ballet-stave of 8, which induced Puttenham to prefer it to the latter of these combinations. His reason for the preference was, in his own language, "because it receiveth better band." This band could be given to the ballet-stave of 7, by making the last "couple" inclose a rime termination, belonging either to the first or to the second set of rimes:

1
2
1
2
3
1
3

- and both these combinations were occasionally made use of. Spenser has used the second of them in his Daphneida—an elegy upon the death of Lady Douglas Gorges [l. 253].

Yet fell she not as one enforce'd to die,
Ne died with dread, and grudging discontent,
But as one toil'd with travel down doth lie,
So lay she down, as if to sleep she went,
And clos'd her eyes with careless quietness,
The whiles soft death away her spirit sent,
And soul assay'd from sinful fleshliness.

In like manner the ballet-stave of 6 was sometimes written with banded rime; but, in such case, they were obliged to reduce the number of rimes to two. The stave in which Spenser wrote his October-Elegy may be called the banded ballet-stave of 6, with close rime [ll. 79-84].

O peerless Poesie, where is then thy place,
If not in Prince's palace thou doe sit,
(And yet is Prince's palace the most fit).
Ne breast of baser birth thee embrace?
Then make thee wings of thine aspiring wit,
And, whence thou canst, fly back to heav'n apace.

The other ballet-staves were also occasionally written with only two rimes—the first rime being substituted for

Vend of care, that is anxiety.
the third. In such case, the stave, of course, possessed all necessary band, and the expedients we have mentioned were unnecessary; but nevertheless we sometimes find the two rimes even in the banded ballet-stave of 7. The June-Eclogue [of Spenser] is written in the ballet-stave of eight.

Lo! Colin, here the place, whose pleasant sight
From other shades hath wean'd my wandering mind.
Tell me what wants me here, to work delight?
The simple air, the gentle warbling wind
So calm, so cool, as no where else I find;
The grassy ground with dainty daisies bright,
The Bramble-bush, where birds of every kind
To th' water's fall their tunes attendant right, &c. . .

Then, if by me thou list advised be,
Forsake the soil that so doth thee bewitch,
Leave me those hills, &c.

King James, when he gives an example of "Troilus verse," quotes a stave with two rimes.

This is not quite correct, as Chaucer wrote his Troilus and Cresside in staves of three rimes; but it shows that, in the opinion of the critic, the common ballet-stave of 7 was preferably written with only two.

The usual expedients for obtaining variety were applied to the ballet-stave. By repeating the last verse of the common ballet-stave of 7, we get the stanza which was used in Britain's Ida—a poem that has been ascribed to Spenser. In like manner, by tripling the odd verses in the ballet-stave of 8, with two rimes, we obtain a stanza of 16 verses, which may be found in the romance of Annelida and Arcite;¹ and by doubling the first and third verses in the

¹ [See Chaucer, ed. Morris, v. 205.]
banded §ballet-stavo of 7,¹ with two rimes, there results another stavo, which is also to be met with in that poem.

This latter is an important stanza. King James recommends it for the "description of heroique actis and martial and knipty faittis of armis," &c. It was used by Dunbar in his Golden Targe,² and also by Gawin Douglas in his Palice of Honour.

O reverend Chaucere, rose of Rethoris all,
As in oun tong are flour imperialis,
That raise in Britane evir, quha reidis richt,
Thou beris of makaris the triumph ryall;
Thy freche anamallit termes celicall
This mater coud illumynit have full brecht;
Was thou noucht of our inglisch all the lycht,
Surmounting every tong terre-triell
Als fer as Mayis morrow dois midnycht.³

O morale Gower, and Lydgait laureat,
Your sugarit lippis, and tongis aureat.
Bene to our eiris cause of grit delyte
Your angel mouthis most mellilluate
Our rude language hies cleir illuminat,
And fair ourgilt our speche, that imperlyte
Stude, or your goldin pensis schup to wrute;
This yle befoir wes hair, and dissolute
Of rethorik, or lusty fresche indyte.

_Dunbar, Golden Targe, st. 29, 30._

Douglas, when his dreamer is once fairly started on his journey, changes his metro to one which is modelled on another variety of the ballet-stave of seven.¹

Ouir mony gudelie plane we raid bidene,
Ouir waters wan, throw worthie woddis grene,
And swa, at last, on lifting up oure ecne,
We se the small end of our travail,
Amid ane plane a plesand roche to waill;
And everie wicht, fra we that sight had sene,
Thankand greit God, their hedis law devaill;

¹ See p. 641.
² [Printed in Sibbald, Chron. of Scot. Poetry, i. 262. - W.W.S.]
³ [There seems to be some mistake here. In Small's edition of G. Douglas, vol. i. p. 47, the stanza is arranged quite differently, ending with the word devaill, and with two extra lines after bidene. This makes the stanza precisely like every other stanza in the poem, according to the scheme abababab. - W. W. S.]
With singing, lauengh, meriues and play
Unto this roche we ryden furth the way.

Palice of Honour, Part 2, near the end.

We now come to two metrical forms, once famous in our poetry, to wit the roundle and the virclay. These are always coupled with the ballet by our older poets;

And many an hymnpe for your holy deies,
That highten balades, roundels, virclayes.
Chaucer, Prol. to the Legend of Goode Women, l. 422.

The former of these metrical contrivances is claimed by Boicau as a countryman born, né Gaulois. It is as thoroughly French in spirit as in origin; one of those ingenious trifles, which only a Frenchman could have hit upon, and which no one but a Frenchman would have sought for.

The roundle is a short poem of not more than three staves. It admits only two rimes; and repeats the whole or part of the opening couplet as a burthen. From these repetitions it takes its name.

In the earlier roundles the burthen consisted of the first couplet, or at least of the first verse; but it gradually dwindled to the opening hemistich, and at last shrunk to the two first words. It was repeated at the end both of the second and third staves, but was often incorporated, as it were, into the second, especially in the older roundles.

Marot, who has been called King of the Roundelay,¹ chiefly used the roundle of thirteen verses. This quickly superseded the others; and seems to be the only kind of roundle, which has survived in the recollection of our neighbours. The following, which was made on the meeting of Henry and Francis in the Champ d’Or, may serve as an example.

De deuques rois²: la noblesse et puissance
Veu en ce lieu : nous donne connoissance,

¹ [Roundelay is merely a corruption of rondelet, diminutive of O. French rondelet. The suffix -lay owes its spelling to confusion with lay. -W. W. S.]
² I mark the middle pause as an illustration of the rule in p. 522.
There are not many English roundles written on this model. Cotton has left us a very un gallant one in verses of four accents; which, however, somewhat varies the order of the rimes.

Thou fool! if madness be so rife,
That, spite of wit, thou'lt have a wife,
I'll tell thee what thou must expect
After the honeymoon neglect.
All the sad days of thy whole life,

To that a world of woe and strife,
Which is of marriage the effect.
And thou thy woe's own architect

Thou fool!

Thou'lt nothing find but dis-regard,
Ill words in th' scolding dialect,
For she'll all tabor be, or life,
Then prye thee go and whet thy knife,
And from this fate thyself protect,

Thou fool!

Rondeau.

The roundle of ten verses was used both by Chartier and by Marot. The latter wrote the following against Mathieu de Vaucolles, who had assumed the title of "poete champestre." The burthen, it will be seen, is incorporated into the second stave.

He gives the couplet, in the second stave, to the second rime instead of the first; and makes the rimes change places in the third stave.
With singing, lauung, merines and play
I'nto this roche we ryden furth the way.
_Palme of Honour, Part 2, near the end._

We now come to two metrical forms, once famous in our
poetry, to wit the _roundle_ and the _virelay_. These are
always coupled with the ballet by our older poets;

And many an hymnpe for your holy daies,
That heighten _balades, roundles, virelais._
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an example.

_De deux grans reis_ ²: _la noblesse et puissance_
_Veu en ce lien: nous donne connoissance,_

¹ _Roundelay is merely a corruption of rondelet, diminutive of O. French
coundel._ The suffix _-lay_ owes its spelling to confusion with _lai_. -W. W. S
² I mark the middle pause as an illustration of the rule in p. 322.
Qu'amié prend : courage de Lyon,
Pau ruer jus : vielle rebellion
Et mettre sus de paix l'es jouissance.

Soit en beauté : savoir et countenance
Les anciens : n'ont point de souvenance,
D'avoir onc' veu : si grand' perfection

De deux grans roys :
Et la festin : la pompe, et l'assistance,
Surpasse en bien : le triumphe et prestance
Qui fut jadis : sur le mont Pelyon .
Car dela vint : la guerre d'Hyon,
Et de ceci : vient paix et alliance

De deux grans roys.

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Thou fool ! if madness be so rife,
That, spite of wit, thou'lt have a wife,
I'll tell thee what thou must expect
After the honeymoon neglect,
All the sad days of thy whole life ;

To that a world of woe and strife,
Which is of marriage the effect ;
And thou thy woe's own architect.

Thou fool ,
Thou'lt nothing find but disrespect,
Ill words in th' scolding dialect,
For she'll all tabor be, or life ;
Then prythee go and whet thy knife,
And from this fate thyself protect,

Thou fool !

Houndau.

The roundle of ten verses was used both by Chartier and by Marot. The latter wrote the following against Mathieu de Vaucelles, who had assumed the title of "poete champestre." The burthen, it will be seen, is incorporated into the second stave.

1 He gives the couplet, in the second stave, to the second rime instead of the first; and makes the rimes change places in the third stave.
Qu'on mene aux champs ce coquardeau,
Lequel gaste, quand il compose,
Raison, mesure, texte et glose,
Soit en balade soit en rondeau.

Il n'a cervelle ne cerveau,
C'est pourquoi si haut crier j'ose,
Qu'on mene aux champs ce coquardeau.

S'il veut rien faire de nouveau,
Qu'il œuvre hardiment en prose ;
(J'entens s'il en sait quelque chose)
Car en rithme ce n'est qu'un veau,
Qu'on mene aux champs.

On this model were written several English roundles; two of a very early date are given by Ritson. One of them was made by Lidgate on the coronation of Henry the Sixth. The burthen, which clearly consisted of the first verse, seems to have been omitted by the blundering transcriber.

Rejoice ye reames of England and of France!
A brauncehe that sprang oute of the flore de lys,
Blode of seint Edward and seint Lowys,
God hath this day sent in governaunce.

God of nature hath yoven him suffisaunce
Likly to atteyne to grete honoure and pris.

O hevenly blossom, o budde of all plesaunce
God graunt the grace for to ben als wise,
As was thi fader, by circumspect advise,
Stable in vertue withoute variaunce.

Three roundles of another form were published by Bishop Percy from a Pepysian MS, which ascribed them to Chaucer. One of them is the following.

Youre two cyn will sle me sodenly,
I may the beante of them not sustene,
So wendeth it thorowout my herte kene.

And butt your words will helen hastily
My hertes wound, while that it is grene,
Youre two cyn will sle me sodenly.

A pun on the name of Faucelles.
Upon my trouth I say yow faithfully,  
That ye heu of my liffe and deth the quene,  
For with my deth the trouth shall be sene.  
Youre two eyn, &c.

Chaucer, ed. Morris, vi. 304.

Douglas, in his Prologue to the Encid, mentions the name of "roundalis;" and Ruddiman, like a true Scotchman, will have the "roundal" to be something different from the English roundle or French rondeau. He tells us it was used for raillery, and consisted of eight verses, whereof the two last corresponded with the two first, and also the fourth with the first. He had, probably, never read Le Jardin de Plaisance--the French Ars Poetica of the fifteenth century.

Ainsi se font communs rondeaux.
Ne plus ne moins que cestuy ci.
Tant de vont que de vont deaux,
Ainsi se font communs rondeaux.

Plusieurs gentils et mains bourdeaux
Faillant silz ne font par tel cy,
Ainsi se font communs rondeaux
Ne plus ne moins que cestuy ci.

We have seen that the application of this trille to the purposes of raillery is not peculiar to the Scotch.

The virelay takes its name from the peculiarities of its formation—the /weering lay/. The French virelay never contained more than two rimes, one of which was made to lead at the beginning, and the other at the end of the poem. In the English virelay, one, at least, of the rimes always changed its place, but the number of rimes was generally more than two.

Gascoyne tells us he never saw but one song, that was "by authoritie called /virey/, and that was a long discorse in verses," such as he had himself used in one of his poems—The Voyage into Holland. [See Gascoigne's Poems, ed. Hazlitt, vol. i. pp. 388, 507.]

1 [Read /gane/, i.e. visible, as in Chaucer's Prologue, l. 594.—W. W. S.]
2 I suspect the ballet in p. 594 was meant for a Virelay.
The winde waxt calme, as I have said before,
O mightie God, so didst thou swage our woes!
The silly ship was sowst and smitten sore
Wyth counter buffets, blowes, and double blowes:
At last the keele, which might endure no more,

Gan rend in twaine, and let the water in—
Then mighty you see pale looks, and woful cheare,
Then mighty you heare loud cries, and deadly dinne!
Well! noble minds in peril best appear,
And boldest harts in bale will never blisse!

For there were some (of whom I will not say
That I was one) that neyvr changed hue, &c.

The critic most probably overlooked the change in the rimes.

Cotton has left us "a Virclay," in which he uses a stave
similar to Gascoyne's, save only that he breaks two of the
vorses.

Thou cruel fair, I go.
To seek out any fate but thee;
Since there is none can wound me so
Nor that has half thy cruelty.
    Thou cruel fair, I go.

For ever then farewell!
'Tis a long leave I take: but oh!
To tarry with thee here is hell,
And twenty thousand hells to go.
    For ever then farewell!

Here the governing rime of the one stave becomes the
intermediate rime of the other; and in a French virclay the
secondary rime would in like manner have been changed
into the primary. I incline to think that even in the English
song, the change of the secondary rime into the primary
would have been more correct.

This favourite combination of the virclay may take its
name from the poem—the vēclay-stave.

1 [Sack. — Hazlitt.]
2 [Perils.—Hazlitt.]
3 [Which.—Hazlitt.]
4 [In the edition of Cotton’s poems in the English Poets, ed. Chalmers, 1810,
vii. 710, we here find though for then. which must be wrong. —W. W. S.]
In like manner I would give the title of roundle-stave to the combination,

1
1
2
2
1

inasmuch as it twice appears in the common roundle\(^1\) of thirteen verses. Dunbar not unfrequently uses it, and, among other instances, in his Winter-Meditation,\(^2\)

1 am assayit on everie side,
Dispair sayis ay, “In tyme provyde,
“ And get sum thin gruairon to leif.
“ Or with girt trouble and mischeif
“ Thow sall into this court abyde,” &c.

And than sayis Age, “My friend, cum near.
“ And be not strange, I the requeir.
“ Cum brudir, by the hand me tak,
“ Remember thow hes compt to mak
“ Of all the tyme thow spendent hen.”

Syne Deid castis up his yettis wyd,
Saying, “Thir oppin sall ye byd,
“ Albeid that yow wer never so stant.
“ Undir this lyntall sall thou bount,
“ Thair is nae uthir way besyd,” &c.

The final verse in this stave is never found repeated as a burthen, the three rimes throwing difficulties in the way of such an arrangement; but in the roundle-stave with inter-woren rime the burthen was almost universal.

This variety of the roundle-stave was chiefly patronized by Dunbar, who wrote in it nearly one-third of his poems. The following staves are taken from one of the many “complaints” which, in his old age, he addressed to his sovereign: \(^3\)

Schir, yit remembris of befor,
How that my growth is done forsoir,
In your service with pane and greif,

---

\(^1\) See p. 644.
\(^2\) [See Pinkerton. Ancient Scottish Poems, i. 125, 126.]
\(^3\) [See Sibbald, Chron. of Scot. Poetry, i. 316.]
HISTORY OF ENGLISH RHYTHMS.  B. IV.

Gud consciens cryis, reward thairfoir;
Excess of thocht dois me mischeif, &c.

May nane remeild my malady,
Sa weill as ye, Schir, veraly;
For with a benefice ye may preief
Gif that I mende nocht hestely;
Excess of thocht dois me mischeif.

I wes on yowth, on nurcis kne,
Call'd "dandely, Bishop, dandely!"
And quhen that ege now dois me greif,
Ane sempie vicar I can nocht be:
Excess of thocht dois me mischeif, &c.

I do not profess to give every variety of ballet-stave, that may be found in our poetry, for the number would rather confuse the reader than enlighten him; but when a particular combination has been adopted by any poet of name, I shall always notice it, though at the risk of some inconvenience. A certain class of staves were formed by prefixing a compleat to some of the ballet stanzas; and one of these, fashioned on the interwoven roundle-stave, was often used by the Scotch poet, whom we have so often quoted, as in his Tydings fra the Session [stanzas 1, 2, 7].

Ane muriellandis man of uplandis mak
At hame thus to his nyelbour spak,
Qhhat tydings, Gossep? peax or weir?
The tother rumit in his eir,
I tell yow this under confession,
But laitly lichtit of my meir,
I come of Edinburgh fra the Session.

Qhhat tydingis hard ye thair, I pray yow?
The tother answerit, I sall say yow;
Keep this all secreit, gentill brother,
Is na man thair that trestis ane uther;
Ane common deo of transgression
Of innocent folkis prevenis a futher. 3
Sie tydingis hard I at the Session, &c.

Religious men of cyers placis
Cum thair to waw, and se fair facis,
Bait Carmelites and Cordelleris, &c.

Anxiety. 2 Nurse's knee. 3 Age.
[Shambur; see Sibbald, Chron. of Scot. Poetry, i. 247.]
A fother, cart-load, a great number.
There is also a curious stave, which should be noticed, if it were only for the celebrity it once possessed throughout Europe—I mean the Sestino-stave, invented by Arnaud Daniel, the Troubadour eulogised by Dante and Petrarch. The stave consisted of six verses, which had no rime, but the same final syllables were used in all the staves; and the order was so regulated, that each of the final syllables, in its turn, closed the stanza. Spenser has left us an example.

Ye wasteful woods bear witnesse of my woe,
Wherein my plaints did oftentimes resound.
Ye careless birds are privy to my cries,
Which, in your songs, were wont to make a part;
Thou pleasant spring hast lul'd me oft asleep,
Whose streames my trickling tears did oft augment.

Resort of people doth my grief augment,
The walled towns do work my greater woe,
The forest wide is fitter to resound
The hollow echo of my careful cries;
I hate the house, since thence my love did part,
Whose wailful want debars my eyes of sleep, &c.


Of course these changes would be exhausted with the sixth stave, and then came the Envoi of these verses, containing all the six syllables.

And you that feel no woe, when as the sound
Of these my nightly cries, ye hear apart,
Let break your sounder sleep, and pity augment.

Celebrity was cheaply purchased, when an invention such as this could ensure it!

The ballet-staves sometimes took, over and above their regular consonances, a quantity of jingle, in the shape of middle rime, sectional rime, interwoven rime, &c. The following interwoven roundle-stave was written by Sir James English,1 secretary to Queen Margaret, about the year 1513:

Sic pryd with rellatis, so few till preiche and pray,
Sic hant of hriollis with thame bayth nicht and day,

1 [See Sibbald, Chron. of Scot. Poetry, i. 374.]
That sowyld halefay thair God afor thair ene,
So nice array, so strange to thair abbay,
Within this land was nevir hard nor sene.

Douglas, in like manner, deluges with sectional rime the three last stanzas of his "Palice of Honour," containing the poet's address to that Divinity.

O hie Honour, sweet hevinlie flour, digest!
Gem verteneous, maist precious, gudliest.
For hie renown, thou art guerdoun conding, &c.

This importence, however, was not confined to the north of the Tweed. We had already set them the example; for stanzas, precisely similar to the one last quoted, were used in the romance of Annolida and Arcite.

The Italian staves were first brought into the country by the young Englishmen, who visited Italy in the first half of the sixteenth century. Surrey attempted to naturalize the bauded three-lined staves of Dante; but, though he had several imitators, those foreign combinations hardly survived him.

The sune hath twice brought forth his tender greene,
Twise clad the earth in lively lustinesse,
Ones have the windes the trees despoiled clene.

And ones again begins their cruchesse—
Sins I have had under my breast the harm,
That never shall recover healthfulness.

The winters hurt recovers with the warme,
The parched greene restored is with shade,
What warmth alas! may serve for to disarm

The frozen hart, &c.? [See Tottel's Miscellany, ed. Arber, p. 3.]

The Italian stave of eight (the celebrated ottava rima) had better fortune. From the days of Surrey to those of Byron it has flourished in our poetry. Spenser wrote in it two of his poems, the Muiopotmos and Virgil's Gnat. From
the former of these are taken the following stanzas [stanzas
20 and 27].

The woods, the rivers, and the meadows green,
With his air-cutting wings he measur'd wide,
Ne did he leave the mountains bare unseen,
Nor the rank grasse, fens delights untrysted;
But none of these, however sweet they been,
Mote please his fancy, nor him cause it abide,
His choicefull sense with ev'ry change doth flit,
No common things may please a wav'ring wit, &c.

What more felicity can fall to creature
Than to enjoy delight with liberty;
And to be Lord of all the works of Nature,
To reign in th' air from earth to highest sky,
To feed on flow'rs and weeds of glorious feature,
To take whatever thing doth please the eye?
Who rests not pleased with such happiness,
Well worthy he to taste of wretchedness.

But of all the importations from Italy the most important was certainly the Sonnet. This celebrated stanza is said to have been invented by the Sicilians; but to Petrarch it owes its celebrity, and to his works should we look for its peculiarities of structure.

"The Petrarchian stanza,"—to use the language of Milton—may be considered as made up of the ballet-stave of eight with close rime,¹ and of two triplets. The ballet-stave has never more than two rimes, and the triplets generally the same number, but sometimes they have three. In the ballet-stave the poet opens and illustrates his subject, which is wound up in the triplets with some striking thought or expression. All conceit, however, should be avoided, for one of the chief beauties of the sonnet lies in its repose and dignity.

These rules agree in substance with those which Boileau has given us, both as to the management of the metre and of the subject. He required,

\[
\text{qu'en deux quatrains de mesure pareille} \\
\text{La rime avec deux sons frappât huit fois l'oreille.}
\]

¹ See p. 638.
In the triplets the rhyme was variously managed. Sometimes Petrarch uses two of Dante's staves, as in Milton's sonnet:

When Faith and Love, which parted from thee never,
Had ripen'd thy just soul to dwell with God,
Meekly thou did'st resign this earthly load
Of death, call'd life, which us from life doth sever.
Thy works and alms, and all thy good endeavour
Staid not behind, nor in the grave were trod;
But, as Faith pointed with her golden rod,
Follow'd thee up to joy and bliss for ever.
Love led them on, and Faith, who knew them best,
Thy handmaids, clad them o'er with purple beams.
And azure wings, that up they flew so drest,
And spake the truth of thee on glorious themes
Before the Judge; who thenceforth bade thee rest,

And drink thy fill of pure immortal streams.

Sonnet on Mrs. C. Thomson.

Sometimes he uses the same terminations in the second as in the first triplet. The Sonnet to Cyriack Skinner is written upon this model.

Occasionally Milton makes of the two triplets a ballet-stave of six; and in one sonnet he disposes of the rhymes in a way which defies my powers of classification.¹

Lawrence! of virtuous father virtuous son,
Now that the fields are dank, and ways are mire,
Where shall we sometimes meet, and by the fire
Help waste a sullen day, what may be won
From the hard season gaining? Time will run
On smoother, till Favonius re-inspire
The frozen earth, and clothe in fresh attire
The lily' and rose, that neither sow'd nor spun.
What neat repast shall feast us, light and choice,
Of Attic taste, with wine, whence we may rise
To hear the lute well touch'd, or artful voice
Warble immortal notes, and Tuscan air?

¹ [What Milton has done is this. He first had the rhymes choice, voice, rise—air, spare, wise—in the order aabcc; he then transposed the places of voice and rise.—W. W. S.]
He who of those delights can judge, and spare
To interpose them oft, is not unwise.

Sonnet to Mr. Lawrence.

In the sixteenth century, many of the Italians ventured to alter the structure of the sonnet, and were of course followed by their imitators in this country. The object of all these changes was greater facility. Some of these new sonnets were divided into four parts—to wit, three interwoven staves of four verses, and a couplet—no two of which had any metrical connexion between them. It was in this loose stanza that Spenser wrote his Visions of Bellay,¹ and Shakespeare his singular, and, till lately, almost incomprehensible² sonnets. When the structure of the Sonnet had been thus trifled with, further change was to be expected. "The Sonnet" increased in length; its interwoven staves became four, five, and at last six; and in one of these poems, written by Surrey, during his imprisonment at Windsor, we have no less than twelve such staves—the whole, however, carefully shut in with the final couplet! He thus passes in review the pleasures of his happier days:

——The gravel-ground¹ wyth sleeues tied on the helme
   On soming horse, with swordes and frendly hartes;
Wyth chere as though one should another whelme,
   Where we have fought, and chased off with darters, &c

The wylde forest, the clothed holts with grewe,
With raynes avayled,¹ and switt ybreathed horse,
With crye of houndes, and mery blasts betwene.
   Where we did chase the fearful hart of force, &c.

Echeo, alas! that doth my sorrow rewe,
Returns thereto a hollow sounde of playnt;

¹ Opitz, Gryphius, &c., usually wrote their sonnets in Alexandrines. But see Müller, Gryph. 145, 156, 163.

² Mr. Beaden has shown very convincingly, I think, that the W. II., to whom the sonnets are addressed, was William Herbert, afterwards Earl of Pembroke, the gifted son of a most gifted mother. It is only when addressed to a man like this—the most accomplished and high-minded nobleman of his day—that we can tolerate some of the expressions found in these sonnets, coming as they do from Shakespeare.

¹ The tilt-yard.

¹ Lower'd, loosened.
Thus I alone, where all my freedom grewe,
In pryson pine, with bondage and restraint.
And with remembrance of the greater greefe
To banish th' lesse, I find my chief reliefe.

[See Tottel's Miscellany, ed. Arber, p. 18.]

In these interwoven staves the reader has doubtless already recognized one of the most important of our metrical forms—I mean the Elegiac stave. The final couplet was quickly lost; and the Sonnet, at the same time that, chiefly by Milton's aid, it recovered its original form, had the honour of giving to our poetry one of its most useful and elegant stanzas. Simplicity is not always a proof of antiquity. The Elegiac stave, and that in which our common ballads are written, though the simplest of their respective classes, were also the last invented. They, both of them, rose out of the ruins of older and more intricate combinations.

1 Vide Opitz, Am Sonntage Exaudi; Muller, Deutsche Dichter, i. 197.
2 See p. 598.
CHAPTER VI.

BROKEN STAVES.

The royal critic, whom we have so often quoted, seems to have given the name of “cuttit or broken verse” to all such staves, as contained verses of unequal length. The name is not an ill-chosen one; but, if applied thus comprehensively, it will bring together staves of different origin, which have been used for very different purposes, and are, consequently, connected with very different associations. I would restrict it to a class of staves, which made their first appearance in our poetry about the middle of the sixteenth century, and had no small influence in giving that lyrical turn to our poetry, which soon afterwards began to show itself.

As the sixteenth century advanced, Frenchman, Italian, and Spaniard, were all alike aiming at novelty of metre, and anxious to relieve themselves from the monotony of their chansons and ballades. The new-found freedom was obtained by the shortening of certain verses, which was effected by lessening the number of their accents. The staves, that resulted from the application of this principle to the older combinations, I would call the broken staves.

This class of staves was probably first brought to England with the Psalms of Marot; and some of the varieties seem to have passed, with the sanction of the great Genevese reformer, from the pages of the French poet, into every corner of Europe, whither Calvinism penetrated. But the broken stave was not applied solely to devotional exercises; our poets, imitating the Italians, used it for general purposes, and we find it at the same time embodying the quaint conceits and elaborate piety of our
"metaphysical poets," and the light and airy lyric of our dramatists.

The broken staves may be divided into two classes, accordingly as the broken verses have, or have not, the same number of accents. To the former of these classes I shall, confine myself, as the latter branches out into such infinite variety, as almost to baffle any attempt at arrangement. The broken verse has generally two accents; but sometimes has three, when the original verse has five, and, in a few cases, even when the original verse has four accents. We have already observed that simplicity of structure is not always a proof of antiquity; some of the oldest broken staves are also the most complicated.

It may, I think, be convenient to range these staves according to the original staves, on which they were modelled, beginning with such as rhyme continuously.

The following "madrigal"¹ made its first appearance in the Miscellany, called England's Helicon. Robert Greene is said to have been the author.

It was a vallie gawdie greene,
Where Dian at the fount was scene;
Greene it was,
And did surpass
All other of Dianae bowers,
In the pride of Floraes flowers.

A fount it was, that no man sees,
Cirkled in with cipres trees,
Set so nie,
That Phæbus' eye
Could not do the virgins seathe,
To see them naked, when they bathe.

Hard by her, upon the ground,
Sate her virgins in a round,
Bathing their
Golden hair,
And sing'ning all | in not|es hie|
Fie on Venus' flattering eye, &c.

¹ We are told (Miscell. Antiq. vol. ii. p. 8), that Sir Thomas Wyat was the first who introduced Italian numbers into English versification.
The song of "Amphion" was written by Sherburne at the time when Charles was struggling with his Parliament.¹

Foreign customs from your land,
Thebans, by fair laws command,
And your good old rites make known
Unto your own... .

Banish vice, walls guard not crimes,
Vengeance o'er tall bulwarks burns.
O'er each sun a Nemesis
Still waking is.

Truth resembling craft, profane
Thirst of empire, and of gain,
Luxury and idle ease,
Banish all these.

War or peace do you approve
With united forces move.
Courts which many columns rear
Their fall[s] less fear

Safer course these pilots run
Who observe more stars than one
Ships with double anchor tied
Secure ride.

Strength united firm doth stand,
Knit in an eternal band,
But proud subjects' private hate
Ruins a state!

Even the three-lined stave, in verses of five accents, was occasionally broken; as in the complimentary letter sent to "old Ben" by the friendly painter, Sir William Burlsce.

To paint thy worth, if rightly I did know it,
And were but painter halfe like thee a poet.
Ben, I would show it.

But, in this skill, my unskilful pen will tire.
Thou and thy worth will still be found farre higher,
And I a liar, &c.²

The Psalm-staves were broken almost as freely as those with continuous rime. Ben Jonson’s Epitaph on one of the boys of Queen Elizabeth’s chapel, may serve as a specimen:

Weep with me, all ye that read
This little story,
And know, for whom a tear you shed,
Death’s self is sorry.

"Twas a child, that so did thrive,
In grace and feature,
As Heaven and Nature seem’d to strive,
Which own’d the creature, &c.

B. Jonson, Epigrams, 120.

His verses against Rime may furnish another example:

Rime, the rack of finest wits,
That expresseth but by fits
True conceit,
Spoiling senses of their treasure,
Cosening judgment with a measure,
But false weight,

Wresting words from their true calling,
Propping verse for fear of falling
To the ground,
Jointing syllables, drowning letters,
Fastning vowels, as with fetters
They were bound, &c.

He, that first invented thee,
May his joints torment’d be,
Cramp’d for ever!
Still may syllables jarre with time,
Still may reason warre with rime,
Resting never, &c.

B. Jonson, Underwoods, 47.

The next specimen is taken from Donne’s version of the 137th Psalm [stanza 9]:

And thou Babel, when the tide
Of thy pride,
Now a flowing, grows to turning,
Victor now, shall then be thrall,
And shall fall
To as low an ebb of mourning.
This stave was used by Marot, and may be found in the songs of every Protestant people in Europe. Gysbert Japicx, for example, thus sings his country's triumph over the Jesuit and Spaniard:

Lit ' uzw nu , reys fro lick sjong 'e
    Ad' in jong :
Oer | de wol ' faert fen ' uzw lår
Huizt | mey schans ' sen buwt te-wire ken
    Huiz en, tjerek en
Falt | siin Heng, heit iju, ne hår :

Let us now right cheer'ly sing,
Old and young,
Oer the wel-fare of our land!
Huizt, with bulwarks! and with out-works!
    Houses! churches!
Fall'n is in his Highness' hand, &c.

I quote from this old Friesish poet, to show the real rhythm of the stanza, which, as usual, is slurred over in the slovenly versification of our countryman. In every language but our own, it always lengthens the first, second, fourth, and fifth verses, and closes the third and sixth with an accented syllable. Hence the origin of this somewhat complicated stave is obvious. Its original stave was clearly formed from two rining trochaic tetrameters, by interweaving a rime and repeating the first sections. By breaking the repeated sections we have the stave before us.

The broken staves, fashioned on the different combinations of the ballet-stave, were perhaps more popular with the foreigner than with our countrymen; but the number of their varieties, to be found in English literature, is singularly great. The interwoven stave of four had generally its last verse shortened, as in the following example from Herbert—"the good George Herbert," as he is still fondly called by many of our countrymen:

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1 Prince Henry, the first member of the House of Orange, that took the title of Highness.

See p. 473.
Sweet day! so cool, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky,
The dew shall weep thy fall to-night,
For thou must die.

In this stave Pope made his first essay in versification,
(the Ode to Solitude,) and poor Byron his last,

'Tis time this heart should be unmov'd
Since others it has ceas'd to move, &c.

It was, perhaps, the most popular of our broken staves, but
owed its popularity to a rather singular influence. The
beautiful song, from which I first quoted, was inserted and
culogised in Isaac Walton's Angler! 1

The ballet-stave of five was broken in different ways—
sometimes in the first and third verses:

    Go lovely rose!
      Tell her, that wastes her time and me,
    That now she knows,
      When I resemble her to thee,
    How sweet and fair she seems to be.

    Tell her that's young
      And shuns to have her graces spied,
    That, had'st thou sprung
      In deserts, where no men abide,
    Thou must have uncommended died, &c.

    Waller.

Sometimes we have only the first verse shortened;

    The great decree of God
      Makes every path of mortals lead
    To this dark common period,
      For what by-ways so-ere we tread
    We end our journey 'mong the dead.

    Habington, Castara, part 3, Poem 6.

The poet, from whom I last quoted, generally prefers the
ballet-stave with close rime. Many of his songs display an
elegance fully equal to their piety.

1 |"Come, let me tell you what holy Herbert says of such days and showers
as these; and then we will thank God that we enjoy them.  Sweet day, so cool;"
&c.—Walton, Complete Angler. c. 5.—W. W. S.|
Domine labia mea aperies.

Now monument of me remaine,
My memorie rust
In the same marble with my dust,
Ere I the spreading laurel gain
By writing wanton or prophane, &c. . . .

Open my lippes, great God! and then
He soare above
The humble light of carnal love—
Upward to thee I'll force my pen,
And trace no path of vulgar men! &c.

Habington, Castara, part 3, Poem 1.

Vias tuas Domine demonstra mihi.

My God! if thou shalt not exclude
Thy comfort thence,
What place can seem to troubled sense
So melancholy, dark, and rude,
To be esteem'd a solitude?

Cast me upon some naked shore,
Where I may tracke
Oney the print of some sad wracke,
If thou be there - though the seas roare,
I shall no gentler calm implore, &c.

Id. Castara, part 3, Poem 17.

Shakespeare, in the following song, seems to have had in view the virelay-stave,¹

Who is Sylvia? what is she
That all our swains commend her ?
Holy, fair, and wise is she,
The Heav'ns such grace did lend her,
That she might admired be.

Is she kind as she is fair,
For beauty lives with kindness ?
Love doth to her eyes repair,
To help him of his blindness,
And, being help'd, inhabits there, &c.

Two Gent. of Verona, 4. 2.

See p. 648.
Many broken staves have been fashioned on the common elegiac stave. One variety was used by Sir William Jones:

What constitutes a state?
Not high-rais’d battlement or labour’d mound,
Thick wall or moated gate,
Not cities proud with spires and turrets crown’d—
No—men, high-minded men, &c.

_Ode in imitation of Alcaeus._

Another variety has been used by Briant, the American poet. His "Address to a Water-fowl," opens with the following staves,

Whither, mid’st falling dew,
While glow the heav’ns with the last steps of day,
Far through their rosy depths dost thou pursue
Thy solitary way?

Vainly the flow’rer’s eye
Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,
As, darkly painted on the crimson sky,
Thy figure floats along.

Seek’st thou the plashy brink
Of weedy lake, or marge of river wade,
Or where the rocking billows rise and sink
On the chaft’d ocean side? &c.

This is a very sweet and, at the same time, a truly American picture.

The original of the following stave, which is taken from one of Herbert’s poems [called “Life”], was probably the elegiac stave, with the first and third verses doubled.

I made a posy, as the day ran by—
Here will I smell my remnant out, and tye
My life within this band—
But time did heccion to the flowers, and they
By noon most cunningly did steal away,
And wither’d in my hand, &c.

In the original of the next stave, the first and third verses must have been _tripled._

[For posy, the former edition has nosegay. —W. W. S.]
All gracious God, the sinner’s sacrifice
A broken heart thou wert not wont despise,
But’t love the fat of rammes or bulls to prize
An offering meet
For thy acceptance; O behold me right,
And take compassion on my grievous plight!
What odour can be, than a heart contrite
To thee more sweet? &c.

Ben Jonson, Underwoods, 1. 2.

The same fondness for jingle, which frittered our ballet-staves into shapeless heaps of rime, also affected our broken staves, though not to the same degree. The original of the following stave seems to belong to that class of ballet-staves, which were formed by adding a couplet to some one of the ordinary combinations. In the present case, the couplet is subjoined to the ballet-stave of six. Its first verse is not only broken, but also takes internal rime.

If thou beest born to see strange sights,
Things invisible to see,
Ride ten thousand daies and nights,
Till age snow white haires on thee
Thou, when thou return’st, wilt tell me
All strange wonders that befell thee:
And swear,
No where
Lives a woman true and fair.

F. Beaumont, 1 Song.

In the following stave, from Turberville, the fifth and sixth verses are broken, and the first section of the seventh verse rimes with them.

If she had dained my good will,
And recompense me with her love,
I would have beene her vassal still
And never once my heart remove;
I did pretend, pretend,
To be her friend,
Unto the end, but she refuse
My loving heart, and mee abuse.

The Looke Abused renounceth Love.

The repetition in the fifth line is a peculiarity often found in the broken verse of the sixteenth century.
CHAPTER VII.

THE SPENSER STAVES.

The noble stanza which we owe to Spenser, is formed by adding an alexandrine to the ballet-stave of eight—such alexandrine riming with the last verse of the ballet-stave. By this banding of the rime, Spenser’s stanza has all that connexion of parts which science demands, and which is so seldom to be met with in our later combinations. The sweeping length of the alexandrine furnishes also an imposing compass of sound, that to many ears is singularly delightful, and must, I think, convey to every one an impression of grandeur and of dignity.

When to these advantages of structure are added the associations, which Spenser’s genius conferred upon it, we may understand the enthusiasm, that sees so many excellencies in Spenser’s stanza, and pronounces it to be the most beautiful, as well as the most perfect of English combinations. Warton’s notice of this stanza is almost the only exception to the eulogies of our critics; and his unfavourable judgment will the less surprise us, when we remember the loose notions he entertained on the subject of versification,¹ and that he has, in this very criticism, confounded our common ballet-stave of eight with the ottava rima of the Italians. His objection to the multiplicity of rimes—because our language does not “easily fall into a frequent repetition of the same termination”—

¹ He, more than once, runs the verses of our older poets one into the other, and sometimes makes the fragment of a line stand for the whole. In other cases, he writes a long passage continuously—apparently unaware that it divides itself into beautiful and scientific stanzas. Many of these oversights Price has not corrected.
may be met by the criticism of Beattie, who maintains that our language, "from its irregularity of inflexion, and number of monosyllables, abounds in diversified terminations, and consequently renders our poetry susceptible of an endless variety of legitimate rimes." The advantages of variety may be best estimated, by considering at what cost they have, in many cases, been purchased; and when we call to mind how many poets have used this stanza, that it has embodied the happiest inventions of Shenstone and Thomson, of Beattie and of Byron, we may well doubt, if the difficulties of its construction be quite so formidable, as Warton apprehended.

The popularity of this stanza soon gave rise to numerous imitations. All of them were formed on one or other of two principles; either, as in Spenser's stanza, by adding an alexandrine to some well-known combination (generally to one of the ballet-staves), or by the substitution of such alexandrine for the last verse of the stanza. Such imitations I would class (together with Spenser's own stanza) under the general title of Spenser-staves—thus giving to these peculiarly English combinations the name of the great English poet, who first brought the principle into notice, on which they have been constructed.

The first class of Spenser-staves may best open with the stanza, which gave rise to all the others—the magnificent stanza, which the Faery Queen has immortalized. It is hard to choose, where choice is distracted by such varied excellence; but the following well-known imitation of the Italian has claims upon our notice, as affording the means, not only of comparing the two languages in a point wherein our own is generally thought deficient—1 mean in point of harmony—but also of comparing the capabilities of the two favourite stanzas.

Eftsoons they heard a most delicious sound
Of all that mote delight a dainty ear,
Such as at once might not on living ground
(Save in this Paradise) be heard elsewhere;
Right hard it was for wight which did it hear
To reele what manner music that mote be,
For all, that pleasing is to living ear.
Was there consorted in one harmonie—
Birds, voices, instruments, winds, waters all agree.
The joyous birds, shrouded in chearful shade,
Their notes unto the voice attemper'd sweet;
Th' angelical soft trembling voices made
To th' instruments divine resondence meet;
The silvery-sounding instruments did meet
With the base murmur of the waters' fall;
The waters' fall, with difference discreet,
Now soft, now loud, unto the wind did call—
The gentle, warbling wind low answered to all.

_Fairy Queen, 2. 12. 70, 71._

Phineas Fletcher, in his very singular poem, entitled
The Purple Island, has used a Spenser-stave, fashioned on
the ballet-stave of six verses.

The cheerful lark, mounting from early bed,
With sweet salutes awakes the drowsy night.
The earth she left, and up to heav'n is fled,
There chants her Maker's praises out of sight.
Earth seems a mole-hill, men but ants to be,
Teaching proud men, that soar to high degree,
The further up they climb, the less they seem and see

_Canto IX. st. 2._

Giles Fletcher, "tho' Spenser of his age," as Quarles
termed him, has left us another kind of Spenser-stave
in the poem which celebrates Christ's Triumph upon Earth.

Her tent with sunny clouds was cieled aloft,
And so exceeding shone with a false light,
That heav'n itself to her it seemed off,
Heav'n without clouds to her deluded sight;
But clouds without heav'n it was aright;
And as her house was built, so did her brain
Build castles in the air, with idle pain,
But heart she never had in all her body vain.

Like as a ship, in which no balance ¹ lies,
Without a pilot on the sleeping waves,
Fairly along with wind and water flies,
And painted masts with silken sails embraves,
That Neptune's self the bragging vessel saves
To laugh awhile at her so proud array,

¹ Ballast.
Her waving streamers loosely she lets play,
And waving colours shine, as bright as smiling day:

—-Right so Presumption did herself behave, &c.
Christ's Triumph on Earth, st. 34, 35.

In this stave (and the remark applies also to the one preceding it) the final rime runs continuously through the three last verses. This jingling was avoided, and another more convenient stave formed on the ballet-stave of seven, by substituting an alexandrine for the last verse of the stanza. Milton has used this Spenser-stave.

Yet can I net persuade me thou art dead,
Or that thy corse corrupts in earth's dark womb,
Or that thy beauties lie in wormy bed,
Hid from the world in a low delyved tomb
Could Heav'n for pity thee so strictly doom?
Oh no! for something in thy face did shine

Above mortality, that shou'd thou wast divine.

On the Death of a Fair Infant, st. 5.

Phineas Fletcher had preceded Milton in the use of this stanza some thirty years; and in his Letter to his Cousin W. R., the same poet has given us another kind of Spenser-stave, similarly formed in the ballet-stave of five verses. Prior, in his Poem on the Campaign of 1706, has used a Spenser-stave, consisting of two elegiac staves and a couplet. The ballet-stave, which answers to this arrangement, had been used by Churchyard.

When bright Eliza rul'd Britannia's state,
Widely distributing her high commands,
And boldly wise, and fortunately great,
Freed the glad nation from tyrannic bands,
An equal genius was in Spenser found,
To the high theme he match'd his noble lays,

1 In his "Lamentaeon" for the death of Henry the Seventh's Queen, written in 1503, Sir Thomas More uses the ballet-stave of seven, and often gives six accents to the last verse of the stanza. This verse always ends with the words "and lo now here she lies." It must have been often convenient to wedge this section into a verse of six accents; and as the poet's rhythm is in other respects loose, I consider the resemblance to the Spenser-stave owing rather to the tumbling rhythm of the period, than to any design of introducing novelty into English versification.
He travell'd England o'er on fairy ground,
In mystic notes to sing his monarch's praise—
Reciting wondrous truths in pleasing dreams,
He deck'd Eliza's head with Gloriana's beams.

But greatest Anna! while thy arms pursue
Paths of renown, and climb ascents of fame,
Which nor Augustus, nor Eliza knew,
What poet shall be found to sing thy name?
What numbers shall record, what tongue shall say
Thy wars on land, thy triumphs on the main?
O fairest model of imperial sway!
What equal pen shall write thy wondrous reign?
Who shall attempts and feats of arms rehearse,
Nor yet by story told, nor parallel'd by verse?

Prior professed to follow Spenser "in the manner of his expression and turn of his number, having only added one verse to his stanza," which he thought "made the number more harmonious." Had he stated facility to be his aim, he had shown more honesty. He has escaped the difficulties of Spenser's stanza, but at the same time has sacrificed all its science and not a little of its beauty.

Prior's name gave to this stanza a certain degree of popularity. Among others, it was used by Lowth in his Choice of Hercules, and by Denton in his poem on the Immortality of the Soul.

We have a few instances, in which the Spenser-stave was fashioned on combinations other than the ballet-stave, as in Rochester's poem on Nothing [stanzas 15 and 16].

Nothing, who dwell'st with fools in grave disguise,
For whom they rev'rend shapes and forms devise,
Lawn sleeves, and furs, and gowns, when they like thee look wise,

French truth, Dutch prowess, British policy,
Hibernian learning, Scotch civility,
Spaniards' dispatch, Danes' wit, are mainly seen in thee! &c.

Occasionally we have even the Psalm-staves ending with an alexandrine, as in Warton's verses on the Suicide's Grave [st. 1].

Beneath the beech, whose branches bare
Smut with the lightning's vivid glare
O'erhang the craggy road,
And whistle hollow, as they wave,
Within a solitary grave
A slayer of himself\(^1\) holds his secur'd abode.

The *broken* stave was closed with an alexandrine at a
very early period. The following intricate specimen was
used by Spenser in his Epithalamion, written on the mar-
rriage of the two Ladies Somerset, daughters of Lord
Worcester.\(^2\) It may be considered as compounded of a
ballet-stave of 6, a peculiar ballet-stave of 5 with three
terminations, another ballet-stave of 6, and a final couplet
—the first and second staves receiving *band* from the rime.
Each of the three staves breaks its last verse.

Open the Temple-gates unto my love!
Open them wide, that she may enter in,
And all the posts adorn, as doth behave,
And all the pillars deck with garlands trim,
For to receive this Saint with honour due,
That cometh in to you;
With trembling steps and humble reverence
She cometh in before the Almighty's view
Of her, ye Virgins, learn obedience,
When so ye come into these holy places,
To humble your proud faces.
Bring her up to th' High Altar, that she may
The sacred ceremonies there partake
The which do endless matrimony make.
And let the roaring organs loudly play
The praises of the Lord in lively notes;
The whiles with hollow threnody
The Choristers the joyous anthem sing.
That all the woods may answer, and their echo ring, &c.

The stave which Cowley uses in his Ode [or Hymn] to
Light is of the same kind, but of greater simplicity. The
original was doubtless Waller's stave, consisting of two
riming couplets.\(^3\) I quote the ode at some length, as it is
one of the few cases, in which poetry has succeeded in
throwing grace and beauty over the stern truths of science.

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\(^1\) [In the former edition—"A wretched suicide holds," &c. But see T. War-
W. W. S.]

\(^2\) [Rather, written on his own marriage. The other poem is called Protha-
lamion.—W. W. S.]

\(^3\) See p. 385.
——All the world’s brav’ry that delights our eyes
Is but thy several liveries,
Thou the rich dye on them bestow’st,
Thy nimble pencil paints this landscape as thou go’st.

A crimson garment in the rose thou wear’st,
A crown of studded gold thou bear’st—
The virgin lilies, in their white,
Are clad but in the lawn of almost naked light.

The violet, Spring’s little infant, stands
Girt in thy purple swaddling-bands;
On the fair tulip thou dost dote,
Thou cloth’st them in a gay and party-colour’d coat, &c. &c. . . .

Through the soft ways of heav’n and air and sea,
Which open all their pores to thee,
Like a clear river thou dost glide,
And with thy living stream, through the close channels slide; . . .

But the vast ocean of unbounded day
In th’ empyrean heav’n does stay;
Thy rivers, lakes, and springs below,
From thence took first their rise, thither at last must flow.

It may be observed, before we close the chapter, that Chatterton has used the Spenser-staves, in the poems which he ascribed to Rowley. This anachronism would, of itself, be sufficient to prove the forgery, even though it had baffled every other test, which modern criticism has applied to it.¹

¹ ["But the most remarkable metre in the Rowley Poems is the ten-line stanza. . . . When Walpole objected to its use, Chatterton replied—'The stanza Rowley writes in, instead of being introduced by Spenser, was in use 300 years before.' . . . Chatterton ought to have the full credit of inventing this stanza, and it is only one of the proofs of his originality. . . . It is really the Spenserian stanza, with an alteration. If we denote the rimes of that stanza by the letters a, b, c, we get the following formula to express it, viz. a, b, a, b, c, b, c, c. But the Rowley stanza is expressed by a, b, a, b, b, c, b, c, d, d. The reason for the alteration is clear, viz. to save trouble. . . . If only one double-pair of rimes can be thought of, the rest are easily disposed of. . . . But whilst giving Chatterton full credit for his thought, I suppose that a fine ear will much prefer the music of Spenser."—Essay on the Rowley Poems, by W. W. Skeat; vol. ii. p. xii.]
CHAPTER VIII.

In the present chapter it is intended briefly to review the history of our rhythms. But, instead of treating each rhythm separately, as heretofore, we shall more particularly endeavour to show the relation, which the several varieties bear to each other, as regards time and place. Perhaps this may be best done, and the dates and localities brought most satisfactorily before the reader, by laying before him a list of our early poets, accompanied with such slight sketches of their works, whether English, Latin, or Romance, as our very limited space will admit of. We shall thus be enabled to bring together those notices of our early literature, which have been scattered through the preceding pages, as they chanced to be suggested in the course of other inquiries.

English poetry, which naturally first claims our attention, may be traced to

THE FIFTH CENTURY.

The Gleeman was born of decent (perhaps noble) parentage among the Myrgings,—a Gothic race, dwelling on the marches, which separated the Englo from the Swefo during the fourth and fifth centuries. In early life he accompanied Ealhild, daughter of Eadwine Lord of the Myrgings, to the court of Eormanric, the celebrated King of the East-Goten. Here his skill on the harp appears to have gained him favour, and we find him rewarded with a costly beigh or armlet. He afterwards visited the great Lords of the East-Goten, and such of the Slavish and Finnish tribes to the eastward, as were subject to their rule.

It was probably after the death of Eormanric in 375, that the Gleeman returned to his native tribe, and ob-
tained from Eadgils, successor and perhaps son of Eadwine, the land which had been holden by his father. We then find him in Italy with Ealfwine, another son of Eadwine, and probably one of the chiefs that followed Alaric in his inroad, A.D. 401; for the Gleeman's praises dwell chiefly on those suspicious virtues—his valour and liberality. From this period Gothic tribes, one after the other, gained a footing in the empire; and the Gleeman seems to have availed himself of the opportunity to wander through its provinces. Unless his story be interpolated, he reached, in his eastward progress, not only the Meads, but even the Hindoos.

The song, which records these wanderings, must have been written in the poet's old age, for Ætla is mentioned as King of the Huns, and his accession dates only in 433.

Our claim to rank the Gleeman as an English poet, may be told in few words. The Myrings, though not Anglo-Saxon, in the fourth century, were a bordering tribe; the Gleeman's song is English, or, as we now choose to call it, Anglo-Saxon; and the introduction is written by an Englishman, who had not yet left the continent. Here, then, we have a poem written in English, prefaced by an Englishman, and preserved in an English MS.—the writer living on the borders of the continental Ongle, and his descendants probably joining in the invasion and settlement of this island—if the poem be not English, to what Gothic dialect, extinct or living, may we refer it?

Besides the Gleeman's song, there are two others, which must date as early as the fifth century, I mean the Tale of Beowulf and the Fall of Finsburgh. The rhythms in these two poems are much shorter than those which are found in the Gleeman's song, and indeed have all those qualities, which, it has been elsewhere conjectured, must have characterised the earliest rhythms of our language. But the lengthened and varied cadences of the Gleeman's song show a very matured system of versification, and will,
perhaps, justify us in referring these short and abrupt rhythms, rather to the nature of the subject than to the earliness of the period. The sectional rime ¹ is found in all the three poems, and there are also traces of the unaccented rime ²—a clear proof of the antiquity of these appendages; for the poems were, in all fair probability, written before the Anglo left the continent. They are the most venerable relics of our early literature—the oldest original compositions, extant in any of the European languages which survived or superseded the Greek and Latin.

During the sixth century, our forefathers were probably too busy with the Welshman to think much of poetry; at least, no poem has come down to us which can, with any show of reason, be assigned to this period. But if their poetical genius were awhile controlled by the sterner energies which the times called into action, it soon after broke forth with redoubled lustre, for the brightest name of Anglo-Saxon poetry is to be met with in

THE SEVENTH CENTURY.

Cædmon was neat-herd to the monastery of Whitby, then lately founded by Hild, kinswoman to Edwin, King of Northumberland. One day, as he was seated at table, the harp approached him; when, conscious of his deficiencies, he stole from the company, and took refuge in the neat-house. Here, as he slept, some one, he thought, approached him, and bade him sing. Encouraged by the stranger he made the attempt, and sung a hymn, which was next day repeated in the monastery, to the admiration of all who heard it. By the advice of the Abbess he was shorn; and as the Scriptures were expounded to him, he turned them into the beautiful verse, which has immortalised his memory. The talent, which our ancestors attributed to the inspiration of heaven, will now rather be ascribed to the poetical temperament, which is so often found united to a sensitive

¹ See p. 122. ² See p. 140.
and retiring nature. His honoured and peaceful end is related by Bede; and his body, we are told by Malmesbury, was found enshrined at Whitby, in the beginning of the twelfth century.

Only six of Cædmon's poems have reached us.¹ The subject of the first is the Creation; that of the second, the Fall of Man, to which is tacked, rather inartificially, a narrative of the events recorded in Genesis to the offering of Isaac; the third—the most sublime, but at the same time the most difficult of his works—relates the flight from Egypt and the destruction of Pharaoh; the fourth, contains the story of Daniel; and the Torments of the Damned, and Christ's Harrowing of Hell, followed by his Ascension and Glory, are the subjects of the other two. Others of his works we must have lost, for we are told by Bede, that he also wrote on our Lord's Incarnation and his Passion; as also on the Advent of the Holy Ghost, and the teaching of the Apostles. What remains, is equal in length to about one half of the Paradise Lost.

The eighth century produced no English poet, whose name has reached us, unless we may refer Aldhelm to this period. Aldhelm, nephew of Ina, King of the West-Sexe, was taught Latin at Malmesbury by Maeldulf the Scot, and Greek Dialectics and Rhetoric at Canterbury, by Archbishop Theodore, and the celebrated Adrian, abbot of St. Austin's. He was shorn in Maeldulf's monastery, of which he became the second abbot; and when the diocese of Winchester was divided A.D. 705, he was made first bishop of Shireburn. His abbot's robe, his psalter, and his silver altar, were long kept as relics at Malmesbury, and were shown to Leland, when he visited that monastery. He is said to have written many English songs, interspersed with notices of Scripture. One of these was still sung by the people, in the days of Malmesbury; and many of them are probably extant in the vast mass of devotional poetry, which

¹ ["The collection of Biblical poems attributed to Cædmon is really the work of several hands."—Sweet, Anglo-Saxon Reader, p. 145.—W. W. S.]
lies unowned, and we may add unread, in our Anglo-
Saxon MSS.

THE NINTH CENTURY
gave birth to one, who, though better known as a statesman
and a warrior, must not be forgotten as a poet—for in
Alfred these three splendid characters were united. This
great man was born at the royal manor of Wantage, in
Berkshire, A.D. 848. He was his father's darling child, but
in youth received no other instruction than could be gleaned
from the popular songs, of which so many specimens have
been laid before the reader. His after-life made amends
for the deficiency; but the difficulties he struggled with and
surmounted, are too well known to be here repeated. He
succeeded his brother Ethelbald in 872, and died in the
year 900.

Of Alfred's English poetry the only relic Time has left us
is the version of Boethius' metres. In the twelfth century
was extant a collection of Proverbs, and another of Fables,
both of which were ascribed to him; but neither of these
productions is mentioned in any list of Alfred's works, and
they were probably only some of the many compilations,
which were made by his order. The Cotton MS. of the
proverbs perished in the fire, which destroyed so many of
our manuscript treasures; but from the introduction, which
had been transcribed by Wanley, it appears to have been
written in the same kind of verse as Layamon's History,
and must therefore have been an Old English version of the
original work. Of the fables we possess a translation, which
was made by Marie, a Norman poetess, about the year 1200.
No English copy of them has yet been discovered.

1 See p. 348.
2 There is, I believe, a copy of this work still extant at Cambridge, in the
University library. [No; in Trinity College library; the MS. has since been
stolen; see Old English Miscellany, ed. Morris, p. ix. -- W. W. S.]
produced the Brunanburgh War-song;¹ Edgar’s Coronation-song; the two songs which commemorate the death of this monarch; and the splendid fragment which relates the defeat of the gallant Byrhtnoth at Maldon, A.D. 993. To this century, too, I would refer the Tale of Judith, or, rather I should say, the remains of this magnificent poem. But no poet has left a name² behind him, unless the somewhat doubtful case of Archbishop Wulfstan be an exception.

Wulfstan, better known by his Latin name of Lupus, was translated from Worcester³ to York in the year 1002, and died Archbishop in 1023; but as more than two-thirds of his life were spent before the year 1000, I have placed him in the tenth century. Upwards of fifty English homilies have been assigned to this prelate, and mixed up with these homilies in certain MSS. are found poetical paraphrases of the Lord’s Prayer and the Doxology, which Wanley would ascribe to the same author. If this criticism be trustworthy, Wulfstan may claim to be considered as an English poet.

In these paraphrases the poet took some small portion of his original (the words pater noster for example), and amplified the sense in a certain number of alliterative couplets. Each of these divisions was considered complete in itself, and was always closed with a full couplet. As they sometimes contained only two or three couplets, we may readily understand the influence they exercised over the rhythm, and how much they contributed to make the middle pause subordinate to the final. Indeed to these paraphrases, and to the translation of such portions of Scripture as were

¹ See p. 357.
² [Yes: Cynewulf has left us his name. “There can be no doubt as to the authorship of the riddles of the Exeter Book, the first of them being a riddle on the name Cynewulf itself. Many of these riddles are true poems.”—Sweet, Anglo-Saxon Reader, p. 179.—W. W. S.]
³ The reader will be careful not to confound this Bishop of Worcester with the St. Wulfstan, to whom we probably owe that portion of the Chronicle quoted in p. 440. [Very few of the homilies are really by Wulfstan.—W. W. S.]
divided into verses,¹ and perhaps, in some slight degree, to
the introduction of final rime, I would attribute the change
in the relative importance of these two pauses, which led to
the first great revolution in English versification.

The importance of this change can hardly be overrated.
Not only did it enable our native rhythms to accommodate
themselves to the flow of the different Latin "rhythmi,"
but it contained within itself the germ of almost every
other change, which has since occurred in English versification.
Had there been no foreign models to imitate, it must
still have led the way to the invention of the stave, the
riming couplet, and other similar novelties, no less surely
in our own language than in the Icelandic.² The subordi-
nation of the middle pause first began to show itself a little
before the year 1000, and at the close of the eleventh century,
we find it very generally prevalent in English poetry.

To this century also we probably owe the first intro-
duction of final rime. But the influence it exercised over
our rhythms was by no means so great as might have been
expected. If we may judge from such poems as have come
down to us, it only occasionally controlled the punctuation.³

THE ELEVENTH CENTURY

seems to have been prolific of English poetry; and not a
few of the poems, written during this period, are still extant.
But though the works survive, the names and circumstances
of the writers have rarely been so fortunate.

†† Elfrie, †raised to the Archbishopric of York by the favour
†† of Knut, †was one of the scholars of the celebrated Ethel-
†† wald, Bishop of Winchester. In early life he was sent, at
the entreaty of a Thane named Ethelmær, to "a minster,
†† which is called Cirence"; and here he formed the design of
turning the Lives of the Saints from Latin into English.
The first set of Lives was, after a few years, followed by a
second; and, at the urgent request of his friend Ethelmær,

¹ See the quotation from the Paris Psalter, p. 563,
² See p. 564.
³ See p. 579.
and of an Aldorman Ethelward, he was induced (apparently with some misgivings) to add a third. The two first of these works were dedicated to Archbishop Sigeric.

The Lives of the Saints have been called prose, but, as far as I have read, they are written in regular alliterative couplets. Elfric, indeed, professes to avoid those stately amplifications, so dear to the Anglo-Saxons; his object, as he tells us, being the profit of his reader, and not the vain display of his own learning.

The works of this prelate, whether Latin or English, well deserve publication. It would be curious to see how far a man, whose good sense revolted from the dangerous novelty of Transubstantiation, was content to tolerate errors, which education had made familiar. His Lives of the Saints, too, would throw light on the manners and customs of the period, and in some cases possess considerable historical interest.

At the end of St. Martin’s Life (which it seems he had twice written) are found the following Latin vorses. They are the earliest specimen I have seen of the Alexandrino rhythmus.

Olin | hae trans | tuli | sicut | i val | ni
Sed mo | do prec | ibus | obstre | tus ple | nius
O Mar | tine | sancte | meri | tis pra | clare
Juva | me mis | erum | meri | tis mod | icum
Care | am quo | nevis | nhi | met noc | uis
Casti | usque | vivam | nactus | jam ve | niam.

Deor has recorded his name in a poem, from which it may perhaps be gathered, that he was scop, or household poet, to the two Danish princes, Harold Harefoot and Hardy-Knut. Like the court-minstrels of the twelfth century, he seems to have holden a fief from the crown, the loss of which (if my translation may be trusted) gave rise to the song in question. He appears to have been suc-

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1 [Two sets of Ælfric’s Lives of Saints have been published as Ælfric’s Homilies by Mr. Thorpe, for the Ælfric Society. The third set is being printed by me for the Early English Text Society.—W. W. S.]
2 See p. 517.
3 See p. 608.
ceed by a poet named Heorren, who was probably patronised by the Confessor.

Wulfwin Cada. The Psalter, lately published at Oxford, is translated partly in prose and partly in verse. At the end of the metrical portion [p. 439] is the following note,

"This poem of the noble King David's Psalter Wulfwin, surnamed Cada, the Lord's priest, wrote with his own hand (manu sua conscripsit). Whoso readeth this writing, let him send up a prayer for his soul."

and, on the strength of this, Wulfwin has been represented as the transcriber of the MS.

Now first it may be questioned, whether the phrase *carmen conscribere* ever signified mere transcription; but though it did, Wulfwin may still put in a claim as author, for there are instances of Anglo-Saxon copyists translating or glossing their text, and yet only mentioning themselves as transcribers. That Wulfwin was the author of the metrical version is probable for the following, among other reasons.

The prose version prefaces each psalm with some account of its history, general scope, and tendency; and often paraphrases the Latin, so as to show more clearly its doctrinal or prophetic meaning. The metrical version has no prefaces, and, though generally literal, exhibits some cases of glaring misconception. I would infer, therefore, that the prose-version was made by a man of reading, and the other by one who was a much better poet than scholar. I think it probable, that Wulfwin copied from some MS. the prose version as far as it went, and when it failed him, drew upon his own resources. Some of the psalms are rendered with singular terseness and elegance.

There is one other poet of this period whose name has been lately recovered, though his works unfortunately are not yet forthcoming. Some two or three years ago was

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1 Or Heorrenda, p. 608, note 2.
2 See p. 563, n. 1.
3 See Psalm 8, v. 1.
4 Psalm 77, v. 43. Psalm 103, v. 1, &c. &c.
found a Latin MS., treating of the exploits of Hereward, the hero who braved the power of William when that power was at its strongest. The writer quotes, as his chief authority, the English work of Leofric, Hereward’s chaplain. He appears to have lived with his patron at Bourne in Lincolnshire, and to have written, among other subjects, on the warriors of our early history, and also, it would seem, on the Ettyns and Giants of our old Mythology. The songs relating to Hereward, which (as a contemporary historian informs us) were sung in the streets, and at the ale-stake, were, in all probability, the productions of this poetical chaplain. The Latin MS. will, I believe, be shortly published at Rouen, under the patronage of the French government.¹

THE TWELFTH CENTURY

was distinguished throughout Europe by an extraordinary display of mental energy. In England, unfortunately, but little of this energy was directed to our native literature. Norman Romance was the language of the court; and Latin the only medium through which our scholars condescended to instruct their readers. Still, however, English poetry was not wholly neglected, and we may yet muster the names of some half dozen poets, whose labours have come down to us.

Godric, the sainted hermit of Durham, has left behind him three short hymns, two of which have been already laid before the reader.² He was born at Walpole in Norfolk, and died aged in 1170. His life may be found in the Acta Sanctorum.

Layamon, son of Lovenath (or, according to the Otho

¹ Edited, I am told, by Mr. Wright, the gentleman who discovered the MS. and to whose politeness I have been indebted, while this sheet was passing through the press, for a perusal of this very curious, and as yet unpublished, work. [Published with the title De Gestis Herwardi Saxonis, as an Appendix to Gaimar’s Chronicle (Caxton Society), 1830; see also Biographia Britannica Literaria (Anglo-Saxon Period); by T. Wright, 1842; p. 15.—W. W. S.]

² See p. 443.
MS. (of Luke), lived as priest with "the good knight" of Ernley, near Radestone on the banks of Severn. Here, it appears, he read a book, which inspired the happy thought of writing a British History. He travelled in search of MSS., and took for his authorities, 1st, the English book which Bede wrote, 2ndly, the Latin book of St. Albin (Alcwin), and, 3rdly, the book of our English apostle St. Austin. In the Caligula MS. the list is somewhat different.—1st, Bede's English book, 2ndly, the Latin book of St. Albin and St. Austin, and, 3rdly, the book of the Frankish clerk Wace. The "English book" is probably Alfred's translation of the Ecclesiastical History, but I do not know what work of St. Austin is here referred to. When the two MSS. are published, as they shortly will be, we may perhaps learn how far the author was indebted to Wace's History.

In my first notice of Layamon's poem, I was in doubt as to the locality of Ernley, but on further search, there was found a Redstone Ferry close to Areley Regis in North Worcestershire. On turning to Nash, it appeared that the similarity of names had already led him to claim Layamon as a Worcestershire poet, and doubtless with good reason, as Areley was formerly written Armleag.

It may now perhaps be a question, what kind of dialect was originally spoken in Worcestershire. Layamon may have brought his peculiarities of speech from Gloucestershire; but if he were a native of Ernley, or its neighbourhood, the Southern Dialect probably reached to the line of watershed between the Trent and Severn, and one of the most distinguished of the Mercian tribes, the Wiceware, must have been Sæce in origin.

Of Layamon's patron, we still only know, that

The good knight is dust,
And his sword is rust.

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[1 Layamon's Brut was edited by Sir F. Madden, and published in 1847. Sir F. Madden's Preface should be consulted.—W. W. S.]


3 See p. 481.
The proprietors of Erneley are not recorded, till years after poet and patron were sleeping in the churchyard.

_Pope Adrian_ is said to have written a metrical version of the Lord's Prayer, which is quoted by Strutt in his "Manners and Customs, &c." It is added, "this, together with the Crede also in rime, was at that time used in all churches in England with universal approbation."

As Strutt was a man of research, he doubtless had _some_ authority for this statement. The poem is written in the same kind of verse as the Hule and Ništengale, and is, if genuine, the earliest specimen of such metre in our language. Adrian's original name was Breakspear.

Ormin was a Regular Canon, and (it would seem from his dialect) a member of some priory in the East of England. At the request of his brother Walter, who was a Canon in the same House, he undertook to turn into English "nigh all the Gospels, that are in the Mass-book, through all the year at Mass," each of them accompanied by an exposition of its meaning.

After an affectionate address to his brother, there followed in the MS. a list of the "Gospels" which had been versified. This list is now imperfect, two leaves having been torn out, but it still contains the titles of no less than 242. The whole number was probably 365, that is, one for every day in the year.

The MS. has written in it the name of some Dutchman, dated Breda 1656, and was probably carried over to Holland by one of the fugitive loyalists. It afterwards came into the hands of Junius, by whom it was given to the Bodleian library. It seems to have been the first volume of Ormin's work, and contains only thirty-one of his "Gospels."

The Ormulum (for so Ormin named the work from his abbreviated name _Orm_) is the most valuable specimen left us of our Old English dialect. It is curious, also, as being the first imitation in our language of the Middle-Age "rhythmi"; and deserves notice also as a storehouse of

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1 See p. 499.
popular divinity. It seems to have been intended for a Harmony of the New Testament, the volume now extant bringing us to the imprisonment of John. It was certainly meant for public reading, and (probably on this account) was looked upon with some degree of jealousy by his brother-churchmen.

The MS. may have been written at the close of the twelfth century.

_Arreck_ is the name of a poet, which occurs in Capgrave’s Life of St. Catharine, referred to by Park, in one of his annotations to Warton. Capgrave tells us, that in the days of Peter King of Cyprus, and Pope Urban the Fifth, an Austin of Lynn named Arreck, found in Cyprus a life of the Saint, written in Greek. This life he translated first into Latin, and afterwards into English verse. The English version (in Arreck left unfinished) Capgrave professes to have “shown more openly,”—that is, accommodated to the language of his day.

Now in the Auchinleck MS. there is a modernised copy of St. Margaret’s Life, and then follows, in the same kind of metre and dialect, an imperfect Life of St. Catharine, which I take to be Capgrave’s original. If so, Capgrave must be mistaken in his dates, for the Auchinleck MS. is older than the papacy of Urban the Fifth. If, as seems probable, the lives of the two saints are of equal antiquity, we may, I think, refer the life of St. Catharine to the twelfth century; and Arreck may, in such case, be author of both. It is possible that Urban the Fifth may be a mistake for Urban the Third; but a reference to the MSS. would best clear up the difficulty.

**THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY,**

though it produced much English poetry, has left us, in most cases, ignorant of the names and circumstances of the writers. The poems, too, lose much of their importance,

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1 MS. Coll. Gresh. 315, and Rawlinson MS. 118.
2 For the older copy of this work, see p. 507.
as regards our present inquiry, inasmuch as the MSS. are
generally of the fourteenth century, and therefore little to
be trusted (owing to the disuse of the final e) in any ques-
tion relating to the rhythm. In such MSS., however, as
were really written in this century, we find the flow of the
Latin "rhythmi" modified by our native rhythms, much in
the same manner as at the present day. Specimens of the
tumbling metres, which afterwards became so common, are
rarely met with; and lines with defective or supernumerary
accents are only to be found in poems which were written
at the close of the century. No alliterative poem has yet
been discovered which can be referred to this period.

John of Guildford is mentioned in an Oxford MS.1 as
the author of an English poem, entitled Le passyvn de
Jesus Crist; and there is little doubt that he also wrote the
Hule and Niȝtengale.2 He seems to have lived in the
reigns of John and Henry the Third, for in the last-menti-
ioned poem there is a prayer for a "King Henri," and the
MS. was written early in the thirteenth century.

In the Hule and Niȝtengale, reference is made to one
Nichol of Guildford,3 who appears to have been an English
poet. I have not met with the name elsewhere.

Hending, son of Marcolf, was author of the song quoted
in p. 612. The MS. from which it was taken is of the
fourteenth century, but all the poems, whose date can be
ascertained, belong to the thirteenth; perhaps then we
may infer that Hending's song, as it now appears with
introductory and concluding stanzas, belongs to the same
period. If so, Hending probably lived in the first half of
the thirteenth century, for fifty or sixty years at least must
have elapsed, before the poet would require to be formally
introduced to the reader, as we find him in the MS.

Hending is quoted by Wynton, but the quotation is not
found in the song, as now extant;

Al the lāw gud, and snā gudūne
Makes al the soum gud, said Eddyne.

Book ix.

Jes. MS. 76.  
2 See p. 427.  
3 See p. 429.
Robert of Gloucester was probably a monk of Gloucester Abbey, and, in the wars waged by the barons against Henry the Third, appears, like most of his fellow-townsmen, to have been a strong partisan of the former. The latest fact mentioned in his Chronicle occurred in 1278 [1297], when it was probably written.

The MS. from which Hearne published his edition was, I suspect, a very corrupt copy of the original; but, with all its faults, it tells our national story with a simplicity, and occasionally with a dramatic power, that have been much undervalued. In sketching the character of our kings this chronicler is sometimes singularly happy.

Kendale appears from his name to have been born in Westmorland. In the opening of his Tristrem,¹ he tells us that he visited Thomas of Ercyldon, from whom he learnt the facts of the story, which it would seem he afterwards versified. Robert of Brunne, however, gives Kendale and Ercyldon a joint-interest in the execution of the work, that is to say, in the choice of stanza and of language;² and our northern brethren, improving on the hint, boldly claim the poem as Scotch property. But the internal evidence is almost decisive against such a claim. The passage in Brunne is irreconcilable with the poem, on any hypothesis; and was, most probably, written from a vague recollection of the opening stanza.

Michael of Kildare has recorded himself as author of the hymn quoted in p. 600. The satire, too, in p. 616, was, no doubt, written by him; and, probably also, the well known satire called The Land of Cockaygne, which immediately precedes these two poems in the MS. [MS. Harl. 913]. The opening lines of the last-mentioned satire,

Fur in see by West Spaygne
Is a loud ibote Cockaygne,

point clearly to Ireland as the locality of the poem; and the same peculiar humour, and the same hatred of the monks, may be traced in this as in the other satire.

¹ See p. 465. ² See p. 566.
Michael’s allusion to the White-Friar, I once thought excluded Drogheda from any chance of being his residence. But the meaning was probably mistaken; for in the next stave is the line

Minor without! and Preacher within!

and at Drogheda there was a house of Dominicans or Preachers within the walls, and a house of Minors or Franciscans without. If the line just quoted express indignation at the preference shown the Preacher, Michael may have been a Minorite. He certainly was neither Dominican nor Carmelite, for both black and white friar are lashed unsparingly. As, however, the Crutched Friars had a house at Drogheda, he may have been a Cross-bearer.

In wit and caustic humour, Ireland has produced few poets superior to Michael, that is, supposing “The Land of Cockaigne” to have been really written by him.

THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

furnishes us with a very copious list of English poets. With many of them the reader must be too well acquainted to require any other notice, than the mere mention of their names. This century is also distinguished by the introduction of certain foreign rhythms, as the couplet metre of five accents and the ballet-staves, and by the re-appearance of our old alliterative metre, or, to speak more correctly, by a certain modification of it. The first name, that appears on the list, is

Robert Manning of Brunne (now Bourne) in Lincolnshire, a Gilbertine Canon of Sempringham, in his native county. He had already been in this House fifteen years, under the Priors John of Camelton and John of Clinton, when, under their successor Prior Philip, he began his translation of Wadington’s Manuel, A.D. 1303. He de-

1 See p. 616, n. 2.
2 See p. 698. [Robert of Brunne’s Handlyng Synne (the translation here referred to) was edited by Mr. Furnivall for the Roxburghe Club in 1862. His
C. VIII. FOURTEENTH CENTURY. 689

dicates this translation to all Christian men, and specially to the "good men" of Bourne and the "fellowship" of Sempringham. The dedication is dated from Brym- wake in Kesteven, which was probably some dependency of his monastery, and where he seems to have finished his work.

He afterwards removed to the Gilbertine priory of Sixhille, also in Lincolnshire; and here, at the instance of Prior Robert of Malton, began his riming Chronicle of England. The first part, in verses of four accents, is a translation of Wace; the second, in Alexandrinos, is a version of Langtoft's Chronicle. It seems to have been finished in the year 1338.

Adam Davie, marshal of Stratford le-bow, announces himself as the author of certain visions, which are found in the Bodleian MS. Laud 72, and appear to be, for the most part, complimentary of Edward the Second. In the same MS. is a version of the romance entitled the Siege of Jerusalem, and other poems, which have also been ascribed to Davie, but I know not on what authority. The romance is written in verses of four accents, and the visions in a very loose rhythm, which may, perhaps, be considered as the corresponding tumbling metre.

John appears to be the name of the poet who wrote, in praise of his lady-love Annot, the song quoted in p. 580.

William of Shoreham is said to have written English poetry in the early half of this century. Sir F. Madden informs us, that the MS. is now at Edinburgh, in private hands.

Robert de Wottoun, according to Henry Wharton, wrote

translation of Peter Langtoft's Chronicle was edited by T. Hearne in 1725, and reprinted in 1820. — W. W. S.]

1 Langtoft was at "Cantobrigé," with Alexander Bruce (brother of Robert), afterwards High Dean of Glasgow. He regrets his untimely fate, giving him high praise for his success in art. See Rob. of Brunne's translation, ed. Hearne, p. 337.


3 See the Preface to William and the Werwolf.

4 [Shoreham's Poems were edited for the Percy Society by Mr. T. Wright, 1849. — W. W. S.]

Randal Higgenet. The MS.¹ of the Chester plays contains a copy of a proclamation, dated 24 H. 8, which states them to have been written in the mayoralty of Sir John Arnewaie, by a monk of Chester, named Henry Frauncis; and the same monk is also said to have obtained from Pope Clement forty days of pardon for all who heard them. But a note in a later hand informs us, that Arnewaie was mayor in the year 1327, and that Randal Higgenet was the author. Consistently with this latter account, we find in a MS. list² of the Chester mayors the following notice appended to Arnewaie's mayoralty in 1327:

The Witson playes made by one Don Randal Higgenet, a monk of Chester abbey, who was thrise at Rome before he could obtayne leave of the pope to have them in the English tongur.

the words in italics being additions in a later hand.

It is probable that the plays were written in 1327 by Higgenet; and that the objections made to their representation were overcome in the papacy of Clement the Fifth, by the joint exertions of Higgenet and Frauncis. Hignet, it may be observed, is still a common name at Chester.

Richard Rolle of Hampole was an Augustine monk and hermit, and lived near Doncaster. Lydgate tells us, that he wrote a translation of the Stimulus Conscientiae, probably the one noticed in p. 524 [note 1].³ It is very doubtful if he wrote any other English poem, though many have been ascribed to him. He died in 1349.

Colman is mentioned as the author of [a version of] Guy, Earl of Warwick; in Harding's Chronicle, p. 211.

Gilbert Pilkington. Wilhelm Bedwel, rector of Totten-

¹ Harl. 2013.
² Harl. 2025.
³ The other translation I would ascribe to Ascheburne. See p. 693. [Hampole's Prick of Conscience was edited by R. Morris in 1863.—W. W. S.]
ham, and one of the translators of the Bible, published the Turnament of Tottenham in 1631; and stated it to have been "written long since by Mr. Gilbert Pilkington, at that time, as some have thought, parson of the parish." An English song in the same MS., entitled Passio Domini nostri Jesu Christi was subscribed quod dominus Gilbertus Pilkington, and this, joined to the tradition, amply warranted the conclusion Bedwel came to.

The MS., ¹ which is now at Cambridge, has been ascribed ³ to the early part of the fourteenth century. But whether this criticism be allowed or not, I agree with Bedwel in thinking, that the song could not have been written later than the reign of our third Edward, when the dangerous pastime, which it celebrates, was forbidden by statute. Warton, indeed, will have it to have been written in the reign of Henry the Eighth! He ridicules Bedwel's notion that it was meant for a burlesque description of a real country jousting, and considers it to be a satire on the knightly tournay; but Bedwel's supposition is, I think, far more consistent with the character both of the poem and of the age.

William Herbert paraphrased a collection of hymns and antiphones; and the MS., we are told by Warton, was in his day to be found in the library of Mr. Farmer, at Tusmore, in Oxfordshire.

Leland mentions a divine and schoolman of this name; and a Herbert is also recorded as having sung the Song of Colbrand and the Gest of Queen Emma before Bishop Orleton in the Prior's Hall at Winchester, A.D. 1338. This latter may possibly have been Warton's poet.

Thomas Vicary, of Wimborne, Dorsetshire, wrote the romance of Apollonius of Tyre, a fragment of which came, by a singular accident, into the possession of Dr. Farmer. Steevens, in his annotations to Pericles, quotes a few verses, which appear to have eight accents each, and to rime by couplets—at the same time taking the interwoven rime.

Univ. Lib. Ff. 5. 48.
See Pref. to the Turnament of Tottenham. Pickering, 1846.
If such were really the law of the metre, it well deserves the reader’s notice.  

William was the name of the poet, who translated the romance of William and the Werwolf. He was patronized by Humphrey Bohun, Earl of Hereford, and must have written the poem between the years 1335 and 1360.

Lawrence Minot was the author of certain songs, commemorating the triumphs of our third Edward. He appears from his dialect to have been a Lincolnshire man. His songs were edited by Ritson.

Robert Langland, born at Mortimer’s Cleybury in Shropshire, was a priest, and fellow of Oriel College, and afterwards a Benedictine at Worcester. When he entered the monastery he seems to have taken the name of John Malvern. His visions were written in 1362.

John Gower is generally considered as Chaucer’s senior. He died in 1402. His only English poem is the Confessio Amantis.

Jeffrey Chaucer was born in London about the year 1340, and died in the year 1400.

John Barbour, archdeacon of Aberdeen, had a passport to visit Oxford in 1357, and a second passport in 1365 to pass through England on his way to St. Denis. In 1375 he wrote the Bruce, and died aged, in 1396.

Gordon, in the preface to his poetical history of Robert Bruce, mentions that he made use of a MS. poem on the same subject, written in rimes like Chaucer’s by Peter Fenton in 1369. See prof. to Wyntoun's Chronicle, p. xxix.

Sir Hugh of Eglynton, otherwise Hugh of the Palace, wrote the Gest of Arthur, the Aunter of Gawaine, and the

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1 See pp. 474, 598.
2 See p. 448.
3 See p. 583.
4 See p. 455.
5 If Langland did assume this name, he must have written the continuation of Higden's Polychronicon in the Bennet MS. 14, for it is ascribed in the manuscript to a Worcester monk, called John Malvern. [All this is very improbable. The poet’s name was certainly William, not Robert; and probably Langley, not Langland. Some parts of the poem were written almost as late as 1390.—W. W. S.]
6 See p. 457, n. 4.
Epistle of Susan. Since my notice of this last poem,¹ I have found it printed in Laing's Early Poetry of Scotland. This critic, it appears, and his friend Mr. Chalmers consider the old poems,² printed by Pinkerton, to be part of the Aunter of Gawaine, but no doubt erroneously.³ Mr. Chalmers adds, "He (Sir Hugh) flourished under David the Second; he is supposed to have died about the year 1381. As he was a busy knight in his day, so there are many notices respecting him."

Thomas Ascheburne, a Carmelite of Northampton, has been considered as author of a poem, "De contemptu mundi,"⁴ on the strength of the following note:—

Script. a fœ Tho de Acheb'ne ord. fœm de mœ' genitr. dei de mo;
Carm. conventus Northampton A" 1384 congest ex . . . . . . . . . . . .

the perpendicular line showing where the page has been cut by the binder.

In the blank leaf we have another note written in pencil as follows,

This MS. is merely a copy of Hampole's Stimulus Conscientiae. At fol. 100 is the passage on the pains of Hell, quoted by Hearne, &c. F. M. (Sir F. Madden.)

I do not, however, see any reason for degrading Ashburn into a mere transcriber. There were two English versions of the Stimulus Conscientiae; and if the one alluded to in p. 524 be Hampole's, the present, which is written in verses of four accents, may very well be Ashburn's. Hampole could hardly have written both.

William of Nassington translated the Speculum Vitæ of Friar John of Waldby, Wycliffo's opponent. MS. Reg. 17. c. 8. William was a proctor at York. The transcript in the King's Library was written in 1418, so that William may have written it in the 14th century.⁵

Hilton the Hermit has a long mystical poem ascribed to him, in the Cotton MS. Faustina, B. vi. It is written in verses of four accents, and in a northern dialect.

Tanner mentions a Walter Hylton, who was monk of Shene in Surrey, and afterwards D.D. and Canon of Turgarton. He died A.D. 1395. But I cannot identify him with the poet.

These are the only writers of English verse, previous to the year 1400, whose names I have found recorded. Were, indeed, our MSS. examined with care, I have little doubt that the number might be tripled. The present scanty list must form a very small proportion of those, who contributed to fill the many collections, still extant, of early English poetry.

We must now turn our attention to the works of our Latin poets, which have been much too generally neglected, in inquiries connected with the history of our literature. Writers of Latin "rhythmi" have influenced, in a very marked manner, both the sentiments and the versification of English poetry. Many of the rhythmical models, which our critics have perversely sought for, in some one or other of the Romance dialects, were familiar to our Latinists, long before any of those languages possessed a literature.

Aldhelm is generally considered as the first Englishman that wrote in Latin. Besides poems of some length in hexameter verse, he has left us specimens of two different kinds of "rhythmus"—the Iambic Colophon and the Dimeter Iambic, both rime by couplets. Other examples of the latter rhythmus have come down to us from his pupil Ethelwald, and also from his friend Winfrid, better known as St. Boniface, the apostle of Germany. Bede occasionally rimes his hexameters in the middle, or by

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1 Two or three other names have been mentioned by our critics, which, however, would not bear the test of inquiry. For example, we are told, by Tanner and Rusin, that one Tugystek wrote a poem on the decaugue. On turning to the MS. (Harl. 1022) we find "a sermon" in prose upon this subject. A short poem precedes the "sermon," though wholly unconnected with it, and hence the blunder.

By the aid of false spelling this worthy monk stands sponsor to no less than three poets, to wit, Tugystek, Gaysteke, and Gatrike.


3 See p. 424.

4 See p. 424.
couplets; and writes the imperfect Trochaic Tetrameter in rhythmus, sometimes with rime, sometimes without. Alcwin, the tutor and friend of Charlemagne, commonly wrote in heroic or elegiac verse, but he has also left us a specimen of adonics, and another of the curious rhythmus noticed in p. 515, apparently that of the imperfect Trochaic Trimeter.

This, though a very imperfect, list contains the names of the more distinguished English scholars of the seventh and eighth centuries. Their accentual rhythms have a peculiarity which deserves notice, as being directly opposed to the great law of Anglo-Saxon versification. Whenever they alliterate the rhythmus, the alliteration is always subordinate to the rime, and often rests on unaccented syllables. Perhaps we may best account for this practice, by considering the sources, from which our ancestors got their first knowledge of the classical languages.

The southern school, or that of Canterbury, owed its existence chiefly to Archbishop Theodore, and Adrian, the venerable head of St. Austin’s abbey. To these two foreigners—the one an African, the other an Asiatic Greek—our country was mainly indebted for the scholarship, which, during four centuries, took precedence in Europe. The northern or rival school was founded by the Irish ecclesiastics, who, chiefly from Iona, evangelized the north of England. Some of their teachers were settled in the southern counties; and we have seen that Aldhelm’s earliest tutor was Maeldulf the Scot, first abbot of Malmsbury. Now, final rime has ever been the great characteristic of Celtic verse; and, whenever it admitted alliteration, it always kept it subordinate. It is probable, therefore, that the alliteration, introduced into the accentual verse of our early Latinists, was borrowed from their Celtic teachers, and differed no less in origin than in kind from that which was used in their vernacular poetry. When the Irish system

1 See p. 474.

2 See p. 676. It may be observed, that Malmsbury is merely a corruption of Maeldulfs bury.
gave way before the increasing influence of the southern school, this subordinate alliteration seems to have fallen gradually into disuse.

Our scholars of the ninth and tenth centuries were every way inferior to the men who preceded them. Brictstan, præcentor of Croyland, wrote an elegy on the ruins of his burnt and desolated monastery; Fridegode of Canterbury wrote in hexameters the Life of St. Wilfrid; and Wulfstan, præcentor of Winchester, the Lives of Bishop Ethelwald and St. Swithin. The cold classicality of these and of other contemporary poems (which still survive, either entire or in extract,) was doubtless the chief reason, why they have come down to us. We might have profited more by the preservation of some of the many "rhythmi," which Leland met with when ransacking the Monkish libraries, and whose merit he is often obliged to admit, notwithstanding his scholar-like prejudice against any but classical versification. Serlo's caustic satire against the monks of Canterbury may perhaps be still extant, in some of our neglected MSS. It could hardly fail to be interesting.

In the eleventh century, John the Grammarian wrote a poem in praise of Paris, where he had been studying; Reginald, of Canterbury, wrote the Life of St. Malchus in hexameters, which occasionally take the mixed rime; and both Osbern and Eadmer—Canterbury monks, whom the Italians, Lanfranc and Anselm, had the good sense to appreciate—distinguished themselves by the same accomplishment. But it was the twelfth century, which was the golden era of English scholarship. Perhaps not even the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries produced men of deeper reading—scholars, to whom the Latin language and literature was more habitually familiar—than an age, which many of our countrymen consider as one of almost unmitigated barbarism.

It is not, however, with the classical poems of this period we have now to do. We may pass by the Life of St. Alban by Robert of Dunstable, the elegies and songs of Henry of Huntingdon, the Architremion of Hanville—half prose, half metre—and even the epics of Joseph of
Exeter; but the "carmina rhythmica" have more immediate reference to the subject before us. Two writers, neither of them undistinguished, and one of them, if we may trust the impression made on his contemporaries, the man of his century—I mean Lawrence, Prior of Durham, and Walter Mapes, Archdeacon of Oxford—have left us numerous specimens of this "sibilant" versification. In their songs we find not only specimens of our psalm-staves, but also other specimens of mixed rime fully as complicated, and apparently as anomalous, as any that was used by the Troubadour. The hymns of the poetical Prior are for the most part in MS. They are much inferior to the jovial songs and biting satires of the Archdeacon. The latter, indeed, manages both rhythm and rime with admirable skill; his numbers seem almost to reel beneath his merriement and sarcasm.

Our MSS. of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries are filled with Latin rhythm, written in an endless variety of stave and metre. But as the chief peculiarities both of our English and of our Romance versification were by this time fully developed, it will be the less necessary to enter upon an investigation of this neglected and much despised portion of our literature. We will rather hasten to take such a view, as our scanty limits will allow, of our Romance poetry and its versification.

The earliest writer of Norman verse, whose works have survived him, is Philippe de Than. One of his poems, entitled De Creaturis,¹ is dedicated to his uncle Humphrey de Than, chaplain of Hugh,² the King's Seneschal; and his other, the Bestiaire, to the Queen of the same monarch—our Henry the First. Samson de Nanteuil soon afterwards translated Solomon's Proverbs³ for "his lady" Adelaide, the wife of a Lincolnshire gentleman; and about the middle of the century Geoffroi Gaimar wrote his History of the Anglo-Saxon kings⁴ from English, Norman, and

¹ Nero, A. v. [Printed in Popular Treatises on Science, ed. T. Wright, 1841.—W. W. S.]
² Hugh Bigod, afterwards Earl of Norfolk.
³ Hurl. 4388.
Latin MSS. He mentions, among others, the Book of Wassingburgh, a History of Winchester, and a translation from the Welsh, which was procured from the Earl of Gloucester by the kind offices of a Yorkshire Baron, named Walter Espec—in all probability Geoffrey of Monmouth’s History. In 1153 Wace wrote the Brut;¹ in 1160 his Roman de Rou; and sometime after his Chronicles of the Norman Dukes. The King’s glory was, he tells us, his only object; but the poet’s zeal, or his patron’s favour, seems at one time to have cooled, for we also learn, that Henry ordered Benoît de Seinto More to translate the History of the Norman Dukes. Wace, however, contrived to anticipate his rival; and Benoît followed him as Chronicler of Normandy² about the year 1172. Benoît also appears to have written a poem on the Trojan war.³ Michael [Martin] of Bury, who, it has been elsewhere⁴ conjectured, wrote one of the British Histories, and Thomas of Kent,⁵ who assisted in compiling the Roman d’Alexandre, must be assigned to a somewhat later period.

At the beginning of the thirteenth century flourished Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury, to whom La Rue ascribes a Canticle⁶ on our Saviour’s Passion, written in staves of five verses with mixed rime. Soon afterwards Denys Pyramus wrote the Lifo⁷ and also the “Miracles” of St. Edmund; and Godfrey of Waterford translated⁸ Dares Phrygius, thus giving us a second Anglo-Norman version of “The Tale of Troy Divine.” About the middle of the century Helis de Guincestre wrote his version of “Cato;”⁹ Hue de Roteland, his story of Ippomydon;¹⁰ Chardri, his Lives of St. Josaphat and of the Seven Sleepers;¹¹ Robert Bikez, his Lai du Corn;¹² and William de Waddington, his “Manuel.”¹³ Peter Langtoft’s Chronicle

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¹ Harl. 1089.
² Harl. 1717.
³ Harl. 1605. See p. 469.
⁴ Harl. 299.
⁵ Bibl. du Roi. 7656.
⁶ Vespasian, A. vii.
⁷ Digby MS. 86.
is of later date. It adds another to the long list of poems on that subject of untiring interest, the British History.

Two poets, connected with this country by their writings, have been omitted, as being natives of the Continent. Guernes, a monk of Picardy, came hither to collect facts for his Life of Becket, which he afterwards wrote,1 and recited publicly at Canterbury; and Marie translated Alfred's fables,2 and also certain Breton "lais."3 She seems to have been patronised by William Longsword, Earl of Salisbury;4 and was, probably, the daughter of some Norman (or, perhaps, of some Englishman, resident in Normandy), who came to England, when the French overran the Duchy in the year 1204. I have also omitted the name of Maurice Regan, interpreter to Dermot, King of Leinster. He wrote a poem on the English conquest of Ireland, but was, probably, both by descent and birth an Irishman.5

Most of these authors wrote in verses of twelve or eight syllables, that is, in alexandrines or in the common rhythmus of four accents. There are, however, instances in which verses of five accents were made use of. Perhaps the earliest is an Ode upon the Crusades, found in the same MS. as Benoit's Chronicle of the Norman Dukes, and ascribed to that author by La Ruo. It is written in the ballet-stave of seven,6 and seems to be the earliest specimen in our Romance poetry not only of the verse of five accents, but also of the mixed rime.

In the far greater number of these poems the rime is continuous, running through a definite or indefinite number of verses, as the case may be; but Humphrey [Philippe] de Than, the first Norman writer of Alexandrine verse, rimes his sections—thus copying, in every particular, the Latin

1 Harl. 270.  
2 Harl. 4333, and Vesp. B. xiv.  
3 Harl. 978.  
4 Son of Henry II. by Fair Rosamond.  
5 Robert Grosse-teste, John Hoveden, and a few others, not mentioned in the text, have had Romance poems ascribed to them; but I believe it will be found, on investigation, that they merely furnished the Latin originals, from which the Romance poems were translated.  
6 See p. 638.
rhythmus used by Elfric. Perhaps we may infer, that this favourite Norman metre was only the copy of a rhythmus, at that time popular among our English Latinists.

I believe it will be found that the versification of these "rhythm i" was introduced into no modern language much before the year 1000. That it should be adopted in our Romance poetry before it made its appearance in English verse was to be expected. With the language of his ancestors, the Norman had also lost their versification, and the only cadences his ear had been taught to follow were those of the Latin rhythm. But the writer of English poetry had a versification made to his hand—one familiar to the people, and admirably suited to the language. The intrusion, therefore, of a foreign rhythm was both unnecessary and unwelcome; and the result was a mixture of the two systems, which will hardly be considered an improvement on the earlier one.

In this short sketch of our Romance poetry, the names of the writers have generally been accommodated to the Norman dialect. This has been done, that we may not be thought unfairly to prejudice the question—are these writers French or English? Under other circumstances, such a disguise of the plain English names, Bennet Seymour, Robert Greathead, Hugh of Rutland, &c., would be every whit as miserable pedantry, as the use of the Latin synonymes, Benedictus de Sancto Mauro, Robertus Capito, &c., and only less absurd than the practice of certain critics, who carefully translate these names into modern French!

Of late years, French critics have distinguished between Norman and Anglo-Norman poems. M. Guizot, with very creditable patriotism, used the influence and resources at his command, in narrowly searching our libraries for Norman works, but I believe entirely without success. Every poem, as yet published under his sanction, is confessedly Anglo-Norman. Indeed most of these Romance poems

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1 See p. 680.
leave little room for doubt or cavil. The MSS. are English; the circumstances of the writer, as far as they are disclosed, relate solely to this country; and the works themselves abound in English phrases, and allusions to English peculiarities of life and manners. Some of them show a marked dislike of all foreigners, not excepting the Norman; and in others we have an apology for defects of language, on the ground of its not being the native language of the writer. The authors were sometimes no doubt of Norman descent, but in several of these cases we can trace their families in the island, both before and for ages after these poems were written. Wace,1 Seymour, and Gymer or Gimber, are names still to be met with in the streets of London.

An opinion, somewhat inconsistent with the one just contrpverted, has been advanced by La Rue, namely, that in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the Norman language was familiar to all classes in this country, and that England ran the greatest risk of losing her native language! Now, in the first place, our language during the period in question, though it had taken a form very different from the Anglo-Saxon, shows but little mixture of Romance, a fact difficult to explain, if the latter were familiar to the great bulk of the people; and, secondly, the Romance of England remained almost unchanged, while, on the continent, the same dialect was losing its final consonants, and gradually melting into the patois, which is at present spoken in Lower Normandy and Jersey. Must we not conclude, that in this country it was a dead language, learnt only from books, and therefore secure from those changes to which, as a living language, it was subject on the continent? We know that the schoolboy translated his Latin into Romance (as his successor turns Greek into Latin) in the vain hope of learning two languages by a process, which little promises to teach either. The Romance dialect, therefore, must have been more or less

1 Wace was a native of Jersey, the grandson of a Norman who fought at Hastings.
familiar to the scholar as well as to the courtier, but, that it did not reach to the great body of the people, is clear from the many versions of Romance poems, made "for the lewed man," a phrase, be it observed, which includes both "lord" and yeoman. "Uplandish men," indeed, such as the franklin or the country gentleman, sometimes aped the accomplishment, much for the same reason that the gentil-latres of the little German courts affect French—not that they admired the foreigner, his language, or his literature, but because it marked a class, and distinguished them from the burgher.

It is important, on several accounts, to ascertain how far and in what manner our native language has been affected, by admixture with this foreign dialect. Many mistakes have prevailed on the subject; and some of our critics have even confounded the Norman phrases of the twelfth century with the French\textsuperscript{1} importations of the seventeenth. The latter, however, might be easily dispensed with, while the former have rooted themselves deeply in the language. There are some hundreds of words, which it would require the nicest skill in philology to say, whether they were originally Norman or Anglo-Saxon.\textsuperscript{2}

The little attention that is paid to the critical study of our language, and the slight regard which attempts to investigate its history have met with, reflect no less dis-

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\textsuperscript{1} There are reasons for believing that "the French," which was brought into the country by Edward and his Norman favourites, was almost as much a foreign language at Paris as at London.

\textsuperscript{2} For an example take the word \textit{number}. If we were to ask whence did we get it? the triumphant answer would be, \textit{from the Latin, through the French}. Now I have never met with the word in Anglo-Saxon, yet that it is native to our language may be shown almost to a certainty. There is an English law of composition, by reference to which we may resolve \textit{number} into certain elements, which are found to have once existed in our language as \textit{independent words}. There is one other language, widely differing in character from our own, in which, however, the same law prevails, and a like analysis may be effected. Will the French enable us to resolve \textit{nombres}? or the Latin to resolve \textit{numerus}?

The word was, in all probability, used both in Anglo-Saxon and in Norman Romance. [But see note in the Appendix.]
credit on our patriotism than on our scholarship. While Frenchmen are sending agents over Europe to scrutinize every manuscript, which may shed light on their early literature, Englishmen are satisfied with knowing, that Anglo-Saxon MSS. may be found in France, in Holland, and in Sweden. The German publishes the most insignificant fragment connected with the antiquities of his language, while our manuscripts lie mouldering in our libraries, and our critics—some of them of no mean reputation—content themselves with the vague and scanty notices of a Hickes and a Wanley. Yet the early literature, which is thus neglected, may be traced to the fifth century, and far surpasses the contemporary literature of every other nation in works of interest and of genius. In the first rank of those gifted men who have shed glory on our country, by the side of Shakespeare, of Milton, and of Spenser, we may place the two patriarchs of English song—Caedmon and Chaucer.

If, instead of looking to the past, we speculate on the future, our language will hardly sink in our estimate of its importance. Before another century has gone by, it will, at the present rate of increase, be spoken by hundreds of millions! Of the five great temperate regions, three—North America, South Africa, and Australia—are fast peopling with our race; and some, now living, will see them overspread with a population, claiming in our language the same interest as ourselves. That language, too, is rapidly becoming the great medium of civilisation, the language of law and literature to the Hindoo, of commerce to the African, of religion to the scattered islanders of the Pacific. The range of its influence, even at the present day, is greater than ever was that of the Greek, the Latin, or the Arabic; and the circle widens yearly. Though it were not our mother tongue, it would still, of all living languages, be the one most worthy of our study and our cultivation, as bearing most directly on the happiness of mankind.

1 There is one exception to this remark in the publication of the Paris Psalter by the University of Oxford. See p. 563, n. 1, [and p. 302, n. 1.]