CHAPTER I.

RHYTHM

in its widest sense may be defined as the law of succession. It is the regulating principle of every whole, that is made up of proportional parts, and is as necessary to the regulation of motion, or the arrangement of matter, as to the orderly succession of sounds. By applying it to the first of these purposes we have obtained the dance; and sculpture and architecture are the results of its application to the second. The rhythmical arrangement of sounds not articulated produces music, while from the like arrangement of articulate sounds we get the cadences of prose and the measures of verse.

Verse may be defined as a succession of articulate sounds regulated by a rhythm so definite, that we can readily foresee the results which follow from its application. Rhythm is also met with in prose, but in the latter its range is so wide, that we rarely can anticipate its flow, while the pleasure we derive from verse is founded on this very anticipation.

As verse consists merely in the arrangement of certain sounds according to a certain rhythm, it is obvious, that neither poetry nor even sense can be essential to it. We may be alive to the beauty of a foreign rhythm, though we do not understand the language, and the burthen of many an English song has long yielded a certain pleasure, though every whit as unmeaning as the nonsense verses of the schoolboy.

In considering the general character of any proposed metre, we should have especial regard to three circumstances: first to the elements, which are to be arranged;
secondly to the accidents, by which these elements are distin-
guished; and thirdly to the law of succession, by which
the arrangement is effected.

In making verse, the elements subjected to the rhythm,
may be either syllables, or verses, or staves. The only
accidents, which need be noticed as of rhythmical value, are
three, the time or quantity, the accent, and the modification
of the sound.

Rhythm may be marked either by the time or the ac-
cent. In the great family of languages which has been
termed the Indo-European, and which spread from the
Ganges to the Shannon, three made time the index of their
rhythm, to wit the Sanscrit, Greek, and Latin; all the
others adopted accent. It is remarkable that those dialects
which now represent the Sanscrit, Greek, and Latin, have
lost their temporal and possess merely an accentual rhythm.
We are able in some measure to follow the progress of this
change. So gradual was it in the Greek, that even as late
as the eleventh century there were authors who wrote in-
differently in either rhythm. The origin, however, of
accentual verse, as it now prevails in those languages, is
by no means clear. Whether it were borrowed from the
northern invader, or were the natural growth of a mixed
and broken language, or merely the revival of a vulgar
rhythm, which had been heretofore kept under by the pre-
valence of one more fashionable and perhaps more perfect,
are questions I shall pass by, as being at least as difficult as
they are interesting.

ARRANGEMENT OF THE SUBJECT.

Having premised thus much as to the meaning of our
terms, I will now lay before the reader the course I shall
follow in tracing the progress of our English rhythms. In
the second book we shall consider the rhythm of individual
verses; and in the third the rhythm of particular passages,
or, to speak more precisely, the flow of several verses in
combination; while the fourth book will be devoted to the
history of our staves, that is, of those regular combinations,
which form as it were a second class of elements to be regulated by the rhythm.

The book which opens with the present chapter is little more than introductory, but the matters discussed in it are of high importance to the right understanding of the subject. In the next chapter we shall consider the different *modifications of sound*, with a view to the aid they afford us in embellishing and perfecting the rhythm. In the third we shall inquire what constitutes a *syllable*, and discuss the nature of *accent* in the fourth, and of *quantity* in the fifth. The various kinds of *rime* will be the subject of the sixth chapter, and in the seventh and last we shall treat of the *rhythmic pauses*. 
CHAPTER II.

THE VOICE.

If we drop a small heavy body into still water it forms a circular wave, which gradually enlarges and loses itself upon the surface. In like manner, if one hard body strike against another—as the cog of a metal wheel against a quill—a wave is formed in the air which expands on all sides round the point of contact. When this wave reaches the ear, it produces on that organ the sensation of sound.

If now the wheel be turned round, so that the cogs strike against the quill in succession, several concentric waves are produced, following each other at equidistant periods of time; and if the velocity be such that there are more than thirty sound-waves in a second, the sensation produced by one lasts till another enters the ear, and a continuous sound is the result. This continuous sound is called a tone or musical note.

As we increase the number of sound-waves, the tone changes its character, and is said to become sharper. When more than six thousand enter the ear in a second, the tone becomes so sharp and shrill as to be no longer perceptible by organs constituted like our own.

The wave which thus produces the sensation of sound, differs widely in origin from that which moves along the surface of the water. The latter is formed by the vertical rising of the watery particles, and as these fall again in obedience to the force of gravity, they drive upwards those next adjoining. The motion of the particles is thus perpendicular or nearly so to the direction of the wave's motion. The air-wave is formed by the condensation as well as by the displacing of the particles, and the moving power in this case is elasticity. The airy particles are
driven on a heap, till the force of elasticity becomes greater than the impelling force, and they are driven back to their former station. The neighbouring particles are then similarly acted on, and a slight motion or vibration in the same line of direction as that in which the sound-wave is travelling, takes place in all the particles. On the size of this vibration depends the loudness of the sound.

The tones of the human voice are produced by the vibrations of two membranes, which have been called the vocal ligaments. These are set in motion by a stream of air gushing from the lungs, and we can at pleasure regulate the sharpness and the loudness of the sound produced. The mechanism, by which this is effected, has been lately made the subject of some very interesting speculations.¹

If two elastic membranes stretched upon frames so as to leave one edge free, be placed opposite to each other, with the free edges uppermost, and a current of air pass between them from beneath, they will be differently affected according to their inclination towards each other. If they incline from each other, they will bulge inwards, if towards each other, they will bulge outwards, if they be parallel, they will vibrate. Now the wind-pipe is contracted near the mouth by a projecting mass of muscles called the Glottis. The edges of the Glottis are membranes, and form the vocal ligaments. Ordinarily these membranous edges are inclined from each other, and consequently no vibrations take place during the passage of the breath; but by the aid of certain muscles, we can place them parallel to each other, when they immediately vibrate and produce a tone. With the aid of other muscles, we can increase their tension, and thereby the sharpness of the tone, and by driving the air more forcibly from the lungs, we may increase its loudness. The tone thus formed is modified by the cavities of the throat, nose, and mouth. These modifications form the first elements of articulate language, or the letters.

¹ See Mr. Willis's papers in the Cambridge Philosophical Transactions.
VOCAL LETTERS.

It has been shown\(^1\) that the note of a common organ-reed may take the qualities of all the vowel-sounds in succession. This is effected by merely lengthening the tube which confines the vibrations. It would seem, therefore, that the peculiar characters of the different vowels depend entirely on the length of the cavity, which modifies the voice.

In pronouncing the long \(a\) in \textit{father}, the cavity seems barely, if at all, extended beyond the throat; in pronouncing the \(au\) of \textit{aught}, it reaches to the root of the tongue, and to the middle of the palate in pronouncing the long \(e\) of \textit{eat}; the sound of the long \(o\) in \textit{oat}, requires the cavity to be extended to the lips, which must be stretched out to form a cavity long enough to pronounce the \(u\) in \textit{jute}.

Every addition to the length of the tube or cavity, affects in a greater or less degree the character of the tone. The possible number of vowel-sounds, therefore, can have no limit; but as there are rarely more than seven or eight in any one language, we may conclude that the human ear is not readily sensible to the nicer distinctions.

In pronouncing the vowels \(a\) and \(e\), as they sound in \textit{ap} and \textit{eel}, we narrow the cavity by raising the tongue towards the palate, while in pronouncing \(a\), \(au\), \(o\), as they sound in \textit{father}, \textit{aught}, \textit{oat}, the cavity is broad and open. These two sets of vowels have accordingly been distinguished as the narrow and the broad vowels.

Next to the vowels, the letters which have spread most widely, are the three,

\[ b, d, g, \]

as pronounced in \textit{ab}, \textit{ad}, \textit{ag}. If we try to dwell upon the consonants which end these words, we find ourselves unable to do so but for a short time, and even then it requires some muscular exertion. In each of the three cases the tone seems to be modified by a \textit{closed} cavity, no aperture being

\(^1\) By Mr. Wills.
left for the breath to escape by. In pronouncing b, the lips are closed, and the vibrations are confined to the throat and mouth; in pronouncing d, the tongue is raised to the palate, and the throat and hinder portion of the mouth are the only open cavities; in pronouncing g, the tone seems to be modified merely by the hollow of the throat. We shall call these letters from the circumstances of their formation the close letters.

The letters b, d, g have a very near connexion with the three nasals

\[ m, n, ng. \]

The only difference in their formation is, that in pronouncing the latter, the breath passes freely through the nostril. With this exception, the organs are disposed precisely in the same way for pronouncing m, n, ng, as for pronouncing b, d, g. As the nostril affords a free passage for the breath, we may dwell on these letters during a whole respiration.

\[ v, dh, \]

have the strongest affinity to b and d. The peculiarity of their formation lies in the free passage of the breath through the interstices of the upper teeth. To the edge of these teeth we raise the lip in pronouncing v, and the tongue in pronouncing dh, instead of joining the lips, or raising the tongue to the palate. As these teeth form part of the enclosure which modifies the voice, the breath may pass between them, and we may dwell upon the letters during a whole respiration, as is seen in pronouncing the words av, adh.

\[ w, y, \]

are never heard in pronunciation except at the beginning of a syllable and before some other vowel. They seem merely to represent the short vowels u and i (as heard in put and pit), melting into their several diphthongs. They

---

1 This character represents the sound which ends such words as loving, table, &c.

2 dh represents the vocal sound of th as heard in the, their, those, &c.
are generally considered as consonants; but if the *y* of *you* be a consonant, so must also be the *s* of *Europe*.

\[ l, r. \]

The peculiarity in the formation of these letters is a certain trembling or vibration of the tongue, whence they may be called the trembling letters. In pronouncing \( l \) the tongue is raised to the palate, as in forming the letter \( d \), but the breath is allowed to escape between it and the side teeth, and thereby causes the loose edges of the tongue to vibrate. In pronouncing the letter \( r \) the tongue is raised towards the palate without touching it, and the breath in passing causes it to vibrate.\(^1\)

These tremblings or vibrations of the tongue are quite distinct from the vibrations of the voice, and may be produced during a whisper when the voice is absent.

The only two vocal sounds which remain to be considered are\[ z, zh \]^2

In pronouncing \( z \) the tongue is raised to the palate in nearly the same position it occupies in pronouncing \( s \), save that, instead of lying hollow so as to form a tube or funnel for the voice, the surface rises in a convex shape and leaves but a narrow slit or aperture between it and the roof of the mouth. By lengthening the aperture we get the sound of \( zh \). These letters may be called the sibilants or hissing letters.

\section*{WHISPER LETTERS.}^3

Hitherto we have spoken only of vocal letters, or, in

\[^1\] Our grammarians tell us that "*r* is never mute." Now, if I may trust my car, *r* is not pronounced at the end of a syllable, unless the following syllable is open with a vowel. It is said that, at the end of a syllable, *r* is obscurely pronounced, but I have observed that a very slight pronunciation of this letter has been sufficient to convict the speaker of being an Irishman, and that many who insist upon its pronunciation, drop it immediately their attention is diverted or their vigilance relaxed.

\[^2\] By the character \( zh \) is represented the sound of \( z \) in *azure*.

\[^3\] The distinction here taken between vocal and whisper letters appears to
other words, of the different modifications of the voice. If the vocal ligaments be so inclined to each other as not to vibrate, the emission of breath from the lungs produces merely a whisper. This whisper may be modified in like manner as the voice, by similar arrangements of the organs; and every vocal sound has its corresponding whisper-sound, that might, if custom had so willed it, have constituted a distinct letter.

It is, however, doubtful if there ever was a language which had its whisper letters perfect. In our own the number of whisper letters is nine. The three close letters, the two dentals or teeth-breathing letters, the two sibilants, and the letter w, have each of them their whisper letters, and the aspirate h is the ninth.

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocal letters</th>
<th>Whisper letters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dh</td>
<td>th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>z</td>
<td>s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zh</td>
<td>sh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>w</td>
<td>wh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>h^1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
\end{array}
\]

We have lost all distinction between dh and th in our spelling, though we still distinguish them in pronunciation.

---

me important. I once thought it was original; but in conversing on this subject with a respected friend, to whose instructions I owe much, I found his views so nearly coinciding with my own, that I have now but little doubt the hint was borrowed.

1 I have here considered h as a letter. Our grammarians differ on this point, but I confess that usage is against me. There is little doubt, that its old and genuine pronunciation was much like the palatal breathing of the Germans; and such is the power which some persons still give to it. But the people altogether neglect h, and others look upon it merely as the symbol of aspiration. In like manner, w^t is usually treated as an aspirated w. Such, however, is the unsettled state of our language, that I have known men who prided themselves on their accuracy and refinement in the pronunciation of these letters h, wh, th, &c., and who nevertheless gave them three or four different properties, or they had well uttered as many sentences.
as is seen at once in comparing the sound of th in this, their, clothes, to loathe—with its sound in thistle, thin, clothe, loseth.

The distinction also between the connected letter-sounds sh and sh does not appear in our orthography, though at once sensible to the ear in comparing the sound of assure with that of Ashur.

That wh represents the whisper sound of w will, I think, be clear, if we compare the initial sounds of where, when, while, with those of were, wen, wile.\(^1\) It is probable that in the Anglo-Saxon hwer, hwanne, hwil, the w may have been vocal, and the h may have represented a distinct breathing; but it would be difficult to account for the change of hw into wh, which took place at so early a period (perhaps as early as the 12th century), unless it indicated a change in the pronunciation; and this change would naturally be to the whisper sound of the w.

In this view of the case w may put in a fair claim to the title of consonant. If the true definition of a vowel be, that it is a letter which makes any part of a word, into which it enters, a distinct syllable, then w has clearly no right to the title of vowel. Nor can we reasonably call the initial sounds of were, wen, wile diphthongal, unless we allow the initial sounds of where, when, while, to be diphthongs also. But were this so, we should have part of a diphthong a mere whisper while the other part remained vocal. Our w then, amid a choice of difficulties, may, perhaps, be allowed the title of consonant; but the same reasoning does not apply to the y. The latter, I think, can only be considered as a letter indicating the initial sound of a diphthong.

The whisper sounds of the two liquids l, r, constitute two distinct letters in Welsh, and in several other languages. But the Latin rh and the Greek ρ were certainly aspirated letter-sounds; the accounts of their pronunciation, handed down to us by the old grammarians, are too explicit to leave any room for doubt upon the subject.

That these letters p, t, k, f, &c., are the whisper sounds\(^1\)

\(^1\) See, however, note 1, on page 9.
of ב, ָd, ָg, ָv, &c., may, I think, be shown without much difficulty. If we try to pronounce the words ָb, ָd, ָg, ָv, &c., in a whisper they cannot be distinguished from ָp, ָt, ָb, ָf, &c. Again, the vibrations of the organs, which are obvious while we are pronouncing a vocal letter, cease immediately we change to the whisper sound; but the disposition of the organs remains unchanged. Thus, in pronouncing the ָv of ָav, if we change to a whisper, the vibrations of the lips and teeth cease; and without any change in the position of the organs we find ourselves pronouncing ָf.

The number then of English consonantal sounds, if we consider ָw as one, amounts to twenty-two; whereof thirteen are vocal and nine mere whisper sounds.¹

The vowels are eleven in number. The long ָa, ָe, ָo, ָu, as heard in ָfathër, ָreel, ָroll, ָrule; ָau and ָa as heard in ָaught, ָate; and the short ָa, ָe, ָi, ָo, ָu, as heard in ָpat, ָpet, ָpit, ָpot, ָput. The diphthongs are twelve,² ָei, ָoi and ָou, as heard in ָheight, ָhoity, ָout; and eleven others formed by prefixing ָy to the eleven vowels. These are heard in the following words, ָyard, ָyeän, ָyoke, ָyule, ָyawn, ָyare, ָyap, ָyell, ָyif, ָyon, ָyoung.

Having said thus much on the formation of our elementary sounds, we will now consider in what way and to what extent they may be rendered useful, in embellishing and perfecting the rhythm.

If, as is often the case, besides the idea which the usage of language has connected with certain words, there are others which are naturally associated with the sounds or with the peculiarities of their formation, it is obvious, that the impression on the mind must be the most vivid, when the natural associations can be made to coincide with such as are merely artificial and conventional. In all languages there are certain words in which this concidence is perfect. In our own we have ָhiss, ָkaw, ָbah, and a few others, in which the natural sound so closely resembles the articulate sound which represents it, that many have fallen into the

¹ See note in the Appendix. ² Fourteen.
error of supposing the latter a mere imitation of the former. The number, however, of these imitative sounds in any language is but scanty, and the assistance they render is both obvious and vulgar. The delicate perceptions of the poet demand the gratification more frequently than it is supplied by the ordinary resources of language. It is by the command which he possesses over this noblest of all gifts (after reason) that he seeks to obtain it.

In the next section we shall trace some of the artifices which have been adopted to arrive at these imitative sounds; and afterwards enquire how far the peculiarities which attend the formation of our letters, as regards the disposition and action of the organs, can assist us in the fit and suitable expression of the thought.

IMITATIVE SOUNDS.

"There is found," says Bacon, "a similitude between the sound, that is made by inanimate bodies, or by animate bodies that have no voice articulate, and divers letters of articulate voices; and commonly men have given such names to those sounds as do allude unto the articulate letters; as trembling of water hath resemblance with the letter l; quenching of hot metals with the letter s; snarling of dogs with the letter r; the noise of screech-owls with the letter sh, voice of cats with the diphthong eu, voice of cuckoos with the diphthong ou, sounds of strings with the diphthong ng." — Nat. History, Century II. § 200.

When we pronounce the letter l, the breath in escaping under the side-teeth presses against the yielding tongue, which may be considered as fixed at its root and tip. The tongue, like other flaccid bodies in similar circumstances, vibrates with a slow and uncertain trembling. This strongly resembles the motion of water. "Running waters," Bacon elsewhere observes, "represent to the ear a trembling noise, and in regals (where they have a pipe they call the nightingale-pipe, which containeth water), the sound hath a continual trembling; and children have also little things they call cocks, which have water in them, and when they blow.
G. H.  IMITATIVE SOUNDS.  13

or whistle in them, they yield a trembling noise."—Id. § 172. It is in this inequality of trepidation, that the resemblance above alluded to seems chiefly to consist. Our great poets afford us many beautiful examples; in the Witches' song we almost hear the bubbling of the cauldron;

For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

* All. Double, double toi and trouble,
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.  Macb. 4. 1. 18.

Not less happy are the following passages,

Gloster stumbled, and in falling
Struck me, that thought to stay him, overboard
Into the tumbling billows of the main.  R. III. 1. 4. 18.

Fountains, and ye that warble as ye flow,
Melodious murmurs, warbling tune his praise.

The hypothesis that has been ventured as to the origin of the resemblance, thus noticed by Bacon, is strengthened by observing, that our poets always affect this letter, whenever they have to describe a yielding wavy motion. The tie, which links such an association with the letter I, is obvious.

—— Part huge of bulk,
Wallowing unwieldy, enormous in their gait,
Tempest the ocean.  P. L. 7. 410.

Some of serpent kind,
Wond'rous in length and corpulence, involved
Their snaky folds.  P. L. 7. 482.

The one seem'd woman to the waist, and fair,
But ended foul, in many a scaly fold

R, though a trembling letter, has a character of sound differing in many particulars from that of L. In the first place it has a narrow sound, not unlike e, while that of l is a decidedly broad one. In the second place the vibrations, instead of being slow and uncertain like those of l, are quick and decided. Its sound was likened, even by Roman critics, to the snarling of the dog; but it has a resemblance to any narrow sound, which is broken in upon by short quick in-
terruptions. Hence its power in expressing harsh, grating, and rattling noises.

In the two first of the following examples, the roll of a liquid mass is beautifully contrasted with the harsh rattle of rock or shingle, on which it is supposed to act.

As burning Ætna from his boiling stew
Doth belch out flames, and rocks in pieces broke,
And rugged ribs of mountains molten new,
Enwraht in co[e]-black clouds.  

As raging seas are wont to roar,
When wintry storm his wrathful wreck does threat,
The rolling billows beat the rugged shore.

With clamour thence the rapid currents drive
Towards the retreating sea their furious tide.

—— As an aged tree . . .
Whose heart-strings with keen steel nigh hewen be,
The mighty trunk, half rent with ragged rift,
Doth roll adown the rocks and fall with fearful drift.

And she whom once the semblance of a scar
Appal'd, an owlet's larum chill'd with dread,
Now views the column-scatt'ring bay'net jar.

Childe Harold, 1. 54.

— — On a sudden open fly
With impetuous recoil and jarring sound
Th' infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
Harsh thunder.

The brazen throat of war had ceas'd to roar,
All now was turn'd to jollity and game.

—— The raven himself is hoarse,
That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
Under my battlements.

Macbeth, 1. 4. 39.

—— Such bursts of horrid thunder,
Such groans of roaring wind and rain, I never
Remember to have heard.

Lear, 3. 2. 45.

The sounds represented in the three last examples are not only harsh and grating, but deep and full; the narrow
sound of the \( r \) is therefore corrected by the broad vowels in
roar, hoarse, groans, &c.

Bacon likens the sound of \( z \) to the quenching of hot
metals, and that of \( sh \) to the noise of screech-owls. The
fact is that the sounds represented by \( z, \ zh, \ s, \ sh \), are all
more or less sibilant, and accordingly have a greater or less
affinity to any sound of the like character. Now there are
a variety of noises, which though not absolutely hisses, yet
approach near to them in the sharpness and shrillness of
their sound, as shrieks, screeches, the whistling of man or
other animals. All these resemble more or less the hissing
sound of the sibilants.

They saw— but, other sight intrudeth a crowd
Of ugly serpents; horror on them fell
And horrid sympathy; for, what they saw,
They felt themselves now changing; down their arms,
Down fell both spear and shield, down they as fast,
And the dire hiss renew'd.

— Dreadful was the din
Of hissing through the hall, thick swarming now
With complicated monsters, head and tail,
Scorpion and asp, and amphibious dire,
Cerastes horn'd, hydra and elops drear,
And dipsus (not so thick swarmed once the soil,
Bedropt with blood of gorgon).

The hoarse night-raven, trump of doleful drear,
The leather-winged bat, day's enemy,
The rueful strich still waiting on the bier,
The whistle shrill that whose hears doth die.

By whispering winds soon hull'd asleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
The swallow twitt'ring from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

And with sharp shrilling shrieks do hootless cry.

Now air is hush'd, save where the weak-eyed bat,
With short shrill shriek flits by on leathern wing.
It will be observed that in several of these examples the sharp sound of the sibilant is strengthened by that of the narrow vowels, long e and short i. These vowels are sometimes used with effect even by themselves.

The clouds were fled,

Driv'n by a keen north wind, that, blowing dry
Wrinkled the face of deluge

P. L. 11. 841.

The threaden sails,

Borne with th' invisible and creeping wind,
Draw the huge bottoms through the narrow'd sea.


The broad vowel-sounds on the contrary, long a, au, long and short o, together with the broad diphthong ou, are used to express deep and hollow sounds;

--- A dreadful sound,
Which through the wood loud bellowing did rebound.

F. Q. 1. 7. 7.

--- The thunder . . . ceases now
To bellow through the vast and boundless deep.

P. L. 1. 176.

All these and thousand thousands many more,
And more deformed monsters thousand-fold,
With dreadful noise and hollow rumbling sound
Came rushing.

F. Q. 2. 12. 25.

--- As the sound of waters deep,
Hourse murmers echoed to his words applause.

P. L. 5. 872.

The very expression a hollow sound shows how close is the association of a hollow space with depth and fullness of sound. Hence the broad vowels are sometimes used to express mere breadth and concavity.

So high as he'vd the timid hills, so low
Down sunk a hollow bottom, broad and deep.

P. L. 7. 288.

--- Hell at last,
Launing received them whole, and on them clos'd.

P. L. 6. 874.

The observation of Bacon relative to the sound of ng may be generalized in like manner. There is no doubt that all
The three nasals have a close affinity to any deep low sound; such as a hum, a murmur, or the twang of a musical string slowly vibrating. The reason I take to be the distinctness with which the vibrations of the voice are heard in pronouncing these letters, and the low deep tone in which they are generally spoken.

--- Through the foul womb of night
The hum of either army softly sounds.


The shade born beetle with his drowsy hums
Hath rang night's yawning peal.

Macbeth, 3. 2. 42.

--- Where the beetle winds
His small but sullen horn,
As oft he rises 'midst the twilight bath
Against the pilgrim borne in heedless hum

Collins, Evening, st 4.

The hum-cock humm'd wi' lazy drone,
The kye stood rowtin' 't the loan.

Burns, Two Dogs.

Where each old poetic mountain
Inspiration breathed around,
Every shade and hallowed fountain
Murmur'd deep a solemn sound.

Gray, Progress of Poetry, n. 3

Even Johnson, notwithstanding the ridicule he has thrown upon enquiries of this nature, has admitted that particular images may be "adumbrated by an exact and perceptible resemblance of sound." But the law of resemblance that first great law of association is not to be confined thus narrowly. If the more sound of the words hiss and bah recall the cry of the animal, so may the muscular action, which the organs exert in pronouncing the words struggle, wrestle, call up in the mind the play of muscle and sinew, usual in those encounters. Wherever there is resemblance there may be association. We will now enquire what means our poets have used to fit their associations in the reader's mind, more especially in those cases, in which the connecting link has been the disposition or the action of the organs.

In the first place, we may observe that in making any
continued muscular effort, we draw in the breath and compress the lips firmly. Now this is the very position in which we place the organs, when pronouncing the letters $h, p$. I have no doubt that to this source may be traced much of the beauty of the following verses.

*Behemoth, biggest born of earth, upheav'd
His vastness.*

$P. L. 7. 471.$

The mountains huge appear
Emergent, and their *broad bare backs upheave* 

*The envious flood
Kept in my soul, and would not let it forth ... .
But smother'd it within my *panting bulk*,
Which almost *burst to belch* in the sea.*

*R. III. 1. 4. 37.*

——— But first from inward grief
His *bursting passion* into *plaints* thus *pour'd*. $P. L. 9. 97.$

Who thrusting boldly twixt him and the blow,
The *burden* of the deadly *brunt* did bear. $F. Q. 4. 8. 42.$

A grievous *burthen* was thy *birth* to me. $R. III. 4. 4. 167.$

When the mind is seiz'd with fear and amazement, the lips open and voice fails us. If the surprize be sudden, a whispered ejaculation escapes, suppress'd almost as soon as utter'd. In this way I would account for that combination of letters *st*, which Spenser and others of our older poets affect, whenever they have to describe this feeling. Its fitness for the purpose seems to lie in the sudden stop, which is given by the *t* to the whisper sound of the *s*—letters, as it observed, which are formed without the agency of the lips.

*The giant self, dismayed with that sound, ... .
In haste came rushing forth from inner bow'rs,
With staring countenance stern, as one astound,
And staggering steps, to meet what sudden stour
Had wrought that horror strange and dar'd his dreaded pow'r.*

$F. Q. 1. 8. 5.$

*Stern was their look; like wild amazed steers,
Staring with hollow eyes and stiff upstanding hairs.*

$F. Q. 2. 9. 13.$
He answer'd not at all, but adding new
Fear to his first amazement, staring wide
With stony eyes, and heartless hollow hue,
Astonish'd stood.  

When too the sinews are overstretch'd, or shaken with sharp and jerking efforts, the same kind of broken breathing generally follows the strain upon them. The sound too is harsh and grating. Hence, in part at least, the effect produced by the combinations st, str, in the following passages;

Staring full ghastly like a strangled man,
His hair uprear'd, his nostrils stretch'd with struggling,
His hands abroad display'd, as one that grasp'd
And tugg'd for life.  

But th' heedful boatman strongly forth did stretch
His brawny arms, and all his body strain.  

There is little doubt, however, that the chief link of association in these passages is the difficult muscular action, which is call'd into play in the pronunciation of str.

Under the influence of fear the voice sinks into a whisper. Hence in describing that passion, or such conduct as it generally accompanies—deceit or caution—we find the whisper-letters peculiarly effective.

With sturdy steps came stalking in his sight
An hideous giant, horrible and high.  

The knight himself e'en trembled at his fall,
So huge and horrible a mass it seem'd.  

So daunted when the giant saw the knight,
His heavy hand he heaved up on high.  

And pious awe, that fear'd to have offended.  

His fraud is then thy fear, which plain infers
Thy equal fear that my firm faith and love
Can by his fraud be shaken and seduce'd.  

Fit vessel, fittest imp of fraud, in whom
To enter, and his dark suggestions hide.  

The whisper-letters p, t, are sometimes used at the end of words with great effect, in representing an interrupted
action. The impossibility of dwelling upon these letters, and the consequently sharp and sudden termination which they give to those words into which they enter, will sufficiency explain their influence.

Till an unusual stop of sudden silence
Gave respite. Comus, 552.

Sudden he stops, his eye is fixed, away!
Away! thou heedless boy. Childe Harold, 1. 76.

——— All unawares
Fluttering his pinions vain, plumb down he drops
Ten thousand fathom deep. Par. Lost, 2. 933.

——— The pilgrim oft
At dead of night, mid his oraison, hears
Aghast the voice of time, disporting tow’rs,
Tumbling all precipitate, down-dash’d,
Rattling aloud, loud thundering to the moon.
Dyer’s Ruins of Rome, 39.

Little effort is wanted, as Johnson once observed, to make our language harsh and rough. It cost Milton no trouble to double his consonants, and load his line with rugged syllables, when he described the mighty conflict between his angels.

But soon obscure’d with smoke, all hea’n appear’d,
From those deep-throated engines belch’d, whose roar
Embowell’d with outrageous noise the air,
And all her entrails tore, disgorging foul
Their dev’lish glut, chain’d thunderbolts and hail

But when he chose, he could also glide upon his vowels and make his language as smooth as the Italian.

And all the while harmonious airs were heard.
P. R. 2. 362.

With what all earth or heaven could bestow
To make her amiable, on she came.
P. L. 8. 483.

——— The serpent sly
Insinuating wove with Gordion twine

Milton’s verses, however, lose half their beauty when thus insulated. It is a remark of Cowper, that a rough line
seems to add a greater smoothness to the others; and no one better knew the advantages of contrast than Milton. There can be little doubt that many of his harsher verses, some of which contain merely a bead-roll of names, were introduced for the sole purpose of heightening the melody of the lines which followed.
CHAPTER III.

SYLLABLE.

The definition of a scientific term is seldom aided by its etymology. According to the Greek derivation, a syllable means a collection of letters, according to the Celtic a verbal element. The first of these must have suggested to Priscian his well-known definition. The Latin grammarian pronounces a syllable, to be a collection of letters bearing the same accent, and formed by one impulse of the breath. Scaliger, more simply, and I think more sensibly, defines it to be a verbal element falling under one accent.

The objection which attaches to both these definitions is the vagueness of the word accent. Among the Greeks and Latins accent meant tone, with us it means something widely different. There are also Greek syllables which receive both a grave and a sharp tone. It is true we call this union of the tones a circumflex, but this is merely an evasion of the difficulty; or rather, we should say, it is a loose expression, on which an erroneous definition has been grounded. I am also far from sure that our English accent in all cases pervades the syllable. On some letters the stress is certainly more obvious than on others. These difficulties might be avoided, by defining a syllable to be a word or verbal element, which for rhythmical purposes is considered as having only one accent.

Properly, every syllable ought to have a distinct vowel sound. Such is the rule which prevailed in the Greek and

---

1 In Welsh, 'ch is an utterance; fraeth a vocation. fraeth eloquent; direb a proverb, dir true; galar a voice of mourning, galar mourning; graeth a climax, graeth a step; silleb an elementary part of speech, a syllable, sill an element. Hence the Norman syllabe, and our English syllable. [But see note in the Appendix.]
Latin, and I believe also in our earlier dialect. At present it is different. Thus the word heaven is now considered as of two syllables, though it has but one vowel, the second syllable consisting merely of a consonantal sound.

It is probable that in the earlier periods of our language there was no such thing as a syllable thus merely consonantal. It is certain that the critics of Elizabeth's reign thought a vowel essential, and though many syllables were held to be doubtful, yet in all such cases there prevailed a difference of pronunciation, as to the number of the vowel-sounds. At present we have many words, such as heaven, seven, &c., which are used in our poetry sometimes as monosyllables, sometimes as dissyllables, yet in neither case have more than one vowel-sound. The only difference in the pronunciation is, that we rest somewhat longer upon the final consonant, when we use them as dissyllables. There can be little doubt that at an earlier period these words would, in such a case, have been pronounced with two vowel-sounds, heav-en, sev-en, &c., as they still are in some of our provincial dialects.

It is not quite easy to say, why all the early systems of syllabification should be thus dependent upon the number of the vowel-sounds. Every letter, except p, t, k, may be dwelt upon during a finite portion of time, and if we also except b, d, g, the consonants may be lengthened just as readily as the vowels. There is therefore only a partial objection to the system, which should even divide a word into its literal elements. If we excepted the six letters b, d, g, p, t, k, and joined them in pronunciation to those immediately preceding or succeeding, I can see no a priori objection to a system even thus simple. Musical composers take this liberty without scruple in adapting words to music, and often split a monosyllable into as many parts as it has letters.

The probable reason is the much greater importance of the vowel in the older dialects. In those languages which had a temporal rhythm, verse must have been spoken in a kind of recitative; and such to this day is the manner in which the Hindoos recite their Sanscrit poems. The more
grateful sound of the vowels would naturally point them out as best fitted for musical expression, and on these the notes would chiefly rest. Again, the tendency of language is to shorten the vowels. Most of our present short vowels were pronounced by the Anglo-Saxons with the middle\(^1\) quantity, and some with the long. Those knots of consonants too, which are so frequent in our language, unloose themselves as we trace them upwards. The vowels reappear one after the other, and as we advance we find their quantity gradually lengthening. There are dissyllables which expand themselves, even within the Anglo-Saxon period, to six syllables, and the number might be doubled, if we traced them still further by the aid of the kindred dialects. This accumulation of consonants and shortening of the vowel made the voice rest the longer on the consonantal portion of the word, and seems at length to have paved the way for consonantal syllables.

In tracing the gradual extinction of our syllables, I shall first call the reader's attention to the final \(e\). The loss of the initial syllable will then be considered; and afterwards the case of those vowels which have at any time melted into diphthongs, or have otherwise coalesced into one syllable. The loss of the vowel before different consonants will then be matter of investigation; and we shall conclude the chapter by noticing such syllables as are formed by the coalition of two or more distinct words.

**French \(e\) Final.**

The following are instances of French substantives which retained their final \(e\) after they were introduced into our language;

\[
\text{Upon her knees she gan to falle,}
\]
\[
\text{And with | sud | coun | tenun | ce: kne}l\text{| eth still,}\(^2\)
\]
\[
\text{Till she had herd, what was the lordes will.}
\]

*Chaucer. The Clerk's Tale; C. T. 8168.*

---

\(^1\) See chap. V.

\(^2\) The vertical line always follows an accented syllable, and the colon (:) indicates the place of the *middle pause*, of which we shall have to say more in Chapter VII.
As to my dome ther is non that is here
Of El|oven|ce: that | shall be | thy pere|.

Chau. The Frankeleins Prologue; C. T. 10989.

Than had | de he spent | all | his philös|ophi|e,
Ay Questio quid juris! wolde he erie.

Chau. Prologue, 647.

And God that sitteth bie in Majistee,
Save all this com|pagni|e: gret | and smal |e,
Thus have I quit the miller in my tale.

Chau. The Revese Tale; C. T. 4320.

Till Er|wyn wattir, fysche to tak, he went,
Sic fum|tusi|e: fell | in his | entent.| Wallace, i. 369.

We find also this termination furnished with two syllables in the plural,

Min ben|also|: the mul|adi|es col|de,
The derke tresons and the castes olde.

Chau. The Knightes Tale; C. T. 2469.

He was a jungler and a goliardeis,
And that | was most |: of sin|ne and har|lotry|es,
Wel coude he stelen corne and tollen thries.¹

Chau. Prologur, 562.

We also have the e, which closes the French adjective.

——— This ilke noble queene
On her shoulders gan sustene
Both the armes, and the name
Of tho | that had | de: larg|e fam|e.


A larg|e man| he was | : with cy|en step|e,
A fairer burgeis is ther non in Chepe.

Chau. Prologue, 755.

——— His conferred sovereignty was like
A larg|e sail: full | with a fore|right wind|²
That drowns a smaller bark. Fletcher, Prophetess, 5. 1.

In rotten ribbed barcck to passe the seas,
The for|aine landes |: and strang|ir sites | to see
Doth daunger dwell. Turbervile to his Friend P., st. 3.

¹ Thries is always a dissyllable in Chaucer.
² [But some editions read: "A large | sail, fill'd | full with | a fore|-right wind.|" This is far better.—W. W. S.]
ENGLISH e FINAL.

The most frequent vowel endings of Anglo-Saxon substantives were *a*, *e*, *u*. All the three were, in the fourteenth century, represented by the *e* final. We meet, however, with substantives in *e* which have two, and in some cases three, Anglo-Saxon substantives corresponding to them; and when we find all the three endings in Anglo-Saxon, it is difficult to say which is represented by the *e*. Even when we only know of one Anglo-Saxon ending, there is always a possibility of the others existing, though they may not have fallen within the compass of our reading. I shall first give examples of the *e* which answers to the Anglo-Saxon *a*.

All the Anglo-Saxon nouns in *a* are masculine, and belong to what Rask terms the first declension, as *nama* a name, *tima* time, *môna* the moon.

And hast bejaped here duk Thesens,
And fals | ely chang | ed hast | : thy wear | e thus | —

Chau. The Knightes Tale; C. T. 1585.

A knight ther was, and that a worthy man,
That fro | the tim | e : that | he first | began |
To riden out, he loved chivalric,
Truth and honour, freedom and courteous.

Chau. Prologue, 43.

His saddel was of rewel bone,
His bridel as the somme shone,
Or as | the mon | e light.

Chau. Sire Thopas; C. T. 13807.

The Anglo-Saxon nouns in *e* belong to various genders and declensions. A great number of them are feminines and neuters belonging to the first declension. Among the feminine nouns are *sunne* the sun, *heorte* the heart, *rose* the rose; *care* the car, is neuter. There are also masculine and neuter nouns in *e*, which belong to other declensions.

——— Thus the day they spende
In rev | el, till | : the son | ne gan | descend | e.

Chau. The Clerkes Tale; C. T. 8267.
And thus with good hope: and with hert e blith
They taken hir leave.

Chau. The Knightes Tale; C. T. 1880.

And fresher than the May with flowres newe,
For with the ros e col our: strof hire hew e.
Chau. The Knightes Tale; C. T. 1039.

—— He smote me ones with his fist,
For that I rent out of his book a lefe,
That of the stroke: myn er e wex al defe.

Nouns in were generally feminine, as scolu school, lufu
love, sceamu shame, lagu law; but there were also some
masculines belonging to another declension, as sunu a son,
wulu a wood, &c.

Full soth is sayd: that lov e ne lordship
Wol nat, his thankes, have no felawship.
Chau. The Knightes Tale; C. T. 1625.

It is a sham e: that the pe ple shal
So sworne thee.
Chau. The Second Nunnnes Tale; C. T. 15973.

With empty womb of fasting many a day
Receiv ed he the law e: that was writ en
With Goddes finger, and Eli, wel ye witen, ...
He fasted long.
Chau. The Sompnoures Tale; C. T. 7470.

No maister, sire, quod he, but servitour,
Though I have had in scol e: that honour.
Chau. The Sompnoures Tale; C. T. 7767.

Befor e hire stood: hire son e Cup i do
Upon his shoulders winges hadde he two.
Chau. The Knightes Tale; C. T. 1965.

And as she cast her eie aboute,
She sigh clad in one sute a route
Of ladies, wher they comen ride
A longe un der: the wood de sid e.

Gower, C. A. bk. iv.

Wo also have the Anglo-Saxon ending -the, a distinct
syllable.

And wel I wot, withouten help or grace
Of thee, no may my streng the: not avail le.
Chau. The Knightes Tale; C. T. 2402.
I preise wel thy wit,
Quod the Frank|e|ne|n|; consid|ier|ing | thy you|th
So fellingly thou speakest, sire, I alone thee
As to my done, ther is non that is here
Of eloquence that shal be thy pere.

Chau. The Frankeleines Pro|t. ; C. T. 10986.

Such of these endings as survived till the sixteenth century changed the e for y, and were gradually confounded with the adjectives of that termination. There can be little doubt that the helly and woody of the following extracts were the Anglo-Saxon helle (gen. case) and owodu.

Free Helicon and franke Parnassus hyll,
Are hel|ly haunts|; and ranke | perr|ician ylls|.
Bal|low ; M. for M. ; Coll|ingbourn|e, 2.

——— The sat|ys scori | their|woody kind|,
And henceforth nothing fair but her|on earth they find.
Fairy Queen, 1. 6. 18.

There were a few Anglo-Saxon adjectives, which ended in e, as ye-trewe true, nine new.

A trewe|e swink|er ; and| a good | was he ,

And swore | his oth|e as | he was trewe knight|.
Chau. The Knights Tale; C. T. 961.

She was wel more blissful on to see
Than is | the new|e pre|j|en|e|t|e tree.
Chau. The Milleres Tale; C. T. 3247.

An adverb was also formed from the adjective by the addition of an e; a formation which flourished in the time of Chaucer, and cannot be considered even now as obsolete. The e has indeed vanished, and the word, thus robbed of a syllable, is considered merely as the adjective used adverbially. It is, however, the legitimate though corrupt descendant of the old adverb, and such root has it taken in the language, that not all the efforts of our grammarians have been able to weed it out.

And | in a cloth | of gold|; that brygh|te shone|,
With a corowme of many a riche stone,
Upon hire bed, they into hall hire broughte.
Chau. The Clerkes Tale; C. T. 8993.
THE E OF INFLEXION.

Command | eth him |
and fas | te blewe | the fire |

Chau.  
Channones Yemanne Tale; C. T. 16728.

Wel | coude he sit | te on hors |: and fray |
e rid | e.

Chau.  The Prologue, 93.

* There is, however, one caution to be given. The superlative of the adjective ends in ste, that of the adverb in st.

A knight ther was, and that | a worthy man,
That | fro the tyme | that | he first | began;
To widen out, he loved chivalrie.  Chau. Prologue, 43.

THE E OF INFLEXION.

In the history of literature there are few things more remarkable than the position which is now occupied by Chaucer. For the last three centuries he has been read and praised and criticised, yet neither reader, eulogist, nor critic, has thought fit to investigate his language. When does he inflect his substantive? when his adjective? These are questions, which obtrude themselves in the study of every language, yet who has ventured to answer for our early English?

One of the difficulties in the way of this enquiry, is the number of dialects, which prevailed in the country from the eleventh to the fifteenth century. There is a wide distinction between the language of Layamon and of Chaucer, yet it is by no means easy to say whether this marks a difference of dialect, or is merely the change which our language underwent in the course of two centuries. I shall therefore confine myself to the dialect of our earliest classic, and notice the language of other writers, only as they serve for the purposes of illustration.

In the time of Layamon the dative singular in e still survived. I suspect this dative had become obsolete before the time of Chaucer; yet there are lines which it is difficult to account for without its assistance. Thus, in the couplet which opens the poem,

Whanne that April with his shoures sote
The drought of March had perved to the rote—

1 [Printed first in the former edition, because so printed by Tyrwhitt; but, by the argument, there ought to be no final e.—W. W. S.]
there is little doubt that *rote* is a dissyllable, for it rhymes with *sote*, which seems clearly to be the plural adjective agreeing with *shoures*. Now the common form of this substantive is a monosyllable *rot*, and unless *rote* be its dative we must conclude there is another substantive *rote* of two syllables—a conclusion which, though I would not contradict it, seems improbable. If however Chaucer used the dative, it must have been so rarely as much to lessen the value of this discussion.

There seems to be no doubt that Chaucer used the old genitive plural in *a*, the final vowel being represented, as in other cases, by *e*. We find in old English *menne, horse, othe*, answering to the Anglo-Saxon *manna, horsa, álha*, the respective genitives plural of *man, hors, and álth*.

Tuelf feren he hadde
That he with him ladde
Al´le rich e menn e son e es,
And alle suythe feyre gomes.

*Geste of King Horn*, 19.

For ye aren men of this molde, that most wide walken
And knownen countreys and countres, and menye kinne places,
Both princ e pal e cis : and pou re men e cot e es.


--- Everie year this fresche Maie
These lustie ladies ride aboute,
And I must nedes sewe her route
In this maner, as ye now see,
And trusse her hallters forth with mee,
-And | am but | her hors e knav e.


That is, “and I am only their horses’ groom.”—in Anglo-Saxon, *heora horsa cnapy*.

We now come to a verse which both Urry and Tyrwhitt have done their best to spoil. Chaucer begins his exquisite portrait of the Prioress with these lines;

Ther was also a nonne, a Prioressse,
That of hire smylyng was ful simple and coy,
Hire grete est oth e : n’as | but by | seint Loy.

*Prologue*, 120.

---

1 See note in the Appendix.
Where othe is the genitive plural after the superlativio, "her greatest of oaths." The flow of the verse is as soft as the gentle being the poet is describing. But its beauty was lost on the Editors. They seem to have shrunk from making othe a disyllable (a reluctance that would be perfectly right if that word were in the nominative), and so, without the authority of a single manuscript, they introduced this jerking substitute:

Hire greet est othe : n'as but by Seint Eloy

a change which not only mars the rhythm of one of the sweetest passages that Chaucer ever wrote, but also brings us acquainted with a new saint. "Sweet Saint Loy" was well known, but I never met with St. Eloy in English verse.¹

The plural adjective takes e for its inflexion, as the Anglo-Saxon endings would lead us to expect. In illustrating this and the following rules, I shall, as much as possible, select examples which contain the adjective both with and without its inflexion. The reason for so doing is obvious.

Men loveden more dorknessis than light, for her werkis weren yvel, for eech man that doith yvel hatith the light.  


In these lay a greet multitude of syhe men, blinde, crokid, and drye.

Wiclif. Jon. 5, 3.

A frere there was, a wanton and a mery,  
A limitour, a ful solemnne man,  
In all the orders foure is non that can  
So much of daillance and fayr langage . . . .  
His tippet was ay farsed full of knives  
And pin nes for to giv en: fayr e wiv es.

Chau. Prologue, 208.

¹ When the English guns swept off the famished Frenchman as he was gathering his muscles, Churchyard tells us

Some decently bought their muskets evry weeke,  
Some sacrificide their horse to sweete Sainct Loy.

Siege of Leith, st. 50.

Lindsay, indeed, in one of his poems, has written the word at full length Eloy, but, I have little doubt, elided the e in pronunciation. [See my note in the Appendix. W. W. S.]
In ol|de day|es: of | the king | Artour, |
Of which that Bretons speke gret honour.

*The Wif of Bathes Tale; C. T. 6439.*

When the adjective follows the definite article *the*, or the
definite pronouns *this, that*, or any one of the possessive
pronouns, it takes what is called its definite form. In the
Anglo-Saxon, the definite adjective differs from the other
in its mode of declension; in the old English the only
difference is the final *e*.

How may any man entre into the house of a strong man, and take
awci hisc vesselis, but he first bynde the stronge man, &c.

*Wyclif. Matt. 12, 29.*

At Leyes was he, and at Satalie,
Whan | they were won|ne: and in | the gret|e se|c|
At many a noble armee had he be.  *Chau. Prologue, 58.*

Wel | can the wis|e po|et: of | Floren|ce,
That highte Dant, spoken of this sentence.

*Chau. Wif of Bathes Tale; C. T. 6307.*

And up | he rid|eth: to | the high|e bord|.

*Chau. The Squiers Tale; C. T. 10399.*

' Sike' lay this husbandman, whos that the place is. . . .
O der|e mais|ter: quod | this sik|e man|,
How have ye faren sin that March began.

*Chau. The Sompnoires Tale; C. T. 7550.*

White* was hire smok, and brouded all before,
And eke behind, on hire colere aboute,
Of coleblak silk, within and eke withoute.
The tap|cs of |: hire whit|e vol|uper|e
Were of the same suit of hire colere.

*Chau. The Milleres Tale; C. T. 3238.*

These rules prevail very widely in the Gothic dialects. They will not, however, explain all the cases in which the
definite adjective is used, either in the Anglo-Saxon or in
the old English dialect. The subject is too difficult and ex-
tensive to be discussed here. We will, however, notice

---

1 [So printed by Tyrwhitt; but wrongly, as the argument shews. Read
Sik.—W. W. S.]

2 [So printed by Tyrwhitt; but wrongly, as the argument shews. Read
Whit.—W. W. S.]
one rule, which may be of importance to the grammar of both these languages. The passive participle, and those adjectives which partake of its character, may, I think, be treated at any time as indeclinable. We shall find many examples, when we examine the rhythms of our Anglo-Saxon poets.

Of the old English verb, as used by Chaucer, it may be observed, that the first person singular and the three persons plural of the present tense end in e; so also the imperative mood and the infinitive;

I put irre me | : in thy | protec|tion,|
Diane! and in thy disposition.

Chau. Knightes Tale; C. T. 2365.

In olde dayes of the king Artour,
Of which | that Bre|tions spek|e : gret | honour|.
Chau. Wif of Bathes Tale; C. T. 6439.

Than longen folk to gon on pilgrimages,
And palmers for to seken strange strondes,
To ser|ve| hal|wes : couth | in sun, dry loud|es.

Chau. Prologue, 12.

The past tense generally ends in de or ede, but sometimes it is the same as the participle in d or ed. I believe those two forms of the perfect to be independent, and not derived the one from the other. We shall not stop to discuss the question, but I cannot pass by the strange hypothesis of Tyrwhitt. That critic supposes the de to be the same as ed, with a transference of the vowel; representing in short the ending intermediate between the old termination and the present. Every one, who has opened an Anglo-Saxon grammar, knows, that de is the old and proper termination of the perfect, and though I will not assert that the other was never used by the Anglo-Saxons (indeed, I think I have actually met with it in one or two instances), yet every English scholar is aware, that it was only a short time

---

1 [Not always; it depends on the verb. Thus let has no final e in Ch. C. T. 928. — W. W. S.]
2 [The right reading is forne, pl. adj. But see ride (Ch. Prol. 27) riming with pride, pl. adj. — W. W. S.]
before Chaucer, that it played any considerable part in our language.

As I have more than once spoken of Tyrwhitt, in terms very different from the eulogics which are commonly paid him, I would make one observation. I admit that when an art is in a state of advancement, such as is the present state of English criticism, it is disingenuous to dwell upon the casual blunders, or the minute inaccuracies of those who have preceded us. Tyrwhitt deserves our thanks for the manly experiment of editing our oldest classic, and for accumulating a decent share of general knowledge, to serve for his occasional elucidation. But what can we say of an editor who will not study the language of his author?—of one, who having the means of accuracy (at least to a great extent) within reach, passes them by, and judges of Chaucer's grammar in the fourteenth century by that of Pope in the eighteenth? A Dano or Norwegian, with a competent knowledge of Anglo-Saxon, would have been a better judge of Chaucer's syntax than his English editor.

That Chaucer sometimes dropt the e final is certain. Hirc is always a monosyllable, whether it represents the A.S. hirc (her) or the A.S. heora (their). It was also lost in other cases when it followed r, and perhaps when it followed other letters, though I would not assert as much, without the benefit of a better edition than Tyrwhitt's. Many French writers in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries discarded their e final; some more generally than others. Marot, who wrote in the reign of Francis, dropt it in three cases, and in three only. The day will no doubt come, when we shall be able to give a list of all the words, in which Chaucor has taken the same liberty.1

INITIAL SYLLABLE.

In the present section, we shall treat of such initial syl-

1 [It has come. Professor Child, of Harvard College, has collected all the instances of the final e, as occurring in the "Canterbury Tales." See also Ellis's "Early English Pronunciation."—W. W., S.]
labes as have occasionally disappeared from our language, and will begin with the initial vowel;

He'll woo | a thou|sand: 'point | the day | of mar|riage,
Make friends, invite friends, and proclaim the bands,
Yet never means to wed.  

_Taming of the Shrew_, 3. 2. 14.

Not | be tied | to hours | nor 'point|ed times.

_Taming of the Shrew_, 3. 1. 19.

And keep | your times | I 'point | you: for | I'll tell | you
A strange way you must wade through.

_Fletcher. The Mad Lover_, 4. 2.

That I am guiltless of your father's death,
It shall | as lev|el to | your judg|ment 'pear; ¹
As death doth to your eye.  

_Hamlet_, 4. 5. 151.

No faith | so fast, | quoth she | : but flesh | does 'pair |
Flesh may impair, quoth he, but reason can repair.

_F. Q._ 1. 7. 41.

The wrath|ful win|ter: 'proch|ing on | apace |,
With blustering blasts had all yerarde the treene.

_Sackville. M. for Mag._ The Induction, 1.

His owne dear wife, whom as his life he loved,
Hee durst | not trust, | : nor 'proche | unto | her bed |.

_Sackville. M. for M._ Buckingham, 45.

— When he had done the thing he sought,
And as | he would | : com|plisht and com|past all.

_Sackville. M. for M._ Buckingham, 33.

Therefore have done, and shortly spede your pace,
To 'quaynt | yourselfe | : and com|pany | with grace.

_Barclay. Schip of Foles, Of Mockers, st. 2.

Lay fear aside, let nothing thee amaze,
Ne have | despaire | : no 'scuse | the want | of time |.

_Higgins. M. for Mag._ King Alhuanct, 2.

— I shifted him away,
And laid | good 'scuse | : upon | your ec:stacy |

_Othello_, 4. 1. 80.

From temple's top, where did Apollo dwell,
_I 'sayd | to fye : | but on | the church | I fell |.

_Higgins. M. for Mag._ King Bladud, 22.

¹ [The Globe edition has pierce. — W. W. S.]
Several verbs, even at this day, are used sometimes with, and sometimes without the vowel, as to espy, to escape, to establish, &c.

There are also substantives that throw away the vowel. Apprentice has been pronounced prentice from the days of Chaucer to the present; apothecary, also, and imagination, not unfrequently lost their first syllables.

Be not abused with priests: nor 'pothecar'ies. They cannot help thee. Fletcher. Valentinian, 5. 2.

Thus time we waste and longest leagures make short, Sail seas in cockles, have an wish but for't, Mak'ing, to take: your 'mag'inat'ion:
From bourn to bourn, region to region. Per. 4. 4. 1.

My brain, methinks, is as an hourglass, Wherein my 'mag'inat'ions: run like sands.
Ben Jonson. Every Man in his Humour. 3. 3.

Words compounded with the old preposition a, often lost it in pronunciation;¹

My lord, I shall reply amazedly, Half sleep, half wak'ing: but as yet I swear
I cannot truly say how I came here. M. N. D. 4. 1. 142.

But home-bred broiles call back the conquering king, Warres though 'bout: the Brit'aine coasts doth ring.¹

THE INITIAL be.

This prefix is found elided in the works of almost all our dramatists, but in some cases there is reason to believe, that the word which is represented thus shorn of a syllable, is in fact the root of the compound, instead of being its remnant. We find 'long not unfrequently written for 'belong, and sometimes we have the word written at full length, although the rhythm requires but one syllable. Now, even in Chaucer's time, long was used in the same sense without the prefix, or any mark of elision; and, as both Dutch and Germans have lang-en, to reach at, the probability is that

¹ So also we have live, adj., for alive; and lone for alone.
long is an independent verb. Gen, though sedulously written

- 'gin, and sometimes begin by modern editors, may also be
  traced back to the times of Wiclif and Chaucer. I do not
however recollect meeting with it in Anglo-Saxon; another
of its compounds, ongyn en, being generally used. The
elisions which follow are among the least doubtful,

Let pty not | be believe ed there | she shook |
The holy water from her heavenly eyes  Lear, 4 3 31

And believe | me gen the youth | we I | weep for | her |
Fletcher Loyal Subject, 5 2

Now, Sir, if we have friends now
Though we al friends | be few |
Yet if your catalogue be in

But yet we want at friend that a time,
In on your list
Burns Little in Larpuck, 11 15

With these domestic traitors, be som thieves,
Whom custom hath call d wives, the richest helps
To betray | the head | his hands rob | the eye |
Ben Jonson Catiline 3 3

Lest Demophon, Duke of Athens
How he forswore him falsely,
And trait ed Phil his wickedly

Chaucer House of Fame 1 388

O believe | his majesty | hath some | intent |
That you should be now christened in the Tower
Richard III 1 1 49

Yet even in those cases there may be doubts as to the
elision of any syllable. The Germans have trieg en, to
betray, why should not we have to betray? The 'luev however
of Burns points clearly to the loss of a syllable, suppos-
ing that the word is, as it ought to be, written accord-
ing to the pronunciation.

There are also certain adverbs and prepositions which are
commonly written as though they had lost this prefix, 'fore,
'cause, &c. These, however, are found as monosyllables in
some of our earliest English authors, and it would perhaps
be safer to consider them as distinct words, and to write
them accordingly.
We shall have less trouble with the prefix dis, than with the one we have just considered. Most of the words, into which it enters, have been derived from foreign sources, and their origin carefully traced and ascertained. Still, however, there is difficulty in fixing upon the date of the corruption. It is undoubtedly of a very early antiquity, and probably of the thirteenth century.

Each bush | a bar | : each spray | a ban|ner 'splayed, |
Each house a fort, our passage to have stayed.

--- A storm ....
In to a cloud | of dust | : 'sperst | in the air |
The weak foundations of this city fair.


And 'sadain | ful pride | : and wil | ful ar | rogance.

Spenser. Mother Hubbard's Tale, 1136.1

I 'sadained | subjenc | tion : and | thought one | step high | er
Would set me highest.

And where Ardiens, tyrant vile!
His aged father 'stroyde.

Higgins. M. for M. King Porrex, 12 (first version).

Quhen | he is 'street | : than | can he swym | at will |,
Gret streth he has, bathe wyt and grace thartill.

Wallace, 5. 520.

—— Hee thought by cruell fære to bring
His subjects under, as him liked best,
But loe | the dread | wherewith | himself | was 'street.

Sackville. M. for M. Buckingham, 39.

Labour had gi'en it up for good,
Savc swains their folds that beeting stood,
While Echo, listning in the wood,
Each knock | kept 'stinct | ly count | ing.

Clare, The Fountain, st. 2.

But, as he higher drew, he easily
Might 'scern | that it | was not | his sweet | est sweet |

F. Q. 3. 10. 22.

I once thought that the disciple of the following verse

1 [So also: "Or rudely 'sadain a gentle heart's request." —Spenser, F. Q. 311.
55.—W. W. S.]
fall under the present rule, and was to be pronounced 'sciple,

And bitter penance with an iron whip
Was wont him once to disciple every day.

F. Q. 1. 10. 27.

but elsewhere, when used as a word of three syllables, Spenser accents it dis cible|, and we often find it written disple in the early part of the sixteenth century. Such was doubtless its pronunciation in the line before us.\(^1\)

It may be observed here, though it does not strictly fall under the present head of our subject, that Shakspeare has used 'cide for decide,

To 'cide | this ti|tle · is | impan|eled
A quest of thoughts. Sonnet 46.

\(^{1}\) [It is actually printed disciple in this very passage in the Globe edition.]

VOWEL COMBINATIONS.

We are now to consider such syllables, as are rendered doubtful by the meeting of two vowel sounds. We will begin with those which contain the sounds represented by ay' and ow'.

There were many dissyllables in the Anglo-Saxon, which contained in the first syllable the diphthong æ, followed by a g. All these have now lost the g, and become monosyllables, as fæger fair, stæger stair, snægel snail.

We learn, from the mode of spelling that prevailed some centuries back, and from the pronunciation which still lingers in our provinces, that the first change was that of the g into a y, fayer, stayer, &c. &c. The next step seems to have been to drop the y, and pronounce the words fa-ir, sta-ir, &c., and to this mode of pronunciation our present orthography was accommodated. They finally became monosyllables.

There were other words which had also g for the middle letter, and a or u in the first syllable; these generally turned the g into w, as agen own, fugel fowl; a use of the w
which was already known to the Anglo-Saxon, for example, in *flower* four. By degrees the *w* was dropt, and after some further time these words also became monosyllabic.

The dissyllables containing *y* and *w* seem to have been once so numerous in our language, that many words, both English and foreign, were adapted to their pronunciation, and thus gained a syllable; *scour*, A.S., became shower, and *fleur*, Fr., became flower. Change of pronunciation has again reduced them to their original dimensions.

---

And soft | unto | himself | : he *say*ed | fle<sup>1</sup>.
Upon a Lord, that woul have no mercie.

*Cchaun. The Knightes Tale*; C. T. 1775.

Beseech|ing him | : with pray|er and | with praise!.
*Spenser. F. Q. 1. 5. 41.*

Nor crab|bed oares | : nor pray|ers make | him rise|.
*Hall. Satires, 3. 6. 12.*

She’s com|ing up | the sta|irs : now | the mus|ic—
*Fletcher. Valentinian, 2. 5.*

——— The light whereof . . . .
Such blaz|ing bright|ness : through | the *a|er threw|,
That eye mote not the same endure to view.
*F. Q. 1. 8. 19.*

Save hazell for forks, save sallow for rake,
Save hul|ver and thorn | : thereof *fu|il*<sup>2</sup> to make|.
*Tusser. April’s Husbandry, st. 10.*

So spake | th’ archan|gel : Mi|chael | then paus’d |.
*P. L. 12. 466.*

Or on | each Mi|chael | : and La|dy day |
Took he deep forfeits for an hour’s delay.
*Hall. Cat. 5. 1. 49.*

Where | is thy pow|er then | : to beat | him back |.
*R. III. 4. 4. 480.*

Or ush|er’d in | a *show*|er still |
When the gust hath blown his fill.
*Il Penseroso, 127.*

---

<sup>1</sup> [So in Tyrwhitt, but wrongly; the right form is *sayde*, where the final *e* is duly sounded.—W. W. S.]

<sup>2</sup> [But read “flail for to make,” as in the best editions.—W. W. S.]
Vowel Combinations.

So many vox uae must I tend my flock.
So many vox aque must I take my rest.
So many vox aque must I confound.

3 H VI 2 5 31

Let ever hill be for feet wide,
The better to come to on ever sand.

Iwser Marcher Husbandry, st. 7

Yet where, how, and when we intend to begin,
Let ev er the first be fast you cum.

Iwser October Husbandry, st 5

I wol my given fully with you ride,
Right at min on in cost and lie your guid.

Chan Prol 805

When the long o, or its equivalents, was followed by a short vowel, Milton often melted them into a diphthong, in cases which have not been sanctioned by subsequent usage,

Delight the more and set our block that flowed.

Fast by the oracles of God

And with more pleasing light
Shad our nets off the face of things, in vain.

If none regard

Why dost thou then suggest to me distrust
Knowing who I am as I know who thou art?

Why dost thou then suggest to me distrust
Knowing who I am as I know who thou art?

The fellows of his crime the followers in st.

P I 1606

THE SYLLABLES i', c', u'

When the long i is followed by a short vowel, the latter is elided among the vulgar even to this day. There is no mispronunciation which now strikes the ear more offensively, yet little more than a century ago, and it must have been general.

And all the prophets in their age the times
Of great Messiah shall singThus laws and rites.

Established, &.

March to your several homes by Nias bese stone

Ben Jonson Cynthia's Revels, 5 3
— 'Tis worse than murder
To do upon respect: such wood out rage.

Lear, 2. 4. 23.

— God, in judgment just,
Subjects him from without: to wood lords.

P. L. 12. 92.

The mouse may some time help: the lion at neede;
The lytle bee once spilt the eagles breed.


— Your several colours, Sir,
Of the pale citron the green lion the crow.

B. Jons. The Alchemist, 2. 1.

Who tore the lion as the lion tears the kid.

Samson Agon. 128.

— Half on foot,
Half flying, behoves him now both oar and sail.

P. L. 2. 941.

With flowers fresh their heads bedeckt,
The fairies dance in fieldes,
And wanton songs in mossy eyer dennes,
The Druids and Satyrs yeeld.

Goose’s Zodiac of Life Taurus.

His knights grow no tuns and himself upbraids us
On every trufle.

Lear, 1. 3. 6.

— The noise
Of riot ascends above their loftiest tow’rs.

P. L. 1. 498.

Pluck the lin’d crutch from thy old limping sire,
With it beat out his brains pty and fear.
Decline, &c


Is pty thus: and pure devotion paid?

P. L. 11. 462.

— Thy words, with grace divine
Imbued, bring to their sweet ness. no sate ty.


And with sate ty seeks: to quench his thirst.

T. of the Shrew, 1. 1. 24.

— Who, having seen me in my worst estate,
Shunn’d my abhor rend sute ty: but now find ing
Who ’twas that so endur’d, with his strong arms
He fasten’d on my neck.

Lear, 5. 3. 299.
For so\textit{lit\textae}d\textit{e | sometimes\textae} is best | \textit{soci\textae|ty}.

\textit{P. L. 9. 249.}

\begin{quote}
--- as well might recommend
Such sol\textit{lit\textae|de before\textae|} is choic\textit{e | est soci\textae|ty}.
\textit{P. R. 1. 301.}
\end{quote}

These verses of Milton have bewilder\textit{ed the critics. Mitford and Todd both give to \textit{society} four syllables. The former reads the verse with six accents,

For sol\textit{lit\textae|ude | sometimes\textae} is best | soci\textit{ety|}
the latter ends\textit{et with two unaccented syllables,

For sol\textit{lit\textae|ude} sometimes\textae} is best | soci\textit{ety.}
\end{quote}

Neither of these rhythms is to be found in the Paradise Lost. There is little doubt that Tyrwhitt scanned these lines in the same way as Todd. He talks of Milton using the \textit{adrucciolo} ending in his heroic poems. These are the only verses which in any way countenance such a notion.

The elision of the vowel after the long \textit{e} is rare.

\begin{quote}
For when, alae! I saw the tyrant king
Content not only from his nephues twayne
To rive \textit{world's blisse| but all\textae| all | world's being|},
Sans earthly gylt ycausing both be slayne,
My heart agrave that such a wretch should reign
\textit{Sackville M. for M. Buckingham, 49.}
\end{quote}

As \textit{being | the contr\textae|trary\textae|: to his | high will|}
Whom we resist---
\textit{P. L. 1. 161.}

\begin{quote}
\textit{Seeing too | much sad\textae|iness hath | congeal'd | your blood|}
\textit{T. of the Shrew. Induction, 2. 134.}
\end{quote}

The elision after the long \textit{u} is still more rare,

\begin{quote}
Full many a yeare the world lookt for my full,
And when I fell, I made as great a cracke
As doth an oak, or mighty tottmng wall,
That whirl\textit{ing wind | doth bring\textae| to ru\textae| and wracke.}
\textit{Churchyarde. M. for M Wolsey, 69.}
\end{quote}

When the short \textit{i} or short \textit{e} was followed by \textit{a}, as it sounds in \textit{pate}, Milton and his contemporaries sometimes melted the vowels into a diphthong \textit{ia}. In modern practice we carefully distinguish between them.
HISTORY OF ENGLISH RHYTHMS.

With tears
Watering the ground, and with our sighs the air
Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
Of sor row unflignd and hu mila|ton meek|—

To conquer Sun and Death, the two grand foes,
By hu mila|ton| and |strong suf|siance|—

Let me
Interpret for him, me his advocate
And pro pilis am all | his works | on me|
Good or not, riled, in|ut

Instructed that to God is no access
Without | media t | whose | high of fulc now|
Moses in hi|me bears

Then | doth the thea tri | ced o all | aloud |
With gladsome mode of that up|law|ng crowd

Hall's Sat 1 3 37

In the country, even to this day, the accent is thrown upon the middle syllable, thea tri, but the word is always pronounced as having three syllables.

When the short i or short e was followed by a short vowel, they often formed two syllables in cases where we now always melt them into a diphthong, or elide the first vowel

A breach of gold ful shone
On which was first written a couched Λ
And af tu, a|mo in|cut om au

Chau Prol 160

But | the capti|d| Acre|sia | he sent ,
Because of travel long a nigher way I Q 3 1 2

Tis summers have I spent in furthest Greece,
Roam|ing clean through | the lounds of 4 via|

Com of Errors, 1 1 133

The vines | and the s|urs cut | and go set ,
If grape be unpleasant, a better go get

Tusser Febraries Husbandry, st 15

Himself | goes patch'd | like some | bare cot|tys ,
Last he might aught the future stock appare

Hall's Sat 4 2.
C. III. VOWEL COMBINATIONS. 45

He vaunts his voice upon an hired stage,
With high | set steps | : and prince | ly car | riage |.

Hull. Sat. 1. 3. 21.

When the words end in ence, ent, or an, the additional syllable now sounds very uncouthly.

Well could he fortunen the ascendent
Of | his imag i es : for | his pa'tent |.

Chau. Prol. 419.

Th' unskil ful leech |, mar dired his pu'tent |,
By poison of some foul ingredient. Hall. Sat. 2. 4. 23.

Contrary to the Ro man an ence |,
Whose words were short, and darksome was their sense.

Hall. Sat. 3. book. Prol.

Whose scepter guides, the flow ing o cean |.

B. Jon. Cynthia's Ren 5. 2.

No airy fowl can take so high a flight—
Nor fish can dive so deep in yielding sea—
Nor fearful beast can dig his cave so low—
As | that the air |, the eath | or o cean,
Should shield them from the gorge of greedy man.

Hall. Sat. 3. 1.

But by far the most common instance of this resolution of syllables occurs in our substantival ending ion. From the 14th to the 17th century this termination expanded into two syllables whenever the verse required it.

Full we tely |, herd e he con fer i on |,
And pleas ant was | his ab solu tion |.

Chau. Prol 221.

Ne can the man that woulds in dle cell
Un to her hap py | man sion | attam |.

F Q 2. 3. 41.

—— 'Tis the list
Of those that claim their offices this day
By cus tom of : the cor ona tion |.


My muse would follow those that have foregone,
But can | not with | : an Eng lish pun ion |.

Hall. Sat. 3. Prol.

Before we close this section I would add a word or two
respecting the diphthong ea. This diphthong, though its representative still keeps its place in our orthography, has long since been obsolete. In our provinces, however, where it still lingers, we often hear it resolved into a dissyllable, e-at, gre-at, me-at, &c. I have watched with some care, to see if it ever held the place of a dissyllable in our poetry, as in such case our Anglo-Saxon and early English rhythms might be seriously affected. My search has not been successful, and the result has been a strong conviction, that the ea, which so frequently occurs in our Anglo-Saxon poems, was strictly diphthongal.

I think, however, that in one or two instances this resolution of the diphthong has actually taken place, as in the following stave,

Now shall the wanton devils dance in rings,
   In ev'ry mead: and ov'ry heathmore,
   The elvish fairies and the gobelins,
   The hoofed satyrs silent heretofore.
   
   Hall. Elegy on Dr. Whistaker, st. 5.

This English diphthong will, of course, not be confounded with the ea that occurs in certain French words, and which was not unfrequently resolved into two syllables.

That ther n' is erthe, water, fire, ne aire,
Ne cre'ture: that of hem ma'ked is|
That may me heelo or don comfort in this.
   
   Chau. The Knightes Tale; C. T. 1248.

NASALS AND LIQUIDS.

The subjects of the present section are the nasals m, n, ng, and the liquids l and r. Of these letters two, namely, n and l, occasionally form consonantal syllables; the remaining three cannot form a syllable without a vowel. The following are instances of the vowel having been dropt and the syllable lost.

But always wept, and wailed night and day
   As blais'ed blis': thoe heat: doth lan'guish and decay.
   
   F. Q. 4. §. 2.
Amongst them all grows not a fairer flower
Than is | the bloom | of some | ly | cour | tesy |
Which, though it on a lowly stalk do bower,
Yet brancheth forth in brave nobility. F. Q. 6. Prol 4

The short vowel was sometimes elided before the m, even when the consonant was found in another syllable.

 Hewn | out of ad | amant rock | *with eng | ines keen |
       F. Q. 1. 7. 33.

 As if | in ad amant rock | it had | been pight |
       F. Q. 1. 11. 25.

Legit | imate Ed | gar : I | must have | your land |
      Lear, 1. 2. 15.

Far be the thought of this from Henry’s heart,
To make | a sham | blees | of | the pur | liament house |
  3 H. VI. 1. 1. 70

They | were a seare | un to the en myes | eye |

----- I profess
Myself | an en | emy | to | all oth | er joys |
      Lear, 1. 1. 74.

So spake | the en | my | of | mankind, | enclos’d |
In serpent. P. L. 9 494

And next to him malicious Envy rode
Upon a rav’rous wolf, and still did chaw
Between | his cank | red teeth | a ven | omous toad |
  F. Q 1. 4 30.

These things did sting
His mind | so ven omously | that burn’ing shame |
Detains him. Lear, 4. 4 47.

On the other hand we now always drop the penultimate e of French words in ment, which once formed an independent syllable.

----- Thus by on assent
We ben | accord | ed : to | his jug | ement |
      Chau. Prol. 819.

-----

1 This author always makes emeny a disyllable, and spells it as in the text.
And who | that wol my jug | ement | withsay |,  
Shall pay for all we spenden by the way  

Chaucer  Prol 807

For of his hands he had no government  
Ne card | for blood in his | avenge | ement  

F Q 1 4 34

Then many a Lollard would in torturement,  
Bear pa pe fag gote o xi | the pay | ement  

Hall  Sat 2 1 17

He came | it his | command | ement | on him  
The sente Thesius for 1 mile  

Chaucer  The Knightes Tale  C T 2981

The wretched woman whom unhappy hour  
Hath now | made thral to your | command | ement  

I Q 1 2 22

The word regiment is now also generally made a disyllable, though we occasionally hear it pronounced with three syllables, as in the verses,

The regiment was wil him and | advanced | too  

Ithiche  Boudica, 2 4

His regiment has half a mile | at least  
South from the mighty power of the King  

R III 5 3 37

M, we have said, cannot form a syllable without a vowel. This rule holds both as regards our spelling and our pronunciation, but one or two centuries ago the termination sm was often pronounced som, as it is among the vulgar to this day

Great Solomon sings in the English quire,  
And is become a new-found sonnetist  
Swearing his love, the holy spouse of Christ  
Like as she were some light skits of the nest,  
In migh test ink borns ms he | can thith el wrest ,  

Hall  Sat 1 8, 8

All this | by syl logis m, true  
In mood and figure, he would do  

Buller  Hudibras, 1 1 79

---

1 And in F Q 1 3 9 — W W 8
These words should have been written as pronounced, *inakhornism*, *syllogism*, &c.

N is one of the two letters, which form consonantal syllables. It is difficult to say when it first obtained this privilege, but it could hardly have been so early as the reign of Elizabeth. In that reign, Gabriel Harvey objected to Spenser’s use of *heaven*, *seven*, &c., as dissyllables, the same not being “authorized by the ordinarie use and custom.” He would have them written and spoken “as monosyllaba, thus, heavn, seavn, &c.” I think therefore that *heaven*, *seven*, &c., were commonly pronounced then, as now, with only one vowel; and that when Spenser and his contemporaries made them dissyllables, they imitated an obsolete, or rather a provincial dialect, and pronounced them with two vowels. This latter mode of pronunciation has left traces behind it; even yet we may occasionally hear *heav en*, *sev-en*, &c., among the vulgar.

There are four terminations into which n enters, *an*, *en*, *in*, *on*; of these *on* is now merely consonantal, as in *even*; *an* and *on* sound like *un*, as in *Roman*, *reason*; and in retains its proper sound as in *griffin*. Our poets use *en* as a syllable whenever it suits their convenience; though, generally speaking, the only difference in the pronunciation is a lengthening of the *n*. The terminations *an*, *on*, and *in*, are now commonly used as syllables; although Milton and some of his contemporaries elide the vowel, and tack *n* to the preceding syllable, when their rhythm requires it.

*Heaven’s* is the quar rel. for *heaven’s* substitut
Hath caus’d his death.  *R II. 1. 2 37.*

*Ed ward’s seven sons* · whereof *thyself* *art one,*
Were *as seven phials* of *his sacred blood,*
Or *seven* *fair branch’es* *spring*’ing from *one root*.

*And Palamon, this woful prisoner,* . . . .
*Was risen,* *and ro* *ed* : *in* *a chamber* *on high*.

*Chau. The Knightes Tale; C. T. 1065.*
HISTORY OF ENGLISH RHYTHMS. R. L.

Seems another morn
Risen on mid noon some great behest from heaven
To us perhaps he brings.

In any case that migh te fallen, or hap pe.

Fallen cher ub to be weak is mis er able

One of our leading reviews scanned the last verse thus,

Fallen cher ub to be weak is mis er able

and Mitford almost laughs at the notion of heav'n and giv'n
being pronounced as monosyllables!

The following are examples of the termination on,

Fareast from him is best
Whom reason hath e quall'd force hath made supreme
Above his equals

Charon was afraid lest thirs ty Gul lion
Would have drunk dry the river Acheron

There is sometimes the same elision of the vowel, and the
same loss of a syllable, in the middle of a word;

And then to had he ridden, no man ferce,
As wel in Cristen dom as in Heth enes se,
And ever honoured for his worthinesse

Though of their names in heaven by re cords now
Be no memorial

My curse upon your wh unstane hearts,
Ye Edin burgh gen try
The tithe o what ye waste at cartes,
Wad store d his pantry.

Burns To William Simpson, st. 4.

It may be here observed, that the elision of the vowel is
generally the first step towards corruption. Ed'nburgh was
merely introductory to E'enboro'.

The short vowels were also very frequently elided before n,
when that letter began the following syllable.

Our Editors will not believe that even Milton could write English; and
"correct" his fareast, perfet, and other barbarisms of the like kind, without
the least hint to the reader.
Un\ to ourselves:  | it hop\neth oft | among\n.

Drayton.  M. for M.  Cromwell, 120.

— My counsel swaied all,
For still | the king\ would | for the card\nall call\n.

Drayton.  M. for M.  Wolsey, 35.

They are but blinde that wake where fortune sleeps,
They worke in vayne that strive with streame and tide,
In doubt\le garde | they dwell\ | that dest\nse keeps\.


Dest\iny by death\ | spoiled fee ble na\ture's frame\.

Hall.  Elegy on Dr. Whitaker, st. 9.

Pride pricketh men to flatter for the prey,
T'opresse | and poll\ | for maut nance of | the same\.

Chalm.  M. for M.  Northfolke, 8.

— And each
In oth\er's count\enance read | his own | dismay.

P. L. 2. 421.

I was despised, and banished from my bliss,
Discount\naunste, sayne | to hide | myself | for shame\.

Higgin.  M. for M.  King Emeranua, 3.

— Wisdom in discourse with her
Los|es discount\enanc'd | and | lke fol\ly shous\.

P. L. 8. 552.

Ignom'ny was further corrupted into ignomy;

Thy ug\nomy | . sleep with | thee in | thy grave\.

1 II. IV. 5. 4. 100.

Hence, broth\er lack\ey \nomy | and shame
Pursue thy life.

Tro. and Crews. 5. 10. 33.

When the termination en followed r, it often formed a
syllable, in cases where the vowel is now elided, as boren,
toren, &c.

Eke Zea\land's pit\cous plaints\ | and Hol\land's tor\en hair.


When ng followed the short i at the end of a word or
syllable, the vowel appears sometimes to have been elided
among our dramatists;

Having nei\ther sub\ject: wealth, | nor di\adem\.

2 H. VI. 4. 1. 82.
Sometimes he angers me
With telling me of the mold-y warp: and the ant.
1 H. IV. 3. 1. 148.

Buckingham, doth York intend no harm to us?
2 H. VI. 5. 1. 56.

Humphrey of Buckingham: I accept thy greeting.
2 H. VI. 5. 1. 15.

Why, Buckingham, is the traitor. Cade surpris'd?
2 H. VI. 4. 9. 18.

— My Lord Cobham,
With whom the Kentish men will willingly rise.
3 H. VI. 1. 2. 40.

This oath I willingly take and will perform.
3 H. VI. 1. 1. 201.

Our dramatists use a very irregular metre, and are therefore not the safest guides in a matter of this kind; but when we find a word recurring again and again, in situations where our prevailing rhythms require the subtraction of a syllable, I think we may fairly conclude such to have been the pronunciation of the poet.

L, I believe, in pronunciation no longer follows any consonant at the end of a word or syllable excepting d, t, r. In the language of the present day, we generally hear a short u before it. The difference between it and the letter n in this respect must, I think, be obvious if the pronunciation of evil be compared with that of heaven. The first sounds clearly with two vowels e-vul, but if we were to pronounce the latter hev-un it would at once strike us as un-couth and vulgar.

In the Anglo-Saxon, l was very generally used without a vowel, as adl sickness, swgot the sky, susl sulphur. In the early English we changed this mode of spelling, and adopted the French ending le in the place of l, writing settle, for instance, instead of the A. S. setl. We have preserved this orthography, except in cases where l follows r, although we have since changed the pronunciation.

We will first give examples in which the vowel has been elided, and a syllable lost in consequence;
What evil is left undone when man may have his will?
Man ever was a hypocrite, and so continues still.

_Tusser's Omnipotence of God_, st. 2.

Each home-bred science percheth in the chair,
While serious arts grovel on the ground sel bare.

_Hall_. Sat. 2. 3. 23.

Foul devil, for God's sake hence and trouble us not.

_R. III. 1_. 2. 50.

But when to sin our biased nature leans,
The careful devil is still at hand with means.

_Dryden_. Abs. & Achit. 79.

This noble ensample: to his shepe he yaf.

_Chau_. _Prol_. 498.

So noble a man, a fallen all gone, and not
One friend to take his fortune by the arm,
And go along with him?

_T. of A_. 4. 1. 46.

When this advice is free I give, and honest,

_Probal to think ing and indeed the course_

To win the Moor again.

_Othello_, 2. 3. 342.

_Probal_ is found in all the early editions, and is clearly a corruption of _probable_. It shows, if any proof were wanting, that the French ending _able_, was commonly used by our early English writers as one syllable. Such was it considered by Chaucer, who makes the word _able_, corresponding to the French _habile_, a disyllable. Milton made this ending one or two syllables, as best suited his verse, and such was the common practice of his contemporaries. At present it is always pronounced _abul_, and of course fills the place of two syllables. When it was so used by our early English poets, they seem, at least in some cases, to have accommodated their spelling to it; to have written, for example, _fabill_ for _fable_, and _delectabill_ for _delectable_. This orthography, and in all probability the pronunciation which corresponded with it, prevailed chiefly in the North.

And thus with fained flattering and japes
He made the person: and the _peple_ his apes.

_Chau_. _Prol_. 707.

_Anon_ there is a noise of _peple_ begonne.

_Chau_. _C. T_. 2662.
There was also a nonne, a prioress,
That | of her smile | ing: was | ful simple | and coy |.

--- The wisest heart
Of Solomon he led by fraud to build
His temple right | against | the temple | of God |.

P. L. 1. 401.

And his next son, for wealth and wisdom fam'd,
The clouded ark of God, till then in tents
Wandering, shall in | a glorious temple | enshrine |.

P. L. 12. 332.

--- This house
Is little, | the old man: and | his people can | not
Be well bestowed.

Lear, 2. 4. 291.

--- The place, unknown and wild,
Breeds dreadful doubts. Oft fire is without smoke,
Peril | without show | there | fire your heart | stroke |,
Sir knight, with-hold.

F. Q. 1. 1. 12. 1

Of son | dry dou | tes: thus they jangle | and trel | e.

Chau. The Squire's Tale; C. T. 10634.

Wer't | not all one | an em | ty eagle | were set |
To guard the chicken from a hungry kite,
As place Duke Humphrey for the King's Protector?

2 H. VI. 3. 1. 248.

And | for this mir | acle: in | conclu | sion |
And by Custance's mediation,
The king, and many another in that place,
Converted was, thanked be Cristes grace.

Chau. Man of Lawes Tale; C. T. 5103.

--- Contempt itself, that doth incite
Each single | sol'd squire | to set | you at | so light |.

Hall's Sat. 2. 2. 17.

How, | Sir | this gent | man: you | must bear | withal |

B. Jonson. Alchemist, 2. 1.

Where nought but shadowy forms were seen to move,
As Idle | ness fancied in | her dream | ing mood |.

Thomson, Castle of Indolence, 1. 8.

1 [The lines are differently divided in the Globe edition.—W. W. S.]
2 [The Globe edition reads: "And peril without shows: thencefore your stroke." That without had the accent on with, appears from the preceding line, and is particularly noted further on, at the end of Chap. IV.—W. W. S.]
3 [But Thomson purposely wrote idleness, and not idleness.—W. W. S.]
I'd rather hear a brass candle stick turn'd.
1 H. IV. 3. 1. 131.

In the quartos we have can-stick, which appears to have been a common corruption in the time of Shakespeare. In like manner, from ev'l and dev'l come ill and devil; and there can be no doubt that gent'man, by a further corruption, has become our slang term gemman. Thomson seems to have made idleness a dissyllable, in imitation of Spenser, whose stanza he had adopted.

The short vowels, when they formed independent syllables before l, were frequently elided, and even at the present day the same license is occasionally taken.

——— What can you say to draw
A third more opulent than your sisters? Speak.
Lear, 1. 1. 37.

Beef that erst Hercules held for finest fare.
Hall Sat. 3. 3.

Particular pains: particular thanks do ask.
B. Jonson. Cynthia's Revels, 5. 3.

——— Thus was the building left
Ridiculous, and the work confusion nam'd.
P. L. 12. 61.

——— And approve
The fit rebuke: of so ridiculous heads.

That over there may flie no fowl but dyes
Choak with the pest lent sav'ours: that arise.

Keep safely and wary: thy utmost fence.
Tussor. Sept. Husbandry, st. 36.

In worst extremes: and on the perilous edge
Of battle.
P. L. 1. 276.

——— The sun who, scarce uprisen, ...
Shot par allel to the earth: his dew, y ray.
P. L. 5. 139.

— Hence Shakespeare's Ercles.
— [But Tussor has warily.—W. W. S.]
— Hence parlous, so common among our Elizabethan writers.
No ser vant at ta ble: use sau’ ly to talk. Tussor, § 86.

The shot was such ther could no sound of drumme
Be eas’ ly heard: the tyme: I you assure.

Churchyard. Siege of Leith, st. 19.

——— For I in publique weal
Lorde Chanc lour was: and had the great broad seal.


His manner too he made mee all in haste,
And threefode githes he threwe upon me still,
His couns lour straight: like wise was Wolsey plaste.


Some of our poets of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries pronounced the vowel, in cases where it is now rejected.

So neither this travell may seem to be lost,
Nor thou to repent of this tri sling cost.


Tumbling all: precipitate down dash’d.

Dyer’s Ruins of Rome, l. 41.

Which when in vain: he tried with strug jellying,
Inflam’d with wrath, his raging blade he left.

F. Q. 1. 11. 39.

Let second broth ers: and poor nes tings
Whom more injurions nature later brings
Into this naked world, let them assaine
To get hard pennyworths.

Hall. Sat. 2. 2. 43.

And as it quincnt: it mad e a whis tling,
As don these bronxes wet in her brouning.

Chau. The Knightes Tale; C. T. 2339.

——— My eyes these lines with tears do steep,
To think how she through guile ful hand jeling,
Is from her knight divorced in despair.

F. Q. 1. 3. 2.

Both star ing fierce: and hold ing idely
The broken reliques of their former cruelty.

F. Q. 1. 2. 16.

For half so bold ely: can ther no man
Sweren and lien as a woman can.


But trew ely: to tel len at te last;
He was in church a noble ecclesiast.

Chau. Prol. 709.
For *trew*; *ely*; *no mirth*; *e is non*
To riden by the way, dumbe as a ston.

*Chau. Prol. 775.*

Some words in the North of England and in Scotland, retain the short vowel, when it follows an *r*, even to this day.

That done | the *ear*; *l*et *ters wrote|
Unto each castle, fort, and hold, &c.

*Flodden Field, 475.*

Ye'll try | the *war*; *ld* : soon | my lad. |

*Burns. Epistle to a young friend, st. 2.*

"Twas e'en, the *dew*; *y* fields were green,
On ev'ry blade | : the *pear* | is hung.

*Burns. Luss o' Ballochmyla.*

In the modern pronunciation of our language, *r* follows no consonant at the end of a word or syllable. In some of our old English dialects such a combination was common, and was expressed by the French ending *re*. In all these cases we now interpose a short *u* before the *r*, and though we retain the spelling in a few instances, as in *acre, sepulcre, mitre*, &c., yet these words are always pronounced with the short vowel, *akur, sepulkur, mitur*, &c.

We will, as before, begin with those cases in which the final syllable has been lost.

And Palamon . . . .
Was risen | and rom| ed : in | a *chambre* | on high, |
In which he all the noble citee sigh.

*Chau. The Knightes Tale; C. T. 1065.*

As Christ | I count | my head | : and I | a *member* | of his, |
So God I trust for Christes sake shall settle me in bliss.

*Tuesser's 1 Belief, st. 24.*

—— Every tedious stride I make,
Will | but *remember* | me : what | a deal | of world |
I wander.

*R. II. 1. 3. 268.*

—— *N' is creature living*

That *ever* | heard such | : anoth|er wai|menting.

*Chau. Knightes Tale; C. T. 904.*

1 The extreme precision of Tuesser's rhythm renders his authority, in a case of this kind, of great value.
I must not suffer this: yet 'tis but the lees
And settlings of a melancholy blood. Comus. 809.

Deliver us out of all: this be my drede.
Chau. Clerkes Tale; C. T. 8010.

Th' Allovier would be unthank'd: would be unprais'd.
Comus, 723.

And where the river of bliss: through midst of heaven Rolls o'er Elysian flowers.
P. L. 3. 358.

And he hadde be sometime in chevachie
In Flandres, in Artois: and in Picardie.
Chau. ProL 85.

By water he sent hem home: to every land.
Chau. ProL 402.

Her glori ous glitter and light: doth all men's eyes amaze.
F. Q. 1. 4. 16.

In proud rebellious arms
Drew after him the third part: of heaven's sons.
P. L. 2. 691.

And after into heaven ascend he did in sight,
And sit there on the right hand: of God the father
Tusser's Belief, st. 16.

If by your art, my dear father: you have
Put the wild waters in this roar, allay them.
Tempest, 1. 2. 1.

Three vollies let his memory crave
O' pouth'r an' lead,
Till Echo answer from her cave,
Tam Samson's dead.
Burns. Tam Samson's Elegy.

Whether sayest thou this: or in nest: or in play?
Chau. The Knights Tale; C. T. 1127.

See whe'r their base met'al: be not moved.
Julius Caesar, 1. 1. 66.

Either thou or I: or both must go with him.

And neither: nor hostility
To seek to put me down.
3 H. VI. 1. 1. 199.

We have one of the best proofs of the elision, in the further corruptions such words have undergone, ou'r be-
came o'er, ev'ry ere, oth'ry or, wheth'ry whid'or; and in those
dialects which are so intimately connected with our own, as
almost to make part of the same language, we find these
letters similarly affected. Thus in the Frisic faer is father,
moar mother, broer brother, foer fodder. With a slight
change in the orthography, we find the same words in the
Dutch. This seems to point clearly to a similar cause of
corruption in all these dialects. The elision of the vowel I
believe to have been the first step.

As this final syllable is so important an element in the
regulation of our rhythms, one or two more instances of its
loss may, I think, be useful;

—— In his rising seem'd
A pillar of state : deep in his front engraven
Deliberation sat. P. L. 2. 301.

—— Who shall go
Before them in a cloud,: and pillar of fire.
P. L. 12. 201.

Studied the grammar of state : and all the rules.
B. Jonson. Cynthia's Revels, 3. 4.

—— Check
This hidious rashness: answer my life, my judgment.
Lear, 1. 1. 151.

In the following examples the vowel is elided at the end
of a syllable;

Tie up the liber'tine: in a field of feasts'.
A. and Cl. 2. 1. 23.

What trowen ye that whiles I may preche,
And winne gold and silver for I teche,
That I wol live in pover'ty: wil'fully'.
Chauc. The Pardoner's Tale; C. T. 12373.

Take pover'ties part: and let prowde for tune go'.

"My dukedom to a beggar'ty denier',
I do mistake my person all this while.
R. III. 1. 2. 252.

1 [Read povert, as in the best MSS.—W. W. S.]
In the next examples, the elided vowel is found in a different syllable from that of the ſ;

Since peddling barismus: gan be in request.

Hall. Sat. 2. 3. 25.

And specially from every shires ende
Of Englelund: to Canterbury: they went e.

Chau. Prol. 15.

So born I was to house and land by right,
But in a bagg to court I brought the same,
From Shrewsbry e tone: a seat of an cient fame.

Churchyard. Tragicall Discourse, 69.

Direct revenge: and battle dangerous.

P. I. 2. 107.

And I: with sprits: welny: bereft,
Beheld the plight and pangs that did him strayne.

Sackville. M. for M. Buckingham, 87.

The captaine notes: what sol Δier hath: most speeed.

Churchyard. Trag. Disc. 64.

You that had taught them to subdue their foes,
Could or Δier teach: and their: high spirts: compose.

Waller. Panegyric, st. 41.

For this infernal pit shall never hold
Cesial spirits: in bondage: nor: the abyss:
Long under darkness cover.

P. L. 1. 658.

Ten dering the precious safe ty: of my prince.

R. II. 1. 1. 32.

Of dauntless courage: and considerate pride.

P. L. 1. 603.

On some apparent danger seen in him
Aim'd: at your highness: no incoreerate malice.

R. II. 1. 1. 13.

Turning our tortures into horrid arms
Against: the torturer: when: to meet: the noise:
Of his almighty engine he shall hear
Infernal thunder.

P. L. 2. 63.

Of corniant kind: some cramned captions are,
The moer they eat the moer they may consume.

Churchyard. Tragicall Discourse.

Timorous and slothful: yet: he pleas'd: the ear.

P. L. 2. 117.
Hum|orists and hyp|ocrates |: it should | produce |.
Whole Raymond families and tribes of Bruce.

Dryden. Mac Flecknoe, 92.

A re|creant |: and most | degen|erate trait|or.

R. II. 1. 1. 144.

The second verse quoted from Milton, is thus scanned by Tyrwhitt;

Celestial spirits in bondage nor the abyss,
and is produced to show that the third foot sometimes contained three syllables!

In several cases, however, the vowel was retained where we now reject it; and so common must have been this mode of pronunciation, that we find it followed in many words which never properly contained an e. We find other words which inserted the short vowel after the long i or the long e, and thereby increased their dimensions by a syllable.

For as you liketh, it sufficeth me.
Then | have | got | the mais terie | quod she.

Chauc. The Wif of Bathes T.; C. T. 6817.

Here | may ye see | wel: | how | that gen terie.
Is not annexed to possession.

Chauc. The Wif of Bathes T.; C. T. 6728.

I here confess myself the king of Tyre,
Who frigh ted from: | my coum try | did wed |.
At Pentapolis the fair Thaisa.

Per. 5. 3. 2.

Then to him stepping, from his arm did reach
Those keys, | and made | himself: | free en|terance |.

F. Q. 1. 8. 34.

The raven himself is hoarse
That croaks | the fa|tal en|terance | of Dun can,
Under my battlements.

Macbeth, 1. 5. 39.

That he is dead, good Warwick, 'tis too true,
But how | he died | God knows : not Hen|ry |.

2 II. VI. 3. 2. 130.

The Em|peress, | the mid|wife: and | yourself |.

Titus And. 4. 2. 143.
Crying with loud voice,

"Jesus maintain your royal Excellence,"

With "God preserve the good Duke Humphrey!"

2 II. VI. 1. 1. 160.

Except none but good Duke Humphrey.

2 II. VI. 1. 1. 193.

Courage yields

No foot to sue: the flaming fire flies,

As from a forge.

F. Q. 1. 2. 17.

The prattling things are just their pride,

That sweet ens all their fire side.

Burns. Twa Dogs.

Sluttery to such neat excellence display'd

Should make desire: venit company.

Cymbeline, 1. 6. 44.

A gentleman of Tyre: my name Pericles.

Per. 2. 3. 81.

There's many a soul

Shall pay full earnest: for this encounter.

1 II. IV. 5. 1. 83.

Arcite unto the temple walked is

Of fierce Mars: to doom his sacrifice.

Chauc. The Knightes Tale; C. T. 2370.

Their God himself, griev'd at my liberty,

Shot many a dart at me with fierce intent.

F. Q. 1. 9. 10.1

THE CLOSE LETTERS.

In the present section we shall discuss the remaining letters of our alphabet, and will begin with the close letters. Of these there are six, b, p, d, t, g, k.

Adjectives in able and ible are sometimes pronounced as if the first vowel were elided. It is extremely difficult to say when this corruption first began. In the following verses,

Some time to increase his horrible cruelty

The quicke with face to face engraved he.

Sackville. M. for M. Buckingham, 48.

1 [But the Globe edition reads: "Shot many a dart at me with fierce intent;” and Todd's edition has the same. Otherwise, the line is deficient in sense as well as metre.—W. W. S.]
Let fall
Your horrible pleasure. Here I stand, your slave.

Lear, 3. 2. 18.

it is clear that horrible is a dissyllable, but whether the i should be elided and the word pronounced horr’ble, or ible should be pronounced as one syllable, may be doubted. As, however, we know that ible was often pronounced as one syllable, and have no distinct evidence that the present corrupt pronunciation was then prevalent, it would be safer, perhaps, to retain the vowel.

The loss of the vowel before g or e is very rare.

Nor the time nor place
Will serve | our long | : inter|gator; ies. See |
Posthumus, &c.

Cymbeline, 5. 5. 391.

Thou ev’er young | : fresh, lov’d, | and del’icate woo’er.

T. of A. 4. 3. 385.

And now and then an ample tear trill’d down
Her del’icate cheek | : it seem’d | she was | a queen |
Over her passion. Lear, 4. 3. 13.

Perfum’d gloves | : and del’icate chains | of am’ber.

B. Jons. Every Man out of his H. 2. 2.

The elision before d and t is far more common.

The participle and preterite in ed, was often pronounced in our old English without the vowel. In Anglo-Saxon the participle ended sometimes in od or ed, sometimes in d simply. I do not, however, find that the elisions in our old English correspond with the latter class of Anglo-Saxon verbs; on the contrary, in some couplets, as in the following, the same verb seems to be both a monosyllable and a dissyllable.

For | in this world | : he lov’ed no | man so’,
And he | loved him | : as ten’derly | again .

Chau. The Knightes Tale; C. T. 1198.

Good milch-cow and pasture good husbands provide,
The res’due good hus’wifes: know best | how to guide .

Tusser. April Husb., st. 19.

1 [Read loved = lov’de, with final e sounded. In the next line, the final e is elided, and the word becomes lov’d'.—W. W. S.]
The King, at length, sent me beyond the seas,

Embas|tour then [: with mes|sage good | and great].


Know Cade | we come [: ambass|adours from | the king].

2 II. VI. 4. 8. 7.

He|roes' and her|oines' shouts | : confus|d, ly rise |.

Pope's Rape of the Lock, 5. 41.

—— Edmund, I arrest thee
On cap|ital trea|son : and | in thine | attaint |
This gilded serpent. Lear, 5. 3. 82.

—— I arrest thee, York,
Of cap|ital trea|son : gainst | the King | and Crown!

2 II. VI. 5. 1. 106.

Needs | must the ser|pent now | : his cap|ital bruise |

—— They all have met again,
And are | upon | : the Med|iterrae|nume flote |
Bound sadly home for Naples. Tempest, 1. 2. 233.

The rest | was magn|anim|i ty : to | remit |.

Samson Agon. 1470.

Prop|er deform|i ty seems | not : in | the fiend |
So horrid as in woman. Lear, 4. 2. 60.

Human|i ty must | perforce | : prey | on itself |

Lear, 4. 2. 49.

He knew not Caton, for his wit was rude,
That bade | a man | shulde wed|de : his isi|militde |

Chau. The Milleres Tale; C. T. 3227.

Would | the nobil|i ty : lay | aside | their ruth |,
And let me use my sword, I'd make a quarry. Cor. 1. 1. 201.

Whose parents dear, whilst equal destinies
Did run aboute, and their felicities
The favourable heavens did not envy,
Did spread | their rule | : through all | their terr|iories |
Which Phison and Euphrates floweth by. F. Q. 1. 7. 43.

Ser|row would be | a rar|i ty : most | belov'd |
If all could so become it. Lear, 4. 3. 25.

There is, however, one word in ty, which now always drops its penultimate vowel, though such vowel was retained as late as the seventeenth century.
For she | had great | : doubt | of his saf'ety.

Nor fish can dive so deep in yielding sea,
Though The' is self | : should swear | her saf'ety.'

THE DENTALS.

We now come to the dental letters, f and th.

She's gone | a man t'irst ser pent : by | her sting

Samson Agon. 997.

Scar' up the pitiful eye | of ten der day

Macbeth. 3. 2. 47.

Hast thou, according to thy oath and band,
Brought hith' or Hen' ry Her' eford. thy | bold son ?

R. II. 1. 1. 2.

Eth, the ending of the third person singular, often lost its vowel. In the Anglo-Saxon the third person ended in ath, eth, or th, and the last ending was most prevalent. Many of our old English verbs, which formerly ended in ath, elided the vowel; though such pronunciation was more usual in those verbs, which took th for their Anglo-Saxon termination: thinkth, ly'th, gyf'th, com'th, &c., were probably the direct descendants of the older forms, thineth, līth, gyfth, etc.

--- --- Drowned in the depth
Of depe desire to drinke the guiltesse bloud,
Like | to the wolf' | : with greed' y lookes | that lepth
Into the snare.

Sackville. M. for M. Buckingham, 25.

--- --- High God, in lieu of innocence,
Imprinted hath that token of his wrath,
To shew | how sore | : blood-guiltines | he ha'th .

F. Q. 2. 2. 4.

His subtle tongue | : like drop' ping hon' ey molt' th
Into the heart, and searcheth every vein,
That ere he be aware, by secret stelth.
His power is reft.

F. Q. 1. 9. 31.

This contraction prevailed very generally among the poets of the West. It occurs no less than five times in the following simile from Dolman,
So mid the vale the greyhound seeing stert
His fearful fæ, pursu' th, before she flert' th,
And where she turn' th, he turn' th her there to beare,
The one prey prick' th, the other safety's fear.

M. for M. Hastings, 24.

THE SIBILANTS.

In discussing the sibilants, the first question relates to
the contraction of es, the ending of the plural and of the
genitive singular. There is no doubt that this syllable was
occasionally contracted before the time of Chaucer, and by
that author frequently; ¹

For him | was lev' er han | : at his | beddes hed |
A twenty bokes clothed in black or red

At mor' tal bat' tailes : had' de he ben | fifteen | c.
Chau. ProL 61.

It is still used when the substantive ends in a sibilant, and
even in other cases was occasionally met with as late as the
early part of the seventeenth century;

—— Arose the doughty knight
All heal' ed of | his hurts | : and wound' es wide|. F. Q. 1. 11. 52.

—— Were I good Sir Bevis,
I would | not stay | his coming : by | your leave | es.

Farewell | madame | : my Lord' es worth' y mother.
Sir Thomas More.

Until he did a dying widow wed,
Whiles | she lay do' ing : on | her death' es bed |.
Hall. Sat. 4. 1. 62.

No contraction was more common than that of the super-
lative.

¹ [I think not, except in plurals of words of more than one syllable, such as
batails or batailles (spelt either way). Certainly not in the genitive singular.
We must scan it otherwise:—

For him | was lever | han at | his bed | des hed. — W. W. S.]
It was the owl that shriek’d, the fatal bellman
Which gives | the stern’st | good night | : he is | about | it.

\textit{Macbeth}, 2. 2. 3.

Or | when they meant | : to fare | the fia’st | of all|
They lick’d oak-leaves besprent with honey-fall.

\textit{Hull}. \textit{Sat}. 3. 1. 16.

Thus | the great’st man | : of Eng’land made | his end!|

\textit{Drayton}. \textit{M. for M. Cromwell}, 121.

So farre my princes prayse doth passe
The fit, most queene | : that ever was | .


Sometimes the vowel was elided, in cases where, according to modern pronunciation, the s and t are given to different syllables;

--- She has in her . . .
--- all the truth of Christians,
And all | their con stancy | : mod esty was made |
When she was first intended. \textit{Fletcher}. \textit{Valentinian}, 1. 1.

Wilt | thou then serve | the Phil istines : with | that gift | ,
Which was expressly given thee to annoy them?

\textit{Samson Agon}. 577.

--- I’ the dead of darkness,
The min isters for | the pur pose : hur ried thence |
Me and thy crying self. \textit{Temp.} 1. 2. 131.

--- To plainness honour’s bound
When maj esty falls | to fol ly : reverse | thy doon | .

\textit{I Jrar}, 1. 1. 150.

In the following examples the vowel belongs to an independent syllable;

I had | in house | : so ma ny of | sars still |
Which were obayde and honour’d for their place,
That carelessse I might sleepe or walke at will.


--- A silver flood
Full | of great vir tues : and | for med, ’one good | .

\textit{F. Q.} 1. 11. 29.

--- Her grace is a lone woman
And very rich | : and if | she take | a phant, ’sie
She will do strange things.

HISTORY OF ENGLISH RHYTHMS.

Our pow'r
Shall do | a court|esy : to | our wrath, | which men|
May blame, but not control.

Lear, 3. 7. 25.

In his raging mind
He curs'd | all court|esy : 1 and | unru|ly wind|.

Hall. Sat. 3. 5. 19.

With blood | of guilt|less babes | : and in|nocents true|.

F. Q. 1. 8. 35.

The in|nocent prey | : in haste | he does | forsake |.

F. Q. 1. 6. 10.

In death | avow|ing : the in|nocence of | her son|.

F. Q. 1. 5. 39.

Slue|d | out his in|nocent soul | : through streams | of blood|.

R. II. 1. 1. 103.

Bidding the dwarf with him to bring away
The Sur|azens shield | : sign | of the con|queror |.

F. Q. 1. 2. 20.

And Brit|on fields | : with Sur|azens blood | body'd |.

F. Q. 1. 11. 7.

COALITION OF WORDS.

We have now only to consider those cases in which a syllable has been lost by the meeting of two words.

The synalapha or coalition of two vowels, is now tolerated in very few instances. We may slide the vowel of the definite article before its substantive, and sometimes, though more rarely, the vowel of to before its verb; but the ear is offended, if the to is made to coalesce with a narrow vowel as, t' insist, or the article with a broad one, as in the verses,

So spake | the apostate an|gel : tho' | in pain|.

P. L. 1. 125.

The earth cum|ber'd and | the wing'd | air : dark | with plumes |.

Comus. 730.

Formerly this union of the vowels was far more general. Chaucer melts the final a into the following word without scruple, and in some cases the Anglo-Saxons took the same

---

1 As from plant'sie came fancy, so from court'sy came curtesy.
license. We also find Chaucer occasionally using the same liberty in other cases. His successors (fully alive to the convenience) followed his example, till Milton pushed this, as every other license, to the utmost. So frequently does it occur in the works of this poet, that several critics, among others Johnson, have given him credit for its invention, or rather, we should say, its introduction, for they suppose it borrowed from the Latin.

We will first give instances where the final vowel is narrow;

It is | reprev'e: and con'trary of | honour
For to be hold a common hasardour.

Chau. The Pardoner's Tale; C. T. 12529.

And thereto he was hard, wise, and rich,
And pit'ous ; and just | and al'way glich'e.

The Squire's Tale; C. T. 10333.

And you that feel no woe when as the sound
Of these my nightly cries ye hear apart,
Let break | your soum'der sleep] : and pit'y augment'.


As marks | to which]; my 'adcar'ours steps | should bend'.

B. Jonson. Cynthia's Revels, 5. 3.

Stiffly to stand | on this]; and proud ly approve | The play, might tax the maker of self-love.

B. Jonson. Epil. to Cynthia's Revels.

Pas|sion and ap'athy : and glor'y and shame'. P. L. 2. 564

In the following examples the final vowel is broad,

Then was gret shoving bothe to and fro,
To lift him up, and muckle care and wo,
So unweil'd was' this se'ly pal'ed gost .

The Meneaples Prologue; C. T 17002.

And with | so exceed ing fury : at | him strake',
That forced him to stoop upon his knee. F. Q. 1. 5. 12.

Her doubtful words made that redoubted knight
Suspect | her truth: yet since | no untruth | he knew
Her fawning love with foul disdainful spite
He would not shend. F. Q. 1 1. 53.
No ungrateful food: and food alike those pure
Intelligent substances require,
As doth your rational.  

Auguish and doubt: and fear: and sorrow and pain.

—— Vouchsafe with us
Two on'ly who yet: by sov'reign gift possess
This spacious ground, in yonder shady bower
To rest.  

The pronoun _it_ not only coalesces with a vowel, as _be't_, _v't_, &c., but sometimes also with a consonant, as _is't_, _with't_, &c.

If the ill spirit have so fair a house,
Good things will strive to dwell with't.

_The Tempest_, 1. 2. 458.

You taught me lan'guage: and my prof'it on't: Is, I know how to curse.

_The Tempest_, 1. 2. 363.

--- If he may
Find mercy in the law, _tis_ his; if none,
Let him not seek't of us: by day and night.
He's traitor to the height.  

_H. VIII_. 1. 2. 211.

I say it is not lost: _Fetch't_, let me see it.—

_Othello_, 3. 4. 85.

--- His sword
Hath a sharp edge: it's long, and it may be said
It reaches far.  

_H. VIII_. 1. 1. 109.

We find _'t_ before a vowel in _'tis_, and even before a consonant in the passage——

Which done, quoth he, "if outwardly you show
Sound, _'t not avails_; if inwardly or no."  

_Drayton_. _M. for M._ _Cromwell_, 107.

To also coalesces very freely with the word that follows it, whether verb, substantive, or pronoun.

When she was dear to us: we did hold her so.

_Lear_, 1. 1. 199.

Married your royalalty: was wife to your place,
Abhor'd your person.  

_Cymbeline_, 5. 5. 39.
For a short day or two | retire to your own house.  

_Fletcher.  Loyal Subject, 2. 1._

From whence to England afterward I brought.  
Those slight of state deliver'd unto me,  
In which were then but very few that sought.  

_Drayton.  M. for M.  Cromwell, 38._

To whom thus | the porter's less | hell-gate replied.  

--- Since you prove so liberal  
To refuse such means as this | maintain your voice still  
'T will prove your best friend.  _Fletcher.  Loyal Subject, 2. 1._

The frier low bowing, crossing with his hand,  
'T speak with contrition, quoth | he: I would crave.  

_Drayton.  M. for M.  Cromwell, 104._

_His is frequently joined to the preceding word, as are also the verb is and conjunction as._

Pondering on his voyage | for | no nar'row frith.  
He had to cross.  

_P. L. 2. 919._

Go tell | the Duke | and his wife | I'd speak with them.  

_Lear, 2. 4. 117._

A blink | o'rest's | a sweet | enjoyment.  

_Burns.  Two Dogs._

They're no | sae wretched's | are | wad think.  
Though constantly on poor'th's brink.  

_Burns.  Two Dogs._

Burns has more than once joined the verb to the word that followed instead of [that] preceding it,

I doubt na, whiles, but thou may thieve,  
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live,  
A dainen-icker in a thrawe  
'S a sma' | request, |  
I'll get a blessin wi' the have,  
And never miss't.  _Burns.  To a Mouse._

[^1] [Here follows, in the former edition, a quotation from Spenser, F. Q. 1. 10. 49:  
"And ask'd to what end | they clomb | that heav'ny height."

This is an oversight; for the line is an Alexandrine:

"And ask'd to what end | they clomb that tolerable height."—W. W. S.]

[^2] ["Pondering his voyage" is the usual reading.—W. W. S.]
Verbs beginning with w sometimes elided it, and coalesced with the word preceding; thus, in old English, we have nas for ne was, not for ne wot, were for ne were, &c.

And by that Lord that cleped is St. Iev.

_Nere_ thou our bro'der: shudd'est thou | not thriv'e.  
_Chou._ The Somnour's Tale; _C. T._ 7525.

I tell | ye, to | my grief, | : he was bas'ly mur'der'd.  
_Fletcher._ Valentinian, 4. 4.

_You were_ best | to go | to bed | : and dream | again.|  
II. VI. 5. 1. 196.

Make | it not strange | : I know | you were one | could keep|

The butt'ry-hatch still lock'd.  
_Alchemist._ 1. 1.

Wit|ness these wounds, | I do | : they were fair'ly giv'n|  
_Fletcher._ Bonduca, 1. 1.

_I would, we would, &c., are still commonly pronounced I'd, we'd, &c., yet we often find them written at full length, in places where the rhythm only tolerates one syllable._

It would be useless to point out the coalition of the verb have with the personal pronouns. We, however, are constantly meeting with these contractions written at full length, we have, you have, &c., for we've, you're, &c.

The first personal pronoun seems to have been occasionally omitted before its verb, as in the phrases, 'pray thee, 'beseech thee, &c. I suspect it was omitted more frequently than the texts warrant us in asserting.

---

_I honour him_

_Even | out of your | report | : But 'pray | you tell | me_
Is she sole child to the King?  
_Cymb._ 1. 1. 54.

_Your voice, Lords, | 'beseech | you : let | her will|
Have a free way._  
_Oth._ 1. 3. 261.

_I presume | she's still | the same | : I would | fain see | her._

_Fletcher._ Loyal Subject, 5. 2.

And, Father Cardinal, I have heard you say,  
That we shall see and know our friends in heaven,  
If that | be true | : I shall see | my boy | again|.  
_King John._ 3. 4. 76.

[Not in the Globe edition, which merely has the five words, "Let her have your voices." — W. W. S.]
The article the was frequently pronounced th', and more particularly when it followed a preposition. The same pronunciation still prevails in the north. In Carr’s Craven Dialogues, we meet with ith’, oth’, toth’, forth’, byth’, &c., also anth’ and auth’, &c., for and the, all the, &c.

Amidst the rest rode that false lady faire,
The foul Dussa, next unto the chair
Of proud Lucif’ era: as one oth’ train! F. Q. 1. 4. 37.

And the Rom’ish rites: that with a clear er sight
The wisest thought they justly did reject,
They all saw that the received light
Not altogether free was from defect.

Dryton. M. for M. Cromwell, 97.

... The flames,
Driven backward, slope their pointing spires, and, roll’d
In billows, leave th’ midst: a horrid vale.

P. L. 1. 223.

While the jolly Hours lead on propitious May.

Milton. Sonnets, 1. 4.

Whose shrill saint’s-bell hangs on his lovery,
While the rest are damned: to the plumb, cry.

Hull. Sat. 5. 1 (near the end).

The fox was howling on the hill,
And the distant echoing glens reply.

Burns. A Vision.

Ith’ and oth’ are often written th’, oth’. This is a common but gross blunder. In the first place, the vowel is [then] not elided, and, secondly, the prepositions are [then] written as if contracted from in and of; but i and o are independent prepositions, which may be traced back through every century to the times of the Heptarchy.

In giving the many extracts I have quoted, I have scrupulously adhered to the spelling of my authors, or rather of their editors: Tyrwhitt’s Chaucer, Steevens’s Shakespeare, and Todd’s Milton have been chiefly referred to, Tonson’s Spenser, and either Gifford’s or Tonson’s Ben Jonson.

---

1 This is, I believe, the only instance of such contraction in the P.L.
CHAPTER IV.

ACCENT,

As the word is now used, means the stress which is laid upon a syllable during pronunciation; and in a more restricted sense, that particular stress, which defines the rhythm of a verse or sentence. The latter might perhaps be termed the rhythmical accent. It is of merely relative importance, and may be either one of the strong or one of the weak accents in the sentence; but must be stronger than that of any syllable immediately adjoining. We shall mark the rhythmical accent, as in the last chapter, by placing a vertical line after the accented syllable.

It has been matter of dispute, what constitutes the stress which thus distinguishes the accented syllable. Mitford, who deserves attention both as a musician and a man of sense, has entered deeply into this inquiry, and concludes with much confidence that it is merely an increased sharpness of tone. Wallis, who is at least an equal authority, assumes it to be an increase of loudness. I cannot help thinking that the latter opinion is the sounder one.

There are two reasons, which weigh strongly in my mind against the conclusion of Mitford. It is admitted on all hands, that the Scots give to the accented syllable a grave tone. Now, if our English accent consisted merely in sharpness of tone, it would follow that in the mouth of a Scotchman our accents would be misplaced. This, however, is not so; the accents follow in their proper place, and our verses still keep their rhythm, though pronounced with the strange intonations of a Fifeshire dialect.

Again, in a whisper there can be neither gravity nor sharpness of tone, as the voice is absent; yet even in a whisper the rhythm of a verse or sentence may be distinctly traced. I do not see what answer can be given to either of these objections.
But though an increase of loudness be the only thing essential to our English accent, yet it is in almost every instance accompanied by an increased sharpness of tone. This, of course, applies only to the prevailing dialect. The Scotchman, we have seen, pronounces his accented syllable with a grave tone, and in some of our counties I have met with what appeared to be the circumflex. But the Englishman of education marks the accented syllable with a sharp tone; and that in all cases, excepting those in which the laws of emphasis require a different intonation.

Besides the increase of loudness, and the sharper tone which distinguishes the accented syllable, there is also a tendency to dwell upon it, or, in other words, to lengthen its quantity. We cannot increase the loudness or the sharpness of a tone without a certain degree of muscular action; and to put the muscles in motion requires time. It would seem, that the time required for producing a perceptible increase in the loudness or sharpness of a tone, is greater than that of pronouncing some of our shorter syllables. If we attempt, for instance, to throw the accent on the first syllable of the verb become, we must either lengthen the vowel, and pronounce the word be|come, or add the adjoining consonant to the first syllable, and so pronounce the word be:|one. We often find it convenient to lengthen the quantity even of the longer syllables, when we wish to give them a very strong and marked accent. Hence, no doubt, arose the vulgar notion, that accent always lengthens the quantity of a syllable.

It is astonishing how widely this notion has misled men, whose judgment, in most other matters of criticism, it would be very unsafe to question. Our earlier writers, almost to a man, confound accent with quantity; and Johnson could not have had much clearer views on the subject when he told his reader that in some of Milton’s verses, “the accent is equally upon two syllables together and upon both strong,—as

Thus at their shady lodge arrived, both stood,
Both turn’d, and under open sky adored
The God that made both sky, air, earth and heaven.”  P. L. 4. 720.
Every reader of taste would pronounce the words *stood, turn'd*, with a greater stress, than that which falls upon the words preceding them. But these words are at least equal to them in *quantity*; and Johnson fell into the mistake, at that time so prevalent, of considering quantity as identical with accent. Even of late years, when sounder notions have prevailed, one who is both critic and poet, has declared the word *Egypt* to be the only spondee in our language. Surely every one would throw a stronger accent on the first syllable than on the second!

In every word of two or more syllables there is one, which receives a stronger accent than any of the others. This may be called the *verbal accent*, as upon it depends the accentual importance of the word. When the word contains three or more syllables, there *may* be a second accent; this, of course, must be subordinate to the first, and is commonly called the *secondary accent*.

When a word of three syllables has its primary accent on the first, our poets have, in all ages, taken the liberty of giving a secondary accent to the third syllable, if their rhythm required it. Thus *harmony, victory*, and many others of the same kind, are often found in our poetry with the last syllable accented. The rule applies to words of any number of syllables, provided the chief accent falls on the last syllable but two.

An ignorance of this principle has led the Danish philologist Rask, into much false criticism. He objects to the Anglo-Saxon couplet,

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Getim} & \mid \text{brede} \\
\text{Tempel} & \mid \text{Gode.}
\end{align*}
\]

because the first verse has but one accent; and supposes that *heah*, or some such word, may have been omitted by the transcriber. The verse, however, has two accents, for a secondary one falls on the last syllable *de*. He pronounces another verse, consisting in like manner of one word, *ælmiht-ne*, to be faulty, and for the same reason: he even ventures to deny the existence of such a word in the language, and would substitute *ælmihtig-ne*. Now, in the first
place, æl|mïht-ne| may well form a verse of two accents, supposing a secondary accent to fall on the last syllable; and secondly, there are two adjectives, almïght and almïghty; the first is rare in Anglo-Saxon, but is often met with in old English, and beyond a doubt is used in the verse last quoted.¹

A word of four syllables can hardly escape a secondary accent, unless the primary accent is on one of the middle syllables, when it falls under the same rule as the trisyllable. If it end in ble, it is occasionally pronounced with one accent, as dis|putable; but I think the more general usage is, to place a secondary accent on the last syllable, dis|putable.

A word of five syllables, if accented on the first, cannot have less than two, and may have three, accents. We may pronounce the following word with two accents, in|consol|able, or with three, in|consol|able. When the accent falls on one of the middle syllables, the word may, in some instances, take only one accent, as indis|putable.

When two syllables are separated by a pause, each of them may receive the accent, the pause filling the place of a syllable. In the verses

Vir|tue, beau|tie and speech|: did strike|—wound|—charm
My heart|—eyes|—ears|: with won|der, love,|—delight|.

strike, wound, charm, heart, eyes and ears, are all of them accented, though only separated by a pause.

It is probable, that at one time every stop, which separated the members of a sentence, was held, for rhythmical purposes, equivalent to a syllable. At present, however, it is only under certain circumstances that the pause takes a place so important to the rhythm.

As no pause can intervene between the syllables of a word, it follows that no two of its adjacent syllables can be accented. There was however a period, when even this rule was violated. After the death of Chaucer, the final e, so commonly used by that poet and his contemporaries, fell into disuse. Hence many disyllables became words of one

¹ [Or accent also the second syllable; see Daniel, 195, ed. Grein.—W. W. S.]
syllable, *mone* became moon, and *sunne* sun; and the compounds, into which they entered, were curtailed of a syllable. The couplet,

Ne was she darke, ne browne, but bright
And clere | as is | : the *mou|e light*.

Romaut of the Rose, 1009.

would be read, as if *mone light* were a dissyllable; and as the metre required two accents in the compound, they would still be given to it, though less by a syllable. By degrees this barbarous rhythm became licensed, though it never obtained much favour, and has been long since exploded. Spenser has left us some examples of it.

*Per.* All as the sunny beam so bright,

*Wil.* Hey | ho | the *sun|beam*!!

*Per.* Glaneeth from Phæbus' face forthright,

*Wil.* So love into thy heart did stream...*

*Per.* Or as Dame Cynthia's silver ray,

*Wil.* *Hey | ho | the moon|light*!!

*Per.* Upon the glittering wave doth play,

*Wil.* Such play is a piteous plight!


We have said that the rhythmical accent must be stronger than that of any syllable immediately adjoining. When the verbal accent is both preceded and succeeded by an unaccented syllable in the same word, it is, of course, independent of the position such word may occupy in a sentence. But when the accent falls on the first or last syllable, it is not necessarily preserved, when the word is combined with others; or—to vary the expression—the verbal accent is not necessarily the same as the *accent of construction*. Thus the word *father* has an accent on its first syllable, but in the lines

Look| , father, look |, and you'll laugh | to see |
How he gapes | and glares | with his eyes | on thee|.

such accented syllable adjoins a word, which has a stronger stress upon it, and consequently loses its accent. The verbal accent, however, can only be eclipsed by a stronger accent, thus immediately adjoining. The license, which is sometimes taken, of slurring over an accent, when it begins the
verse, is opposed to the very first principles of accentual rhythm. In Moore's line,

Shining on, shining on, by no shadow made tender.

the verbal accent of shining is eclipsed, in the second foot, by the stronger accent on the word on; but in the first it adjoins only to an unaccented syllable, and therefore remains unchanged. It is true, that by a rapid pronunciation, and by affixing a very strong accent to the third syllable, we may slur it over; but, in such case, the rhythm is at the mercy of the reader; and no poet has a right to a false accent, in order to help his rhythm. Neither length of usage, nor weight of authority, can justify this practice.

When a verse is divided into two parts or sections, by what is called the middle pause, the syllable, which follows such pause, is in the same situation as if it began the verse, and cannot lose its accent, unless it be succeeded by a more strongly accented syllable. In this case, however, the same license is often taken as in the last, particularly in the triple metre.

As Emphasis and Accent are too often confounded, I shall add a few words on the nature of the former, and endeavour to show, in what particulars they resemble, and in what they are distinguished from each other.

A very common method of pointing out an emphatic word or syllable is by placing a pause, or emphatic stop, before it. There is little doubt that this pause was known from the earliest periods of our language, and that it had a considerable influence in regulating the flow of our earlier rhythms. It is still common, and indeed in almost hourly use.

When I burned in desire to question them further, they made themselves—air, into which they vanished.

Macbeth, 1. 5. 3.

If the accent be on the first syllable, our expectation is not only excited by the pause, but the accent becomes more marked; and as the importance of a word depends on that of its accented syllable, the word itself stands the more
prominently forward in the sentence. This method of heightening the accent is sometimes used, even when the first syllable is unaccented, and when consequently the pause must fall in the midst of the word. Thus we hear some persons who spell, as it were, the words pro-digious, di-rectly, in order to throw the greater stress on the second syllable. One result, that follows from this mis-pronunciation, is a tendency to fix, in some degree, the pause on the first syllable, and thereby to lengthen its vowel.

Another method of marking the emphasis, is a strengthening of the accent, without any precedent stop. We have seen, that under such circumstances the speaker is apt to dwell upon the accented word or syllable. Hence we sometimes find, that the emphatic word lengthens its quantity. When the vulgar wish to throw an emphasis on the word little, they pronounce it leettle.

But the chief difficulty occurs, when the emphatic syllable adjoins upon one, which ought, according to the usual laws of construction, to be more strongly accented. In such a case, we very commonly have a transference of the accent. In Shakespeare's verse,

\[
\text{Is this the Lord Talbot? uncle Gloucester?} \\

text.
\]

the emphasis, which is thrown on the article, gives it an accent, stronger than that of the word either preceding or succeeding. Sometimes, however, it would seem, that we distinguish the emphatic syllable by more sharpness of tone; and leave the stress of the voice, or in other words the essential part of the accent, on the ordinary syllable. Thus in Spenser's line,

\[
\text{Flesh may impair, quoth she: but reason can repair.} \\
\]

both the rhythm, and the common laws of accentuation will have the last syllable of repair accented; but the purposes of contrast require that the first syllable should be emphatic. The stress therefore falls on the last syllable, and the sharp tone on the first. In the same way must be read Milton's verses,