In Gascoigne, -i-on, -i-ence, -i-or, are invariable scansions.

JOHN MILTON

MILTON, JOHN: 1667, *Paradise Lost*; 1671, *Paradise Regained*, and *Samson Agonistes*.

	Ll.	Run.	End.	Com.	Unb.	Fem.	Uns.
Paradise Lost ¹							
10558	58.36	16.91	24.73	28.92	1.4	3.8	
Paradise Regained							
2070	44.78	22.85	32.37	39.32	3.72	5.70	
Samson Agonistes							
1758	41.41	27.24	31.25	49.09	10.29	6.31	

3 Poems ² 14386 54.41 18.89 26.70 32.88 2.81 4.37
 In *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*,—12,628 lines:³

Tot.	Percentage of cæsuras after				
Cæs.	Mid.	End.	1	2	3
9844	34.00	66.00	1.00	8.89	10.06
4	5	6	7	8	9
22.52	11.19	24.98	10.83	9.48	0.87

The most interesting item about Milton's verse is the steady drop from poem to poem in the proportion of run-on lines, accompanied by an equally marked increase in endstopt lines. The differences between *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes* are very likely due to the change from long formal speeches to relatively vivacious dialogue. The greatest change, however, is between *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*, and this shift in Milton's practice, in connection with the fact that in both *Paradise*

¹ In the different books of *Paradise Lost*, the proportions vary irregularly, though the run-on lines never fall to 50%, and the endstopt lines never rise above 20%. The relation between run-on and endstopt lines is not marked, except that Books I and II, which have 5 or 6% more run-on lines than any other book, have 2% fewer endstopt than the others.

² In the 792 blank verse lines of *Comus*, 1634, the figures are: run-on, 40.90; endstopt, 18.43; commastopt, 40.67; unbroken, 54.29; feminine endings, 8.30; unstressed endings, 13.25.

³ The separate figures for the two poems are so nearly alike that it does not seem worth while to add them to the already burdensome number.

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Lost and *Paradise Regained* the run-on lines are most frequent, and endstopt lines fewest in the 1st Book, perhaps implies that Milton's theory, strong at the outset, yielded somewhat as the poet warmed to his work. If we may assume that Milton thought run-on lines a chief grace of blank verse, and endstopt lines the greatest bar to continuous melody, then it would seem that he found his original proportions difficult to maintain. This hypothesis may seem a little more plausible when we remember that, although Shelley and Swinburne use nearly as many run-on lines as Milton did in *Paradise Lost*, and fewer endstopt, Wordsworth, Keats, Browning, and Tennyson use noticeably fewer run-on and more endstopt lines. Commastopt lines which, as already explained, serve on occasion either as run-on or endstopt, but are certainly more subdued in their effect than either, are more frequent in *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes* than in *Paradise Lost*. Only Young, Philips, and Newcomb have a smaller proportion of commastopt lines than Milton's average, and only Newcomb fewer than *Paradise Lost*.

Milton's use of unbroken lines increased rather in proportion to the decrease in run-on than to the increase in endstopt lines.¹ This increase also is curiously in accord with the practice of the later poets, for Shelley, Tennyson, Swinburne, Browning, Wordsworth, and Keats, all have a somewhat larger proportion of unbroken lines than even *Paradise Regained*. Here again, it seems that there may have been some conflict between Milton's theory and his practice.

In *Paradise Lost*, feminine endings occur in less than 1.4% of the lines—there are only 146 in the

¹ Nearly one-fifth of the unbroken lines in *Samson Agonistes* are short lines, so that the increase over *Paradise Regained* is not significant.

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whole 10,558 lines—but in *Paradise Regained* this percentage is more than doubled, and in *Samson Agonistes* rises to over 10%. In the two earlier poems, feminine endings are certainly not frequent enough to make their presence a marked feature of the verse, and even in the *Samson Agonistes* the amount is small for dramatic verse.

For his feminine endings Milton almost invariably chose words in which the extra syllable was light—such words as these from Bk. XII: *assuming, residing, rather, Tabernacle, Testimony representing, Ceremonies, Spirit* (twice), *merits*. Except for four cases, toward the end of Bk. X, Milton does not use feminine endings in *Paradise Lost* in which the extra syllable is a pronoun, although he does admit such endings 8 times in *Paradise Regained*, and over 50 times in *Samson Agonistes*. Mr. Bridges¹ gives two lines from *Paradise Lost*, which he reduces to five beats by making the last two syllables extra-metrical. In *Samson Agonistes*, however, as Mr. Bridges points out, there are a number of lines which are at least more easily scanned with six beats than with five.

Of unstressed endings also, Milton used more and more, although even 6.31% in *Samson Agonistes* is hardly evidence of any special fondness for the device. Their entirely haphazard occurrence in the various books of *Paradise Lost*, together with their relatively small number, indicates, I think, that Milton at best took no pains to avoid them, as some of his successors expressly did.

In each successive poem we find Milton using fewer run-on, somewhat more endstopt, many more unbroken lines, and noticeably more feminine and unstressed endings. These facts are hardly debatable; the reasons or inferences are less certain.

¹ "Milton's Prosody," p. 2: —society, —satiety.

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Paradise Lost is pretty generally more esteemed, and certainly better known, than *Paradise Regained*. Are we to assume that Milton's verse deteriorated? It is perhaps wiser to say that in *Paradise Regained* Milton had, for him and under the circumstances, a less happy subject, and that the relative popularity of the two poems does not rest to an appreciable extent on matters of verse technique. The fact that *Samson Agonistes*, the third poem, is quasi-dramatic instead of epic, affords some basis for suggesting that the last two poems were the work of a virtuoso who knew that in *Paradise Lost* he had done one thing admirably, and who would rather experiment than duplicate the performance. Again, the fact that these changes in versification correspond to the order in which the poems were written, seems at first glance to confirm the importance of metrical tests in fixing chronology, and suggests comparison with Shakspeare. There is a certain parallel between the two men, although we need to remember that Shakspeare began writing blank verse when he was about twenty-five, and stopped before he was fifty; whereas Milton wrote all three of his poems within eight or ten years, and after he was fifty. In the plays written about 1600 we find Shakspeare's verse at its highest efficiency as an easy, flexible medium of expression, "a clear unwrinkled song," almost free from metrical puzzles and vagaries. Thereafter, Shakspeare seems more and more to have experimented with his verse, with no loss of mastery, with perhaps snatches of more thrilling magic, but with only rare and brief returns to the clear straightforward fluency of *Twelfth Night* or of *Julius Cæsar*. Milton's history is like Shakspeare's only in this, that *Paradise Lost* is certainly freer from metrical puzzles and licenses than are the two later poems.¹

¹ These comparisons, it should be understood, are of

JOHN PHILIPS

PHILIPS, JOHN: 1701, *The Splendid Shilling*, 143 lines; 1705, *Blenheim*, 493 lines; 1708, *Cyder*, 1465 lines.

	Ll.	Run.	End.	Com.	Unb.	Fem.	Uns.
3 Poems	2101	61.25	13.04	25.71	17.41	1 ¹	2.71
Splendid Shilling,							
143	44.05	18.15	37.80	50.34			
Blenheim	493	64.90	10.95	24.15	15.21		
Cyder	1465	61.70	13.24	25.06	14.94		

Although both *The Splendid Shilling* and *Blenheim* are almost too short to give a sound basis for inference, the increase in run-on lines and the decrease in endstopt and unbroken lines are more marked than similar changes in any other poets except Browning and Tennyson—men who wrote on various themes during fifty years each. It is a little remarkable that Newcomb and Philips, who are among the earliest followers of Milton in our list, should be the only ones to materially outdo him in their use of run-on lines.

WATTS, ISAAC: 1709, *A Sight of Christ*, 73 lines; *To Sarissa*, 80 lines; *True Courage*, 52 lines; *The Dacian Battle*, 225 lines; *Elegiac Thoughts on the Death of Anne Warner*, 99 lines; *To Mitio*, I, II, 361 lines.²

	Ll.	Run.	End.	Com.	Unb.	Fem.	Uns.
6 Poems	890	47.30	17.86	34.84		4.49	2.13

There is not enough of Watts' blank verse to make it important; it is of interest only because his

facts of metrical technique, and their explanation and application are both complicated by many other considerations, such as in Shakspeare a change of mood and interests, an increasing subordination of verse to the demands and opportunities of dramatic presentation, and in Milton a possible flagging of interest or of energy in *Paradise Regained* and a change from epic to Greek choral drama in *Samson Agonistes*.

¹ *Blenheim*, 96, —prowess.

² Part III of *To Mitio* is Pindaric.

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percentage of feminine endings, small as it is, has been surpassed by but two men, Blair and Browning.

NEWCOMB, THOMAS: 1723, *The Last Judgment of Men and Angels*. A poem in 12 books, after the manner of Milton.

	Ll.	Run.	End.	Com.	Unb.	Fem.	Uns.
Bks. 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11	6426	70.18	11.99	17.83	17.39		
Entire poem,	12383						
In Bks. 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11				Strong		1 ? ¹	2 ?
Tot.	Mid.	End.	1	2	3		
1626	59.94	40.01	0.73	4.18	7.01		
4	5	6	7	8	9		
13.96	22.38	20.04	29.76	1.83	0.06		

Newcomb and his poem are all but unknown to-day; he is not mentioned even by the special histories of his period, although the DNB gives him a fraction of a column, and one kindly antiquarian reports that he was "descended on his mother's side from the poet Spenser." As late as 1757, he published "Mr. Hervey's Contemplations on a Flower Garden, done into blank verse (after the manner of Dr. Young)," which was reprinted, with additions, in 1764. He does not deserve revival, although as I recall his poem after several years it was not unpleasant reading,—perhaps because it was a beautiful folio printed in large type on unusually good paper.

Newcomb is extreme in all the details of his verse, for he has more run-on lines than any one else, and fewer endstopt, commastopt, and unbroken lines, and he has only one feminine ending and two unstressed—all three doubtful cases. Judging from his

¹ This —ever (8.134) is probably a mistake of the printer, for in 25 other instances at the end of a line it is printed —e'er; and —over is similarly printed —o'er 24 times.

JAMES THOMSON

strong pauses, he is the earliest of the men here studied to exploit the cæsuras after the 5th and 7th syllables, following Glover closely in the former, and going even beyond Swinburne in the latter. Aside from these cæsuras, Newcomb allowed himself only the liberty of run-on lines, but of these he made such extreme use that his endstopt and commastopt lines together are no more numerous than the endstopt lines of Browning, Thomson, or Gascoigne, and fall below those of Keats, Landor, Arnold, or Blair. Newcomb shows, however, that a man in Pope's day could write a very long, didactic poem entirely free from either couplet structure or its common rhetorical accompaniment of antithesis.

THOMSON, JAMES: 1726-30, *The Seasons*, 5423 lines; *The Hymn*, 118 lines; 1727, *To the Memory of Sir Isaac Newton*, 209 lines; 1729, *Britannia*, 299 lines; *To the Memory of Congreve*, 166 lines; 1734-6, *Liberty*, 3378 lines; 1738, *To the Memory of Lord Talbot*, 371 lines.

	Ll.	Run.	End.	Com.	Unb.	Fem.	Uns.
The Seasons	5423	30.00	28.72	41.28	32.67		
6 Poems,	9964					1 ¹	1.24
Tancred and Sigismunda, Acts I, III & V							
1412 lines						37.25 ²	

¹ *Autumn*, 269, —feature. Thomson has such evasions of feminine endings as:

Wide o'er his isles the branching Oronoque (Summer, 834)
and

All is the gift of industry, —whate'er (Autumn, 141)

² Once Thomson has —howe'er, but also in I. 4 —never, in a run-on line, though it is possibly a misprint. He admits such endings as —*period*, in I. 2; —*interest*, —*numerous*, *Sicily*, in consecutive lines in I. 4.

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In *The Seasons*:

Tot.	Percentage of cæsuras after				
Cæs.	Mid.	End.	1	2	3
3815	34.34	65.66	6.97	7.36	3.74
Per cent 'run-on'			0.44	2.41	1.65
4	5	6	7	8	9
26.84	13.70	25.19	7.75	6.00	2.14
			4.50	3.61	1.18

Mr. J. H. Millar says of Thomson: "His blank verse can boast a novelty of construction and an originality of cadence unrivalled for more than a century. It is not the blank verse of the Elizabethans, nor is it the blank verse of Milton, although, as Mr. Raleigh has pointed out, it is not without strong reminiscences of the latter. It is something *sui generis*." ("The Mid-Eighteenth Century," 1902, p. 184-5.) I confess that I do not understand what Mr. Millar means by "novelty of construction" or "original cadences," as applied to the technique of Thomson's blank verse. It has neutral proportions of run-on, endstopt, commastopt, and unbroken lines, and avoids feminine and unstressed endings. It has, like Milton's verse, almost exactly two-thirds of its cæsuras at the ends of feet; it carries just a little farther Milton's massing of cæsuras after the 4th, 5th, and 6th syllables, with a consequent reduction in the other percentages, except after the 1st and 9th syllables. After the 1st syllable, although Thomson has nearly seven times as many pauses as Milton, none of the increase is in 'run-on' cæsuras; after the 9th syllable, Thomson's 1.18% of 'run-on' cæsuras is rivalled only by Landor, Wordsworth, Browning, and Tennyson. That is to say, the one point in which Thomson may be said to have gone beyond Milton in the direction of freedom is in doubling Milton's percentage of 'run-on' cæ-

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suras after the 9th syllable; in all other respects, his technique shows a marked reaction toward the 'correctness' of his age. At the same time, his poems are not mere unrhymed couplets, but real blank verse, as genuinely so as Milton's in all that distinguishes blank verse from rhymed measures. Nevertheless, the popularity of *The Seasons*—which did so much to establish the vogue of blank verse, although they by no means 'introduced' it—was due then as now not to their being blank verse, but to their contents, to their fresh and unmistakably genuine attitude toward nature. Consequently, while Thomson is important in the history of English Romanticism, I cannot see that he contributed anything to the development of blank verse beyond the mere fact of using it almost exclusively.

MALLET, DAVID: 1728, *The Excursion*, 977 lines; 1747, *Amyntor and Theodora, or, The Hermit*, 1406 lines.

	Ll.	Run.	End.	Com.	Unb.	Fem.	Uns.
2 Poems	23.83	35.62	20.69	43.69	21.31	none	0.62
Tot.			Percentage of cæsuras after				
Cæs.	Mid.	End.	1	2	3		
2254	32.13	67.87	2.75	6.65	5.37		
4	5	6	7	8	9		
29.90	14.81	26.39	8.25	5.00	0.88		

Mallet shows the disapproval in which his generation held the feminine ending by twice writing —o'er at the end of a line. In the mechanical details of his versification he copies his friend Thomson fairly well, but without success in other ways. It seems hardly necessary to add that aside from this I found Mallet's verse exceptionally uninteresting.

SOMERVILE, WILLIAM: 1735, *The Chase*, 2073 lines; 1740, *Hobbinol*, 1201 lines; 1742, *Field Sports*, 286 lines.

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	Ll.	Run.	End.	Com.	Unb.	Fem.	Uns.
3 Poems	35.60	51.96	20.70	27.34	20.05	0.14	1.65
Tot.	Percentage of cæsuras after						
Cæs.	Mid.	End.	1	2	3		
3085	18.39	81.61	1.84	5.64	2.85		
4	5	6	7	8	9		
28.55	8.20	38.37	4.63	8.03	0.77		

In the small number of cæsuras in the middle of feet, Somervile is the only poet like Gascoigne and Surrey, but he differs from them in having more than half his cæsuras in the last four places, as compared with Surrey's one-fourth, and Gascoigne's one-eighth. Somervile has nine rhymes, apparently accidental; but no cases of rhetorical repetition.

GLOVER, RICHARD: 1737, *Leonidas*, 7321 lines; *On Newton*, 475 lines; 1739, *London, or the Progress of Commerce*, 590 lines.

	Ll.	Run.	End.	Com.	Unb.	Fem.	Uns.
3 Poems	8386	36.60	16.00	47.50	35.60	none	2 ²
In <i>Leonidas</i> :							
Tot.	Percentage of cæsuras after						
Cæs.	Mid.	End.	1	2	3		
5722	53.80	46.20	3.32	8.05	4.85		
4	5	6	7	8	9		
18.71	25.23	11.83	18.71	7.58	1.66		

In his exclusion of unstressed and feminine endings Glover is like Newcomb and Akenside. He seems also like Akenside in that his run-on lines jump from 35% in *Leonidas* to 50.5 in *London*, and his endstopt lines drop from 16 to 13, but even this change does not bring him to the proportions with which Akenside started. He differs from

¹ 5 cases: —covert, —perish, —melancholy, in *The Chase*; —Ganderetta, —misfortune, in *Hobbinol*. He twice has —o'er at the end of run-on lines, and follows Milton and Spenser in using 'submiss' for 'submissive.'

² The possible unstressed endings are —Diomedon, in *Leonidas*, 5. 169, and 8. 775. In *London*, 44, —Elbe may be a feminine ending; Glover has —o'er at the ends of lines at least eight times.

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YOUNG, EDWARD: 1742-5, *The Night Thoughts*.

	Li.	Run.	End.	Com.	Unb.	Fem.	Uns.
The Night Thoughts	9783	15.50	58.15	26.35	29.20	1.10	3.64
Univ. Passion, (heroic couplets)	2497	6.60	63.03	30.35	43.08		
The Revenge (or Zanga), Acts I, III & V, 1152 lines						25.78 ¹	
Night Thoughts, I-VII, 5902 lines:							
Tot.				Percentage of cæsuras after			
Cæs.	Mid.	End.	1	2	3		
5823	42.12	57.88	5.46	10.32	7.10		
'Run-on' cæsuras,			0.13	1.54	1.23		
4	5	6	7	8	9		
23.92	15.86	17.37	11.55	7.77	2.15		
			2.67	2.79	0.61		

Young's small use of run-on and excessive use of endstopt lines may seem to bear out the frequent assertion that his blank verse has "constantly the run of the couplet." To be sure, Young has more endstopt lines than either Dryden or Pope, but he has more run-on lines than Chaucer. Chaucer, indeed, seems to me an admirable illustration of the way in which a quality of style (in Chaucer's case, 'liquidity' of diction) is more clearly responsible for the 'run' of the poetry than any technical matter of versification. Young carried his practice of sententious, antithetic expression very far, but to me his blank verse does not read like couplets—certainly not like his own couplets.² Young's blank verse has more than twice as many run-on lines as his

¹ In *The Revenge*, —ever occurs often as an ending, but always in endstopt lines; in 5. 1, —o'er comes in an endstopt line.

² In Bartlett, of 56 quotations from the *Night Thoughts*, only 9 are distichs; in the first 56 from Pope, all but 9 are couplets or groups of couplets, and except for the phrase "Order is Heaven's first law," all of the 9 are second lines, where the rhyme clinched the thought.

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couplets, slightly fewer endstopt and commastopt lines, and only about two-thirds as many unbroken lines. Technically, the run-on and unbroken lines are the significant items, for they show the 'pull' of the rhyme in the couplets and the freedom which its absence gives to blank verse. I am not sure that blank verse did not offer Young more opportunity than the couplet for the sententious manner, weighty without polished brilliance, and I find some support for this in Young's very excess of endstopt lines, even as compared with Pope. The couplet, in the hands of a poet seeking apophthegms, tends very strongly to bring the point of a statement at the end of every couplet, even if the statement does not require the full twenty syllables. Blank verse, on the other hand, does not demand regular spacing of points, and is for that reason somewhat freer. Instead of the regularity of pause characteristic of the couplet, we find in Young's blank verse frequency of pause—a frequency not the result of punctuation, but of pithy expression. Technically, then, Young's blank verse is of interest because it illustrates how far an extreme habit of rhetorical expression may reflect itself in the verse without being in the least a result of any demands made by the verse-form itself.

It is hardly necessary to say that I have not found in Young the singing qualities that mark many smaller poets than he, nor often the dazzling polish of Pope; but I have been surprised to find, amid a good deal of tumid pomposity, constant evidences of thought and care, constant minor felicities of idea and phrase, which go far toward explaining his great and long-continued popularity.

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BLAIR, ROBERT: 1743,¹ *The Grave*.

	Ll.	Run.	End.	Com.	Unb.	Fem.	Uns.
	767	25.30	36.76	39.94	35.99	17.47	1.95
Tot.	Percentage of cæsuras after						
Cæs.	Mid.	End.		1	2	3	
575	28.00	72.00	4.34	9.04	3.47		
4	5	6	7	8	9		
21.56	10.08	35.30	9.91	6.08	0.17		

Metrically Blair's interest for us is that he alone of the poets in our list used feminine endings with a freedom approaching that of the drama. In five cases out of the 134 the extra syllable is a monosyllable; and in line 235 he has —*flattery*, and in line 675 —*witnesses*. Indeed, unless we count one three-beat line (661) and the final couplet, the only liberty Blair makes use of is the feminine ending. Only Surrey, Gascoigne, and Somervile exceed him in the proportion of cæsuras at the ends of feet, and he and Somervile are alone in having more than a third of their cæsuras after the 6th syllable. Both these details make for stiffness of versification, but it is surprising to see how far they are counterbalanced by the feminine endings and the fairly large proportion of unbroken lines. I have been unable to learn anything about either his aims or his models. His versification shows that he could not have studied Milton closely, and that the *Grave* owes to the *Night Thoughts* only their demonstration that there was an audience for poems on such themes. Blair's letter to Watts is not necessary to free him from the charge of imitating Young.

AKENSIDE, MARK: 1774, *The Pleasures of Imagination*.

¹ Dennis notes that in "a letter dated Feb. 25th, 1741-2, Blair in transmitting the MS. of the poem to a friend states that the greater portion of it was composed several years before his ordination ten years previously." ("Age of Pope," 84, note.) This friend was Isaac Watts.

MARK AKENSIDE

	Ll. 1999	Run. 56.27	End. 12.75	Com. 30.98	Unb. 41.47	Fem. none	Uns. none
	Percentage of cæsuras after						
	Mid.	End.	1	2	3		
Tot.							
Cæs.	48.80	51.20	2.53	6.12	5.75		
1339							
4	5	6	7	8	9		
19.86	20.01	21.21	19.85	4.10	0.50		

Akenside used very few trisyllables of any sort at the ends of lines, and in his avoidance of both feminine and unstressed endings he followed strictly the canons of the 18th century. In the proportion of run-on and endstopt lines, he is close to Shelley, and not far from Milton and Wordsworth. In the proportion of unbroken lines, Akenside follows Wordsworth and Shelley in using noticeably more than Milton.

The figures for the individual cantos of the *Pleasures of Imagination* show a slight increase in run-on lines from 54.14 to 57.66, and a somewhat more pronounced decrease of endstopt lines from 16.78 to 11.84. When Akenside revised his poem some years later, these tendencies were both confirmed, as the figures show :

Revision: Canto I, 1757	734	55.31	10.62	34.07	36.92	
Canto II, 1765	705	63.68	10.21	26.11	36.87	
Canto III, 1770	540	65.37	9.25	25.38	35.74	
Canto IV, 1770	170	45.88	7.05	47.07	27.06	

Omitting Canto IV, which Akenside left unfinished, this revision shows that Akenside, beginning with almost as large a percentage of run-on lines as Milton had in *Paradise Lost*, and with an even smaller per cent of endstopt lines, steadily increased the one and decreased the other, thus exactly reversing Milton's experience. This extreme use of run-on lines and avoidance of endstopt ones seems to be slightly reflected in the decrease of unbroken lines, but even then Akenside has more unbroken lines than Milton. Akenside, however, is curiously near both Milton

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and Wordsworth in all the matters of the table. His merit as a poet is certainly not great; his defects are just as certainly not in the matters of technique which we have thus far considered. It might be inferred from this that poetic excellence is not to be found in technique and that therefore a study of Milton's prosody is of little value. On the contrary, it is very useful to compare the work of Milton with that of such men as Akenside, because the comparison helps to make clear what might otherwise be uncertain, namely, that *Paradise Lost* is great, not so much because Milton recognized certain limitations and opportunities of his metre (as, for instance, Pope did in his use of the heroic couplet), but rather because blank verse so well reflects all the various excellences of sonority and rhetoric. In short, the prime advantage of blank verse as a vehicle for English poetry is that it offers fewer technical restrictions than any other verse form we have, and therefore expresses more precisely and delicately, with least refraction, the numberless qualities of thought, feeling, and vocabulary which are poetic.

SHENSTONE, WILLIAM: *Love and Honour*, 325 lines; *The Ruined Abbey*, or, *The Effects of Superstition*, 383 lines; *Economy*, 649 lines.

	Ll.	Run.	End.	Com.	Unb.	Fem.	Uns.
3 Poems,	1357	45.02	24.39	30.59	21.29	none	2.21

Shenstone's nearest approach to a feminine ending is —friar, in the *Ruined Abbey*; in *Economy*, 3. 74. he has —e'er. One line from *Economy*

The cloud-wrought canes, the gorgeous snuff-boxes,

obviously imitated from Shakspeare, illustrates both the avoidance of a feminine ending, and the much more important fact that real poetry is always something more than metre and idea, —that it is a matter

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of cadence, of a felicitous collocation of sounds as unmeasurable as it is unmistakable.

COWPER, WILLIAM: 1785, *The Task*, 5185 lines; 1791, *The Iliad*, Bks. I, VI, XI, and XII, 3004 lines.

	Ll.	Run.	End.	Com.	Unb.	Fem.	Uns.
2 Poems	8189	48.55	24.32	27.13	37.01	3 ¹	0.39
In <i>The Task</i> :							
Tot.		Percentage of cæsuras after					
Cæs.	Mid.	End.	1	2	3		
3262	42.99	57.01	1.62	6.19	9.81		
‘Run-on’	cæsuras,		0.21	2.78	6.68		
4	5	6	7	8	9		
21.67	14.65	22.25	15.42	6.89	1.44		
			10.82	4.87	0.45		

Cowper's *Task* is like Gray's *Elegy* and Goldsmith's *Deserted Village* in that, although the feeling is at least mildly Romantic, the diction and the handling of the metre follow the Classic mode. In all of them the words are precisely chosen and fitted together with a nice appreciation of the total effect. To modern readers the unflinching 'correctness' of the result occasionally sounds formal, or so restrained as to seem conventional and somewhat lacking in sincerity, conviction, intensity, or whatever word best describes that expression of emotional matters or attitude which we have been trained to look upon as the essence of poetry. In all three poems we are likely to be most impressed by the carefulness of the workmanship;—in *The Task* more than in the others by its extreme neatness. This effect is helped by Cowper's observance of 18th century metrical conventions; *The Task* has no feminine endings and

¹ Two in *Iliad*, I, —Apollo, —inextinguishable; one possible instance in *The Task*, VI: "Sacred to neatness and repose, the alcove." But Cowper elsewhere clearly scans "alcove," which seems to have been the current pronunciation. See the "Oxford Dictionary."

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only 17 unstressed. In *The Task* and in the *Iliad* the percentages of run-on and endstopt lines vary but little in the different books—little as compared with *Paradise Lost* or the *Idylls of the King*—and the reason probably is that *The Task* at least has less variety of tone or treatment than the other poems. In the other details of his verse Cowper keeps to a mean which may be called ‘golden,’ but which does not distinguish his verse from that of many others. In Cowper, as in Wordsworth, one is tempted to say that the absence of rhyme contributed much to the quietness of tone, without obtrusive cleverness or wit; but one recalls that during these years George Crabbe was using the ‘strict’ couplet for equally straightforward, quiet, unpretentious studies in realism. The truth is that inasmuch as Cowper was both a genuine poet and an unusually accomplished craftsman, his blank verse is admirable without being notable for any especial qualities of technique peculiar to the verse-form.

LANDOR, WALTER SAVAGE: 1798, *Gebir*.

	Ll. 1733	Run. 35.42	End. 32.60	Com. 31.98	Unb. 44.10	Fem. 2 ¹	Uns. 3.92
Tot.		Percentage of cæsuras after					
Cæs.	Mid.	End.	1	2	3		
1260	50.39	49.61	5.39	12.22	10.80		
‘Run-on’	cæsuras,		1.27	4.28	4.12		
4	5	6	7	8	9		
13.17	14.36	15.08	17.77	9.12	1.90		
			9.84	4.76	1.19		

In the distribution of run-on, endstopt, and com-mastopt lines, Landor anticipated Keats, Arnold, and Browning in dividing them almost equally; in his avoidance of feminine and unstressed endings he is like most of the other 18th century poets. In

¹ Book II, —iron; Book VII, —heron.

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the distribution of his cæsuras he has, like Akenside and Browning, an almost equal number in the middle and at the ends of feet; Glover, Browning, and Swinburne are the only ones beside Landor who have more at the middle than at the ends of feet. Landor is the only one, however, who has 10% or more of his cæsuras in each of six places (after 2d to 7th syllables), and he comes near having 10% after the 8th syllable also. He differs from Swinburne—the only other poet who has more cæsuras after the 7th syllable than elsewhere—in showing no strongly marked preference for any particular pause. However, five-sevenths of his run-on lines are used in connection with his 'run-on' cæsuras. Like these details, in contributing to the smoothness of the effect, is his use of unbroken lines, in which he is exceeded only by Surrey and Gascoigne. The details of Landor's versification are, therefore, remarkable for their evenness of distribution,—for the careful avoidance of excessive or even considerable use of any one device. The result should be, theoretically, great delicacy of modulation; as a matter of fact, I must confess that I am not especially taken with *Gebir*, though the fault may lie with me or with the theme, and not with Landor's handling of it.

WORDSWORTH, WILLIAM: 1800-May, 1805, *The Prelude*; 1809-13, *The Excursion*.

	Ll.	Run.	End.	Com.	Unb.	Fem.	Uns.
The <i>Prelude</i>	7923	49.91	16.98	33.19	39.73	1.61	7.15
The <i>Excursion</i> ,	8850	48.09	20.81	31.10	36.98	1.02	4.30
2 Poems	16773	48.94	19.00	32.06	37.22	1.34	5.65
3 Poems in couplets,	1280	27.65	40.85	31.50	59.60		
1795-6, <i>The Borderers</i> , Acts I & III, 1066 lines,						24.01	

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In the *Excursion*, and the *Prelude*, Books I to VII, 13020 lines:

Tot. Cæs.	Mid.	End.	Percentage of cæsuras after		
			1	2	3
10257	45.77	54.23	6.61	8.55	7.45
‘Run-on’	cæsuras,		1.13	3.96	4.19
4	5	6	7	8	9
19.27	15.92	16.50	13.08	9.90	1.87
			8.77	6.68	1.08

The proportions of run-on lines in the different books of the *Prelude* vary over 25%, but in the *Excursion* only 5.44%; and the *Prelude* is like *Paradise Lost* in having its highest percentages in Books I and II. The variation in the endstopt lines (*Prelude*, 7.37%; *Excursion*, 5.34%), is much less than that of the run-on lines. On the whole, however, the figures for the two poems are surprisingly alike.

The feminine endings in the *Borderers* differ from those in the other poems both in quantity and in kind. In the *Borderers* we find such cases as —*Oswald*, —*outlaws*, —*moonlight*, —*twelve-month*, —*churchyard*, —*spendthrift*, —*ploughshares*; and such others (if alexandrines, they are the only kind Wordsworth uses) as —*discoveries*, —*philosophy*, —*suffering*, —*innocent*, —*tyranny*, —*murderer*, —*governors*, and —*perilous*.

Metrically the interest of these two poems lies in their demonstration that the ‘flexibility’ and ‘adaptability’ of blank verse are due entirely to the fact that it makes fewer and simpler demands than any other of our verse-forms. Undoubtedly the two poems are poetic in mood and substance, and therefore are properly given metrical form, but their blank verse seems to me to be reduced to its lowest terms, to be as nearly pedestrian as anything could be that was not bald prose. I find in it very rarely the sonorous music of Milton or the brilliant proofs of technical mastery which are on every page of Ten-

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nyson. In some moods, therefore, I find the blank verse very disappointing—be it carefully noted that I am not speaking of contents—for in so many lines the cadences are mechanical, and the expressions are so often prosaic that I get chiefly an impression of crude verse written by a tyro. At other times, however, the very slightness of the difference which makes it verse instead of prose is the chief source of my pleasure in it. Beyond a doubt Wordsworth could not have given the material of these poems such acceptable expression in any other English verse-form, for blank verse alone is sufficiently achromatic to transmit, untouched and uncolored, these naive revelations of a soul so astoundingly unhumorous, and yet perhaps on that account the more obviously sincere and lofty and thoughtful and gentle.

SHELLEY, PERCY BYSSHE: 1815, *Alastor*.

	Ll.	Run.	End.	Com.	Unb.	Fem.	Uns.
	720	58.05	12.91	29.04	39.58	2.08	10.27
1821, Epipsychidion (couplets)							
	604	39.90	28.31	31.79	44.86		

Aug., 1819, The Cenci, Acts I, III & V,

1488 lines,

11.35

In *Alastor*:

Tot.		Percentage of cæsuras after				
Cæs.	Mid.	End.	1	2	3	
522	31.41	68.59	2.87	9.19	5.55	
'Run-on' cæsuras,			0.76	5.36	3.25	
4	5	6	7	8	9	
23.56	7.85	24.90	12.64	10.91	2.49	
			10.34	6.51	0.95	

As one reads *Alastor* it seems much what might be expected from so determined a rebel against conventions, literary and otherwise, but the details of the versification do not reveal Shelley's iconoclasm. The percentage of run-on lines is almost exactly that of *Paradise Lost*, though the endstopt lines are fewer; there are somewhat more feminine endings

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than in *Paradise Lost*, but hardly more than half as many as in *Paradise Regained*, and none of Shelley's have a pronoun as a final syllable. And yet *Alastor* reads with a rush; it is almost as sinuously rapid as the beginning of the *Revolt of Islam*; it has an effect of speed that is rare in *Paradise Lost*. The secret is surely not in the use of blank verse, or in Shelley's handling of it; it is very clearly, it seems to me, a matter of the poet's individuality, a habit of collocation of sound which produces precisely the same effect whether the poet is using blank verse, as here, or couplet, as in *Epipsychidion*, or even the bulky Spenserian stanza, as in the *Revolt of Islam* or *Adonais*.

Although Shelley does not seem to avoid feminine endings in run-on lines as much as Keats did, he writes—"where'er and—"whene'er" in run-on lines, and—"forever," which he uses three times, occurs twice in endstopt lines, and once in a commastopt line. That Shelley's avoidance of feminine endings in run-on lines in *Alastor* is deliberate is shown by his practice in the *Cenci*, where more than two-fifths of his feminine endings are in run-on lines. Moreover, in the *Cenci*, Shelley does occasionally use feminine endings in which the unstressed syllable is a pronoun, and in two or three instances "not."

JOHN KEATS

KEATS, JOHN: Dec., 1818-Sept., 1819, *Hyperion*,
a *Fragment*.

	Ll.	Run.	End.	Com.	Unb.	Fem.	Uns.
	883	34.00	32.00	34.00	43.40	2.04	8.5-
Nov.-Dec., 1819, <i>Hyperion</i> , a <i>Vision</i> , ¹	506	39.32	25.09	35.59	49.01	1.18	8.89
Mar., 1818, <i>Endymion</i> (heroic couplets)	3905	47.11	28.04	24.85	34.57		
Aug., 1819, <i>Lamia</i> (coups.)	708	32.47	31.36	36.17	38.13		
1819, <i>Otho</i> , Acts I, III & V, 1194 In <i>Hyperion</i> , a <i>Fragment</i> :						9.21	
Tot.			Percentage of cæsuras after				
Cæs.	Mid.	End.	1	2	3		
636	40.00	60.00	3.00	11.80	9.77		
'Run-on'	cæsuras,		0.62	2.51	2.67		
4	5	6	7	8	9		
20.28	12.42	21.54	14.77	5.18	1.25		
			7.54	1.72	0.31		

Keats, Landor, Arnold, and Browning—as has already been said—are the only poets in the list who have an almost equal distribution of run-on, endstopt, and commastopt lines. The first three of these men were notable admirers and imitators of Greek thought and feeling. Landor and Arnold were distinctly anti-Romantic in the austere formal severity of their style, and Keats clearly belongs with them in the general restraint of his blank verse, at least. The *Vision*, which is still more fragmentary than the *Fragment*, is not materially different from it in its proportion of run-on and endstopt lines, and is certainly not extreme when compared with the 47% of run-on lines in the couplets of *Endymion*. *Hyperion* has only 2% of feminine endings, as against 3.43% of feminine rhymes in *Endymion*, and of

¹ Between 60 and 70 lines are substantially the same as in the *Fragment*.

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these 18 instances, only one comes in a run-on line, while in two other run-on lines, Keats has written —ta'en and—o'er.¹ Perhaps it is mere accident that in the *Fragment* Keats has no endings like —sanctuary, which are both feminine and unstressed, for three of the six in the *Vision* are of this kind. Keats's restraint in the use of the devices which tend to subordinate or obscure the line-rhythm is emphasized by the large number of unbroken lines, in which he is exceeded only by Gascoigne, Surrey, and Landor. Here again comparison with his couplets is interesting, for in *Endymion* only 34.57% of the lines are unbroken. The increased number of unbroken lines in his blank verse was, I suspect, a partial compensation for the loss of the line emphasis which rhyme gives.

Keats's poetry, although written within a very brief period, showed a constant growth in restraint. If his using blank verse only toward the close of his life was accidental, then the differences between *Endymion* and *Hyperion* are largely chronological, and independent of the actual verse-form. However, it should be remembered that the Romantic movement in the first quarter of the 19th century—while it can hardly be said to have brought back blank verse, for that had been done at least three-quarters of a century earlier—brought in a riot of stanzas, some new, but mostly old ones handled in a way and with effects hardly dreamed of before. The variety of experiments in rhyme and stanza in Tennyson's first volume, as compared with the bulk of

¹ The poets in our list practically always avoid ending a line with —taken, or —ever. Shakspeare, on the contrary, who uses "taken" and "ta'en" some 90 times apiece, has —ta'en at the end of a line ten times but —taken nine times. In a hasty search in Bartlett's "Concordance," I found no instance of —e'er at the end of a line, but 29 instances of —ever.

JOHN KEATS

the product of his last fifty years, illustrates this search for beautiful and splendid effects, and also the untamed, youthful determination to be "different." That this unpruned exuberance, which characterises Keats's early work, should have shown itself in rhyme and stanza was almost certainly not accidental, for as compared with the warm color and luxuriously decorative rhymes in the 'loose' couplets and in the elaborate stanzas which Keats had used earlier, his blank verse was almost as severe and classical as a bit of Greek sculpture.

In *Hyperion*, in none of the feminine endings is the unstressed syllable a pronoun, but in *Otho*—a rather depressing piece of hack-work—almost one-fifth are of that kind. It will be noticed, however, that in *Otho* Keats was more sparing of feminine endings than Shelley, Wordsworth, or Tennyson were in their plays.

Because *Hyperion* was an avowed imitation of Milton, it has unfortunately occasioned a good deal of indiscriminating criticism. In the mere details of versification, Cowper, for example, is much nearer Milton than Keats is, but surely no one would think of calling *The Task* Miltonic. Keats himself wrote to Reynolds the well-known sentences: "I have given up *Hyperion*—there were too many Miltonic inversions in it—Miltonic verse cannot be written but in an artful, or, rather, artist's humour . . . Upon my soul 'twas imagination—I cannot make the distinction—every now and then there is a Miltonic intonation—but I cannot make the division properly." That the poem is far from Miltonic in the details of its technique is evident; as compared with *Paradise Lost*, *Hyperion* has only three-fifths as many run-on lines, nearly twice as many endstopt, one-third more unbroken, and twice as many feminine and unstressed endings. Al-

ENGLISH BLANK VERSE

though the distribution of cæsuras is on the whole not noticeably different, Keats has only about half as many 'run-on' cæsuras as Milton, and in the proportions of them after the various syllables he never equals Milton. The "Miltonic intonations," then, are not matters of blank verse technique but of rhetoric and style.

ARNOLD, MATTHEW: 1853, *Sohrab and Rustum*.

		Ll.	Run.	End.	Com.	Unb.	Fem.	Uns.
		902	28.00	35.07	36.93	29.38	2 ¹	1.33
Tot.		Percentage of cæsuras after						
Cæs.	Mid.	End.	1	2	3			
825	33.00	67.00	6.78	14.30	9.00			
'Run-on'	cæsuras,		1.21	5.69	3.39			
4	5	6	7	8	9			
18.00	9.00	21.09	7.80	13.70	0.36			
			3.27	7.39	0.24			

In its studied formality and its avoidance of the ordinary devices of blank verse, *Sohrab and Rustum* is almost as remarkable as *In Memoriam* with its monotonously cadenced stanza.² Unstressed endings are noticeably few, for the other 19th century poets use from two to eight times as many, and Arnold alone of his group takes pains to avoid feminine endings. Moreover, he has fewer unbroken lines than any other 19th century poet; Shelley, who comes nearest, has ten per cent more. Although Arnold seems like Milton and a number of others in having only about one-third of his cæsuras in the middle of feet, he is the only one who has over 10% of his cæsuras after the 2d, 4th, 6th, and 8th syllables, and *only* there.

¹—estuaries and —rivers; —iron and —precipices are probably not feminine endings.

² See "The Stanza of *In Memoriam*," in *Modern Language Notes*, Dec., 1906.

MATTHEW ARNOLD

That Arnold's versification is as formal as his rhetoric is evident when we compare his use of elaborate, formal similes with the effect of rhyme which his habit of repetition gives. Seven times he repeats a word, as in:

And, from the fluted spine atop, a plume
Of horsehair waved, a scarlet horsehair plume.

Again we find:

And Rustum followed his own blow, and fell
To his knees, and with his fingers clutch'd the sand;
And now might Sohrab have unsheathed his sword,
And pierced the mighty Rustum while he lay
Dizzy, and on his knees, and choked with sand;
But he looked on, and smiled, nor bared his sword.

In a passage near the end, Sohrab asks to be taken back to Seistan, and Rustum promises with almost a repetition of Sohrab's words, so that the line-endings "—Seistan, —me, —friends, —earth, —bones, —all" of Sohrab's speech are echoed by Rustum's "—Seistan, —thee, —friends, —earth, —bones, —all." Only rhymeless verse would lend itself to such a device, but the device is rhetorical, not metrical.¹ Arnold has only two cases of actual rhyme, but in both, the rhymes link sentences.

¹ If Rustum's six lines had followed Sohrab's immediately, one might find in the two speeches a suggestion of the *sestina*, but even the *sestina* does not repeat the rhyme words in the same order.

ENGLISH BLANK VERSE

BROWNING, ROBERT:

	Ll.	Run.	End.	Com.	Unb.	Fem.	Uns.
1832, Pauline.....	1031	46.66	20.42	32.92	43.35	5.00	3.30
1835, Paracelsus	3813	48.00	30.00	32.00	35.64	10.00	4.30
1837, (Strafford), 1.....	2202					5.72	4.31
1841, (Pippa Passes).....	772					9.71	5.70
1842, (K. Victor & K. C.)..	1622					8.20	6.70
1843, (Return of Druses)..	738	(Acts I & V)				9.87	5.40
1843, (Blot in 'Scutcheon)	1313					4.11	6.32
1844, (Colombe's Birthday)	700	(Acts I & V)				6.31	9.60
1846, (Soul's Tragedy), 1..	402	(Act II is prose)				8.45	4.72
1846, (Luria) 2.....	1821					4.22	7.79
'4-'5- Transcendentalism.	52	17.30	55.76	26.94	51.92	none	3.84
How it Strikes a Con-							
temporary.....	116	20.69	38.78	40.53	50.86	0.86	6.90
Artemis Prologizes..	121	47.15	20.66	32.19	46.28	none	10.00
Epistle of Karshish..	312	31.41	40.06	28.53	49.35	0.96	11.21
Fra Lippo Lippi.....	380	23.94	42.63	33.42	38.42	1.57	3.94
Andrea del Sarto....	267	18.72	48.31	32.97	28.46	none	5.24
The Bishop Orders							
His Tomb.....	120	24.16	34.16	40.68	50.00	none	5.82
Bp. Blougram's Apol.	1014	26.72	44.18	29.10	38.26	0.18	3.00
Cleon.....	353	26.06	39.09	34.85	40.00	none	8.78
1853, (In a Balcony).....	919					2 ³	6.20
1864, Death in the Desert	687	19.65	34.64	45.71	39.57	none	5.00
1864, Caliban upon Sete-							
bos.....	297	18.85	36.36	44.79	34.00	none	2.60
1864, Mr. Sludge, the Me-							
dium.....	ca1040	26.50	36.15	42.35	21.53	0.76	7.88
'68-9, The Ring and the							
Book.....	20973	30.53	29.47	40.00	40.16 ⁴	0.13	8.26
1871, Balaustion's Adv....	ca2800	30.35	37.32*	32.33	32.89	3 ⁵	9.03
1871, Prince Hohen.-Schw.	1005	36.71	32.50	30.70	37.31	none	13.90
1873, Red Cot. N't Cap C.	1030	33.49	34.27	32.24	40.67	0.29	17.57
(1st Section)							
1875, Aristophanes' Apol.	1008	29.16	32.83	38.01	35.41	2 ⁶	18.05
1875, The Inn Album.....	3080	42.53	35.84	21.63	28.24	2 ⁷	9.41
1876, Cenciaja.....	300	47.33	28.66	24.01	40.33	1 ⁸	21.66
1884, Ferishtah's Fancies.	1612	41.18	33.12	25.70	28.22	none	10.98
1889, Imperante Augusto.	163	30.06	46.50	23.44	32.51	none	10.42
1889, Development.....	115	25.21	40.00	34.79	29.56	none	13.91
24 Poems.....	41689	33.24	31.85	34.91			
24 Poems ⁴	31307				36.05		
33 Poems.....	52238					2.15	9.11
10 Poems (down to '46)...	14474					6.58	
23 Poems (after '46).....	37704					0.16	
Sordello, I-III (cplts).....	3036	59.68	16.04	24.28	28.52		

In Pauline, Bp. Blougram, R. & B., I, II, III, VI, 8750 lines :
Percentage of cæsuras after

Tot.

Caes.	Mid.	End.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
6831	51.51	48.49	7.48	8.85	10.35	17.42	16.39	13.10	13.67	8.94	3.61

'Run-on' cæsuras: 0.76 2.59 3.61 4.33 3.76 1.46

¹ Titles in () are plays. ² Fem. endings in Act I, 7.44%; Act II, 4.78; Act III, 4.50; Act IV, 1.18; Act V, 2.67. ³ —Norbert, —echo. ⁴ For Bks. I-VI, 10382 lines. ⁵ —diest, —irrevocable (twice). ⁶ —hierarchy, —seven. ⁷ —adversary, —*cigno fedel*. ⁸ —*Croce*. * In six passages, 88 lines of stichomythy.

ROBERT BROWNING

Browning's first poems, *Pauline* and *Paracelsus*, are not equalled by any later long poem in their proportion of run-on lines. In the *Ring and the Book*, the proportion varies in the different books from 27.17 to 33.41, although in the later books the percentage grows slightly smaller. In four poems, all rather short, the percentage of run-on lines falls below 20. Although Browning's endstopt lines vary from 20 to over 55%, it will be noticed that the average of 31.85 is not far from the mean.

The unbroken lines vary in proportions almost as much as the run-on and endstopt, with a tendency on the whole, though with exceptions, to have many unbroken lines when the run-on lines are few. As in the case of Tennyson, the only other poet in our list who wrote much blank verse through a long period of time, the differences in metrical details are of mood and treatment rather than of chronology.

In the matter of feminine endings alone does Browning seem clearly to have changed his habit. His plays are not different from his non-dramatic verse in this, unless we argue that both their dates and their use of feminine endings are significant. I feel pretty sure that the number of feminine endings in the plays is purely a matter of date, for their number tends on the whole to decrease, and in *Luria* the percentage visibly falls off from act to act. After 1846, feminine endings practically disappear, so that, as we can judge from the usage of other poets, Browning must have definitely avoided them. On the other hand, as apparently an irregular compensation, unstressed endings which, as compared with the other poets, he never avoided, grow in his latest poems so much more numerous than in any other poet, that it seems obvious that he at least experimented with them as a metrical device. He is

ENGLISH BLANK VERSE

the only poet in our list of whom we can say this with any assurance.

As compared with Tennyson's blank verse, that of Browning shows a considerably wider range of metrical experiment. It is not necessary to argue that this difference of practice is to the credit or the discredit of either poet, but it may point to a fundamental difference in their method of treatment. Tennyson for the most part wrote narrative; probably even the monologue form of such shorter poems as *St. Simeon*, *Ulysses*, *Tithonus*, or *Lucretius*, was affected in its general metrics by the poet's narrative habit. Browning, needless to say, was dramatic in his habit, even though his characters spoke unceasing monologue. Now, this mental attitude of Browning's, along with his admitted subtlety of thought-processes if not of thought itself, and along with his apparent carelessness and perversity, means that he was often more interested in forcing his instrument to express his thought than he was in bringing out the richest, fullest, or clearest tones of the instrument. Throughout, Browning's work seems like that of Shakspeare's later periods, where a predominant interest in thought did not imply either neglect of or ignoring of form, but only the finished technician's experimenting—a tendency which Tennyson did not exhibit, in his blank verse at least, to such an extent as Browning did. In a very general way, then, the larger differences between Browning and Tennyson show in their versification.

As for Browning—and I am speaking now as a student of metrics—I find myself more and more protesting at the falsity of the dictum of a late brilliant and paradoxical critic who concluded a wonderful page about Meredith with: "Meredith is a prose Browning. And so is Browning." The

ROBERT BROWNING

Ring and the Book, which long repelled me by its length and substance, has proved on acquaintance as wonderful in its blank verse as in other respects, and I cordially endorse Professor Corson's declaration: "And it is always *verse*—although the reader has but a minimum of metre consciousness." ("Primer of Eng. Verse," 225.)¹

¹ Because Browning wrote the 20,000 lines of the *Ring and the Book* in two years, as compared with the nine years which Milton spent on the 10,000 of *Paradise Lost*, or the fifty years through which Tennyson was writing the 11,000 lines of the *Idylls*, one might expect Browning's work to show less variation than the others between the different books. As the accompanying table shows, however, the percentages in all the men vary much less than one might expect. The reasons are probably two: first—especially in the case of Browning and Milton—that the poems in question were the work of mature, thoroughly practised men; the other, that there is much less variety either of mood or treatment between the different parts of the same poem than there is between these particular poems and others by the same men.

	Range of percentage in		
	Run.	End.	Unb.
The <i>Ring and the Book</i> ,	6.25	11.22	12.03
<i>Paradise Lost</i> ,	14.88	7.87	13.31
The <i>Idylls of the King</i> ,	7.39	12.15	19.63

ENGLISH BLANK VERSE

TENNYSON, ALFRED, LORD:

	Ll.	Run.	End.	Com.	Unb.	Fem.	Uns.
1827, <i>Timbuctoo</i> , ¹							
	248	58.46	14.91	26.63	49.59	2.82	9.27
1828, <i>The Lover's Tale</i> ,							
	1459	41.94	18.71	39.35	44.14	3.97	6.44
1842, <i>St. Simeon</i> ,							
	220	26.81	31.36	41.83	36.81	none	5.45
1842, <i>Ulysses</i> ,							
	70	42.85	28.57	28.58	37.15	none	5.71
1847, <i>The Princess</i> ,							
	3144	40.07	24.33	35.60	34.70	1.36	6.77
1860, <i>Tithonus</i> ,							
	76	31.57	27.63	40.80	56.07	none	5.26
1864, <i>Enoch Arden</i> ,							
	911	30.29	27.77	41.94	46.00	4.61	5.92
1868, <i>Lucretius</i> ,							
	280	47.85	14.64	37.51	41.78	2.14	8.57
1835-85, <i>The Idylls</i> ,							
	11321	33.61	26.88	39.51	44.96	2.34	5.39
9 Poems,	17729	35.91	25.42	38.67	42.94	2.37	5.88
1875, <i>Queen Mary</i> , I. 4, 5; II. 3; IV. 2, 3,							
1220 lines						21.00	
1879, <i>Becket</i> , Prol. I. 1; II. 1; IV. 2, 779							
lines,						22.85	
The two plays, 1999 lines,						21.76	

In the *Idylls*, 11321 lines:

Tot.	Cæs.	Mid.	End.	Percentage of cæsuras after		
				1	2	3
8127		46.14	53.86	6.92	9.39	11.60
'Run-on'		cæsuras,		0.84	2.31	5.47
4		5	6	7	8	9
21.39		11.02	13.61	13.39	9.52	3.25
				5.21	4.73	1.29

From the first draft of *Timbuctoo* in 1827 to *Balin and Balan* in 1885, Tennyson's blank verse extends over nearly sixty years. With two excep-

¹Took Chancellor's Medal in 1829, but composed 1827.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

tions, however, the metrical variations are indicative not of chronology (and therefore of change of metrical habit), but only of variety of theme and of rhetorical treatment. The metrics of the individual *Idylls* afford no indication of chronology except that the four earliest have slightly fewer run-on lines and somewhat more endstopt lines than the later ones. *Timbuctoo*, the earliest of the poems, and the nearest to *Paradise Lost* in its proportion of run-on and endstopt lines, is much more extreme in those respects than any of the later poems except *Lucretius*. Of the four long poems, the *Lover's Tale*, which is the earliest, has more run-on lines than the *Princess*, and as many unbroken lines as the *Idylls*. *Arden* and the *Idylls* have distinctly fewer run-on and more unbroken lines than the *Princess*; a relation which suggests that similar differences between *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* are not accidental. It may be that run-on and unbroken lines tend to compensate for each other, that a poet may secure freedom of movement by a preponderance of either.

ENGLISH BLANK VERSE

SWINBURNE, ALGERNON CHARLES: 1864, *Atalanta in Calydon*; 1876, *Erechtheus*.

	Ll.	Run.	End.	Com.	Unb.	Fem.	Uns.
Atalanta ¹	1373	42.82	18.28	38.90	39.83	3 ²	4.29
Erechtheus ¹	977	67.55	4.81	27.64	41.96	none	1.33
<hr/>							
2 Poems, 1881, Mary Stuart,	2350	53.14	12.66	34.20	40.69		3.06
	5046						
In Atalanta:						1.34 ³	
Tot.				Percentage of cæsuras after			
Cæs.	Mid.	End.	1	2	3		
942	50.42	49.58	10.93	11.88	8.70		
'Run-on'	cæsuras,		5.30	5.62	4.24		
4	5	6	7	8	9		
15.92	10.72	8.91	18.90	12.95	1.16		
			10.82	8.69	0.53		
<hr/>							
In Erechtheus:							
Cæs.	Mid.	End.	1	2	3		
638	64.57	35.42	5.32	8.62	4.54		
'Run-on'	cæsuras,		3.29	5.64	2.03		
4	5	6	7	8	9		
7.52	12.69	7.68	36.67	11.60	2.19		
			28.52	9.71	0.63		
<hr/>							
2 Poems:							
Cæs.	Mid.	End.	1	2	3		
1580	56.13	43.87	8.67	10.50	7.02		
'Run-on'	cæsuras,		4.49	4.74	3.22		
4	5	6	7	8	9		
12.53	11.51	8.41	26.07	12.42	1.58		
			17.97	9.05	0.63		

¹ In both plays I have omitted not only the rhymed portions but the occasional pages of stichomythy.

² —*birdwise*, —*infatuated*, —*seeing*.

³ 68 cases: 22 times words like —*secretary*; 14 times phrases like —*know him*; 17 times words like —*seeing*. There are only 4 doubtful cases in —*able*; only one instance of two extra syllables; —*sworn to me*, 3. I. 540;

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

Both *Atalanta* and *Erechtheus* have to the drama something of the relation that oratorios have to grand opera. The blank verse which is the chief metre of both poems gives way in choruses and occasional other passages to a variety of metres, and the dialogue is never broken with any intent of the illusion of the stage. Wherever the dialogue is rapid, the speakers have at least their line apiece, and almost invariably end a speech at the end of a line.

Comus and *Samson Agonistes*, and the *Princess* with its intercalated songs, seem pale and timid departures from convention when compared with Swinburne's bold use of lyric measures in the most intense passages of these poems; but they are not less remarkable for the amount and character of the changes in their blank verse. In *Atalanta*, to be sure, the proportions of run-on and endstopt lines are by no means exceptional, but the percentage of run-on lines in *Erechtheus* is exceeded only by Newcomb, and approached only by the first two books of *Paradise Lost*, by Philips' *Blenheim*, and by Akenside's revised third Canto, while the percentage of endstopt lines is the lowest I have any record of; even the sum of the endstopt and commastopt lines is less than in any of the other men except Newcomb and Shelley.

The chief distinction of both poems, however, is their distribution of cæsuras. In *Atalanta*, the 10.93% after the 1st syllable is considerably greater than in the other men; Browning, who comes nearest, has only 7.48%. After the 4th syllable, only Landor has so few, and after the 6th, only Gascoigne. After the 7th syllable, on the other hand,

in no case is the extra syllable heavy. In run-on lines —ta'en occurs once, —howsoe'er once, and —soe'er twice.

ENGLISH BLANK VERSE

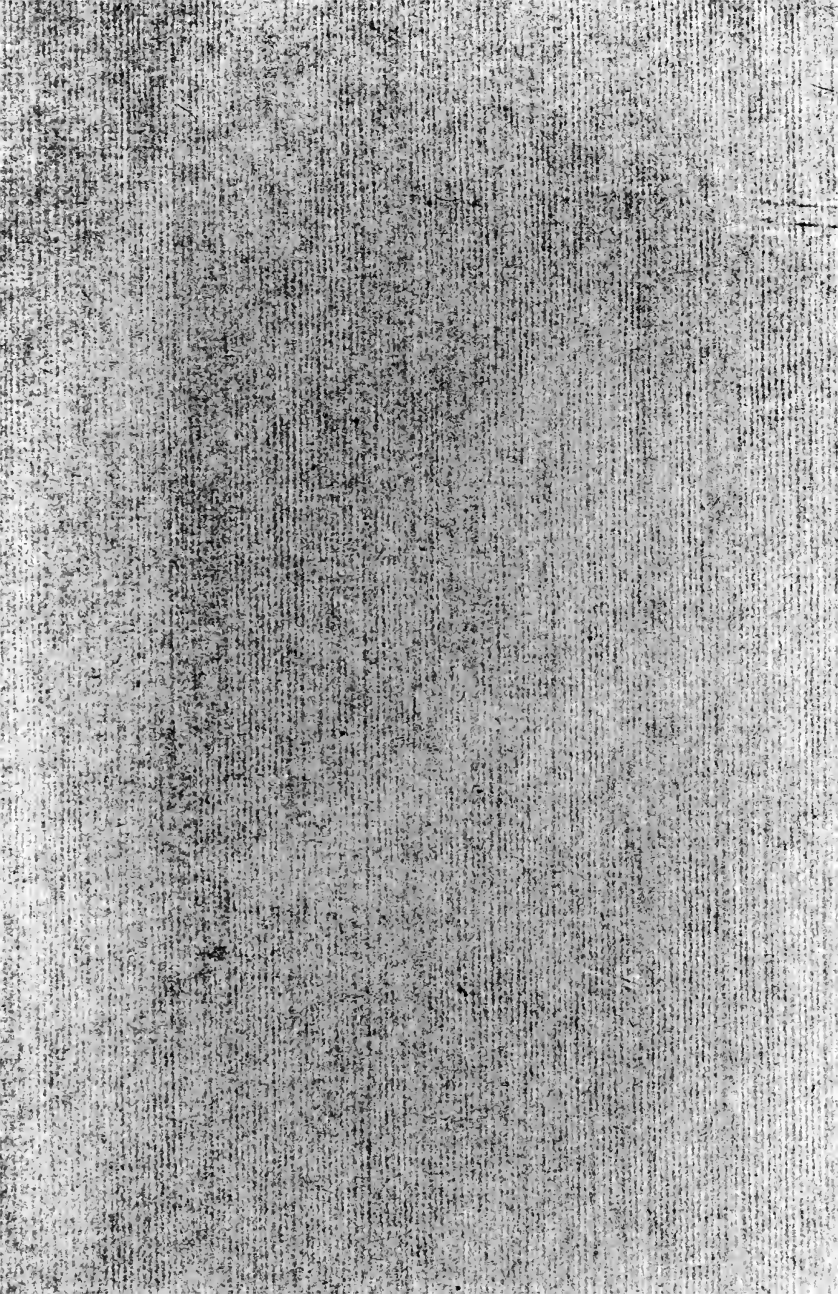
only Akenside, Glover, and Landor have nearly so many; after the 8th syllable only Arnold has more, and Shelley alone approaches him. After the 9th syllable, nine poets have as many or more, but only Browning and Tennyson materially exceed Swinburne. (For similar proportions in *Queen Mary*, see p. 25, note.) Swinburne's excess of cæsuras after the 1st syllable is due to his habit in this poem of running a sentence over into the following line just one syllable, for he has more than four times as many 'run-on' cæsuras after the 1st syllable as Landor, Wordsworth, or Arnold—the only ones who have more than 1%. Of 'run-on' cæsuras after the 7th syllable, Shelley and Cowper have as many, and Glover and Akenside have more; but after the 8th syllable, only Milton and Arnold approach Swinburne.

The differences between *Atalanta* and *Erechtheus* are very much more striking than any I have noted in the work of other poets. As compared with *Atalanta*, *Erechtheus* has fewer cæsuras after the first four syllables (only 26% as compared with 47.43% in *Atalanta*), and has practically all of the consequent increase in the second half of the line after the 7th syllable—36.67%, a percentage not only about twice as great as any one else has at that place, but not equalled at any other place in the line, except by Somervile after the 6th and by Gascoigne and Surrey after the 4th syllable. The 'run-on' cæsuras are similarly concentrated after the 7th syllable, for the 28.52% of *Erechtheus* is twice that of Akenside even. *Erechtheus* also reverses the division of nine of the poets, and has two-thirds of its cæsuras in the middle instead of at the ends of feet.

In contrast with these extravagances of versification, it is especially interesting to note that Swinburne has a proportion of unbroken lines which is

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

not extraordinary, that he uses fewer unstressed endings than the other 19th century men (except Arnold, and in *Erechtheus* the percentage is exactly that of *Sohrab and Rustum*), and that he not only avoids feminine endings in *Atalanta* and *Erechtheus*, but in *Mary Stuart* uses fewer than any other dramatist I know.



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