C. V. VERSES BEGINNING WITH SECTION 5. 241

Whether to knock against the gates of Rome,
Or rudely visit them in parts remote,
To fright them, ere I destroy.: But | come in!,
Let me command thee first to those, that shall
Say yea to thy desires.  Cor. 4. 5. 147.

——— Love is not love,
When it is mingled with regards that stand
Aloof | from th' en'tire point: will | you have | her?
Lear, 1. 1. 241.

——— I defy thee,
Thou mock'd made man | of mat: charge | home, sir rah.
Fl. Bond'veca, 4. 2.

5 : 2. is one of the standard verses of five accents.

A sh'er'veed he been': and | a contour',
Was no wher swiche a worthy vawasouer.  Chau.  Prol. 361.

Instruct | me, for | thou know'st, | thou | from the first:

We can | not blame | indeed: but | we may sleep.

One fatal tree there stands, of knowledge called,
Forbid | den them | to taste: | know | ledge forbid, | den?
P. L. 4. 514.

At Sessions ther was he lord and sire
Ful of ten times | he was | knight | of the shire.
Chau.  Prol. 357.

5 : 5. is also one of the standard verses of five accents.

And though he holy were and vertuous,
He was | to sin'ful men: not dis'pitous.
Chau.  Prol. 517.

Learn hence | for an cient rules: a just | esteem.
Pope's Ess. on Crit. 139.

He dies | and makes | no sign: O God | forgive | him.
2 II. VI. 3. 3. 29.

The fel' lows of | his crime: the fol'low'rs rath'er.
P. L. 1. 606.

The following is an instance of the verse 5 : 5 ll.

Will you permit that I shall stand condemn'd
A wan'd'ring vag'abond: my rights | and roy alties
Plucked from my arms perforce?  R. II. 2. 3. 119.
5:6. was seldom used after the fifteenth century.

The faithful love that dyd us both combye,
In mariage and peassable concorde,
Into your handes here I cleane resgne
To be | bestowed | upon | your children and mine.


And was | a big | bold barn | and brent of his age.

William and the Werwolf, 18.

And when | it was | out went | so well | hit him liked.

Same, 28.

5:10. is very rare.

——— Kath'rine the curst,
A title for | a maid | of all titles the worst.

Tum. of the Shrew, 1. 2. 129.

5:1. is one of the standard verses of five accents.

Before that in that season, on a day
In Southwark at the Tabard: as | I lay —

Ch. Prol. 19.

These leave the sense, their learning to display,
And those | explain | the meaning: quite | away.

Pope's Ess. on Criticism, 116.

——— From every shire's ende
Of Englelond to Canterbury they wende
The holy blissful man | tyr | for | to seek.

Chaucer. Prol. 15.

——— His greedy wish to find,
His wish | and best | advance: us | asunder.


5:2. and 5:5. were seldom used after the time of Milton.

Till now you have gone on and fill'd the time
With all | licentious measure: making your will|
The scope of Justice. Timon of A. 5. 4. 3.

I heard | thee in | the garden: and | of thy voice

Obey | and be | attentive: canst | thou remember
A time before we came into this cell? Temp. 1. 2. 38.
5 l. 5.

—— Thou and I
Have forty miles | to ride | yet: ere din|ner time!.

1 Hen. IV. 3. 3. 222.

For in | those days | might on|ly: shall be | admir’d |.

P. L. 11. 689.

——— And from work
Now res|ting, bless’d | and hal|low’d: the sev|enth day |.

P. L. 7. 591.

The morn|ing comes | upon | us: we’ll leave | you, Brui|tus.

Jul. Cæs. 2. 1. 221.

——— Began
To loathe | the taste | of sweet|ness: whereof | a lit|tle
More than a little, is by much too much. 1 Hen. IV. 3. 2. 71.

5 l. 6 l. is met with in the old English alliterative rhythms.

For son|e thu | bist lad|lie: and lad | to iseon|ne.

Grave-Song, 42.

In hab|ite as | an her|mite: unho|ly of work |cs.

P. Ploughman, B. prol. 3.

1 slo|mbréd in | a slep|ying: it swey|ved so mer|y.

P. Ploughman, id. 10.

Verses that begin with the section 5 ll. are met with, not only in the tumbling verse, but occasionally also in our dramatists. They give a loose and slovenly character to the rhythm, and were very properly rejected by Spenser, and by Milton.

5 ll. 1.

Who wears | my stripes | impress’d | on him: who | must bear |
My beating to the grave.

Cor. 5. 5. 108.

5 ll. 2.

It may | be I | will go | with you: but yet | I’ll pause |.

Rich. II. 2. 3. 168.

A sov|reign shame | so el|bows him: his own | unkind|ness.

Lear, 4. 3. 44.

1 [Printed as prose in the Globe edition.—W. W. S.]

2 [In the Globe edition the lines are differently divided.]
Verses beginning with the sections 6. 6 l. 6 ll. were rarely used even by our dramatists. Byron, whose negligent versification has never yet been properly censured, has given us one or two examples of the verse 6:2. To slip a verse of this kind into a modern poem, is little better than laying a trap for the reader.

6:2.

I have so much endur'd, so much endure,
Look on me, the grave hath not: chang'd thee more
Than I am chang'd for thee.  

_Byron._  
_Manfred_, 2. 4.

6:5.

And there by the hand of God: he was prostrate.

_M. for M._  
_Floorden Field_, 18.

He conquered all the reigne of feminic,
That whilom was ycleped Scythia,
And wedded the fresh quene: Ippolita.  

_The Knightes Tale_, l. 8.

The sente hath sent about: three sev'ral quests
To search you out.  

_Othello_, 1. 2. 46.


And man'ly a dead'ly stroke: on them there did light.

_M. for M._  

6 ll: 6 l.

Qui loquitur turpi: pilocuium: is Lucifer: bin:e.

_P. Ploughman_, B. proI. 39.

Verses beginning with the sections 7. and 7 l. are very rarely met with, except in the old English alliterative metre.

7:6.

With that, in haist to the hege: so hard I inthran.

_Dunbar._  
_Tua Maryt Wemen_, 13.

Quhairo'n a bird on ane bransche: so birst out hir not is.

_Same_, 5.

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1 [This line is so execrably harsh that an error may be suspected. Accordingly, we find that _freshe_ is an insertion of Tyrwhitt's, due to the fact that he was unaware that _wedded_ was tri-syllabic. _Read_—_And wed|ded|e the queen_._Ippolita._—W. W. S.]
7 l : 2 l.
Apon | the mid | sumer ev | en : mir | riest of nich | tis.

Dunbar. Twa Maryit Wemen, 1.

7 l : 6 l.
The hel | ewag | as boeth lag | e : sid-wag | as unhege| e.

Grave-Song, 17.

To have | e a ly | cence and lev | e : at Lon | don to dwel | je.
Piers Ploughman, B. prol. 85.

Verses beginning with the section 8. are no less rare
than those which begin with section 4. They must of
necessity approach close on the confines of the triple
measure; but verses belonging to that measure would, in
most cases, be of a most unwieldy length, if they contained
five accents. They are, however, occasionally found in the
alliterative metre, and there are some very curious speci-
mens in the Anglo-Saxon poem, called The Traveller.

8 l : 1 ll.
Mid Wen | num ic wæs | and mid Wær | num : and | mid Wic | ingum.

Song of the Traveller, 59.

Mid Seax | num ic wæs | and mid Syc | gum : and | mid Sweord | werum.

Song of the Trav. 62.

Mid Fronc | num ic wæs | and mid Fryse | um : and | mid Frum | ingum.

Song of the Trav. 68.

Mid Eng | num ic wæs | and mid Swæf | um : and | mid Æn | num.

Song of the Trav. 61.

Mid Rûg | num ic wæs | and mid Glom | num : and | mid Rûm | walum.

Song of the Trav. 69.

Mid Creac | num ic wæs | and mid Fin | num : and | mid Cæs | erc.

Song of the Trav. 76.

8 ll : 1 ll.
Mid Geof | thum ic wæs | and mid Wæl | cdum : and | mid Geof | ingum.

* Song of the Trav. 60.

8 ll : 6.
Of fals | nesse of fas | ting of les | inges : of vow | es ybroke. 1

P. Ploughman, B. prol. 71.

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1 [This line is certainly corrupt in this form. It was perhaps derived from some very inferior MS., which has the words of lesinges inserted. No good MS. inserts them; see P. Plowman, A. prol. 68, B. prol. 71, C. i. 69.—W. W. S.]
Verses beginning with the section 9. form a very slovenly rhythm, but are occasionally found in the works of our dramatists.

9:5.

"Tis a won|der by | your leave |: she will | be tam'd | so.

_T. of the Shrew, 5. 2. 189._

9:1.

——— Like an arrow shot
From a well-|exper|ienced ar|cher : hits | the mark|
His eye doth level at———

_Per. 1. 1. 163._

——— [We] gave way unto your clusters
Who did bunt | him out | o' th' cit|y : But | I fear|
They'll roar him in again.

_Cor. 4. 6. 122._
CHAPTER VI.

VERSE OF SIX ACCENTS.

Formerly the verse of six accents was the one most commonly used in our language; but for the last three centuries it has been losing ground, and is now merely tolerated, as affording a convenient pause in a stave, or as sometimes yielding the pleasure of variety.

The place it once filled in English literature would give it some degree of importance, even though it had never been one of our classical rhythms; but its importance is greatly increased, when we recollect the period when it most flourished, and the writers by whom it was chiefly cultivated. Poems in this metre ushered in the era of Elizabeth; and no one can look with other feelings than respect upon the favourite rhythm of a Howard, a Sidney, and a Drayton.

The verse of six accents is frequently met with in our Anglo-Saxon poems, and also in the alliterative poems of the fourteenth century. But the psalm-metres were chiefly instrumental in rendering it familiar to the people; and doubtless gave it that extraordinary popularity, which for a time threw into the shade all the other metres of our language.

It must, however, be acknowledged, that our verse of six accents is much inferior to the verse of five. Though of greater length, its rhythm has a narrower range, and a slow much more tame and monotonous. Its pause admits little change of position, and though in the number of its possible varieties it equals the verse of five accents, yet many of these have a length so inconvenient, as to render them very unfit for any practical purpose. It is also more difficult to follow a diversified rhythm in the section of three,
than in the shorter section of two accents. A verse, therefore, which admits only the former, cannot safely allow the same license to the rhythm, as one which contains the latter. Accordingly, our metre of six accents departs in very few instances from the strictest law of the common measure.

The name of Alexandrine has been given to this verse, not only in our own, but also in foreign countries. The origin of the term has been questioned; but I see little reason to doubt the common opinion, which traces it to the French Romance of Alexander. This once famous "Geste" was the work of several authors, some of whom were English. Its verse in many respects resembles the modern French Alexandrine, but always contains six accents.

Of late years the Alexandrine has kept a place in English literature, chiefly by its introduction into our heroic verse. This intermixture of rhythms was unknown to Chaucer, and seems to have been mainly owing to the influence of the tumbling metre. The poets of the seventeenth century introduced the Alexandrine, sometimes singly, sometimes in couplets or triplets, and in some cases used it for whole passages together. It would be difficult to defend this practice, on any sound principles of criticism; but the intrusive verses are occasionally introduced so happily, the change of rhythm is so well adapted to change of feeling or of subject, that criticism will probably be forgotten in the pleasure of the reader. On this ground, the following passage seems to me to have a fair claim on the forbearance of the critic, though it will hardly meet with his approval. Sheffield thus describes, or rather professes his inability to describe, the nature of genius.

A spirit which inspires the work throughout,
As that of nature moves the world about;
A flame that glows amidst conceptions fit
Ev'n something of divine, and more than wit;
Itself unseen, yet all things by it shown,
Describing all men, but described by none.
Where dost thou dwell? What caverns of the brain
Can such a vast and mighty thing contain?
When I, at vacant hours, in vain thy absence mourn,
Oh, where dost thou retire? And why dost thou return
C. VI.  VERSE OF SIX ACCENTS.

Sometimes with powerful charms to hurry me away,
From pleasures of the night, and business of the day?


The writers of our old English alliterative metre used
the Alexandrine with the utmost freedom, as also did our
dramatists; but it was rejected by Milton, and has ever
since been considered as alien to the spirit of English blank
verse.

Verses of six accents beginning with the section 1, are
rarely found, except in our Anglo-Saxon poems, and the
works of our dramatists; Milton, however, has occasionally
used them in his Samson.

1:1. is well known to the Anglo-Saxon, but is hardly
ever met with in English verse.

heah|eyning|es has|: him | wæs hal|ig leocht|.
   *Cad. Gen.* 124.

thurh | his an|cs cæst|: of|er oth|re forth|.
   *Exeter MS.* *Christ*, 685.

him | seo wen | gelcah|: sith|than wæl|dend his|.
   *Cad. Gen.* 49.

Hath | he ask'd | for me|? Know | you not | he has|?
   *Macb*. 1. 7. 30.

of|er rum|ne grund|: rath|e wæs | gesy|led.
   *Cad. Gen.* 123.

Tha | seo tid | gewat|: of|er tib|er sceac|an.
   *Cad. id.* 135.

Ne | wæs her | tha giet|: nym| the heal|stersec|o.
   *Cad. id.* 103.

By alternating the verse 1:1. with the common heroic
verse, Campion formed what he calls his elegiac metre. It
seems to have been his intention to imitate the rhythm of
Latin elegy; if so, the attempt must be considered as a
failure.

*Constant to none, but ever false to me!*

*Trai*ter still | to love|: through | thy false | desires|,

*Not hope of pittie now, nor vain redress*

*Turns* | my grief | to tears|: and | remu'd | laments|,

*So well thy empty vows and hollow thoughts*
HISTORY OF ENGLISH RHYTHMS. B. II.

Witnes both thy wrongs: and remorse les hart—
None canst thou long refuse, nor long affect,
But turn'st feare with hope: sor:row with delight,
Delaying and deluding ev'ry way.
Those whose eyes were once: with thy beauty charm'd.

1:2. is also rare.

Whose mention were alike to thee as lieve
As a catch: pulls fist: un:to a bank: rups sleeve.

Hall. Sat. 4. 2. 81.

O ye Gods ye Gods: must: I endure: all this?

Jul. Cas. 4. 3. 41.

Well, what remedy?: Fen:ton, Heav'n give: thee joy.

M. W. of Windsor, 5. 5. 250.

The verse 1:5. is somewhat more common.

Take pomp from prelatis, magistree from kings,
Sol:me:ne ceir: cumstance: from all: these world: lye thingis:
We walk: awry: and wander without light,
Confounding all to make a chaos quite.

Puttenham. Parth.

O despite:ful love: uncon:stant wom:ankind:!

T. of the Shrew, 4. 2. 14.

Sat:er shall: be: upon: the sandy plains:
Than where castles mounted stand.

1 H. VI. 1. 4. 39.

We'll: along: ourselves: and meet: them at: Philip:pi.

Jul. Ces. 4. 3. 225.

Vir:tie, as: I thought: truth, duty, so: enjoining.

Samson Agon. 870.

Verses beginning with the lengthened section are more commonly met with. The verse 1 l. 1. was used as late as the 16th century.

And thurh of:ermet:to: soh:ton oth:er land:

Cæd. Gen. 332.

Gan enquire
What stately building durst so high extend
Her lofty tow'res, unto the starry sphere,
And what un:known na:tion: there: empeo:bled were.

F. Q. 1. 10. 56.

Let: me be: recorded: by: the righteous:eous Gods:
I am as poor as you.

T. of A. 4. 2. 4.
The Duke of Suffolk is the first, and claims
To be high Steward; next the Duke of Norfolk
He to be | Earl Mar|shal: you | may read | the rest |

H. VIII. 4. 1. 17.

Set|e sig|eleas|e : on | tha sweart|an hel|le.

Ced. Gen. 312.

Gif | he to | them ric|e : was | on riht|te bor|en.


He | nom Sun|erset,e: and | he nou | Dorset|e.

Layamon, 21013.

And | tha men | within|nen : oht|liche | agun|nen.

Layamon, 21033.

--- --- These evils I deserve; and more,
Acknowledge them from God inflicted on me
Justly, yet | despair | not : of | his final par don.

Samson Agon. 1169.

1 l. 5. is met with in the Anglo-Saxon, and also in the old English alliterative poems.

haef|a haor|; a blaf|ord : for thon | e heh|stan God|.

Alfred. Met. 26. 44.

On | tha deop|an da|lo : thær be | to deof|le wearth|.

Ced. Gen. 305.

Hy|ste with | than her|ge : ne mi|ton hyg|eleas|e.

Ced. id. 51.

Ræd|an on | this ric|e : swa me | that riht | ne thine|eth.

Ced. id. 289.

And | hi wil|tan seir|e : mid with|ere | ingræ|te.

Layamon, 21017.

Gif | me mot | ilas|ten : that lif | a mir|e broos|ten.

Layamon, 21087.

Ther | lai the | Kaiser|e : and Col|grim his | iver|e.

Layamon, 21039.

High|ed to | the high |e : bot het|erly | thay wer|e.

Gaw. and the Green Knight, 1152.

In | a som|er ses|on : when sof|te was | the sun, ne.¹

P. Ploughman, B. prol. 1.

**Verses, which begin with the sections 2. and 2 l. hav**

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¹ [I scan it otherwise; the adjective is soft, not softir. We then have—In a som|er ses|on : when sof|te was | the sun, ne. I make only four accents, not six; or, if we accent In, there are six.—W. W. S.]
been widely used in English poetry. Some of their varieties have survived in modern usage.

2 : 1. is found in our dramatists.

Was not that nobly done: ay, and wisely too.

Mucb. 3. 6. 14.

How long should I be, ere I should put off
To the lord Chancellor's tomb: or the Shrieks posts.

Ben Jonson. E. Man out of his Humour, 3. 3.

——— This young Prince had the ordering
(To crown his father's hopes) of all the army——
Fashion'd and drew them up: but alas! so poorly,
So raggedly and loosely, so unsoldier'd,
The good Duke blushed.

Fletcher. Loy. Subj. 1. 1.

But if there can be virtue, if that name
Be any thing but name and empty title,
If it be so as fools: have been pleas'd to feign it,
A pow'r that can preserve us after ashes——

Fletcher. Valentinian, 1. 1.

2 : 2. is still common.

Both for her noble blood: and for her tender youth.

F. Q. 1. 1. 50.

——— Throw out our eyes for brave Othello,
Ev'n till we make the main: and the aerial blue
An indigent regard.

Othello, 2. 1. 38.

The verse 2 : 5, like the last, is used even at the present day.

And by his on'ly ayde: preserv'd our prince's right.


Bansh'd from living wights: our weary days we waste.

F. Q. 1. 2. 42.

Whither the souls do fly: of men that live amiss.

F. Q. 1. 2. 19.

Where they should live in woe: and die in wretchedness.

F. Q. 1. 5. 46.

Then by main force pull'd up: and on his shoulders bore
The gates of Azza.

Samson Agon. 146.

Knyctis ar hobs: and compass pluck'd claws.


1 [I should put no accent on these words.—W. W. S.]
C. VI. VERSES BEGINNING WITH SECTION 21. 253

So | did that squire | his foes |: disperse | and drive | asun|der.
F. Q. 6. 5. 19.

Yet | were her words | but wind: and all | her tears | but wat|er.
F. Q. 6. 6. 42.

Upon the British coast, what ship yet ever came,
That not of Plymouth hears, where those brave navies lie,
From cannon's thund'ring throat -, that all the world defy,
Which | to invas ive spoilt | when th' English list | to draw |,
Have check'd Iberia's pride, and held her oft in awe?

Drayton's Polyolbion, Song 1.

The verse which follows appears to be doubly lengthened;

We have this hour a constant will to publish
Our daughters' sev'ral dow'rs, that future strife
May | be preven|ted now |: the prince ex France | and Bur|gundy
Long in our court have made their am'rous sojourn.

Lear, 1. 1. 44.

VERSES BEGINNING WITH THE SECTION 21.

Johnson has given it as his opinion that the Alexandrine
"invariably requires a break at the sixth syllable." This,
he tells us, is a rule which the modern French poets never
violate; and he censures Dryden's negligence in having so
ill observed it. But the French and English Alexandrines
have little in common save the name, and to reason from
the properties of the one to the properties of the other, is
very unsafe criticism. The former may have four, five, or
six accents; the latter never has less than six. In the
number of their syllables they approach more nearly to
each other; but their pauses are regulated by very different
laws. The English pause divides the accents equally, but
the French pause has frequently two on one side, and three
on the other. Again, in French the pause must divide the
syllables equally, but not necessarily so in English. Johnson's
acquaintance with the English Alexandrine seems to have
been very limited; in one place he even represents it as the
invention of Spenser.

Dryden only followed the last mentioned poet, in using

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1 This observation does not apply to those verses of six accents, which con-
tain a compound section; see ch. 7. But such rhythms have long since been
obsolete.
Alexandrines beginning with a lengthened section. Such verses are also found in every page of our dramatists; and are full as common in the works of our earlier poets. Pope seems to have imitated Drayton in rejecting them; and as Johnson formed all his notions of rhythmical proportion in the school of Pope, we have an easy clue to the criticism, which gave rise to these observations.

27:1.

hwæt | scæol ic win|nan cwæð | he : nis | me wiht | te theærf.
Cæd. Gen. 278.

Rapt | in eter|nal si|lence : far | from en|emies |.
F. Q. 1. 1. 41.

Up | to the hill | by He|bron : seat | of gi|ants old |.
Samson Agon. 148.

27:5 l.

Lis|ta and tha|ra la|ra. he let | hco that | land bu|an.
Cæd. Gen. 239.

The sections 3. and 3 l. but seldom open an English verse, whatever be the number of its accents. When there are six accents, such a verse is rarely, if ever, met with after the 15th century.

3:1.

Swa | mec hyht| -giefu heold |: hyg| c dryht | befeold |.
Riming Poem, 21.

3:5 l.

Wen| to forth | in here way | : with man| y wis| e tal| es.
P. Ploughman, B. prol. 48.

This | was heor|c icbot |: ar heo | to Bath|e com|en.
Layamon, 21029.

3 l: 1 l. [Rather, 3 l: 5 l.]

I | was wer|y forwan|dred : [and] wen| te me | to res|te.
P. Ploughman, B. prol. 7.

3 l: 3.

Mon|y mar|vellus mat|er : nev| er mark | it nor ment |.

He | nom al| le tha lon|des : in | to thae | re sæ-stron|de. 1
Layamon, 21019.

1 [This can hardly be right; the syllable sæ, our sea, must have been accented. At the same time, the accent on is was very slight, as is shown by its omission]
C. VI. VERSES BEGINNING WITH SECTION 5. 255

Verses beginning with the sections 5. and 5 l. are by far the most common of our modern Alexandrines. They are also well known in old English poetry, but are rare in Anglo-Saxon.

5:1.

I know | you're man | enough | mould | it to | just ends |.

Fletcher. Loy. Subj. 1. 3.

5:2.

Such one | was | delness | first | of this com | pany |

F. Q. 1. 4. 20.

To gaze | on earth | ly wight | that | with the night | durst ride |

F. Q. 1. 5. 32.

Then gins | her griev | ed ghost | thus | to lament | and mourn |

F. Q. 1. 7. 21.

Or by the girdles grasp'd, they practice with the hip,
The forward, backward falls, the mar, the turn, the trip,
When strip'd into their skirts each other they invade,
Within | a | spa | cious ring | by | the behol | ders made |.

Drayton. Polyolbion, Song 1.

Which men | enjoy | ing sight | oft | without cause | complain |

Samson Agon. 157.

This and much more, much more than twice all this
Condemns | you to | the death | see | them deliv | er'd o | ver
To execution,

R. II. 3. 1. 28.

The dominations, royalties, and rights
Of this | oppress | ed boy | This | is thy el | dest son's | son
Infortunate in nothing but in thee.

K. John, 2. 1. 176.

5:3. is only found in old English.

I muv | it furth | allane | neir | as mid | nicht wes past |

Dunbar. Tua Muryit Wemen, 2.

Quod he | and drew | me doun | derne | in dolf | by ane dyk |.


in the later MS. of the poem. I therefore read : into the | re se | -strond | e.—W. W. S]

1 [I scan the line differently. It can be shown that the phrase quod he is often unaccented, forming no real part of the line. Hence the caesura comes after derne; as thus:

Quod he— and drew | me doun | derne | in dolf | by ane dyk |.—W. W. S.]
His seel schulde nought be sent: to deceyve the people.

P. Ploughman, B. prol. 79.

O who does know the bent: of womans fun tasy?

F. Q. 1. 4. 24.

In shape and life more like: a monster than a man.

F. Q. 1. 4. 22.

He cast about and searchd his bale ful books again.

F. Q. 1. 2. 2.

And helmets hewn deep: shew marks of either might.

F. Q. 1. 5. 7.

This is the verse, which Drayton used in the Polyolbion. Other varieties are occasionally introduced, but rarely—too rarely, it may be thought, to diversify the tameness and monotony of the metre. Of the sixteen verses which open the poem, fifteen belong to the present rhythm; yet, notwithstanding this iterated cadence, there is something very pleasing in their flow. Much of this, however, may arise from mere association.

Of Alcion’s glorious isle: the wonders whilst I write,
The sun dry varying soils: the pleasures infinite,
Where heat kills not: the cold: nor cold expels: the heat,
The calms too mild: ly small: nor winds too rough: ly great,
Nor night doth hin: der day: nor day the night: doth wrong,
The sum mer not: too short: the winter not: too long—
What help shall I invoke: to aid my muse the while?

Thon genius of: the place! this most renown ed isle,
Which liv ed long: before: the all earth drown ing flood,
Whilst yet the earth did swarm: with her gigan tic brood,
Go thou before me still: thy cir cling shores about,
And in this wand ring maze: help to conduct me out;
Direct my course so right: as with thy hand to show
Which way thy courses range: which way thy rivers flow;
Wise genius wise: thy help: that so I may desire
How thy fair mountains stand, and how thy valleys lie.

Drayton’s Polyolbion. Song 1.

The lengthened verse was also common.

So long as these two arms: were able to be wroken.

F. Q. 6. 2. 7.

[I should put no accent on to.—W. W. S.]
C. VI. VERSES BEGINNING WITH SECTION 5 l. 257

And drove | away | the stound : which mor | tally | attach'd | him.

Oft sur | nishing | our dames : with In | dia's | rare | st | devi | ces,
And lent | us gold | and pearl : rich silks | and dain | ty | speci | ces.

Drayton. Polyolbion, Song 1.

Verses beginning with the lengthened section, were common till the end of the seventeenth century. Drayton, however, rejected them, and they were proscribed by Johnson.

Some spar is no thir spirit | nal : spon | it wyf | nor ant | .


A mun | ny of | rude vil | layns : made | hym for | to bide | .

Shelton's Elegy, 46.

Whose sem | blance she | did car | ry : un | der feig | ned show | .

F. Q. 1. 1. 46.

But pin | d | away | in ang | wish : and | self | will | d | annoy | .

F. Q. 1. 6. 17.

More ugly shape | yet never : liv | ing crea | ture saw | .

F. Q. 1. 8. 48.

And oft | to groan | with bill | lows : beat | ing from | the main | .

F. Q. 4. 12. 5.

Whom unarm'd
No strength | of man | , or fierce | est : wild | beast, could | withstand | .

Samson. 126.

And with | paternal thun | der : vindicates her crown | .

Dryden. Hind and Panther, 1109.

The last verse is the one specially objected to by Johnson.

5 l : 3 l.

And wer | eden | tha rich | e | with | than strong | Childre | c.

Layamon, 21037.

5 l : 5. like all those verses, which have a supernumerary syllable in the middle, was rarely used after the fifteenth century. It was, however, sometimes met with in our dramatists.
Of dre[f]yling | and drem|ys : what do|ith to | endyte|?


Full rud | and ry|ot ress|onis : baith roun|dalis | and ryme|.

Same, st. 6.

Na la|our list | they luk | till : tharc luff|is are | byrd-lyme|.

Samw, st. 6.

Yet sham|fully | they saw | hym: that shame | mot them | befall|.

Skelton's Elegy, 49.

And furth | he wul|de bug|en : and Bath|en al | belig|gen.

Layamon, 21025.

Ah swa | me hæl|pen drih|ten : thæ sçop | thæs dæ|cs lih|ten.

Layamon, 21073.

Despise | me if | I do | not: Three great | ones of | the cit|y,
In personal suit to make me his lieutenant,
Off-capp'd to him.

Othello, 1. 1. 8.

Verses beginning with the sections 6 and 6 l. are found
in the old English alliterative metre.

6 : 1.

Quha spor|tis thame on | the spray|: spars|is for | na space|.

Gaw. Douglas. Prolo. to 8 Eneid, st. 3.

6 : 6 l.

As an|res and here|mites|: that hol|de hem in | here sel|les.

P. Ploughman, B. prol. 28.

That Na|ture ful no|bilee|: annam|iliit fine | with flo|ris.


6 : 9 l.

So gilit|terit as | the gold|: wer thair glor|ius | gilt tres|sis.

Dunbar, id. 19.

6 l : 5.

Syth Char|ite hath | be chap|man : and chef| to schryv|e lord|es.

P. Ploughman, B. prol. 64.

Unclos|ed the ken|el dore|: and cal|de hem | ther-out|e.

Gaw. and the Green Knight, 1140.

[I adopt the reading of Mr. Small's edition, and scan the line differently,
thus:

Of dre[s]ling and drem|is : what dow | it to endyt?—W. W. S.]
C. VI. VERSES BEGINNING WITH SECTION 7 l. 259

In the same metre may also be found verses beginning with the sections 7. and 7 l.

7: 1 l.

The breve|e buke|kes also| with | her bro|d|e paum| es.

Gaw. and the Green Knight, 1155.

By that | that an| y day-lyght|: le|ned up, on er|th|e.

Gaw. and the Green Knight, 1137.

I seigh | a tour | on a toft|: trie|lich ym| ked.


7: 3 l.

And get|en gold | with here gle|: sin|; ful|lich e y trow|e.

P. Ploughman, A. prol. 34.

7: 5.

So thoeh|tis thret|is in thra|: our bres|tis o| ver-thwort|.


The schip|man schrenk|is the schou|r|: and set|tith to | the schore|.

Gaw. Doug. id. st. 5.

With such | a erak|kaunde cry|: as klif|fe|s had|den brus|en|.

Gaw. and the Green Knight, 1166.

Of al|e man|er of men|: the men|e and| the rich|e.

P. Ploughman, A. prol. 18.

I drew | in derne | to the dyk|: to dirk|in er|ter myrth|is.

Dunbar. Tua Maryit Wemen. 9.

7 l: 1.

I weene | thou byds|na bet|er: bot | I breck | thy brow|.


7 l: 2 l.

Ich wul|le wurth|liche wrek|en: al|le is with|er-ded, en.

Layamon, 21085.

7 l: 3 l.

And sum|e put | hem to pry|e: apar|ayleth | hem there af|tur.

P. Ploughman, B. prol. 23.

7 l: 5 l.

Bot in|compe|tabill cler|gy: that Chris|tyndome | off|and|es.


1 [But Mr. Small’s edition ends the line with “and settis to schore”; which is far better.—W. W. S.] 2 [I put no accent on and.—W. W. S.]
Verses beginning with sections 8. and 8 l. are very rare. They are found, however, in the Song of the Traveller.

8 : 5 l.

That travyllis\footnote{[For \textit{travyllis}, Mr. Small has \textit{bravillis}, obviously the right reading, as shown by the alliteration. This alters the run of the line.---W. W. S.]} thus | with thy boist\footnote{[For \textit{boist}, Mr. Small has \textit{host}. The right reading is obviously \textit{host}, i.e. boast.---W. W. S.]}; quhen bern\is with | the bord\is.

\textit{Gaw. Douglas, id. st. 10.}

8 l : 1 l.

Mid Hron\um ic was | and mid Dean\um : and | mid Heath\oream\um.

\textit{Trav. Song, 63.}

Mid Scot\um ic was | and mid Peoh tum : and | mid Scrid\e-Fin\um.

\textit{Trav. Song, 79.}

Verses beginning with sections 9. and 9 l. are also rare. Ben Jonson has used them once or twice in that strange medley of learning, coarseness, and extravagance, with which the three sycophants amuse the crafty epicure, their master. We have the verses 9 : 7. and 9 : 9. in the first four lines.

Now room for fresh gamesters, who do will you to know,
They do bring | you nei\ther play \^ nor Un\iver\sity show \(^;\)
And therefore do intreat you, that whatsoever they rehearse
May not fare | a whit \^ the worse \(^;\) for the false \^ pace of \^ the verse.

\textit{Ben Jonson. The Far, 1. 1.}

There are also verses in Piers Ploughman, which may be read, as if they began with the section 9. But I have doubts, if the custom, now so prevalent, of slurring over an initial accent, were practised at so early a period. If this license be allowed, we may give to the following line the rhythm 9 l : 2 l.

All in hop\e for \^ to hav\e : hev\ene-rich \^e blis \^e.

\textit{P. Ploughman, B. pro\l. 27.}
CHAPTER VII.

VERSES WITH A COMPOUND SECTION.

The origin of those sections which have more than three accents, has already been matter of discussion;¹ in the present chapter we shall consider them all as compound. This will enable us, at once, to double the range of our notation.

Every section of four, five, or six accents, may be represented as an Anglo-Saxon couplet; and if we add a c to the figures, which denote the rhythm, we shall be in no danger of confounding a compound section, with the couplet to which it probably owes its origin. Thus we may represent the section [in Ciedmon, Gen. 245]

Then sheo ðæs halig word;

by the formula 1:6:6:—assuming that the middle pause of the couplet followed after the third syllable. I have already stated my belief, that the hypothesis, which has been started, as to the nature and origin of these compound sections is the true one; but whether true or false, there can be little doubt as to the convenience of the notation.

VERSES OF SIX ACCENTS

may be ranged under two heads, accordingly as they begin or end with the compound section. Those which belong to the latter class are rare in Anglo-Saxon; but common in our psalm metres, and all those rhythms which

¹ See B. 2. ch. 1, 3, and 4.
were derived from, or influenced by them. They are, however, seldom met with after the sixteenth century.¹

1: 6. c: 1 l.

—— Heo weren leof gode
Then | den heo | his hal | ioe word | heal | dan wol | don.

—— They were dear to God,
While they his holy word would keep.  Caedmon. Gen. 244.

2 l: 1 ll. c: 6.

—— No man ys wurthe to be ycluped kyng,
Bot | e the hey | e kyng | of hev | one | that wro | te al thing |.

R. Glouc. p. 322.

5: 5. c: 6.

About | e scint | Ambros | e day | ido | was al this |,
Tuelf hundred in yer of word, and foure and sixti isw.


Lewelin, prince of Walis, robbede mid is route
The er | es lond | of Glou | ectr | in Wal | is about | e.


5: 6. c: 6 l.

So ho | ly lyf | he lad | de and god | so chas | and so clen | e
That hey men of the lond wolde hem aklay mene

6: 5. c: 6.

And wel vaire is offrine to the hey weved² ber
And suth | the ofte wan | he thud | er com | ho off | rede ther |.

R. Glouc. p. 545.

5: 5 l. c: 6 l.

And ris | en up | with rib | andy | e | tho rob | erdes knav | es.
P. Ploughman, B. prol. 44.

5 l: 5 l. c: 6 l.

To syn | ge ther | e for sym | ony | e | for sil | ver is swet | e.
P. Ploughman, id. 86.

¹ It must be observed that the examples quoted in this chapter have been arranged generally according to the authors, as the number of varieties was too scanty to render the mode of subdivision, hitherto followed, advisable.

² Weved is the Anglo-Saxon wigbed, an altar.
C. VII.  

VERSES OF SIX ACCENTS.  

5 : 5. c : 5.

Who with his wisdom won, him strait did chose
Their king | and swore | him fealty: to win | or lose].

Yet secret pleasure did offence impeach,
And wonder of | antiquity: long stop'd | his speech].

5 l : 1. c : 5.

As well | in curious instruments: as cunning lays).

They crown'd | the second Constantin: with joyous tears.

How he | that lady's liberal: might enterprise.

Their hearts | were sick, | their eyes | were sore!: their feet | were lame.

2 : 5 l : 1.

——— Gracious queen,
More | than your lord's | departure weep | not: more's | not seen!.

Verses ending with section 2. are chiefly found in the works of our dramatists.

1 l : 1. c : 2 l.

Art | thou certain this | is true: is | it most certain?

Verses which end with the compound section are much more common in Anglo-Saxon, than in the later dialects. They yielded to the favourite rhythms of our psalmmetres; and though their popularity revived in some measure during the sixteenth century, they have since fallen into almost total neglect.

Caedmon frequently made both his sections begin abruptly, and for opening the couplet preferred the section 2 l.

1 l : 5 l : 1 l. c.

——— Hie habbath me to hearren geworne,
Rofere in cas: mid swilcum may | man read | getheven cean.
They have me for Lord y-chosen,
Warriors famous! with such may man council take!


2 l : 2 : 5 c.

——— Gif hit eower ænig næge
gewendan mid wihte: that hie word Godes
lar|e forlæ|ten| son| a hie him | the lath|ran beoth|.

——— — If any of you may
Change this with aught—that they God's word
And lore desert—soon they to him the more loath'd will be.

Cæd. id. 427.

——— Thær he getruwode wel
That hie his giongorsceipe: fyligen wolden
Wyr|ean his will|lan: for | thon he him | gewit | forgeat|.

——— — In whom he trusted well
That they his service would follow,
And work his will—for that he gave them reason—

Cæd. id. 248.

2 l : 2 : 5 l. c.

Gif ic ænumig thegce : theoden-madmas
Gær|a forgeat|æ: theon|æn we on | than god|an ric|æ
Ge’sel|ige set|on: and la|don ur|æ set|la geweald|.

If I to any thanc lordly treasures
Gave of yore—while we in that good realm
Sat happy and o'er our seats had sway—

Cæd. id. 409.

The last of these verses has the rhythm 6l : 5l : 2c.
It will be observed that in all these examples the alliteration falls on the third accented syllable of the second section. According to Rask, all the preceding syllables form the “complement;” they are to be uttered in a softer and a lower tone, so that the first accent may always fall on the alliterative syllable. Were this theory true, the rhythm of Anglo-Saxon verse would be poor indeed!

Sometimes, though rarely, we find the alliteration falling upon other syllables; and occasionally we have even two alliterative syllables in the second section.

2 l : 1 l : 1 l. c.

... byge hrècoweth: that hie heofonrice
Ag|an to al|dre: gif | hit co|wer æ|nig næg|æ.
Gewendan mid wihte.
C. VII. VERSES OF SIX ACCENTS.

Rueth my heart, that they heaven's realm
Possess for ever! If any of you may
This change by aught, &c. Caed. Gen. 426.

Though not unknown to the old English dialect, these verses are so rarely met with in the interval which elapsed between the Anglo-Saxon period, and the sixteenth century, that we shall pass at once to the rhythms of the Faery Queen.

\[ 5 : 5 : 5. c. \]

You shame fac'd are: but shame 'fac'dness | itself | is she\]. F. Q. 2. 9. 43.

By which she well perceiving what was done,
Gan rear her hair, and all her garments rent,
And beat | her breast: and pitiously | herself | torment\]. F. Q. 6. 5. 4.

For no demands he stay'd,
But first | him loas'd: and afterwards | thus to \[ him said\].
F. Q. 6. 1. 11.

The common metre of six accents, which spread so widely during the sixteenth century, seldom tolerated a verse with a compound section. The reluctance to admit these verses was strengthened by the example of Drayton, who rigidly excluded them from the Polyolbion. There are, however, a few poems, in which they are admitted freely enough to give a peculiar character to the rhythm. One of these poems is the Elegy written by Brysket, (though generally ascribed to Spenser,) on the death of Sir Philip Sidney. It has very little poetical merit, but deserves attention, as having undoubtedly been in Milton's eye, when he wrote his Lycidas. From it Milton borrowed his irregular rimes, and that strange mixture of Christianity and Heathenism, which shocked the feelings and roused the indignation of Johnson. It may be questioned, if the peculiarity in the metre can fairly be considered as a blemish. Like cudings, recurring at uncertain distances, impart a wilfulness and an appearance of negligence to the verse, which suits well with the character of elegy. But to bring in St. Peter (as Milton has done) hand in hand with a pagan deity is merely ludicrous; it was the taste of the age, and that is all that can be urged in
its excuse. Still, however, the beauties of this singular peem may well make us tolerant of even greater absurdity. No work of Milton has excited warmer admiration, or called forth more strongly the zeal of the partizan. The elegy on Sir Philip Sidney will afford us a specimen of rather a curious rhythm; and at the same time enable us to judge of Milton's skill in changing the baser metal into gold. It should be observed, that, in some editions, the sections are written in separate lines, as if they formed distinct verses.

THE MOURNING MUSE OF THESTYLIS. 1

Come forth, ye Nymphs! come forth, forsake your wat'ry bowers,  
Forsake your mossy caves, and help me to lament;  
Help me to tune my doleful notes: to grating sound  
Of Little's tumbling streams, come let salt tears of ours,  
Mix with his waters fresh: O come, let one consent  
Joy us to mourn with wailing plaints: the dead ly wound  
Which fatal clasp hath made, decreed by higher powers  
The dry day, in which they have from us yert  
The noblest plant that might from east to west be found,  
Mourn, mourn great Philip's fall! mourn we his woeful end,  
Whom spiteful death hath plucked untimely from the tree,  
Whiles yet his years in flowre did promise worthy fruit, &c.

Up from his tomb: the mighty Corineus rose,  
Who cursing oft the Fates that his mishap had bred,  
His hoary locks he bare, calling the Heavens unkind;  
The Thames was heard to roar, the Seyne and eke the Mose,  
The Scheld, the Danow's self this great mischance did rue,  
With torment and with grief their fountains pure and clear  
Were troubled, and with swelling floods: declar'd their woes.  
The Muses comfortless, the Nymphs with pallid hue.  
The Sylvan Gods likewise came running far and near;  
And, all with tears bedew'd and eyes cast up on high,  
O help, O help, ye Gods! they ghastly gan to cry.  
O change the cruel fate of this so rare a wight,  
And grant that nature's course may measure out his age.  
The beasts their food forsook and, trembling fearfully,  
Each sought his cave or den, this cry did them so fright.  
Out from amid the waves by storm then stirr'd to rage,  
This cry did cause to rise th' old father Ocean hear;  
Who grave with old and full of majesty in sight

1 [In the Globe edition of Spenser, p. 563.]
Spake in this wise: Refrain, quoth he, your tears and plaints,
Cease these your idle words, make vain requests no more;
No humble speech nor mean may move the fixed stint
Of Destiny or Death; such is his will that paints
The earth with colours fresh, the darkest skies with store
Of starry light: and though your tears a heart of flint
Might tender make, yet nought herein they will prevail.
Whiles thus he said: the noble Knight who gan to feel
His vital force to faint, and death with cruel dint
Of direful dart: his mortal body to assail,
With eyes lift up to Heav’n, and courage frank as steel,
With cheerful face: where valorously was express’d,
But humble mind, he said, O Lord, if ouch this frail
And earthly carcass have thy service sought t’advance,
If my desire hath been, still to relieve th’oppress;
If, justice to maintain, that valour I have spent.
Which thou me gav’st: or if henceforth I might advance
Thy name, thy truth, then spare me, Lord: if thou think best
Forswear these unripe years. But if thy will be bent,
If that prefix ed time be come: which thou hast set,
Through pure and fervent faith I hope now to be placed
In th’everlasting bliss, which with thy precious blood
Thou purchase didst for us. With that a sigh he fet,
And straight a cloudy mist his senses over-cast;
His lips wax pale and wan, like damask roses bud
Cast from the stalk, or like in field to purple flowre
Which languisheth being shered by cultur as it past.
A trembling chilly cold ran through their veins, which were
With eyes brimfull of tears, to see his fatal hour, &c.

VERSES OF SEVEN ACCENTS

May be divided, like those of six, into two classes, accordingly as they begin or end with the compound section. Both these classes were known to the Anglo-Saxons; but under the influence of the psalm metres the latter gradually gave way, in the same manner as the corresponding rhythm in the metre of six accents. It was, however, very freely used by certain of our poets, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; more especially by Phaer and Chapman.

We will first take the verses that begin with the compound section. Caedmon generally opened the first section with an accent, and the second with an unaccented syllable.
And moste ane tid: ute weorthern
Wes an an; c win | ter stun | de: than | ne ie mid | this wer | ode.

And might I one season outfare
And bide one winter's space! then I with this host—

_Cæd. Gen. 369._

1 : 6 l. c : 8.

hael | eth-helm | on heaf | od aset | te: and thon | e full heard | e geband |.
Hero's-helm on head he set, and it full hard y-bound.

_Cæd. id. 444._

2 : 5. c : 5.

War | iath inc | with thon | e wæstm |: ne wyth | inc wil | na ged |
Be ye both ware of that fruit, ne let it goad your lust.

_Cæd. id. 236._

2 l : 2 l. c : 5 l.

Lag | on tha outh | re fynd | on tham fy | re: the ær | swa feal | a hæf | don
Gewinnes with heora waldend.

Lay the others, fiends, in fire, that enwhile had so fele
Strife with their Ruler.

_Cæd. Gen. 322._

2 l : 5 l. c : 5 l.

——— Næron metode
Tha | seyta wid | lond ne wæg | as nyt | te: æc stod | bewrig | en fies | te
Folde mid flode.¹

——— Nor had the Maker
As yet wide land, nor pathways useful; but fast beset
With flood earth stood.

_Cæd. id. 155._

5 l : 1 l. c : 5 l.

Tha spræc | se of | ermod | a cyn | ing: the ær | wæs eng | In scyn | ost.
Then spake the haughty king, that enwhile was of angels sheenest.

_Cæd. id. 338._

5 : 5 l. c : 4 l.

Se feond | mid his | gefer | u m eal | luan : feal | lon tha u | fon of heof | num.
The fiend with all his feres fell then on high from heaven.

_Cæd. id. 306._

¹ [In Grein, l. 156 begins with _Wulf lond._—W. W. S.]
C. VII. VERSES OF SEVEN ACCENTS. 269

The last verse but one approaches very nearly to the favourite rhythm of Chapman; of which we have no less than five examples in the first six lines of his Iliad.

5 l: 1. c: 5.

Achile's bane ful wrath | resound'd: O God, desist! that | imposed
Infinite sorrows on the Greeks: and many brave souls los'd
From breasts | heroic, sent | them farre: to that | invisible cave!
That no | light com forts, and | their limbs: to dogs | and vul tures gave!
To all | which Jove's | will gave | effect: from whom | strike first |
begunne
Betwixt | Atrid | es, king of men: and The | tis' god, like some

Iliad, 1. 1.

The same verse is also common in the translations of Phaer and Golding. Like Chapman also, these poets frequently begin the first section abruptly, and sometimes even the second; but they never allow themselves the liberty, which the latter so often takes, of opening a verse with the section 5: 2. c.

5: 2. c: 5.

This grace desir'd
Vouchsafe | to me! | pains | for my tears: let these | rude Greeks | repay:
Forsworn with thy arrowes. Thus he pray'd, and Phæbus heard him pray.
And vext | at heart | down | from the tops: of steepes | heaven stoop'd: his bow
And quiver cover'd round, his hands did on his shoulders throw;
And of the angry deity, the arrowes as he mov'd

Chapman. Iliad, 1. 10.

5: 2. c: 2.

Jove's and Latona's sonne, who, fired against the king of men
For contumelie shown his priest, infectious sickness sent
To plague the armie; and to death by troopers, the soldiers went,
Ocassioned thus: ; Chryses the priest: came | to the skete | to buy |
For presents of unvalu'd price, his daughter's libertie, &c.

Chapman. Iliad, 1. 8.

5: 27. c: 1.

Thus Xanthus spake; a | bless Achil, les: now | at least | our care!
Shall bring thee off; but not farre hence the fatal minutes are
Of thy grave ruine.

Chapman. Iliad, 18.
This kind of verse is sometimes used in Layamon, but more rarely than might have been expected. Robert of Gloucester has made it the great staple of his Chronicle. He uses a very loose rhythm, one of his sections approaching to the triple measure, while the other not unfrequently belongs to the strictest law of the common measure.

\[
2 : 5. \ c : 8.
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Eng} | \text{cloud} & | \text{ys} | a \ \text{wel} | \text{god} \ \text{lond} | : \ \text{ich} \ \text{wen} & | e \ \text{of} \ \text{ech} | e \ \text{lond} \ \text{best} | \\
Yset & \text{in} \ \text{the} \ \text{ende} \ \text{of} \ \text{the} \ \text{world}.
\end{align*}
\]


\[
6 : 6. \ c : 5 \ l.
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{The} \ \text{Sax} & | \text{ones} \ \text{and} | \ \text{the} \ \text{Eng} | \text{lische} \ \text{tho} | : \ \text{heo} \ \text{had} & | \text{den} \ \text{al} | \ \text{an} \ \text{bon} | \text{de}, \\
\text{Five} & \ \text{and} \ \text{thirty} \ \text{schiren} \ \text{heo} \ \text{maden} \ \text{in} \ \text{Engeloude}.
\end{align*}
\]

*Rob. Glouc. p. 3.*

He seems to have preferred opening his verse abruptly, and, like Cadmon, generally began the second section with an unaccented syllable.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Ev} & | \text{erwyk} | \text{of} \ \text{fair} | \text{est} \ \text{wod} & | e | \ \text{Lyn} | \text{colne} \ \text{of} \ \text{fayr} | \text{est} \ \text{men} | , \\
\text{Gran} & | \text{tebrug} | \text{ge} \ \text{and} | \text{Hon} | \text{tyndon} & | e | \ \text{mest} \ \text{plen} | \text{te} | \text{of} | \ \text{dup} \ \text{fen} | , \\
\text{Ely} & \ \text{of} \ \text{fairest} \ \text{place} | , \ \text{of} \ \text{fairest} \ \text{sigte} \ \text{Rochestre}, \\
\text{Ev} & | \text{ene} \ \text{a} | \text{geyn} \ \text{Fraun} & | \text{ee} \ \text{ston} | \text{de} | : \ \text{the} \ \text{con} | \ \text{tre} \ \text{of} | \ \text{Chiches} | \text{tre}.
\end{align*}
\]

*Rob. Glouc. p. 6.*

We have now to consider those verses which *end* with the compound section; and will begin with some examples furnished by Cadmon.

\[
1 \ l : 2 : 5 \ l. \ c.
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{forthon} \he \ \text{secolde} \ \text{grund} \ \text{gescan} \\
\text{Heard} | \text{es} \ \text{hel} | \text{le-wit} | \text{es} & | \ \text{thues} | \ \text{the} \ \text{he} \ \text{wann} | \ \text{with} \ \text{heof} | \text{nes} \ \text{wal} | \text{dend}.
\end{align*}
\]

therefore must he seek th' abyss

Of dread hell-torment, since he warr'd with heaven's wielder.  

*Caed. Gen. 302.*

\[
2 \ l : 5 : 5 \ l. \ c.
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{God sylfa} \ \text{wearth} \\
\text{Miht} | \text{ig} \ \text{on} \ \text{mod} & | e \ \text{yr} | \text{re} | : \ \text{wearp} \ \text{hin} | e \ \text{on} | \ \text{that} \ \text{mor} | \ \text{ther-in} | \text{nan}.
\end{align*}
\]

God's mighty self became

At heart enraged; he hurl'd him to that murderer's den.  

*Caed. Gen. 341.*
C. VII. VERSES OF SEVEN ACCENTS.

2 l : 5 l : 1 l. c.

\[\text{æt} \text{ter his on licen} \text{sc} \text{mid than} \text{l he wîl} \text{o eft geset} \text{tan} \]
\[\text{Heofona rice mid hlutrum sawlum} \]

there he hath man ywrought
After his likeness; with whom he wills again to people
Heaven's realm with shining souls. \textit{Ced. Gen. 395.}

3 l : 5 : 5 l. c.

\[\text{hæls} \text{ta heof} \text{ones wal} \text{dend} \text{wæerp hinn} \text{e of} \text{than hæ} \text{an stole} \]
The highest Heaven-wielder hurl'd him from the lofty seat.
\textit{Ced. ud. 300.}

This kind of verse is to be found in Layamon.

7 l : 1 : 9 l. c.

\[\text{To Bath} \text{e com} \text{the Kaise} \text{re and} \text{he} \text{eas} \text{tel ther} \text{e} \]
To Bath came the Kaiser, and beset the castle there.
\textit{Layamon, 21031.}


\[\text{Fe} \text{de geond} \text{al Scotland} \text{hit} \text{hit an his agere hand} \]
He went through all Scotland, and brought it under his own hand.
* \textit{Layamon, 21045.}

Phaer and Chapman also used similar rhythms; the latter more sparingly than the former.

5 : 5 : 5. c.

Then for disайте, for on themselves their owne worke Jove did	
Their sister crawlyd furth: both swift of fecte and wight of	
A monister ghastly great: for evry plume her cas bears:
Like number leering eyes she hath, like number harckning cares.

* \textit{Great Atreus' sonnes! said he,}
And all ye well-grieved Greekes: the Gods whose habitation be.
In heavenly houses, grace your powers with Priam's razed town,
And grant ye happy conduct home. \textit{Chapman. Iliad, 1. 15.}

Seed of the Harpye! in the charge ye undertake of us,
Discharge it not as when: Patroc'lus ye left dead in field.

\textit{Chapman. Iliad, 19; 1. 23 from end.}
Verses of seven accents are not unfrequently met with in the loose metre used by our dramatists. Such as begin with the compound section appear to have been most favoured. There can be little doubt that Shakespeare's text has suffered from the attempts, which have been made by his editors, to remove these seeming anomalies. Sometimes we find a word dropt, or altered, and at other times the verse broken up into fragments, in order to bring it within the limits of the ordinary rhythms. For example, in the folio of 1623, there is the following passage:

We speak no treason man, we say the King
Is wise and virtuous; and his noble Queen
Well struck in years; fair, and not jealous;
We say that Shore's wife hath a pretty foot,
A cherry lip, a bonny eye; a passing pleasing tongue.
And the Queen's kindred are called gentlefolks.

R. III. 1. 1. 90.

The difference in the flow of the two last verses was certainly not accidental. The libertine sneer upon the wretched mistress, was to be contrasted with the bitter sarcasm levelled at more formidable, and therefore more hated rivals. But in the text, as "corrected" by Steevens, this happy turn of the rhythm is lost;

We say that Shore's wife hath a pretty foot,
A cherry lip,
A bonny eye, a passing pleasing tongue,
And the Queen's kindred are called gentlefolks.

In Boswell's edition of Malone's Shakespeare we have the line written, as in the folio, with seven accents. But in neither of the editions do the notes give the reader the slightest hint of any interference with the text, either for the purposes of amendment or of restoration!

The poets of the seventeenth century occasionally introduced the verse of seven accents into their "heroic metre." But the change of rhythm was too violent. The license hardly survived the age of Dryden.

Let such a man begin without delay,
But he must do beyond what I can say,
C. VII. VERSES OF EIGHT ACCENTS.

Must above Milton’s lofty flight prevail,
Succeed where great Torquato to: and where great|er Spenser fail|.

In the second edition this line was altered to give Milton the preference, when it quietly settled down into an Alexandrine.¹

They meet, they lead to church, the priests invoke
The pow’rs, and feed the flames with fragrant smoke,
This done, they feast, and at the close of night
By kindled torches vary their delight,
These | lead the lively dance | and those | the brimming bowls | invite:.

Dryden. Cymon and Iphigenia, 564.

It will be observed that each of these verses ends with the compound section.

VERSES OF EIGHT ACCENTS.

The notation used in this chapter readily adapts itself to verses of six or seven accents, but when a verse contains eight or more accents, the reader must be furnished with some further intimation than is given by the mere numerical index, before he can hope to follow its rhythm. Even in tracing the rhythm of a verse which contains only six or seven accents, he will require the like assistance, if the middle pause of the compound section fall in the midst of a word. But in both these cases, I believe the index, followed by such explanation, to afford the shortest and readiest means of pointing out the rhythm.

The longest verse which has been used to form any English metre, is the one of eight accents. This unwieldy rhythm was not unknown in the seventeenth century, and according to Webbe “consisteth of sixteen syllables, each two verses ryming together, thus:

¹ [The passage concludes the poem, and is printed by Chalmers so that the two last lines run thus:

Must above Tasso’s lofty flight prevail,
Succeed where Spenser and ev’n Milton fail.

Surely this last line is no Alexandrine.—W. W. N.]
Where virtue wants and vice abounds, there wealth is but a baited hooke
To make men swallow down their bane, before on danger deepe they looke.

Even at that period this metre was "not very much used at length." The couplet was more commonly divided into the stave of eight and eight; in which shape it is still flourishing in our poetry.

In his longer rhythms Cædmon not unfrequently inserts a couplet of eight accents; of which five were sometimes given to the one section, and three to the other; as,

\[ 8 l : 1 l : 7 l. c. \]

Bigstand ath me strang e gencat as : tha | ne wil lath me at | tham
strith e geswic an,
Hælothas heardmode.

By me stand liegenmen strong, they that will not at the striffe fail me,
Heroes stalwart.  


But in the great majority of cases the accents are equally divided, each section taking four. It is highly probable that this was owing to the ecclesiastical chants; and that the Latin metre of four accents, which, if not invented, was chiefly cultivated by the celebrated Ambrose Bishop of Milan, had already begun to exercise an influence over our English rhythms.

\[ 1 : 5 l. c : 1 l : 1 l. c. \]

Worth te man | him hit | to wit c : hyr | a wor | uld wes | gehwyrf ed.
They wrought them this for punishment; their world was changed!


\[ 1 l : 1 l. c : 5 : 5 l. c. \]

Dear e was | ho driht | ne ur um : ne mihi te him | bedyrn ed
wyrth an,
That his engyl organ ofermed wesan.

Dear was he to our Lord, nor might from him be hidden,
That his angel gan to wax o'erprond.  

Cæd. id. 261.

\[ 1 l : 1 ll. c : 2 : 5 l. c. \]

Gif his bree | ath his | gebod | scipe : thon | ne he him | abol | gen
wurth | eth.

If they break his commandment, then he 'gainst them enrag'd becomes.

Cæd. id. 430.
VERSES OF EIGHT ACCENTS.


He let hine swa nicles wealdan,
Heast'ne to him | on heof,oma ric e | hafl de he hun e | swa hwit'ne geworht ne.

He let him so mickle wfeld,
Next to himself in heaven's realm; he had him so purely wrought. -

Ced. id. 253.

2 l: 1 l. c : 1 l : 1 l. c.

Hwy seal ic after his hylde theowian,
Bag'an him swal ves geaung ordon'es : ie | mag wes an God | swa he .

Why must I for his favour serve—
Bow to him with such obedience? I may be God as he.

Ced. id. 282

2 l : 1 l. c : 1 l : 1 l. c.

Fynd synd hie mine georne,
Hol de on hvr a hyg e sceat tum . ie | mag hyr a hear ra wes'an

Friends are they of mine right truly,
Faithful in their hearts deep counsels; I may their liege lord be.

Ced. id. 287.

5 : 5 l. c : 5 l : 1 l. c.

Ar niot ath me | thes othtres eal les : forlet ath thon e am ne beam.

But enjoy ye all the other—leave ye that one tree.

Ced. id. 235.

5 : 5 ll. c : 1 : 6 l. c.

Swa wyn lie was | his wæstum | on heof onum : that | him com | from wer oda driht ne.

So [excellent was his appearance] in heaven, [that] came to him from
the Lord of Hosts.

Ced. id. 255.

6 : 5 l. c : 1 l : 5 l. c.

Æune hæfde he swa swithe geworhtne,
Swa miht igne on | his mod, gethoh te : he | let hin e swa mit les wealdan.

One had he so mighty wrought,
So powerful in his mind's thought—he let him so mickle wfeld.

Ced. id. 252.

These verses are also to be found in the psalm metres of
the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Robert of Gloucester used them very freely in his Chronicle.
King Wyllam was to milde men debonere y-nou,
Ac to men that hym with-sede to al sturnhede he drou,
In chirche he was devout y-nou; vor hym ne ssol de non day
abyld:e,
That he ne hur de mas:se and masts:yns: and ev:esong: and ech:e
tyld:e.  

VERSES OF NINE ACCENTS.

Caedmon occasionally uses couplets, which contain nine,
or even more than nine accents.

$$1\ell:2\ell.c:1:5\text{c.}$$

And he on seecop drif\l: ten to doef\l:um; for thon heo his
ded: and word: 1
Noldon wrothian.
And then all the Lord transhaped to fiends, for that they his deed and
word
Would not worship.  
Caed. id. 309.

$$3:6\ell.c:1\ell:1\ell.c.$$  
Hete heo de he as: his hear ran gewun: nen: hyl: do heo de his
fer-
lor\l:en.
Hate had he from his Lord y-won; his favour had forlorn.
Caed. id. 301.

In the following couplet we have as many as eleven accents.

$$\text{And seeolde his drihtne thancian}$$

Thes fean es the he him on tham leoh te gesceor\l: ede; thon ne let e
he his hin\l: e lang\l: e weal\l: dan.

And should his Lord have thank\d'd
For the portion he him in light had given, then had he let him long time
wield it.
Caed. id. 257.

Perhaps, however, we ought to read, thon ne let e ho his
hin\l: e; and, by this elision of the vowel, reduce the number
of accents to ten.

These long rhythms may be traced through our literature,
till they ended in the doggrel verses, which Shakespeare
put into the mouth of his Clowns, and Swift used as a fit
vehicle for his coarse but witty buffoonery. Their revival
is hardly to be wished for.

1 [In Grein's edition, the line begins with drihten.—W. W. S.]
CHAPTER VIII.

THE SECTIONAL PAUSE

gives a character so very marked and peculiar to those rhythms into which it enters, as makes the consideration of them apart from the others, not only a matter of convenience, but almost of necessity. We have, therefore, reserved the present chapter for tracing the history, and noticing the peculiarities, of those sections which admit the pause.

As to the origin of this pause, I have already ventured an opinion. I think it owes its existence, in our poetry, to the emphatic stop; but as the question is one of difficulty, and as I may have occasion hereafter to refer to some of the reasons, which lead me to this conclusion, I make no apology for laying those reasons at some length before the reader.

In the earlier and primitive languages, we find the intonation of words a matter of very high importance. In the Greek and Latin, there are many words which have nothing else to distinguish them, but the tone; thus the Latin ne, when it signified not, was pronounced with a sharp tone—when it signified lest, with a grave one; or to speak with greater precision, it was pronounced, in the first case, more sharply than the ordinary pitch of the voice, and more gravely in the latter. In the Chinese, there are monosyllables, with no less than five distinct meanings, according to the tone which is given them; and those, who have heard them pronounced by a native, will readily understand the immense resources, which may thus be placed within the reach of language. I am not, however, aware that these differences of tone have ever been applied to the purposes of construction. There does not seem to have been any re-
ative and subordinate intonation in a sentence; a word had its tone fixed, and this it retained, whatever its position.

Whether the metrical arsis heightened the tone of the syllable on which it fell, has been doubted. Bentley thought it did; but later critics have seen reason to question his opinion; and as it must often interfere with the verbal tone, their objections are entitled to much weight. There are, however, passages in the old grammarians, which favour the notion of there having been some change in the voice. May not the arsis have been marked by a stress, resembling our modern accent? If this were so, the change from the temporal to the accentual rhythm, in the fourth century, would be natural and easy; the same syllable taking the accent in the new rhythm, which (according to Bentley and Dawes) received the arsis in the old.

With this exception (if it be one), I know no instance in the Greek and Latin, where an alteration either in the tone or loudness of the voice, has been used for purposes of construction or of rhythm. The tone seems to have been a mere accidental of the word; and had no influence on the sentence, further than as it contributed to its harmony. The stress of the voice seems to have been employed solely for the purposes of emphasis; and was certainly considered by Quintilian as reducible to no system, for he leaves the learner to gather from experience, "quando attollenda vel submittenda sit vox." Had the stress of voice been in any way dependent on the construction, its laws might have been readily explained; and would have certainly fixed the attention of a people who scrutinized the peculiarities of their language with so much care.

But though I can find no system of accents like our own, in these kindred languages, yet there are reasons for believing, that our present accentuation has been handed down to us from a very remote antiquity. We find it reduced to a system in our Anglo-Saxon rhythms; and its wide prevalence in the other Gothic dialects, points clearly to an origin of even earlier date. The precision of the laws, which regulated the accents in Anglo-Saxon verse, is one of the most striking features of their poetry. We find none of those
licentious departures from rule,¹ which are so common in the old English, and are occasionally met with, even in our later dialect. It may be questioned, if any primary accent were doubtful ² in the Anglo-Saxon; at any rate, the limits of uncertainty must have been extremely narrow.

In modern usage, we sometimes hear a word accented, though it immediately adjoin upon an accented syllable; especially when it contains a long vowel-sound. The rhythm of Sackville's line,³

Their greate [œn']eltce: and the deepè bloodshed
Of friends — —

is not without example, in the every-day conversation of many persons, who have accustomed themselves to a slow and emphatic mode of delivery. Were this practice generally sanctioned by that of our earlier and more perfect dialect, we might infer, with some plausibility, that our English accents were at one time, like those of the Greek and Latin, strictly verbal; and that the sectional pause was a consequence, which followed naturally from the system of accentuation, originally prevalent in our language. But there are grounds for believing, that in the Anglo-Saxon the stress on the adjective was always subordinate to that on the substantive. In nine cases out of ten, it was clearly subordinate; in no case is it found predominant; ⁴ and when with the aid of the sectional pause, it takes the accent, there is, in the great majority of cases, an evident intention on the part of the poet, to use the pause for the purposes of emphasis—the substantive, in all probability, still keeping the stronger accent. There are, indeed, instances of the sectional pause, where it is certainly not used as an emphatic

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¹ The widest departure from the common rhythm of the language which the Anglo-Saxon poet allowed himself, was owing to the frequent use of the sectional pause. We shall have more to say on this head shortly.

² There are perhaps instances, in which the same sentence has been differently accentuated. But this may be owing to a difference of dialect. The Anglo-Saxon author is, I believe, always consistent with himself.

³ See p. 295.

⁴ When the adjective has a stronger accent than its substantive, it always forms part of a compound, and is no longer subject to inflexion.
stop; but these, I believe, are, for the most part, found in poems of inferior merit, or in those artificial rhythms which were probably invented in the course of the ninth and tenth centuries. They may perhaps be laid to the account of carelessness or of incapacity, and ranked with those cases, where the ordinary rhythm of the language has been made to yield to the rhythm of its poetry. These exceptions may shake, but I do not think they are sufficiently numerous to overturn, the hypothesis that has been started.

Having thus given the reasons, which incline me to the opinion already stated as to the origin of the pause, I shall now proceed to range in order, those sections into which it enters. If we consider the pause as filling the place of an unaccented syllable, we may use nearly the same notation to indicate the rhythm, as hitherto. We have merely to show the presence of the pause, by the addition of a p. Thus the section we have already quoted from Sackville,

Their greate rurcltee.

would be represented by the formula, 5 ll. p.

**THE SECTION 1 p. OF TWO ACCENTS.**

Sections, which admit the pause, may be divided into two classes, accordingly as they contain two or three accents. When the section contains only two, the pause cannot change its position, for it **must** fall between the accented syllables; but as the section may vary both its beginning and its end, no less than three different ways, it admits of nine varieties. Of these six have established themselves in English literature, to wit, 1. p. 1 l. p. 1 ll. p. 5. p. 5 l. p. 5 ll. p.

Whether the section 1. p. were known in Anglo-Saxon, is a matter of some doubt. In Beowulf [l. 1168], there is the couplet,

Spake then the Scylding's Lady

Spræc, tha. : iedes Scyldinga.

---

1 Conybeare's rime poem, for example.
2 [Grein makes the line much longer. - W. W. S.]
and in Caedmon, p. 185 [Exod. 118], we have,

Thy las him westengryre,
Har | hath : holmeggum wederum.

Lest them the desert-horror—
The hoar heath—with deluging storms, &c.

The lengthened section, 1 l. p. is somewhat more common;

Tha on dunum geset—
Farc | No: es : the Armenia
Hatene sandon.

Then on the downs rested
Noah's arc—which Armenia
Are right.  

Cæd. Gen. 1421.

See also,

Cæd. id. 1323.

The section 1 p. was never common. It was chiefly used by our dramatists; and more particularly in their faery dialect.

On the ground
Sleep | sound : !
I'll apply
To your eye,
Gentle lover, remedy.
When thou wak'st,
Thou | tak'st |
True delight
In the sight
Of thy former lady's eye.  

M. N. D. 3. 2. 448.

I up and down, every where,
I strew these herbs to purge the air,
Let your odour : drive | hence |
All | mists | : that dazzle sense.  

Fl. Fa. Sh. 3. 1.

Mark what radiant state she spreads
In circle round her shining throne,
Shooting her beams, like silver threads ;
This | this | : is she alone,
Sitting like a goddess bright,
In the centre of her light.  

Arcades, 14.

This is the only instance of the section in Milton, who doubtless borrowed it from Fletcher. The propriety of Shakespeare's rhythm will be better understood, if we sup-
pose (what was certainly intended) that the fairy is pouring
the love-juice on the sleeper’s eye, while he pronounces the
words, “Thou tak’st.” The words form, indeed, the fairy’s
“charm,” and the rhythm is grave and emphatic as their
import. I cannot think, with Tyrwhitt, that the line would
be improved, “both in its measure and construction, if it
were written thus:

See | thou tak’st | .”

I know not how the construction is bettered, and the
correspondence, no less than the fitness of the numbers, is
entirely lost. Seward, in like manner, took compassion
upon the halting verses of Fletcher. His corrections afford
us an amusing specimen of conjectural criticism.

. Let your odour : drive | from hence
   All | musters,; that dazzle sense!

Fletcher, like Shakespeare, had a charm to deal with; and,
to gain the same object, he used the same rhythm.

The sections 1. p. and 1 l. p. are both of them to be
found in Spenser’s 1ngust; but the strange rhythm which
he adopted in his roundle can only be considered as an ex-
periment. It would be idle to trace out every variety he
has stumbled upon, in writing a metre for which he had no
precedent, and in which he has had no imitator.

The section 1 ll. p. is peculiar to the Anglo-Saxon. In
that dialect it is met with, not only among the short and
rapid rhythms of Beowulf, but also in the stately numbers
of Cædmon, and of all the pausing sections known to our
earliest dialect, was the one most widely used. It is sin-
gular it should so completely have disappeared from the
early English. I do not recollect one single instance of it
in that dialect.

We will begin with the couplet of four accents.


Deop | dream’ a leas : dritten ure.  Cæd. id. 40.

Beorn | bland’en-feax : bill-geslihtes.

Battle of Brunanburh, 45.

C. VII.  SECTION 5 p. OF TWO ACCENTS.  283

Sweart | syn nibte : side and wide.  Ced. id. 118.
Trow | tel gade tr | wel gade.  Rim. Poem, 34.
Gold | gear wade > gum | hwear fade.  Same, 36.
Sinc | scær|wade > sib | near|wade.  Same, 37.
Fage feol ton | fald | dyn ecde.  Brunanburh, 12.
Sar and sorge | susl | throw edon.  Ced. id. 75.

The following are instances of this section, when found in the couplet of five accents.

Ofer holmes bring hof | sel este.  Ced. id. 1393.
Tha com ofer foldan fus | sith ian.  Ced. id. 154.
Whitbecontte gescatt | wet | lie ode.  Ced. id. 131.
eala founda glewile tyr | ed neowe.  Ced. id. 914.

The section 5. p. was used by our dramatists in their faery dialect. It was also found in Sackville, and must, at one time, have taken deep root in the language, for it forms a striking feature in the staves of several popular songs.

O Troy ! Troy ! there is no boote but baker,
The huge horse within thy walls is brought,
Thy turrets fall.

Sackville.  M for M. Induction, st. 65.

Let her fly, let her scampe,
Give again her own shape

Fl. Fa. Sh. 3. 1.

I do wander every where,
Swifter than the moon's sphere

M. N. Dream, 2. 1. 6.
Warton, in quoting Sackville, added a third Troy, without authority from the poet, or notice to the reader.

O Troy! Troy! Troy!! there is no bote but bale.

The passages he has thus corrupted are more numerous, and the corruptions more serious than his late able editor suspected. They would have fully satisfied even the spleen of a Ritson, had it been his good fortune to have lighted on them. Steevens also, with that mischievous ingenuity which called down the happy ridicule of Gifford, thought fit to improve the metre of Shakespeare. He reads the line thus:

Switter than the moon's sphere.

But the quarto of 1600, and the folio of 1623, are both against him. The flow of Shakespeare's line is quite in keeping with the peculiar rhythm which he has devoted to his fairies. It wants nothing from the critic but his forbearance.

Burns, in his "Lucy," has used this section often enough to give a peculiar character to his metre.¹

O, wat ye wha's: in yon town,
Ye see the c'enin sun upon?
The fairest dame's: in yon town,
That c'enin sun is shining on.

The sun blinks blithe: on yon town,
And on you bonie braes of Ayr;
But my delight: in yon town,
And dearest bliss is Lucy fair, &c.

Moore also, in one of his beautiful melodies, has used a compound stanza, which opens with a stave like Burns'. His stanza contains also other specimens of this section.

While gazing: on the moon's light,
A moment from her smile 1 turn'd,
To look at orbs: that, more bright,
In lone and distant glory burn'd;

¹ [This song, beginning "O, wat ye," &c., was written to a particular tune, called "The bonie Lauis in yon town." Hence the peculiar phrase "in yon town" is not the poet's own.—W. W. S.]
C. VIII. SECTION 5. p. OF TWO ACCENTS.

But too | far;
Each proud | star;
For me to feel its warming flame.
Much more | dear;
That mild | sphere;
Which near our planet smiling came;
Thus Mary dear! be thou my own,
While brighter eyes unheeded play,
I'll love those moonlight looks alone
That bless my home, and guide my way.

The day had sunk: in dim | showers.
But midnight now, with lustre meek,
Illumined all: the pale | flowers.
Like hope upon a mourner's cheek,
I said, (while:
The moon's | smile;
Play'd o'er a stream, in dimpling bliss),
"The moon | looks:
On many brooks;
"The brook can see no moon but this:"
And thus, I thought, our fortunes run,
For many a lover looks to thee;
While, oh! I feel there is but our.
One Mary in the world for me!

Sir Jonah Barrington tells us, in his Memoirs, that this singular stanza belonged to a well-known Irish song, which was popular some fifty years since.

The section 5 l. p. was used from the earliest period to which we can trace our literature, down to the close of the sixteenth century. It is found in the almost perfect rhythms of Caedmon, and in the majestic stanza which we owe to the genius of a Spenser. Sackville used it with a profusion, which has given a very marked character to his metre; and there are grounds for suspecting that it was not altogether unknown to Milton. My search, however, in the works of this poet has hitherto been without success.

Verses of four accents.

On last | leg'd dun: laethum theodum. Brunanburh, 22.

The King | of: tir: that he wes gane,
To Louch-lomond the way has tane. Bruce, 3. 405.

That hi that rice: geræht | huef|don.  

He is dead: and gone |, La|dy,  
He is dead and gone;  
At his head a green grass turf,  
At his heels a stone.  
Humlet, 4. 5. 29.

A year or two ago there was published a book of songs, written on the model of the exquisite little pieces, which are scattered through the works of our dramatists. Many of these songs are extremely beautiful; but the author seems to have caught more happily, the *spirit* 1 than the *form* of his originals; to have followed the flow of thought and feeling much better than the rhythm. He must have been thinking of Shakespeare's metre when he wrote.

Lady sing no more,  
Science is in vain,  
Till | the heart | be touch'd |, Lady,  
And give forth its pain.

But in the one stave, *Lady* forms an essential part of the rhythm, while it may be rejected from the other without doing it the slightest injury. It is, in fact, a *mere pendant*; and might as well have been written *between* the verses, as at the end of one of them.

The section 5 l. p. is also common in verses of five accents.

His freond | frith|o : and gescean calle.  
Cedd. Gen. 57.

Our prince | Da|wy : the erle of Huntynatown  
Thre dochtrys had.  
Wallace, 1. 45.

Compleyne | Lord|ys : compleyne yhe Ladyis brycht,  
Compleyne for him, that worthi was and wycht.  
Wallace, 2. 225.

The deepe | daunderger : that he so sere did feare.  
Sackville.  M. for M. Buckingham, 45.

Whom great Macedo vanquisht there in sight,  
With deepe | slaunderter : despoiling all his pride.  

---

1 Certainly a much more important matter!
C. VIII. SECTION 5 ll. p. OF TWO ACCENTS. 287

When Hannibal,
And worthy Scipio last in armes were sen,
Before Carthago gate, to try for all
The worlds | en | pire: to whom it should befall.

Sackville. M. for M. Induction, 60.

Her eyes | swol | len: with flowing streames allote.


The hugie hostes, Darins and his power,
His kings, prince: his peere and all his flower.

Sackville. Induction, 58.

What could buoy
The vaine | peo | ple: but they will swerve and sway.

Sack. Buckingham, 61.

Yet were'd by secret signs of manliness,
Which close appeared in that rude brutishness,
That he | whi | dome: some gentle swain had been.

F. Q. 4. 7. 45.

His land | mort | gag'd: he sea-beat in the way
Wishes for home a thousand styes a day.

Hall. Sat. 4. 6. 78.

Which parted thence,

As pearls from diamonds dropt: in brief, sor row
Would be a rarity most belov'd, if all
Could so become it.

Lear, 4. 3. 23.

With all my heart, good Thomas: I have , Thom as,
A secret to impart unto you.


Make your own purpose
How in my strength you please: for you, Ed. mund,
Whose virtue and obedience doth this instant
So much commend itself, you shall be ours. Lear, 2. 1. 113.

Our dramatists very commonly placed a pause before the
last accent, when they ended the verse with the name
or title of the person addressed. There are three or four
examples of this practice among the verses last quoted,
and we shall meet with others as we proceed further.

*THE SECTION 5 ll. p.*

is found in the old English metre of four accents, and in

1 [Differently divided in the Globe edition.]
the works of our dramatists. It was also used by other writers of the sixteenth century, more especially by Sackville. In the Anglo-Saxon it is of very rare occurrence, but is occasionally met with;

Hun tha sceg brathræ gewat | sith ran
Then a soldier quickly gan speed him

Cad Genev 2018

Whan corn rieth in every steode,
Mery hit is in feld and hyde,
Synne hit is and scheme to chude
Knightes wolithic on huntynge ride,
The deor | gal opeth by wodis sub, &c.

Aleander, ed. Weber, 1, 477

Yet saw I Giulia and Marcus where they stood
Then great | et cetera and the deeps bloodshed
Of trysts

Sackville M for M Induction, 61

O Jove! to thee above the rest I make
My humble playnt, guide me that what I spake
May by thy will upon this wretch to fall,
On thee! Banastaire wretched of wretches all

Sackville Buckingham 92

Remove | myste tene from rebellion
From godly fear all superstition

Puttenham Parth

Have you yourselves, Somerset Buckingham,
Brave York, Salisbury and victorious Wiltshire
Received deep scars, &c.

2 H VI 1 1 85

O! who hath done
This deed? — No body, I myself, farewell!

Othello, 5, 2, 122

But room! so cry, here comes Othon
And here my mistress, would that he was gone!

M V D 2 1 58

The verses 5 l. p. 5. and 5 ll. p. 1 contain, each of them, ten syllables. This was doubtless the reason of the forbearance shown to them by our classical writers of the sixteenth century.

THE SECTION OF THREE ACCENTS.

In the section of three accents the pause may fall between the first and second accented syllables, between the
second and third, or in both these places. We might provide for these three possible contingencies by dividing the pausing sections (like the rimen sections,1) into three classes. But, in fact, the two first classes are alone met with in our literature, none of our sections containing two pauses.2


of the first class, is occasionally found in Anglo-Saxon poems;

Hreemnas wundon
Earn | as | es georn | was on eorhan acm.

The laven's wheel'd around
The ern, greedy for its prey, their scream was on the earth.

Battle of Maldon, 100.

and very commonly of the second class, when lengthened;

Thurh | geweal | God es | walhcs bearnum.

Ced. Gen. 11.

Wæs | min derm | dryht, lie | drohtad byhtlie.

Riiming Poem, 39.

Thurh | his word | wes an | wæter genuane.

Ced. Gen 158.

Ofer scild | seot on | swede Seyttise eac. Brunnadhurh, 19.

Us | is riht | mie el | that we rodea weard. Ced. Gen. 1.

geomre gastas | was | him gylp | for god 1

Ced. id 69.

mudes muflan | o for maegth | giun ge.


Sah to setle | thar | læg secg | mæn ig. Brunnadhurh, 17.

Godes ahwurson | hæf don gielp | mie el.

Ced Gen. 25.

gewændon mid white | that | hie word | God es.

Ced id 428.


Worching and wandering: as | the world as keth.

P. P id. 19.

1 See page 129.

2 Sidney has used them in the song quoted at page 151. But he adopted this singular rhythm, avowedly, as an experiment.
It is nought by the bishop: that | the boy | precht\eth.

P. P. id. 80.

O there are divers reasons: to | dissuade\, broth\,er.\(^1\)


This section is sometimes, though but rarely, found doubly lengthened.


THE SECTION 2 l. p.

Can only be of the second class. It is found both in Anglo-Saxon rhythms and in the old English alliterative metre.

cweth | that his lic | wer\,e | leoh\,t and scene.

Ced. Gen. 265.

Her sire Typhon was, who mad with lust,
And drunk with blood of men, slain by his might,
Through incest her of his own mother Earth
Whil\,om begot\, | be\,ing | but half | twin of | that birth\,.

F. Q. 3. 7. 47.

I shop me into shrowdes: as | I a shepe | wer\,e.

P. P. B. prol. 2.

There preched a pardoner: as | he a preoste | wer\,e.

P. P. id. 68.

What says the other troop\,! They \,are dissolv\,d\, | hang\,\,en.

Cor. 1. 1. 208.

Why \,are you vex\,d\, | la\,dy | why \,do you frown\,?

Comus, 666.


Is more rare, but is occasionally met with; and, of course, must be of the first class.

thrang | thrys\,tre genip\,: tham the se theoden self.

Ced. Gen. 139.

heold | heof\,ona frea\,: tha hine halig God. Ced. id. 1404.

\(^1\) Gifford reads—"to dissuade me."—W. W. S.
C. VIII. SECTION 5. p. OF THREE ACCENTS. 291

——— You shall close prisoner rest,
Till that the nature of your fault be known
To the Venetian state: 'come | bring | him away'.

Oth. 5. 2. 335.

Where be these knaves? What! no | man at door,
To hold my stirrup, nor to take my horse?

T. of the Shrew, 4. 1. 124.

The section 5 p. is rare. It is found, however, in the old romance of Sir Tristrem, and was not unknown to the Anglo-Saxons.

The folk | stode | unfam
Befor that levedi fre,
"Roland my Lord is slain,
He speketh no more with me"

The Duke | an | sword then,
"X pray mi Lord so fre,
Whether thou blis or ban,
Thin owhen mot it be."

The folk stood sad
Before that lady free,
"Roland my lord is slain,
He speketh no more with me."

Trist. 1. 22.

Trist. 177

hæste hrunon | ac his | hal'ig God. | Cæd. Gen. 1396.
hyge hroweth : that his | heof onric e. | Cæd. ud. 426.

A modern poet has used this section in one of those songs which have been already mentioned, and which recall, so vividly, the lyrical outpourings of our dramatists. The propriety of doing so may, however, admit of some question. Even in the sixteenth century, when the sectional pause was common, it was seldom introduced into a song, unless its place in the rhythm was marked out by some regular law. To introduce it at random now, when the pause is obsolete, seems little better than throwing a needless difficulty in the way of the reader. How many persons would read the following lines, for the first time, without a blunder?

The brand is on thy brow,
A dark and guilty spot,
'Tis ne'er to be erased,
'Tis never to be forgot.
The brand is on thy brow,
Yet I must shade the spot,
For who will love thee now
If I love thee not?  

Thy soul is dark, is stain'd,
From out the bright world thrown,
By God and man disdain'd,
But not by me—thy own.  

*The Felon's Wife.*

The section 5. p. when lengthened, is met with of the second class, not only in the Anglo-Saxon, but also in the old English alliterative metre, and the works of our dramatists. In this last division of our literature, we occasionally find it without the lengthening syllable.

For that it sav'd me, keep it.  
In like necessity,
Which God protect thee from: it may protect thee.  

*Per. 2. 1. 134.*

What shall I be appointed hours, as though belike
I knew not which to take: and what to leave, hal?  

*Tam. of the S. 1. 1. 103.*

Are bees bound to keep life in drones: and idle moths? No.

*Ben Jonson.  Ev. M. out of his H. 1. 1.*

These examples, however, are very rare. The lengthened section is common.

Dowk Morgan was blithe
Tho Rouland Riis was down,
He sent his sond swith e,
And had all schuld be boun.
And to his lores lithè,
Redi to his sumoun,
Durst non oyain him kithe,
Bot yalt him tour and toun.

Duke Morgan was blithe
When Roland Riis was down,
He sent his messenger quickly,
And bade all should be boun.
And to his hests attend,
Ready at his summons,
Durst none against him strive,
But yielded him towar and town.

*Tristrem, 1. 24.*

To sek e seint Jam es: and seintes in Rome.

*P. Ploughman, B. prol. 47.*

But on a May aflor we: upon Malverne hilles.

*P. Ploughman, B. prol. 5.*

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1 [From English Songs, by Barry Cornwall, 1832, p. 140.]
2 [In the Globe edition: “The which the gods protect thee from!—may defend thee.”]
C. VIII. SECTION 7. p. OF THREE ACCENTS. 293

Nay more \(\mid\) than this \(\mid\), broth\(\mid\)er \(\mid\): if I should speak,\(^1\)
He would be ready, \(\&c.\)  \(B.\) Jonson.  \(Ev.\) \(M.\) \(in\) his \(H.\) 2. 1.

beorhte blisse \(\mid\) was heor\(\mid\)a blæd \(\mid\) mic\(\mid\)el.  \(Cad.\) \(Gen.\) 14.

gæstes snytru \(\mid\) thy læs \(\mid\) him gielp \(\mid\) seeth\(\mid\)th.  \(Exeter\) \(MS.\)  \(Christ,\) 684.

A love of mine?  I would \(\mid\) it were \(\mid\) no worse \(\mid\), broth\(\mid\)er.

\(B.\) Jonson.  \(Ev.\) \(M.\) \(in\) his \(H.\) 4. 1.

Hark what I say to thee \(\mid\) I must \(\mid\) go forth \(\mid\), Thom\(\mid\) as.

\(Same,\) 4. 6.

It may here be observed, that if the section of an Anglo-Saxon couplet take the pause, the alliteration almost always falls on the syllable which precedes it.  If the alliteration be double, it falls also (with very few exceptions) upon the syllable which follows the pause.  These observations will also apply to the old English alliterative metre.


admits of only one form.  From the peculiar nature of the rhythm, the pause must fall between the first and second accented syllables.

Of all those sections which contain the pause, this is the one which has played the most important part in our literature.  It is rarely met with in the Anglo-Saxon, but was very generally used by our old English poets, by the poets of the Elizabethan era, by Shakespeare, and by Milton.  It is the only one of our pausing sections which survived the sixteenth century, and it is found occasionally re-appearing, even after Milton's death.  Burns has used it once—probably the last time it has been patronized by any of our classical writers.

This section occurs so frequently, as to render necessary a more careful arrangement than we have hitherto found practicable.  We shall begin with the verse of three accents, of which several examples are found in the romance of Tristrem.
The forster, for his rightes,
The left Schul[der yaf he],
With heart | liv|er and ligh|tes,
And blod tille his quire.

The forester for his rights
The left shoulder gave he,
With heart, liver and lights,
And blood for his share.

Tristrem, 1. 46.

Mi fader me hath forlorn,
Sir Rohant sikerly,
The best | blow | er of horn|,
And king of venery.

My father hath me lost,
Sir Rohant truly,
The best blower of horn,
And king of venery.

Tristr. 1. 49.

"Your owhen soster him bare;”
The king | list|ed him than|,
Y nam sibbe him na mare,
Ich aught to ben his man.

Your own sister bare him,
—The king listened [to him] then—
I am akin to him no more,
I ought to be his man.

Tristr. 1. 66.

Among the verses of five accents, which contain this section, 7 p : 5 is the one the most commonly met with in our poetry. The orthodox number of its syllables, is doubtless one of the causes of its popularity.

I have this day ben at your chirche at messe,
And said a sermon to my simple wit,
Not all | af | ter the text | : of ho|ly writ |.

Somnoure’s Tale; C. T. 7370.

The Mar | kep | yt the port | : of that | willage |,
Wallace knew well, and send him his message.

Wallace, 4. 359.

He call’t Balyonne till answer for Scotland,
The wyss | lord | is gert him | : some brek | that band |.

Wallace, 1. 75.

And cry’d | mer | cy, sir Knight | : and mer | cy, Lord |.

F. Q. 2. 1. 27.

At last | turn | ing her fear | : to fool | ish wrath |,
She ask’d—

F. Q. 3. 7. 8.

Cupid their eldest brother, he enjoys
The wide | king | dom of love | : with lord | ly sway |.

F. Q. 4. 10. 42.

So peace | be | ing confirm’d | : amongst | them all |,
They took their steeds—

F. Q. 4. 6. 39.

What man is he that boasts of fleshly might,
And vain assurance of mortality,
Which all so soon as it doth come to fight
Against | spiri | tual foes | : yields by | and by |.

F. Q. 1. 10. 1.
C. VIII. SECTION 7 p. OF THREE ACCENTS. 295

Let not light see my black and deep desires,
The eye | wink | at the hand: yet let | that be,
Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see. Mucb. 1. 4. 51.

The owl | shriek'd | at thy birth: an evil sign.

3 H. VI. 5. 6. 44.

——— Be a man never so vile, ...
If he can purchase but a silken cover,
He shall not only pass, but pass regarded;
Whereas | let | him be poor: and meanly clad, &c.

B. Jonson. Er. M. out of his H. 3. 3.

But for | be | it from me: to spill | the blood
Of harmless maids. Fletcher. F. Sh. 3. 1.

None else can write so skilfully to shew
Your praise: ages shall pay: yet still | must owe.

Geo. Lucy to Ben. Jonson. on the Alchemist.

Anon | out | of the earth: a fabric huge
Rose like an exhalation. P. L. 1. 710.

A mind | not | to be chang'd: by place | or time.

P. L. 1. 253.

Bird, beast | in | sect, or worm: durst enter none.

P. L. 4. 704.

Is pain to them
Less pain, | less | to be fled: or thou | than they
Less hardy to endure?

P. L. 4. 918.

And when a beast is dead, he hath no peace,
But man | after his death: mote wepe and pleine.

Knightes Tale; C. T. 1321.

Writings all tending to the great opinion
That Rome | holds | of his name: wherein | obscurely
Caesar's ambition shall be glanced at.

J. Caesar. 1. 2. 322.

But since, time | and the truth: have wak'd | my judgment.


The versos 7 p. 2 is more rare.

Yet saw I Silla and Marius where they stood,
Their greate crueltie, and the deepe bloodshed
Of friends: Cyrius I saw: and | his host dead.


Tis good, | go | to the gate: some | body knocks.

Jul. Caesar. 2. 1. 60.

In rage, deaf | as the sea: has ty as fire.

R. II. 1. 1. 19.
So spake | Is’rael’s true king]; and | to the fiend |
Made answer meet. \[P. R. 3. 440.\]
He speaks, | let | us draw near]: match|less in might|,
The glory late of Israel, now the grief. \[Samson Agon. 178.\]

The section 7 p. is also found in the verse of six accents; 7 p: 5 was the most usual combination.

She almost fell again into a swoond,
Ne wist | wheth|er above : she were | or un|der ground|.
\[F. Q. 4. 7. 9.\]

——— I prithee now, my son, ә
Go to them with this bonnet in thy hand,
Thy knee | bust|ling the stones]: for in | such bus|iness
Action is eloquence. \[Cor. 3. 2. 72.\]

Much care is sometimes necessary to discover this section, when it ends the verse. Owing to the license which certain of our poets allow themselves, in the management of their pauses, there is danger of confounding the middle pause with the sectional. We shall first give examples of the verse 2: 7 p. and then of the verse 5: 7 p.

Wallace sacho said:\[that full | worth ʒ has beyne\],
Thau wepyt sacho, that pete was to scene. \[Wallace, 2. 333.\]

Thre ʒ r in pess the realm stude desolate,
Qubar|for their rais|s]: a full | grew, ons debate|.
\[Wallace, 1. 43.\]

——— When merchant-like I sell revenge,
Broke | be my sword\!] : my arms | torn | and defaced\!.
\[2 II. VI. 4. 1. 41.\]

5: 7 p.

Quba spend|s, sacho said to Saint | Marg\'ret thai socht\];
Quba ser|wit hir, | full ʒ gret | frend schipe thai fand|
With Southam folk, for sacho was of Ingland. \[Wallace, 1. 283.\]

And next in order \sad, old age wee found,
His beard | all hoare ; his eyes | hol, low and blind]\,
With drouping chere still poring on the ground.
\[Sackville. M. for M. Induction, 43.\]

1 [Jameson, the editor of Wallace, actually puts a full stop after hir, which cuts the sentence in half, and ruins the sense.—W. W. S.].
C. VIII. SECTION 7 l. p. OF THREE ACCENTS. 297

Thrice happy mother, and thrice happy morn,
That bore three such: three such not to be found.

--- I should be still
Peering in maps for ports and piers and roads:
And every object that might make me fear
Misfortune to my ventures, out of doubt
Would make me sad. *Salar.*—My wind cooling my broth
Would blow me to an ague, when I thought
What harm a wind too great at sea might do.

*M. of Venice,* 1. 1. 17.

The lengthened section 7 l. p. is as common as the one we have been considering. It has been used by Shakespeare as a complete verse.

If you dare fight to-day, come to the field,
If not when you have stom{achs}.

*Jul. Cæs.* 5. 1. 65.

But it was the verse 7 l. p. I that spread it most widely through our literature. In this verse it was used by our dramatists, and by Milton: and may be traced far into the eighteenth century.

--- For the dearth—
The Gods, the patri{c}ians: make it, and
Your knees to them, not arms must help.

*Cor. 1. 1. 74.*

No, no, this shall forbid: it: lie: thou there.

*Rom. and Jul.* 4. 3 21.

--- Your father were a fool
To give thee all, and in his waning age
Set foot under thy table: tut: a toy!

*Tam. of the Shrew,* 2. 1. 401.

--- One that dares
Do deeds worth: the burl'dle: or: the wheel:

*B. Jon.* *Cynthia's Revels,* 3. 4.

More foul diseases than e'er yet the hot
San brèl', thorough his burn'ings: while: the dog!
Pursues the raging lion.

*Fl. Fa. Sheph.* 1. 2.

Whose vein's like: a dull riv'er: far: from springs:
Is still the same. slow, heavy, and unfit,
For stream or motion.

*Fl. Fa. Sheph.* 1. 3.

And to despise, or envy, or suspect,
Whom God hath of his spec'ial: fa: your rais'd
As their deliverer.

*Samson,* 272.
Light the day, and darkness night,
He nam'd; thus was the first day: ev'n and morn.

That all
The sentence, from thy head remov'd, may light
On me, the cause to thee of all this woe,
Me, me only, just objec't: of his ire.

Me also he hath judg'd, or rather
Me not, but the brute ser'pent: in whose shape
Man I deceiv'd.

I go to judge
On earth these thy transgres'sors: but thou know'st
Whoever judg'd, the worst on me must light.

Shall he, nurs'd in the Pea'sant's: low'ly shed,
To hardy independence bravely bred,
Shall he be guilty of their hireling crimes,
The servile, mercenary Swiss of rhymes?

Burns' Brigs of Ayr, 7.

The following are instances of the same verso lengthened.

This like monk let olde things pace
And held at tir the new world the trac'e.

Light...
Sprung from the deep; and from her native east
To journey through the aery gloom began,
Sphcr'd in a radiant cloud, for yet the sun
Was not: she in a cloud y: tab'erna'cle
Sojourn'd the while.

Wherever fountain or fresh current flow'd,
I drank, from the clear milky: juice: allaying
Thirst.

Surrey has given us an example of the verse 7 l. p: 5.

The fishes flete with newe repayred scale,
The adder all her slough away she slinges,
The swift swal low pursu'eth: the fly es small.

These are the principal combinations in which the section 7 l. p. is met with. Others, however, have occasionally been found, moro especially in the old English alliterative
C. VIII. SECTION 7 l. p. OF THREE ACCENTS. 299

metre. Thus Dunbar, in his "Twa marit women and the wede," gives us an example of the verse 7 l. p: 2 l.

I hard, | an| der ane hol| yn : hevin| lie green hew| it.

Dunbar, as above, l. 11.

Such examples, however, are rare.

Before I close a book, which treats thus fully of the rhythm of English verse, it may be expected that I should notice a series of works, which have been published during the last thirty years, on the same subject, by men, some of whose names are not unknown to the public. These writers entertain a very humble opinion of those "prosodians," "who scan English verse, according to the laws of Greek metre," and they divide our heroic line, not into five feet, but into six cadences! They are not, however, so averse to foreign terms, as might have been looked for. With them rhythm is rhythmus, and an elided syllable, an apogiaitura. One of these critics assures us, that there are eight degrees of English quantity; and if the reader should "deny that there is any such thing as eight degrees of it, in our language, for this plain reason, because he cannot perceive them," it will be his duty to confide in the greater experience, and better educated ear of those, who have paid more attention to the subject! I will not follow the example set by these gentlemen, when they speak of the poor "prosodian." It may be sufficient to say, that much which they advance, I do not understand, and much that I do understand, I cannot approve of.
BOOK III.

CHAPTER I.

SYSTEMS—NATURAL AND ARTIFICIAL.

Few things appear, at first sight, more easy, or upon trial are found more difficult, than the clear and orderly arrangement of many and varied particulars. To class them according to their several relations, so that they may follow each other in due subordination, would seem rather an exercise of patience than of intellect; to require industry, or at most some little discrimination, rather than depth of thought, or an enlarged comprehension of the subject. But it has ever been by a slow and tedious process, that theory has disentangled itself from mere knowledge of fact; and we soon learn how much easier it is to collect materials, than to form with them a consistent whole. The many systems, which have been hazarded in the exact sciences, may well make us cautious, when we treat of matters, from their very nature, so much more vague and indeterminate.

The systems of the naturalist have been called (with no great accuracy of language) natural or artificial, accordingly as they were founded on more or less extensive analogies. The same terms have been applied to the systems of philology, accordingly as they were based on the gradual development of language, or accommodated to the peculiarities of a particular dialect. If we may use these terms, when speaking of our literature, I would venture to denounce as artificial, every system, which makes time or place the rule of its classification. The example of Warton¹ shows us, how difficult

¹ All must admit his failure as regards the arrangement of his subject;—however much they admire the taste and learning of this accomplished scholar.
C. I. SYSTEMS OF ENGLISH POETRY.

it is to follow a merely chronological arrangement; and the
claims, which have been made by local vanity or prejudice,
to appropriate certain portions of our literature, are listened
to with less patience, as our knowledge of that literature
becomes more widely extended.

The success of our critics might have been greater, if their
ambition had been less; had they noticed with more care
the outward make and fashion, and confined themselves less
exclusively to the spiritual tendencies of our poetry. The
instinct of imitation appears to have seized the points most
tangible—the rhythm and the versification. The sentiments
and language seem to have been considered as appur-
tenants of the metre, rather than as essential elements of our
poetry. We find particular trains of thought, and particular
idioms (in some cases amounting almost to a change of
dialect) for ages appropriated to certain rhythms.

The history of our language has suffered, equally with
that of our poetry, from overlooking the peculiarities of our
poetical dialect. Some of our critics will have Chaucer to
exhibit a faithful specimen of the English tongue, during the
fourteenth century—but who, judging from style and lan-
guage, would suppose him to be a contemporary of Langland?
or that, in the following century, the same hand 1 wrote the
"Twa mariit women and the Wede," and "The Golden
Targe?" How widely does the foreign and artificial state-
liness of the ballot stylo differ from the rude but native
vigour of our alliterative poetry!

A complete history of our rhythms would probably lead
to a very satisfactory arrangement of our poetry; and enable
us to trace, with more truth and precision than has hitherto
been done, at once the progress of our language, and the
gradual development of our inventive genius. Unfortunately,
the published specimens of our early literature are so scanty,
as rarely to furnish us with an unbroken series of any early
rhythm. Large gaps occur, which can only be filled up by
a laborious search into manuscripts, scattered through the

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1 [That of William Dunbar. The Twa Mariit Women is in the old allitera-
tive metre.—W. W. S.]
country, and not always very easy of access. In such cases similarity of idiom, or of subject, may sometimes aid us; and enable us to recognise a particular rhythm, when the changes it has undergone might otherwise make us hesitate.

With better means of information, I might probably see reason to modify much that is advanced in the following book; but I cannot think that any of the more important divisions would require material alteration.

ARRANGEMENT OF THE SUBJECT.

The next chapter will be devoted to the consideration of Anglo-Saxon rhythm—that main stock, from which have branched almost all the later rhythms of the language. In the third chapter, we shall treat of our sectional metres—or such as were produced by making each section a distinct verse. In the fourth, we shall trace the progress of such metres as were based on the shorter Anglo-Saxon rhythms; and in the fifth, the history of our old English alliterative metre—or, in other words, of that metre, which resulted from modifying the longer Anglo-Saxon rhythms by the accentual rhythm of the Latin chants. The origin of the Psalm metres may be considered as the converse of this; they appear to be the natural growth of the Latin rhythm modified by the native rhythm of the language. These will form the subject of the sixth chapter. The metre of five accents will be considered in the seventh chapter; and the tumbling metre in the eighth. We shall, in the ninth chapter, notice certain loose rhythms, which have been occasionally used; and in the tenth, such new metres as have from time to time been invented or adopted by our English poets.

[It must be remembered that this statement refers to the year 1838. Since that date, a large number of MSS. have been printed by the Early English Text Society, by the Camden Society, and by various editors.—W. W. S.]
CHAPTER II.

Before we enter upon the subject of Anglo-Saxon rhythm, it may forward our inquiry, if we first throw a rapid glance over the present state [in 1838] of Anglo-Saxon literature.

Among the writers, to whom this literature has hitherto been considered as very deeply indebted, must be ranked the names of Hickes, Lye, and Conybeare. The first of these published his Thesaurus in 1705; Lye’s Dictionary followed after the lapse of half a century; and Conybeare’s “Illustrations” appeared, as a posthumous publication, so late as the year 1826.

The censures, which have been passed upon these works latterly, have been fully equal to any former eulogies. It would require much care, and some discrimination, fairly to portion out the merit due to their respective authors. Their errors, it is true, are many, but the subjects on which they speculated were new; and, when an art is in its infancy, an increased range of knowledge is sometimes of more importance than extreme accuracy. They, who devote themselves to discovery, have rarely time for minute investigation; and their mistakes may well claim the forbearance of those, who have profited by their labours. It is no slight praise, that the materials, which these writers furnish, are readily seized upon, even by those whose criticism has been most hostile. No one, I believe, has studied Anglo-Saxon literature, since these “blundering works” were published, without having them at his elbow.

The interest, which has been felt of late years in favour of these studies, has not however been confined to our own country. It has spread to the scholars of Denmark and of Germany; and their enthusiasm, backed by an unremitting industry, has given a marked impulse to Anglo-Saxon literature.
Of their various publications, the Grammar of Rask and the *Deutsche Grammatik* of Grimm, are certainly the most valuable. Upon these two works, and the influence which they have exerted, I would make a few observations; and if, in so doing, I dwell chiefly on what appear to be their defects, it should be remembered that a mistake becomes the more dangerous, the greater the merit of the work which contains it.

The first of these scholars was a native of Copenhagen, and devoted the whole of a short life to the study of the Northern languages. His knowledge of the Icelandic was accurate and profound; his *familiar* acquaintance with the kindred dialects may admit of some question. But it was as a philological critic, as one of the most zealous promoters of what may be called *comparative philology*, that he has the fairest claim to our respect. In this field he was one of the earliest labourers; and the discovery of many a curious analogy was the reward of his zeal and ingenuity. His varied knowledge enabled him to detect, by comparison, minute peculiarities of construction, which would certainly have escaped the notice of one, who had given his attention solely to a particular dialect.

It was with these advantages that he began his Anglo-Saxon Grammar; and to these he owes whatever success that work has met with. There are few English scholars who can peruse this grammar without benefit; there are probably none, who will rise from its perusal, with any very high notion of its author’s candour, or even—so far as regards the Anglo-Saxon dialect—of his scholarship. The terms in which he speaks of Hickes and Lye are but little to his credit. Without the aid derived from their labours, his book would never have been written; and though, in some cases, his mastery of the Icelandic enabled him to correct their errors, in others, his triumph, though equally loud, is far more questionable.

1 After the publication of Conybeare's "Illustrations," Rask noticed the longer rhythms of Caedmon, "which had escaped him while engaged in the first edition of his Grammar, not having Caedmon then at hand," &c. *Could* they have escaped the notice of any one who had read that poet?
The Accidence is by far the most valuable portion of his grammar; the Syntax and the Prosody (and more especially the latter) must, I think, be considered as failures. According to him, the alliterative syllables alone take the accent; all those which precede them, form merely a "complement," and are "toneless." Great care must be taken not to confound this complement with the verse itself, "lest the alliteration, the structure of the verse, and even the sense, be thereby destroyed!" Were these strange notions sanctioned by Anglo-Saxon prosody, the jingle of a nursery rime would be music, compared with the rhythm of Anglo-Saxon verse. He has treated Hickes' theory of a temporal metre with little ceremony; it would be difficult to say which of the two theories be the more futile, the one he has adopted, or that which he repudiates.

The great defect of the Deutsche Grammatik is a want of sound distinction—of a jealous and a penetrating criticism. Words of like ending, or of like beginning, are classed together, many of which we know must belong to different formations, for we can resolve them into their elements, and prove a different construction. We have also a large portion of the work, devoted to the changes of the letters; but the laws, which regulate these changes, are barely glanced at, and it would seem imperfectly understood, for we have letters represented as original, which are certainly corruptions; and others degraded as corruptions, which are, as certainly, original. The declensions again are divided into the weak and the strong, or, as Rask has it, into the simple and the complex; and this has been called a natural division. Had it any claim to such a title it would be more widely applicable; we have only to test it by some of the kindred languages, to see at once its unsoundness. As an artificial system, it does not possess

\[\text{The nouns of all the Indo-European languages may, I think, be ranked under a very small number of declensions. I will venture to answer for the Sanskrit, the Greek, the Latin, the Slavish dialects, and the Gothic. Even the anomalies of the Celtic may be reduced (in part at least) under the same laws. The distinctions between the declensions are essential, and deeply rooted in the very structure of these languages.}\]
the ordinary merit of convenience; it is at once cumbrous and imperfect. His arrangement of the conjugations approaches nearer to a natural order, and is far more convenient.

But, with all these defects, the *Deutsche Grammatik* is a work of surpassing thought and labour. No man that studies the nature and structure of language, can neglect it with safety. It is a mine of learning; and, though we may sometimes quarrel with the arrangement of its materials, we may well be grateful that such masses of knowledge have been arranged at all. In what manner they may be best turned to account in the study of language, is an inquiry of some difficulty, but of far greater interest.

Now dialect is a term merely relative. The Gothic is a dialect of the Indo-European language; the Anglo-Saxon is a dialect of the Gothic. When we compare the Indo-European languages, we seize the points of resemblance, and pass slightly over those of difference. When we compare the Gothic languages, we find many of these points of difference become leading features—such as are, in many cases, strikingly characteristic of these now dialects. The same thing is to be expected, and certainly takes place in comparing our English dialects. To argue then from such a knowledge as we can now obtain of any parent language, to the peculiarities of a derivative dialect, requires the greatest caution. In studying the Anglo-Saxon, we can only look upon the *Deutsche Grammatik* as a collection of useful hints—hints not to be adopted at once and without reflection, but to be worked out and tested, by a careful examination of Anglo-Saxon authorities.

After the publication of these two books, Mr. Thorpe, the friend of Rask and translator of his Grammar, returned to England. To this gentleman we owe the version of Cedmon, which was published about four years ago by the Society of Antiquaries. Another gentleman,1 who had, I believe,

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1 J. M. Kemble. See his account of Anglo-Saxon studies, in a letter printed in the preface to the *Bibliothèque Anglo Saxonne*, par F. Michel, 1837.—W. W. S.
been admitted to the intimacy of Grimm, distinguished himself about the same time by his zealous admiration of that scholar; and expressed his opinion of English scholarship in terms, that were, to say the least, somewhat unguarded. An answer soon appeared, and "the Controversy" followed.¹ In the warmth of this dispute extreme opinions have been advanced on both sides; some of which I think, the writers themselves would, upon reflection, see reason at least to modify.

May we not appreciate the learning of Hickes, the masterly command of idiom shown by Lyce, and the elegant scholarship of Conybeare, and yet acknowledge the many grammatical errors, of which these writers have been guilty? May we not admire the patient investigation of Grimm, and the quicker but less sound perception of Rask, without blinding ourselves to their faults, or embarking with them in ill-considered theory or vague generalization?

Of these two parties, the "new Saxonists" have been certainly the most enterprising. The peculiar notions which they maintain, and act upon, have been thus stated by one of their earliest and most zealous advocates. "All persons who have had much experience of Anglo-Saxon MSS. know how hopelessly incorrect they in general are; when every allowance has been made for date and dialect, and even for the etymological ignorance of former times, we are yet met at every turn with faults of grammar, with omissions or redundancies of letters and words, which can only be accounted for on the supposition, that professional copyists brought to their task (in itself confusing enough) both lack of knowledge, and lack of care. A modern edition made by a person really conversant with the language which he illustrates, will, in all probability, be much more like the original than the MS. copy, which even in the earliest times was made by an ignorant and indolent transcriber. But while he makes the necessary corrections, no man is justified in withholding the original readings: for, although the laws of a language,

¹ The papers on this subject appeared in the "Gentleman's Magazine" at various times during the last two years. [See Gent. Mag. 1834, 1835.]
ascertained by wide and careful examination of all the cognate tongues, of all the hidden springs and ground-principles on which they rest in common, are like the laws of the Medes and Persians and alter not, yet the very errors of the old writer are valuable, and serve sometimes as guides and clues to the inner being and spiritual tendencies of the language itself."

That I differ from several of the opinions here advanced, may be partly gathered from what has gone before. But I think it due to a gentleman, who has laid Anglo-Saxon literature under some obligation, to state my reasons more fully; and as the question is one of great importance, and as a very loose meaning is sometimes given to the words, "correct copy" and "original readings," perhaps I shall be excused, if I enter somewhat minutely into the points at issue.

Our modern editors take the liberty (without any warning to the reader) of altering the text in three particulars. They change the accents, which in certain cases are used to distinguish the long vowels; they compound and resolve words; and they alter the stops and pauses—or in other words the punctuation and versification—at their pleasure.

With respect to the accents, Rask professes to have been guided by the authority of printed Anglo-Saxon works, aided by a comparison of the kindred dialects. I do not inquire if he acted up to these principles; but under the circumstances, (unable as he was to procure Anglo-Saxon MSS.) none better could have been followed. The editor of Cædmon informs us, that in the accentuation, "which confirms, in almost every case, the theory of Professor Rask," he has "followed the authority of MSS., and except in a few instances that of the MS. of Cædmon himself." I will not stop to ask, what constitutes the theory of Rask, or in what cases this gentleman differs from his friend, but I have compared his edition with the MS. at Oxford, and find accents

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1 In the following remarks, the word accent has the same meaning, as is generally given it by our Anglo-Saxon editors. Much confusion might have arisen if we had ventured upon a change of phraseology.
omitted or intruded without authority, at the rate of some twenty a page—by what license of language can these be called a few instances?

If the reader ask what theory has been followed, after this bold departure from the original?—an answer would be difficult. The very same words are found, in one page, with long vowels, and in another with short, as if the accent were inserted or omitted, as the whim of the moment dictated.

To the edition of Beowulf these observations only partially apply. The editor has shown more deference to his reader, and has distinguished between theory and fact between his own accents, and the accents of the MS.¹

¹ In one of his papers (Gent. Mag., Dec. 1834, p. 603) he promises to explain "the system," on which he has regulated his accentuation. Would it not have been safer policy, if he had first established the system, and then had acted upon it?

After this note was written, there appeared an article in the Gentleman's Magazine, explaining the system of accentuation, which was followed in the last edition of Beowulf [i.e. that by Kellie, published in 1837]. The writer dissents, and I think with much reason, from the principles on which Mr. Thorpe remodelled the accentuation of Caedmon, and then advances arguments in favour of his own system. These we will not examine, as it is a matter of minor importance what theory an editor may adopt, if he distinguish (and in Beowulf the distinction has been made) between his own notions and the contents of his MS. But there is one passage, very candidly quoted from an old grammarian, which deserves the reader's notice—"I say candidly quoted, because it affords a very strong argument in a case where, as it seems to me, strong arguments were not wanting, against the theory which the writer himself espouses. From this passage, which makes mention of "the short e," it is very properly inferred, that the accent was sometimes used for the same purpose as our modern italics. It must, I think, convince every one, who has not committed himself in controversy, how little we yet know of a subject, on which so much speculation has been hazarded.

I would take this opportunity of again pressing on the reader the importance of copying our MSS. faithfully—I mean not only to the letter, but so as to show their peculiarities as regards punctuation, composition, &c. It is astonishing how much light may thus be thrown upon the structure of our language. For example, many Anglo Saxon MSS. join the preposition to its substantive, and thus point to the origin of a numerous class of adverbs, aften, asleep, aground, &c., underfoot, underhand, underneath, &c., today, tonight, tomorrow, &c. Again, in some MSS. several of the common prefixes are carefully separated from their compounds—the adverb gewisse, for example, being written ge wisse, or in Old English y wisse; and it is from these scattered elements of an adverb that modern scholarship has manufactured a verb and pro-
I cannot help thinking, however, that in the present state of Anglo-Saxon scholarship, all these speculations are premature. Here is a language, with whose accidence and syntax we are very imperfectly acquainted—the nature of whose dialects we have not yet investigated—and we are endeavouring to measure the length of its vowel-sounds, with a nicety, to which they who spoke it made no pretension. It is probable that the quantity of the vowels varied with the dialects—if so, their peculiarities should be first studied; it is almost certain that the quantity was sometimes indicated by the spelling—if so, the system of Anglo-Saxon orthography should be first ascertained and settled.

If we look into Anglo-Saxon MSS. we find some without any accents; and few, in which they have been systematically adopted. In the Beowulf MS. the whole number of accents cannot amount to more than a few dozens. In the MS. of Caedmon, they were also at first very sparingly used; but were profusely added by the same hand that corrected the MS.

To charge these conflicting usages upon the ignorance of the writers, is a ready method of solving a very difficult question. That some of our Anglo-Saxon MSS. have been carelessly transcribed, may be admitted, but I cannot allow that such is their general character. Many of them are beautifully written, and have minute corrections, which show they have been revised with equal care; and these MSS. agree no better than the others, with any theory that has yet been started, on the subject of Anglo-Saxon orthography. To pare down their peculiarities to a level with German criticism, is an easy task, but one I think that is little likely to aid the progress of Anglo-Saxon scholarship.\footnote{I have elsewhere suggested (p. 103) that there may have been three}

\textit{I wish}! Again, in many Old English MSS. the genitival ending is separated from its noun, thus Saint Benet is scorge, Saint Bennet’s scourge—a practice, which shows us the origin of those phrases to be met with in our Liturgy and other works of the same date, Christ his sake, God his love, &c. Other instances of the advantages, likely to accrue from a more careful editing of our manuscripts, might easily be collected.
C. II. MODERN EDITIONS—COMPOSITION OF WORDS. 311

Another license, very commonly taken, is that of compounding and resolving words.

In English we write some compounds continuously, as redbreast; others we split, as it were, into distinct words, as coal mine; or link together by means of the hyphen, as pear-tree. The hyphen was unknown to the Anglo-Saxons; but compounds were frequently resolved into their elements, and written as though they formed distinct words. Now there is no objection to the hyphen, if it be used only to tie together the scattered elements of a compound; for even if there be blunders in the construction of a passage, and words united that should be separate, yet the reader possesses an easy remedy—he has merely to strike out the hyphen, and the real text is before him. But the case is widely different, when the hyphen is also used in the resolution of words. He must then rest content with such readings as are given him. The editor is secure from criticism.

Most of our modern editors take this double license. The reader may think that the hyphen is occasionally used to prop a false translation, or that it sometimes mars the rhythm of a section; but he must have a greater confidence in the soundness of his opinion, than would be generally warranted by the present state of Anglo-Saxon scholarship, if he venture an objection. He may be quarrelling with the original, when he thinks he has only the editor to cope with. He cannot be safe unless he have his finger on the manuscript.

What is the object proposed by this resolution of words, is far from clear. Few of our editors follow the same plan; nor are there many of them consistent even with themselves. Sometimes the prefix is separated from its verb; sometimes linked to it by means of the hyphen; sometimes the two are written continuously. The common degrees of Anglo-Saxon quantity. This, of course, is mere hypothesis, and would be given up with very little reluctance; but I certainly could wish to have had an opportunity of testing its correctness.

1 The English reader must not consider this a mere question of orthography.
adjectival compounds generally take the hyphen, but in many hundred instances, they are separated into distinct words, as mere flos, god cyning, &c. &c. So that not only is the integrity of the manuscript violated, but the reader gets nothing in exchange—not even a theory. The versification of our MSS. has been treated with little more ceremony than their system of accents.

I have already mentioned, that Anglo-Saxon poetry was written continuously like prose. In some manuscripts (as in that of Cedmon) the point separated the sections; in others (as in the Dunstan Chronicle) it separated the couplets; in others (as in the Beowulf MS.) the point was used merely to close a period, and the versification had nothing but the rhythm to indicate it. The point was often omitted; and sometimes, though very rarely, it was misplaced. Now it would seem easy enough, to copy the MS. correctly, and to mention in the notes the omission or the false position of the points; and it is matter of regret, that the confidence reposed in some eminent grammarian has too often led our editors to “restore” the versification, without informing the reader. The alterations which have been thus made are, I fear, but too numerous; and more

It sometimes happens, that an adverb is tacked as a prefix to a verb, and not only the rhythm of the line, but even its sense, destroyed.

1 See p. 99.

2 The hyphen is very commonly forgotten, when an adjective and substantive are compounded, (even in cases where change of accent points infallibly to a compound,) unless the peculiarities of the syntax be such, as cannot be got rid of without it.

3 In the MSS. from which I have taken the extracts, which will shortly be submitted to the reader, the preposition is generally joined to its substantive, as onhearm. I have written them separately, as I could not satisfy myself whether or not this custom applied to all the prepositions. The negative particle ne is also generally joined to its verb; and sometimes the article to its substantive. I have written them separately in all cases. With these exceptions, the reader will have only to strike out the hyphen, to get a tolerably pure text.

4 The writer generally leaves a slight interval between his sections; but, as might be expected, this is often forgotten. The Editor should have mentioned the omission of the dot, and have let his reader know that he was, to a great extent at least, answerable for the versification.
C. II. MODERN EDITIONS—THEIR PUNCTUATION. 313

than one scholar has thus impaired his usefulness, whose services, in other respects, may well deserve our thanks.1

In their punctuation, the Anglo-Saxons used three kinds of stops. The first was somewhat like our semicolon (;); the second was merely the same stop reversed (:) ; and the third consisted of three dots (···). Most manuscripts have merely the rhythmical point (.), and that too in cases where it is required also to mark the versification—a clear proof how closely the two systems were at first connected. The same hand that altered the spelling, and sometimes even the wording of the Caedmon MS. added also the stops. The task however was carelessly performed; and Junius has pointed his edition, according to his own notions of the author's meaning. The compiler of the Analecta, also, has furnished his text with commas, semi-colons, &c. in the same way as if it were an English composition; but as the sense often depends on the punctuation, the reader ought always to know, how far it is borne out by the original. Many persons may differ with an editor, in the construction of a passage, who would not have confidence enough to impugn the punctuation of a manuscript.2

A modern edition therefore aims at being an improved version, and not merely a copy of the MS. The editors claim the merit of restoring the text; and unfortunately so little do they distrust their amendments, as seldom to give the reader that warning he has a right to look for. These claims we have examined; but there are others (and strangely inconsistent ones) sometimes brought forward, which should not pass, altogether, without obser-

1 The evening before I examined the MS. of Caedmon I marked down between twenty and thirty cases of doubtful prosody. In every one of these instances, but two, the text had been altered.

The motive for these changes was in general obvious enough; it was to bring two alliterative syllables into the first section—or to begin the second section with the chief-letter, as Hask terms it—or to support some of the other prosodial canons of that grammarian. To effect these objects, we have periods ending in the midst of a section, and pauses immediately between a preposition and its substantive!

2 As I believe the Caedmon MS. originally had no stops, I have in such extracts as are taken from it, seldom thought it worth while to notice them.
vation. One editor, who has entirely altered the accentuation of his manuscript—who has often changed the versification—who has compounded words and resolved words, "lays claim at least to one merit, that of exhibiting a faithful text." Another, who is no less free in the composition and resolution of words, and who marks in the same way an erasure of the MS., and (what he considers to be) a defect in the syntax or the prosody, tells us, he has printed his "text letter for letter as he found it." It seems difficult to reconcile these professions with the claims elsewhere made by these gentlemen, and hardly possible to reconcile them with their practice.

In the following extracts, we shall first state the law which defines the versification; and then carefully note every deviation from it. When the point occurs in the midst of a section, it will be inserted, so as to give the reader every means of forming an independent judgment. It will be seen, that the point often divides a compound section, in a way that strongly supports the hypothesis, elsewhere started, as to the origin of such section.¹

The sections will be ranged in couplets, notwithstanding the protest of Rush. It will be useless to follow this critic through his long, and (as it seems to me) very inconclusive reasoning upon this subject. Half a dozen sentences may embrace all the merits of the question. Our English verse was at first written like prose, the point sometimes separating the couplets, but generally the sections. About the end of the twelfth century, a new mode of writing came into fashion, and a line was given to each couplet. The Icelanders followed a different plan, and made each section a distinct verse; but I have very seldom seen regular alliterative metre, so written, in English. As far therefore as authority goes, an Icelander would naturally make a verse of each section, and an Englishman of each couplet. It is

¹ P. 139. A scrupulous adherence to the punctuation of the manuscript will also leave open another question, which cannot, I think, be looked upon as fully decided—the question, I mean, whether an alliterative section ever occurs singly.
however, as Conybeare remarked, a mere question of convenience. I prefer the couplet for Anglo-Saxon verse, because in such form it seems better calculated to illustrate the origin of our later rhythms.

In marking the accented syllables, I have met with great difficulty; and fear I have sometimes mistaken the rhythm of my author. It might perhaps be sufficient to say, it was a work of difficulty, and the first time it had been attempted; but it may also be said, that much of the difficulty arises from the liberties, which have been taken with the versification of our manuscripts. I have been very anxious to arrive at accuracy; for the scansion of an Anglo-Saxon verse is not a matter of mere curiosity. There can be little doubt that the modern accentedation of our language is mainly built upon that of its earliest dialect; and that we must investigate the latter, before we can arrive at any satisfactory arrangement of the former.

As to the English version, I fear it will often stand in need of the reader's indulgence. I cannot hope to escape much better than those who have attempted the task before me; and in every translation from the Anglo-Saxon, that has fallen under my notice, there are blunders enough to satisfy the most unfriendly critic. The Anglo-Saxon student has to work against the evils of a scanty vocabulary, an imperfect grammar, and idioms, that must

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1 I once wished to ascertain the accentedation of a particular class of compounds, and collected for that purpose seventeen sections, in which such compounds occurred. Of these, nine were indecisive; five gave one mode of accentuation, and three another. I satisfied myself, that in one of these sections a hyphen had been used improperly, but the other two continued puzzles, till I had an opportunity of seeing the MS., when I found the point had in both cases been misplaced by the Editor.

I felt half inclined to agree with the learned biographer of Ritson, and to denounce the corruption of a MS. as a crime little less than felony!

2 Much difficulty arises from the vast number of duplicates and triplicates among our Anglo-Saxon nouns. Very many of these have more than one termination and more than one gender and declension. Other nouns (both substantive and adjective) occasionally take an e in the nominative, and an a in one of the commonest inflexions, the perplexity, thence arising, is considerable. A collection of these puzzling synonyms would be of the greatest service to the student.
have taken root in the very infancy of our language. Price appears to have been the only scholar, who has fairly met these difficulties with a running commentary. I shall endeavour to follow his example, but as the discussion of some questions may be too lengthy for the compass of a note, I shall take this opportunity of discussing certain

**Anglo-Saxon Idioms.**

There are some words, compounded of an adjective and a substantive, in which the latter, though it remains unchanged, has the force of an inflected noun. It would seem, that this class of compounds place the negative prefix before the adjective. Thus *græs-grene* is green with grass, and *græs-ungrene*¹ not green with grass. The modern idiom, which most nearly resembles the present, is found in the comparison of certain compounds, wherein one adjective qualifies another, as *heavenly-bright, sweet-tempered*. These are compared by adding the *er* and the *est* to the *first* adjective.

Thrice blessed they, that master so their blood,
To undergo such maiden pilgrimage:
But earthier happy is the rose distill’d,
Than that, which, withering on the virgin thorn,
Grows, lives, and dies, in single blessedness.

*M. N. D. 1 1. 74.*

And many strokes, though with a little axe,
Hew down and fell the *hardest-timber’d oak*.

*3 II. VI. 2. 1. 54.*

Well, well, he was the *coverst shelter’d* traitor
That ever lived.  
*Rich. III. 3. 5. 33.*

Farewell then, *fairest cruel! all thoughts in me*
Of women perish.  
*Mussinger. Maid of Honour, 1. 2.*

¹ In the last edition of Caedmon, these are made two distinct words. It is clear, from the prosody, that they are compound; for the prefix loses its accent.


*Caed. fol. 7. Gen. 117.*
All those we saw were the ugliest-awkward holdens in nature.

Swinburne. *Trans. in Spain, Letter 44.*

Again, certain compound propositions may be divided,
so as to inclose the substantive they govern.


Burnon scealcan

*ymb ofn utan* burnt were the servants


This idiom wo long retained in the phrases, to God-ward, to him-ward, to Windsor-ward, &c. There was also an idiom very like it in the Latin.

It would seem too, that, when one substantive qualified another, the compound sometimes opened and admitted an adjective.

The Anglo-Saxon winter modor, mere wic, sumor dag, &c. answer to our modern phrases, winter weather, sea station, summer day, &c. In the following passages these compounds admit the adjective—at least it is only on this supposition, that I can render them into intelligible English.

*Byrnende fyr: and heoht sumor*

*Nergend heargath: niht somod and daeg* And theo landa gehwile: leoh and theostro

*Herige on hát: somod hát and eald* And theo frea nihtig: forstas and swawas

Winter bitgor weder: and wolcen-faru

Lotige on lyfte

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1 I quote from Mr. Thorpe’s text, but refer to the page of the manuscript, which is given in both the Editions.

2 Grimm links these two words together as a compound, winter-biter, bitter as winter. Mr. Thorpe follows his example, but reads the consequence,

And thee, mighty Lord! the frosts and snows
The winter’s bitter weather, and the heaven’s course,
Praise in the air.

He cannot keep both his compound and his translation. One or other must be given up.
Burning fire, and bright summer
Hery [praise] their preserver! night also and day;
And Thee each land, light and darkness.
Hery in their station! also heat and cold;
And Thee, mighty Lord, the frosts and the snows,
The bitter winter weather, and the welkin’s course
Praise in the lyft!


For them that is sio an rest : callea geswinea
Hyhtlicen hyth : heammen ecolum
Modes usses : mere smylta wece 1

For that it is the one rest of all labour,
The desired haven for the lofty barks,
Our soul’s mild roadstead.


Hwæt thu fæder weccest
Summer lange 2 dagæ : swithe hate
Thæm winter dagum : wundrum secota
Tida getiohbast

Lo! thou, Father, makest
Long summer-days intensely hot,
And to the winter-days wondrously short
Times last given!

Alfred. Met. 4. 18.

Æðelstan cyning : corla drihten
Beorna beag gifa : and his brother væc
Eadmund ætheling : caldoar langne 4 tir
Æðelægon æt sake

Mr. Fox renders the line thus,

Of our mind a great tranquil station,

but this would require mere instead of mere.

Mr. Fox (from whose edition I am quoting) makes these two words a compound, summer-langne, long as summer; but, like Mr. Thorpe, he evades the consequence,

Behold! thou, O Father, makest
Summer long days very hot.

Compare also the following:

theair ic sittan met summer lange dag.

Erle's Complaint | Klage der Frau, 37.

theah ic gesitte summer longne day.

Juliana, 495.

None of these mad vastaria-purpure-æted multworms.

1 Hen. IV. 2. 1. 83.

At the winter-long night.

Lay le Freine, 140.

2 Lyte renders the passage, langne tir geslogen, &c., thus—diuturnam victoriam reportâram in praelio. Mr. Thorpe has greatly improved upon Lyte.
Æthelstan king, of ears the Lord,
Of thorns the heigh-giver, and his brother eke
Edmund the etheling, elders a long train
Slew in battle.  

_Brunanburgh War-Song, 1._

There is another idiom, or, to speak more accurately, a rule of syntax, which has hitherto been most strangely overlooked. A substantive singular, when taken in a collective sense, may always be joined to a verb plural. Almost every page of Anglo-Saxon poetry will furnish us with examples.

_Maegh sithedon_
Fæman and wudun : freondum beslegene
From bleow-stole : heltenl bædun
U't mid æhtum : abrahames meg

The maidens departed.
Damsels and widows, shorn of their friends;
From his place of refuge, the spoiler led
Out with his goods, Abraham's kinsman.

_Cod. fol. 94. Gen. 2011._

Thær after him : folca thrythum
Suan simeones : sweotum comon

There after them, in peopled bands,
The sons of Simeon came in crowds.

_Cod. fol. 160. Esod. 340._

_Him on laste setl_
Wuldor spedum welig : wide stidan
Gifum growende : on godes rice
Beorht and gebldfist : buendra leas

On their hinder path,
Rich with glories, their seats stood widely

by making _caldor langle_ a compound—"gained life-long glory in the battle;" vide _sceal_ in Glossary. But objections may be taken even to this version. In the first place, I am not satisfied, that _tir_ (glory) is masculine. In the second place, the meaning given to the word _sceal_ may be doubted. _Sceal_, to strike, to slay, has two sets of derivative meanings; to fix (as it were by striking), to establish—as _gefeal sceal_, to fix a tent, _corleod sceal_, to establish an earldom; and to gain (as it were by striking), in which sense we might even now use the primitive verb, as _sige sceal_, to strike a victory, _hute sceal_, to strike a prey. But I think we should be putting this analogy too far, if we talked of _striking a glory_; at least, I would not so translate, without a clearer authority than the passage before us. Lastly, the promise of merely life-long glory, for such a victory, would be much too meagre flattery.
HISTORY OF ENGLISH RHYTHMS. B. III.

(With riches flourishing within God's realm, Bright and precious)—void of habitants.  

Cæd. fol. 5. Gen. 80.

Handum brugdon
Heleth of scarthum : ring-mailed sword

With their hands the heroes
Drew from the sheaths the ring-coloured sword.  


Eiddon thu sterced-falth the heleth
Went the stern-hearted heroes.  

Judith, 55.

Wigend crumcon : wündum wērige

The warriors quailed, with wounds dispirited.

Death of Byrthnoth, 301, 302.

An adjective, connected with the noun, may be put in the singular number, as in the third example; or in the plural, as in the last.²

It is curious to observe how this idiom has been rendered in our translations. Sometimes, when the meaning was obvious, it has been rightly construed, and the "false concord" passed over in silence. In other cases, it has led to very bad translation, and more than once to very unsound criticism. It has been held³ for instance, that the masculine nouns of the second declension sometimes reject their plural ending as; so that hettend, wigend, and heleth may stand for hettendas, wigendas, and helethas. But this hypothesis is much too narrow for its object. In the examples above quoted, mægth is feminine, and has mægthas in the plural; sellas is neuter, and has sellas; and suna, though masculine, forms its plural in a, suna.

There is yet another rule, which is no less important than the last, and appears to have been equally overlooked. The passive participle may be considered as, declinable, or not, at the pleasure of the writer.

¹ [Grimm puts coder and heleth in different lines. W. W. S.]
² So in Livy: "Tarquinium moribundum quum qui circa erant excepissent, illos fugientes lictores comprehendunt. Clamor inde concursusque populi minu- tionem quad rei esset."—Book i. ch. 41.
³ See Glossary to the Analecta, under the heads Gar, and Heleth; and Cædmon, ed. Thorpe, p. 278, note b. And see Grimm, Dict. Gramm. t. 647.