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ELIZABETHAN LYRICS



Catherine Ing



ELIZABETHAN LYRICS

A study in the development of English metres and their relation to poetic effect

1951
CHATTO & WINDUS
LONDON

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Ye know not what hurt ye do to learning, that care not for wordes but for matter, and so make a deuorse betwixt the tong and the hart. For marke all aiges: looke vpon the whole course of both the Greeke and Latin tonge, and ye shall surelie finde that, whan apte and good wordes began to be neglected, and properties of those two tonges to be confounded, than also began ill deedes to spring. . . .

ROGER ASCHAM: The Scholemaster

IN
MEMORY OF
MY FATHER AND
MOTHER

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Chapter 1

THE ELIZABETHAN TEMPER IN POETRY AND CRITICISM

THE lyrics of the Elizabethan age[1] have an interest rare in the history of literature. They are, at their best, extremely beautiful; and they were written at a time when literary criticism was as eagerly pursued as literary creation. Many of them were written by poets who were also critics; some of them (not always the worst) were in fact composed under the influence of theories about literature, even as illustrations of specific lessons in the theories. So far from being the spontaneous and untutored cries of 'a nest of singing-birds', they were the products of highly conscious artists, often working to rule, always well aware of the effect they wished to produce, and deliberately choosing certain means towards their chosen ends. It may well be, then, that study of this poetry will throw light on the processes of poetic creation when they are realized in the consciousness of the creator; and,

[1] To an historian 'the Elizabethan age' must mean the years of Queen Elizabeth's reign, from 1558 to 1603; but for the purposes of this dissertation I take it to mean the period 1557–1633 The first is the date of the first publication of the *Miscellany of Songes and Sonnettes*, compiled by Richard Tottel and Nicholas Grimald, which, under its familiar title of *Tottel's Miscellany*, is commonly regarded as inaugurating the characteristically 'Elizabethan' period of poetry. The second is the date of the first publication of John Donne's *Poems*, by J. D., many of which were certainly written before the death of Elizabeth, though most of them were printed for the first time in the 1633 Quarto, two years after the poet's death. The choice of this second date allows me to discuss both poetry probably written, though not published, during Elizabeth's reign, and poetry written mainly under 'Elizabethan' influences, though not in her reign. My choice of such poetry has necessarily been to some extent arbitrary, but I hope that the reasons for the choice will become clear. I have not allowed myself to roam at large in the poetry written between 1603 and 1633.

further, that such study will be made both easier and truer by serious and modest inquiry into the intentions of the Elizabethan literary theorists.

Respect for Elizabethan criticism has grown since the work of nineteenth-century scholars, and particularly since Gregory Smith made his collection of Elizabethan essays.[1] Yet it still seems natural in many ways to speak of Dryden as 'the father of English criticism'; and what is natural may be accepted as right if we take the phrase to mean 'the father of a specially English kind of criticism' and not 'the father of criticism in England'. It is probably because English criticism has shown itself particularly strong and successful in a kind largely initiated by Dryden in this country that the critics who preceded him are still difficult for us to follow closely and seriously in all their arguments. What nearly all these writers omit to give us is precisely that part and kind of literary criticism which has most flourished here—the description, interpretation and analysis of actual works of literature, and the attempt of critical readers to convey to other readers the particular 'flavour' of individual authors, the sense of 'what it feels like' to read them.[2] Yet our liking for this kind of criticism should not blind us to the possible importance of what the Elizabethan critics give us in its

[1] *Elizabethan Critical Essays*, edited by Gregory Smith. Oxford, 1904.

[2] It is, I believe, less because of his 'modern' (and delightful) style that Dryden may with propriety be called 'the father of English criticism' than because his criticism constantly and closely concerns itself with individual authors and particular works. It is characteristic of him to open, for instance, one of his most memorable passages: 'To begin, then, with Shakespeare. He was the man who of all modern, and perhaps ancient, poets had the largest and most comprehensive soul'; and to go on with descriptive references to Shakespeare's artistic strengths and weaknesses, but above all his strengths. It is equally characteristic of him, after describing Ben Jonson as a writer, to go on: 'Having thus spoken of the author, I proceed to the examination of his comedy, *The Silent Woman*.' Dryden never writes of artistic principles without giving close illustrative references to works in which the principles are put into practice, and he writes freely and happily of particular authors. English readers tend to remember best and love most such passages as his great paragraphs on the nature of Chaucer's work and his own pleasure in it, and thereby show their own preferences in criticism and their reason for feeling that criticism has not really begun in England until it produces this kind of writing.

place, for they give it of choice. It is not only the accident that in simple fact they had less English literature to write about than their successors that makes them omit analysis and discussion of particular authors and works, for they show themselves not unacquainted with Chaucer and poets of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries; they prefer to write of something else. Their 'something else' seems constantly to go to two extremes: to the discussion of the general nature of poetry and its place in the world on the one hand, and to the eager investigation of minute details of prosody on the other.

This tendency to fly to extremes is far from meaning that the critics were remote and ineffectual dons spinning their theories in an empty space removed from the actual practice of poetry. Many true poets, some of a very high order, were among the critics. Lodge, Spenser, Sidney, Nash, Chapman, Campion and Daniel, all published (or allowed to be published) prose discussions of critical questions[1]; Jonson brings critical questions into his plays,[2] and talks[3] and writes notes about them[4]; and Shakespeare's plays contain famous passages about the poet[5] and the actor.[6] It is always at least prudent to take seriously what a poet says about poetry. Further, these poet-critics were for some time writing in an atmosphere of fierce warfare, for their impulse to write about their art came to many of them from the attacks made on the stage

[1] Thomas Lodge: *A Defence of Poetry*. 1579.
Edmund Spenser: Correspondence with Gabriel Harvey. Printed 1580.
Thomas Nash: *The Anatomie of Absurditie*. 1589. *Preface* to Greene's *Menaphon*. 1589. *Strange Newes*. 1592.
George Chapman: Prefaces to *Seaven Bookes of the Iliades of Homere* and to *Achilles Shield*. 1598.
Thomas Campion: *Obseruations in the Art of English Poesie*. 1602.
Samuel Daniel: *A Defence of Ryme*. 1603.

[2] *Every Man in his Humor*, V, 1. Printed 1601.
Every Man out of his Humor, Induction I, 1. Printed 1620.
The Poetaster, I, II; V, 1; V, III. Printed 1620.

[3] William Drummond: Conversations with Ben Jonson in 1619. 1842 (incomplete in the Collected Works, 1711).

[4] Ben Jonson: *Timber or Discoveries*. 1640 (dated 1641).

[5] *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, V, i.

[6] *Hamlet*, III, II.

in particular and poetry in general by such writers as Stephen Gosson, who identified lasciviousness with the stage and lying with poetry, and therefore attacked all poets and 'such like Catterpillers of a Commonwealth'. The effect of such a background may be seen in the emotionally persuasive eloquence of some parts of the criticism; but its principal effect, slightly unexpected and very impressive, is to make the critics go straight to a central statement of the essential goodness and glory of poetry. Even Lodge, writing a direct defence against Gosson's attack, refuses to answer point for point the accusations of immorality in behaviour and falsehood in writing of poets and dramatists, for he and the other apologists see that such attacks are only on the abuses and superficialities of their subject. They therefore look as closely as they may into the nature of that subject, and, in so doing, reveal with almost startling clarity an unselfconscious and wholehearted rapture of faith in its divineness. From Ascham onwards, all the critics of this period use the words 'divine' and 'noble' of poetry, and all would clearly concur with Puttenham in the statement with which he opens his treatise *Of Poets and Poesie*: 'A poet is as much to say as a maker. . . . Such as (by way of resemblance and reverently) we may say of God.' The splendid conclusion to this tale of reverence for poetry is written by the sober Bacon: 'It appeareth that poesy serveth and conferreth to magnanimity, morality, and to delectation. And therefore it was ever thought to have some participation of divineness, because it doth raise and erect the mind, by submitting the shows of things to the desires of the mind; whereas reason doth buckle and bow the mind unto the nature of things.'[1] There has never been an age when poets and critics were more convinced of the splendour and importance of poetry. This conviction remained constant among all their anger with their enemies and their frequent disagreements among themselves.

The only conviction equally consistent among them was that details of style in writing were matters of serious interest. They were true to the two poles of the most general and the most par-

[1] *The Advancement of Learning*. 1605.

ticular extremes of their subject: poetry is divine, and the poet must take care over the arrangement of syllables. Many of those writers who are most eloquently impassioned in singing the divinity of poetry are the very same who go into details of verse craft. Calling all men to revere this art, they call upon its practitioners to take heed to its craft. Sidney confesses that 'the very true cause of our [the poets'] wanting estimation is want of desert'; 'they that delight in Poesie it selfe should seeke to know what they doe, and how they doe,' for 'as the firtilest ground must be manured, so must the highest flying wit have a *Dedalus* to guide him'. It is knowledge of style that most critics cast for the rôle of Dedalus; and Ascham, Gascoigne, Spenser, Harvey, Stanyhurst, Sidney, King James VI of Scotland, Webbe, Fraunce, Puttenham, Harington, Nash, Campion, Daniel and Jonson all recommend assiduous study and exercise in style. Clearly, they see no shame in the divinely inspired poet's being a workman, any more than the writer of the story of Noah in *Genesis* saw any incongruity in God's giving to Noah exact measurements for length, breadth and height of the ark, with instructions to use gopher wood and pitch. 'Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he'; and it probably seemed to the Elizabethan critic that the truth of a poet's inspiration must show itself in his delight and care in labour. It would be well for us to take seriously all the preoccupations of critics who take poetry seriously, if we ourselves care for it; if we are disappointed when we look for illuminating comment on actual poetry at this period, we may find compensation in learning to understand the enthusiasms of those who made the poetry and perhaps to understand better the poetry itself. These writers clearly found questions of versification important, and they wrote with passion.

It seems, then, that a principal belief of these Elizabethans who cared most deeply for poetry was that a proper and important part of its creation and its enjoyment was a care for its metrical structure. If, therefore, we are to seek in Elizabethan poetry for what the poets put into it and contemporary critics found there, we too must have a care for its metrical structure. The sonnet,

blank verse, the *Faerie Queene* stanza, even the heroic couplet, were so developed in this period as to provide practical proof of the concern of poets with prosody, and in addition to these famous forms, there is at this time a really astonishing number of unique lyric forms. In Tottel's *Miscellany*, there are seventeen metrical forms not used before Tottel's publication. In the anthologies and song-books which followed Tottel's, I have counted several hundred forms for lyric poetry which have not, to my knowledge, been used before or after their use for one poem of this age. The very uniqueness of these forms has obscured their importance. Blank verse, the satiric couplet, the sonnet, even the *Faerie Queene* stanza, have continued into later periods as useful modes of expression, and have received recognition of their significance in careful study. The forms of Elizabethan lyric, each serving one immediate purpose, have proved less malleable to criticism when it seeks to show any permanent value in metrical structures. If these forms were used for bad poetry, there would be little profit in studying them, but they were not so used. It is true that there are hundreds of bad poems among Elizabethan lyrics; after studying the miscellanies, song-books and plays of the period, I have come to the conclusion that the best of its lyric poetry is fairly represented in such standard anthologies as Bullen's *Lyrics from Elizabethan Song-books* (1887), *More Lyrics from Elizabethan Song-books* (1888), *Lyrics from Elizabethan Dramatists* (1889) and *Lyrics from Elizabethan Romances* (1890), Palgrave's *Golden Treasury of Songs and Lyrics*, the *Oxford Book of Sixteenth-century Verse* and Ault's *Elizabethan Lyrics*. The lyrics not reprinted in these volumes, or in editions of the collected works of the best-known poets of the period, could not supply enough good poems for even a small new anthology. These collections, however, contain hundreds of unique poetic forms, and these are the poems which have won for the Elizabethan poets the hackneyed description of 'a nest of singing birds'. The greatest Elizabethan poets added to the number of lyrics: Shakespeare was a fine lyrist as well as a great dramatist. Certainly, if we are to be guided by the interests of these poets themselves, we must, I think, not only

take note of metrical studies in general, but also regard lyric metres as important.

'Lyric' is a term that needs definition, or at least description. There appear to be two main ways of interpreting it, one etymological and particular, the other associative and general; and the characteristics ascribed to the lyric when it is seen from one viewpoint are often oddly contradictory of those ascribed to it when it is seen from the other point. The first begins from the ancient definition of lyric as 'a song for singing', the second from certain features of 'lyrical' poetry when it is composed by fine poets of a particular kind, particularly among the Romantics. The first, naturally, regards the formal qualities of the poem so named as paramount in importance, for its possibilities of pleasing utterance by the singing or speaking voice make all the difference to whether or not it may be truly called 'lyric' in this sense at all. It is usually short. Because it is intended for audible utterance, it retains something of a 'public' quality: however deep and genuine the emotions expressed in it may be, they are of such a kind, or treated in such a way, as to make it seem proper that they should be communicated to anyone who may hear the singing. That is, the subject of the poem, whether emotion or situation giving rise to emotion, must be freed from those elements which might connect it so intimately with an individual human personality that his privacy might seem to be invaded by the overhearing of his utterance. Therefore, the emotion or situation will probably be in some degree generalized, as this is the most obvious way of protecting individual privacy. For the same reason, and also because hearing a statement, especially in a form which expects musical qualities to be heard at the same time, gives less leisure for pondering its meaning than reading it, the diction and imagery will probably tend to be either simple and obvious, or familiarized by frequent use, or both. Lyric of this kind, therefore, is not usually original in any of the more obvious senses, and it is impersonal. It does not matter to us that its author is often Anon. I do not know that anyone has every tried to find out who wrote 'Western wind, when wilt thou blow?', or even wondered who

wrote it, except in the very vaguest way; whereas I suspect that even if we did not know who wrote the *Ode to the West Wind*, we should tend to feel that the question of its authorship was a matter of some importance, that it would probably end by being ascribed to Shelley 'on internal evidence', or at least that readers would indulge in conjecture on 'the kind of man' who wrote this and would build up a mental picture of a personality.

For the second kind of lyric, so far from being an impersonal song, is a poem in which the reader expects to find a revelation of strong personal emotion, usually of an intimate kind. It can well have a 'reader', for it is not usually intended for singing, and in fact few attempts have been made to provide musical settings for lyrics of this type, which is the type most frequently written by poets from the early nineteenth century to the present day, but very rarely written before the seventeenth century. Its use of speech sounds is often highly musical in itself, though its form must not appear to be anything but a harmless necessary servant of its feeling. It is often longer than the song lyric, for it has for matter subtleties and intimacies of emotion requiring careful and often prolonged expression. It seeks to distinguish its own 'occasion' from others of similar type, rather than to relate it to a whole class of emotional occasions, and therefore may use unfamiliar diction and unusual imagery, such as the 'pestilence-stricken multitude' of leaves or the submarine vegetation in Shelley's *West Wind*. Much of the pleasure (not always very sensitively enjoyed) in reading lyric of this kind often arises from a sense that we are sharing in a private and probably unusual experience with a particular person. The emotion of such poems is made sharper and deeper by its immediate association with a personality; the emotion of lyrics of the first type (which can be highly emotional) is made sharper and deeper by its association with other experiences of similar emotion, which by very repetition carry a weight of remembered human significance, and there is no more of individual personality suggested than is enough to make us believe that the emotion was really experienced. We are moved by the

second type of lyric as we are by seeing a human being in a moment of strong feeling; we are moved by the first type as we are moved by the remote impersonal beauty of a boy's voice, with its suggestion of mysterious origin, or as Wordsworth was moved to ask of the cuckoo, 'Shall I call thee bird, or but a wandering voice?' Lyric of the first type is a voice from the invisible, lyric of the second type the speech of a personality.

It is impossible to draw a clear line, on one side or the other of which every lyric must take its firm place. There are many poems, notably some by Keats and Wordsworth, which remain on the border-line. When passages of poems largely non-lyrical are said to have a 'lyrical' quality, it is not always easy to judge which sense of the word is being used, and often either is valid. The two kinds have, in fact, much in common, and naturally, for, in spite of all their evident contradictions, the second grows directly and inevitably out of the first. The musical brevity of song lyric cannot deal with narrative or with details of a situation, but it can convey emotion. Therefore emotion seems to be its most important element. Therefore poets, finding lyric a suitable vehicle for emotional expression, develop and expand the emotional content until it becomes subtle, complex and often private and personal and, on the whole, unsuitable for singing. Remembering the musical associations of the form, they develop the musical qualities of the language they use until it is rich and profoundly satisfying in itself, and often, as a result of this, again on the whole unsuitable for singing. There are organizations of speech sounds so rich that the addition of music strictly so-called simply makes it impossible to hear either words or melody clearly. Some poets develop emotional content more than speech music, some speech music more than emotional content. Some lyrics unsuitable for singing because of their verbal music are as impersonal as songs, some highly personal poems may be readily and beautifully sung. In the Elizabethan age (stretched to the limits I have chosen), both kinds of lyric were written, but I think it is true to say that the first type precedes the second, both in time and in relative quantity. It is interesting to compare Wyatt, a poet from the beginning

of the period,[1] with Donne, a poet from the end. The two have much in common. The poetry of each is often concerned with twists and troubles of a man-woman relationship uncommon in other Elizabethan poetry, it makes no use of most of the conventional imagery for love and beauty, it has little colour and leaves a prevailing impression of black and white and grey, of lines and shadows; it is often sombre in emotional tone. Both poets wrote some of their poems for music. Yet if we set some stanzas by Wyatt—

Vengeance shall fall on thy disdain,
That makest but game on earnest pain:
  Think not alone under the sun
Unquit to cause thy lover's plain,
  Although my lute and I have done.

Perchance thee lie withered and old
The winter nights that are so cold,
  Plaining in vain unto the moon:
Thy wishes then dare not be told:
  Care then who list, for I have done

And then may chance thee to repent
The time that thou hast lost and spent
  To cause thy lover's sigh and swoon:
Then shalt thou know beauty but lent,
  And wish and want as I have done.[2]

beside a poem by Donne—

When by thy scorn, O murd'ress, I am dead,
And that thou think'st thee free
From all solicitation from me,
Then shall my ghost come to thy bed,
And thee, feign'd vestal, in worse arms shall see:

[1] Wyatt was dead before Elizabeth came to the throne, but much of his work was first printed in Tottel's *Miscellany* of 1557, with which we have chosen to open the period.

[2] I have given both passages in modern spelling here, in order to remove superficial appearances of diversity of style.

Then thy sick taper will begin to wink,
And he, whose thou art then, being tired before,
Will, if thou stir, or pinch to wake him, think
Thou call'st for more,
And, in false sleep, will from thee shrink:
And then, poor aspen wretch, neglected thou
Bathed in a cold quicksilver sweat wilt lie
A verier ghost than I.
What I will say, I will not tell thee now,
Lest that preserve thee; and since my love is spent,
I'd rather thou shouldst painfully repent,
Than by my threatenings rest still innocent,

interesting differences show themselves through the marked similarities. In each passage the poet, his love for the lady dead ('I have done', 'my love is spent'), foretells, rather bodingly than threateningly, that the lady must herself come unpitied to that abstention from passion she has forced on a former lover; the foreseen night of both poems is cold as that of any of those 'in shady cloister mewed. . . . Chanting faint hymns to the cold fruitless moon'[1]; the fruitless moon is mentioned by Wyatt, at least suggested by Donne's 'quicksilver'; each poet refers cruelly to the wishes that 'dare not be told'. Yet there is a real difference in effect between the two poems. Wyatt, by becoming 'thy lover' in the third person, has somehow escaped our scrutiny: Donne, by his insistence through rime and stress on the personal pronouns, has invited it. Wyatt links his situation to the old truth 'then shalt thou know beauty but lent', and so covers its individuality under its class; Donne begins in narrative fashion, suggesting a particular occasion, and ends in hints of secret purpose. Wyatt's poem, then, belongs essentially to the first type of lyric, Donne's, on the whole, to the second type. We should be startled, apart from all considerations of the stanza form, to find any signs of the possibility of such a close to Donne's poem as comes naturally to Wyatt's:

[1] *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, I, 1.

Now cease, my lute! this is the last
Labour that thou and I shall wast,
And ended is that we begun:
Now is this song both sung and past—
My lute, be still, for I have done.

Much of the difference felt by most critics between Donne and his immediate predecessors and contemporaries lies less in his supposed overthrowing of their kind of imagery and mood of love than in his interpreting the function of lyric poetry differently. There are few poems before his which are built on exactly his interpretation, but there are, of course, many which differ from the pure 'first type' of lyric in many ways. Yet the majority of Elizabethan lyrics are of the first type or closely connected with it, and while we must consider both types, we shall find it essential and rewarding to consider the first at length, as all the lyrics to be discussed will be found to come in direct descent from it. Sonnets will not be considered except by the way. In England, they never had any immediate connection with lyric in its earliest sense, and it is questionable whether they may be with precision called 'lyrics' at all. Certainly, the sonnet is a whole subject in itself.

The preponderance of song over other lyric at this time gives the period a particular significance for the student of poetic technique. The characteristics suggested for the song lyric make it unlikely that Elizabethan lyrics will give much reward to the seeker after deep and original thought, subtle psychology, strange imagery, or social or philosophical implications in literature. In fact, these lyrics are notorious for their repetitive subject-matter (usually faithful—often despised—love, with celebrations of ladies' beauty), their well-worn imagery and their light intellectual weight. Many of them were, after all, versions of translations of translations; many were written to adorn a scene or cover an awkward pause on the stage; many were simply created to provide syllables to sing. The fact of their existence might be studied as having social or psychological significance, but the poems themselves will usually yield up no such significance. This

is in itself a major reason for studying them, once their beauty is allowed. They are a supreme test of whether readers appreciate art as art. There is here no possibility of our being confused into thinking a poem is a great work of art just because we find its material excitingly new or happen to approve of its doctrine. When the material is old and the doctrine slight and obvious if existent, our enjoyment is dependent on our appreciation of that in the poem which is truly the result of the poet's art. That part of his art which orders the subject and finds images is here not striking. Indeed, it becomes clear that one of the few ways in which this poetry can be studied is through its versification, and this is the only way in which the poems can be distinguished among themselves. As verse is the only formal distinction between poetry and prose, so different uses of verse are the only distinction between many of these poems, which must be divided formally if at all. Their other attributes merely distinguish them as a class from other classes of poetry; their versification gives them existence as individuals within their class. There is, I think, no other way of seeing the difference between the anonymous :

Weep you no more, sad fountains;
What need you flow so fast?
Look how the snowy mountains
Heaven's sun doth gently waste.
But my sun's heavenly eyes
View not your weeping,
That now lies sleeping
Softly, now softly lies
Sleeping.

Sleep is a reconciling,
A rest that peace begets.
Doth not the sun rise smiling
When fair at even he sets?
Rest you then, rest, sad eyes,
Melt not in weeping,
While she lies sleeping
Softly, now softly lies
Sleeping.

and Ben Jonson's—

> Slow, slow, fresh fount, keep time with my salt tears;
> Yet slower, yet; O faintly gentle springs:
> List to the heavy part the music bears,
> Woe weeps out her division when she sings.
> Droop herbs and flowers;
> Fall grief in showers;
> Our beauties are not ours;
> O, I could still,
> Like melting snow upon some craggy hill,
> Drop, drop, drop, drop,
> Since nature's pride is, now, a withered daffodil.

Not only the situation, but also the imagery, are almost identical.[1] Yet these are two separate, beautiful and sensibly individual songs, their individualities established by their particular verse-forms. The ability to respond to their differing appeals shows capacity for appreciating their art, and such capacity developed is invaluable in learning to distinguish between the artistic and other elements in works quite properly using appeals other than the purely artistic, and finally helps in understanding the whole better, for the better an imaginative artist's method is appreciated, the more fully is his 'message' received. It may fairly be said that learning to appreciate Elizabethan lyric is a training for understanding literature properly so called.

There remains a danger that the art of these lyrics is not truly literary at all, and that when we have learnt to appreciate them we shall have learnt something of music but little of poetry. The verse of these poems is so subtle, varied, complex and apparently difficult, and so many of them were written either for music already existing or in collaboration with composers, that it has been natural to suppose that only the rhythms of the musical accompaniment could explain the metres of the words, and that

[1] There are several poems of the period, particularly in Dowland's books, using several parts of the same imagery. These two are not only, in my judgment, the best of the group as poetry, but also those which contain the most complete complex of common imagery.

without the music it was foolish to attempt to make metrical sense of the poetry. If this were true, it would certainly mean that the problem was not truly literary, and its solution could be of little assistance to further study of English poetic technique. If it were true, however, it would be difficult to explain, not only the delight in the song lyrics experienced by generations of readers who have not heard the music, but the very survival of those songs whose music has been lost. This alone suggests that the supposition is less than the truth, and we shall probably see that it is not true at all. There is no doubt that the close association of Elizabethan poetry with music was generally beneficial to the free and rapid development of experimental rhythmical forms, but there is equally no doubt, after study, that the music is not specifically explanatory of all the phenomena of metre in the song poems. The questions about their metres remain fundamentally the same as the questions about the metres of the poems not written for music, and must, in the end, be answered in the same terms. It will be found, therefore, that while there is profit in studying the musical connections of this poetry, this is but a means to an end, and the end is literary.

There were, after all, other influences at work on the poets, and not the least of these is the classical. Perhaps it did not result in quite the effects expected by the classicizing theorists, but it certainly had some effect, and it is dangerous to dismiss the views of the Latin-loving critics as lightly as is customary. Further study will show their value. There was also the influence of Italian and French literature on English poets. It is true that both Italian and French poetry had been, or were being, influenced by music themselves, but in its turn that music sometimes showed the influence on it of the classical languages. As medieval musical rhythms had at some periods been dictated by Latin metres,[1] so Baïf, in sixteenth-century France, was to use music as a servant of quantitative measures. The strongest force of all in the development of the formal qualities of English verse at this time was probably the increasing pride and delight in a sense of language,

[1] See the *Oxford History of Music*, vol. I.

and above all the vernacular, as the proper body of the spirit of thought or imagination. 'Ye know not', said Ascham, 'what hurt ye do to learning, that care not for wordes but for matter, and so make a deuorse betwixt the tong and the hart. For marke all aiges: looke vpon the whole course of both the Greeke and Latin tonge, and ye shall surelie finde that, when apte and good wordes began to be neglected, and properties of those two tonges to be confounded, than also began ill deedes to spring.' [1] This, closely connected with a strong strand in the moral and political philosophizing of the age, will be found as an element in nearly all the thinking about poetry which we are to examine. Further, the ideas about language will be seen to be connected with more general thinking about the arts, and to be influenced by theories of 'proportion' and 'harmony' which are applied to general considerations of the body-politic and details of speech alike. So far from music's being the onlie begetter of verse rhythms among Elizabethan poets, it is itself a child of a parent habit of thought and behaviour which had as other offspring the Courtier, the Gentleman or Noble Person, lyric poetry, and criticism of the body and soul of poetry. Study of the theory and practice of lyric poetry will show the proper importance of music and also the other elements in the experience of the poets.

[1] The fitting footnote to this is Bacon's statement in *The Advancement of Learning*: 'Here, therefore, the first distemper of learning, when men studie words and not matter. . . . It seemes to me that *Pigmalions* frenzie is a good embleme or portraiture of this vanitie; for wordes are but the Images of matter, and except they haue life of reason and inuention, to fall in loue with them is all one as to fall in loue with a Picture.' Bacon is not contradicting Ascham, but the wheel has come full circle, and the beginning and end of a period of thought are marked by the difference of emphasis in statements about words and matter.

Chapter 2

RENAISSANCE THEORIES OF METRE

SOME of the many Elizabethan critics who write about metre have nothing of interest to say on any part of the subject, and it is profitless to spend time analysing their work here. A few are interesting on general questions of metre, but have no evident concern with lyric writing; their work is worth considering with reasonable care, since lyric metres naturally have something in common with all other forms of metre. One or two writers discuss freshly and sensitively the peculiar problems of lyric structures, and these are still capable of telling careful readers much that they have not known or at least not fully considered and understood, about these problems.

Whether, or how far, what these writers say is original in them is not here our concern. There is probably some truth in the frequent suggestion that foreign critical opinions influenced English writers, on this subject as on others, in the sixteenth century; but it is the English books that best represent the climate of opinion in which English poetry of the day was born and bred, and at least in giving vernacular examples of verse-forms, the English writers were forced into some independence. Moreover, it is not always safe to ascribe any one remark in an English essay to a specific source in an earlier English or continental work, however close the parallel may appear to be, for there is always danger in under-estimating the amount of common ideas there may be 'in the air' of any period, particularly of a period that we know to be one of enthusiastic discussion among friends and acquaintances about literary questions.[1] It is very probable that

[1] Note the evidence for such discussions in the references in the Spenser-Harvey Correspondence of 1579–80 to conversations between Spenser and 'the twoo worthy Gentlemen, Master SIDNEY and Master DYER', and the communication of verses to 'your verie entire friendes, Maister PRESTON, Maister

apparent borrowings from earlier books by Elizabethan critics may be, in fact, simply echoes from the talks they have had with friends, in which ideas from books jostled ideas new-born until all together was a stimulating and fertile crowd in the minds of all the talkers. The opinions of each critic discussed will therefore be regarded as his own, whether he made them, bought them or stole them, though it may be as well to glance at the ideas and subjects most canvassed in those foreign works which appear to have made an impression on English criticism. It may be taken for granted that these ideas were likely to be present, from direct or indirect communication, in the back of the mind of any English writer.

The ideas in foreign works which seem relevant to English discussions of metre may be found stated in concentrated and memorable form by four writers, though they are scattered in various forms through many other works. No more books need be consulted on this subject than Dante's *De Vulgari Eloquentia*, Pico della Mirandola's *Liber de Imaginatione*, du Bellay's *Deffence et illustration de la langue françoyse*, and Ronsard's *Abrégé de l'art poétique* and *Préface*.

Dante's book is, in time of composition if not of publication,[1]

STILL, and the reste'. These are the most famous of such conversations, but the tradition had probably come unbroken from 'the pleasant talke' which Ascham 'had oft with *M. Cheke* and *M. Watson* of this fault [imperfect versifying] not onely in the olde Latin Poets, but also in our new English Rymers at this day'. It certainly went on, probably in such gatherings as those at Sir Thomas Monson's house referred to by Campion in his Preface to the Third and Fourth Bookes of Aires, until Drummond and Jonson had the talks in 1619 of which Drummond made notes. Certainly, one receives a very strong impression of an age of talk about literary subjects in general and questions of verse in particular, and the popular imagination clings to the belief in fine talk at the *Mermaid*. It is interesting that Kipling used for *The Craftsman*, in which he imagines Shakespeare talking after wine to Jonson about the genesis of his characters and situations, a form of English Sapphics, as though the suitable vehicle for this subject must be a form always, in English, difficult and experimental.

[1] It was first published in 1529, in an Italian translation by Trissino, whose travels as a papal ambassador, combined with his own interest in new verse-forms, may have done much to foster that interest in Dante's treatise which led to the publication of its Latin form at Paris in 1577.

the earliest *locus* for the discussion of several opinions important in sixteenth-century criticism. Dante is conscious of being an innovator in discussing the vulgar tongue, and he defines it as 'that to which children are accustomed by those who are about them when they first begin to distinguish sounds'; it is also, he says, nobler than the learned Latin tongue 'as being natural to us'. Two points stand out here: first, that Dante thinks of language as sound, a skill to be acquired by ear and not by eye; and, second, that natural speech, which 'the whole world makes use of', is nobler than the artificial kind. The discussion which follows is all of poetry and not of prose. In Chapter III of the second book he says that poets have employed the vulgar tongue for *Canzoni*, *Ballate* and Sonnets, and chooses *Canzoni* as the most important of these. The inferiority of the sonnet he assumes, and *Ballate*, he says, are inferior in requiring 'the assistance of the performers for whom they were written'—that is, the dancers who sang them. Nevertheless, he does not appear to regard *Canzoni* as purely verbal forms, for he says that 'a *Canzone* appears to be nothing else but the completed action of one writing words to be set to music',[1] so that, though he says that the tune for the words is not, while the verbal form for the tune is, a *Canzone*, he clearly regards the poet as necessarily expecting music for his words. Several chapters are then filled with detailed analysis of structures of line suitable for stanzas, and arrangements of stanzas fit for the *Canzone*. He discusses lyric only, with a full regard for musical accompaniment. To sum up, Dante's treatise shows the scholar who loved Virgil and wrote in Latin claiming serious attention for the vernacular and listening to the sounds of natural speech, the poet of thousands of lines of *terza rima* devoting special attention to lyric forms, the man whose subject was the Divine Comedy giving scrupulous care to questions of rimes and line-lengths.

Pico della Mirandola's strange book [2] is relevant to our subject

[1] Saintsbury questions this interpretation of the passage, but that is the simplest meaning, and probable in the context.

[2] IOANNIS FRANCISCI PI/CILIBER DE IMAGI-/NATIONE· Venetus apud Aldum Romanum men/se Aprili. M·DI·

in one point only, though its opening chapter is of rare interest in its discussion of the imagination. The imagination, he says, which can no more help working in man than God's goodness could help communicating itself and so creating the world, works, whether receiving or giving, through the five senses; and of these, sight is by far the most important, for it depends on light, the Prime Work of God. Therefore, he seems to imply, the visual may be regarded as a kind of archetype of all sense experience. The importance of this in English prosody, from which it may seem far removed, will become apparent later.

La Deffence et l'illustration de la Langue Frarçoyse (1549) of Joachim du Bellay is famous as the manifesto of the Pléiade, whose activities certainly had effect on poets' beliefs in England, though the channels of communication remain obscure. Du Bellay is interesting to us, in that he claims, simultaneously, that the classical languages are and should be models of perfection and richness in metrical expression, and that the vernacular should find appropriate means of ensuring satisfying metrical structure in its own verse which shall be equivalent to, rather than copied from, the structure given in Greek and Latin by the use of syllabic quantity. For example, he has no disapproval of rime, though he starts a tiresome hare by pointing out that the sixteenth-century French 'rime' or 'ryme' was descended from the Greek ῥυθμός, and trying for a time to ignore the word's semantic history and use it for both 'rhythm' and 'rime'. Both rhythm and rime, and all other devices of versification, are required to satisfy the 'jugement de l'oreille', and not of the eye.

In his *Abrégé de l'art poétique françois* (1565), Ronsard too asks for a truly vernacular rhythm in verse, and is so anxious to ensure that it shall satisfy the ear's judgment that he advises poets to recite their own verses aloud 'ou plutost les chanter'. He seems, in fact, to seek for a musical rhythm in the arrangement of words, and his respect for the aural qualities of poetry is further demonstrated by his long discussion of grammar and orthography, since it shows that he longs for a means of writing that might accurately and subtly represent speech sounds. Nevertheless, his description in

the *Préface* to *Les Odes* of 1587, of what he imagined Sappho's utterance of her poetry to have been,[1] indicates that for Ronsard the words of poetry are one element only in a very complex artistic effect.

The English writings on metre in this age have all been reprinted in *Elizabethan Critical Essays*, edited by Gregory Smith, and *Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century*, edited by J. E. Spingarn, and reference may conveniently be made to these collections.[2] Of these writings, we may ignore those by Ascham, Spenser, Stanyhurst and Webbe, since none of these does more than follow the guidance either of foreign prosodies or of what earlier English writers have already said. Of the rest, Harvey, Sidney, Fraunce, Harington, Daniel and Jonson have little of continuing interest to say, but may be considered briefly before we consider the more illuminating prosodists; but Gascoigne, King James VI of Scotland, Puttenham and Campion either state or suggest many ideas about metre that are either as valid or as provocative today as they ever were, and their works, properly considered, may show us how far our ancestors went in understanding the relationship between metrical means and poetic ends, and how little we have learned, save in terminology and techniques of more complete investigation, since their day.

Harvey's remarks about English metre have become reasonably well known because they occur in the published correspondence between himself and his famous friend Spenser.[3] It has been

[1] 'Les vers Sapphiques ne sont, ny ne furent, ny ne seront jamais agreables, s'ils ne sont chantez de vive voix, ou pour le moins accordez aux instruments, qui sont la vie, et l'ame de la Poesie. Car Sapphon chantant ses vers ou accomodez à son Cystre, ou à quelque Rebec, estant toute rabuffée, à cheveux mal-agencez et negligez, avec un contour d'yeux languissants et putaciers, leur donnoit plus de grace, que toutes les trompettes, fifres et tabourins n'en donnoient aux vers masles et hardis d'Alcée, son citoyen, et contemporain, faisant la guerre aux Tyrans.'

[2] Original printings, or scholarly editions, of the separate works are well worth consulting, but it will be found that the prosodic material is identical in most editions.

[3] Three Proper / and wittie familiar Letters: / lately passed betweene two U- / niversitie men: touching the Earth- / quake in Aprill last, and our / Eng-

customary to regard Harvey as an uncivil pedant who showed nothing but his impudence when, in letters, he reproved Spenser for the idea of *The Faerie Queene* and for mistakes in prosody; but it does not seem to me uncivil in a busy and learned Fellow of Trinity Hall to include such criticism, which had been invited, in long, affectionate, joking letters to a younger man. His jokes were laborious, but his attitude to poets and their methods is indicated by his quoting '*Pauca multis condonanda vitia virtutibus*', and, in fact, in the discussion on the fashionable craze for bringing Latin measures into English verse, Harvey shows more common sense than Spenser, who on several occasions seems to long to force English words willy-nilly into foreign clothes. Harvey's chief desire, in 'our new famous enterprise for the Exchanging of Barbarous and Balductum Rymes with Artificial Verses', is for what he emphatically capitalizes as 'ONE AND THE SAME ORTOGRAPHIE', which he thinks should be 'in all pointes conformable and proportionate to our COMMON NATURAL PROSODYE'. By 'prosodye' Harvey clearly means 'pronunciation', and it is noticeable that ear matters to him more than eye in language; he finds it literally preposterous that spelling should be allowed to influence pronunciation, and gives examples to show that 'corrupte ORTHOGRAPHY in the moste hathe beene the sole, or principall, cause of corrupte PROSODYE in over many'. He longs for a spelling system that will provide a poet with a kind of precision instrument for indicating how his lines are to be spoken, but the instrument must be constructed in conformity with natural English speech-habits, so that verse may seem both precise and unstrained. He speaks with delighted confidence and hope of the possibilities this would open up: 'WE BEGINNERS have the start and advantage of our Followers, who are to frame and conforme both their Examples and Precepts according to that President which they have of us.'

lish refourmed Versifying. / / With a Preface of a well willer to them both. London, 1580.

Two other / very commendable Letters / of the same mens writing: / both touching the foresaid / Artificiall Versifying, and cer / tain other Particulars / / More lately delivered unto the / Printer. London, 1580.

In laughing at Spenser's attempts 'to make your *Carpēnter*, our *Carpĕnter*, an inche longer or bigger than God and his Englishe people have made him', he unfortunately nowhere makes it clear whether he would allow stress in English always to take the place of length in Greek and Latin, but it seems likely that he hoped that careful study might find a usable quantitative system in natural English. 'I grant, after long advise and diligent observation of particulars, a certain Uniform Analogie and Concordance being in processe of time espyed out, sometime this, sometime that, hath been noted by good wits in their ANALYSES to fall out generally alyke, and, as a man woulde saye, regularly, in all or most wordes'; but 'It is the vulgare and naturall Mother PROSODYE that alone worketh the feate'. Harvey never wrote a verse that demonstrated a delicate ear in himself, but he had the rare imagination to recognize that other men might have such delicate hearing. Knowing that English syllables were too refractory to be forced by rules of spelling or any other theory into strict classical lines, he nevertheless dreamed of English lines as surely constructed as those in classical poetry. While he respected the 'accent' (that is, speech-stress) in English words so deeply as to allow no wrenching of it, he still believed that quantity of some kind must have meaning in verse, and that some quantitative correspondences might be observed in English speech.

Sidney's statement, in the *Apologie for Poetrie*, that verse is 'but an ornament and no cause to Poetry', prepares us for brevity in dealing with verse, but the few remarks on the subject are revealing. The poet 'commeth to you with words set in delightfull proportion, either accompanied with, or prepared for, the well-inchaunting skill of Musicke'; and verse has 'iust prayse', 'beeing the onely fit speech for Musick (Musick I say, the most divine striker of the sences)'. Sidney evidently loved lyric: 'Other sorts of Poetry almost have we none? but that Lyricall kind of Songs and Sonnets: which, Lord, if he gave us so good mindes, how well it might be imployed, and with howe heavenly fruite, both private and publique, in singing the prayses of the immortall beauty, the immortall goodnes of that God who gyveth us hands

to write and wits to conceive.' He distinguishes between ancient and modern versifying, pointing out that the former 'marked the quantities of each silable, and according to that framed his verse', while the latter observes 'onely number (with some regarde of the accent)'. He continues with two paragraphs showing that he could distinguish clearly between quantity and accent, can respect both, and hear music in both the sensitive deliberation of 'the well-weyed silable' and the sweetness of rime. Sidney's clear simplicity, and his belief that metre is servant and not master of that delight of art which rises from a recognition of measured relationships between the parts of the material, ennobles the subject.

Abraham Fraunce's *Arcadian Rhetorike* [1] gives us no argument, but does provide an astonishing range of examples of different kinds of verse in many languages, and we ought to remember his references to visual figures in verse: 'Theocritus hath expressed the forme of an egge and an alter in verse; so hath Willy represented the figure of a swoard, and an old Abbot the image of the crosse, in verie laboured and intangled verses.' Sir John Harington's *Brief Apology for Poetry* notes the mnemonic power of verse. Daniel's *Defence of Ryme* showed perception and modesty in arguing the value of rime. 'All verse is but a frame of words confined within certaine measures, differing from the ordinarie speach, and introduced, the better to expresse mens conceipts, both for delight and memorie.' Rime is natural and 'indenized' in English, and is 'number and harmonie of words, consisting of an agreeing sound in the last sillables of severall verses, giving both to the Eare an Echo of a delightful report, and to the Memorie a deeper impression of what is delivered therein'. Jonson's remarks have, unfortunately, to be pursued through several contradictions in his conversations of 1619 with Drummond of Hawthornden: 'That verses stood by sense without either colours or accent;

[1] This is best consulted in the edition by Miss M. E. Seaton, Luttrell Society Reprints, No. 9. This edition has made use of the material in the complete copy discovered by Professor F. P. Wilson in the library of St. John's College, Cambridge, whereas the Bodleian copy, until recently the only one known, lacks Sheet B.

which yett other tymes he denied' is but one of the confusions to be found in the famous Conversations. Yet he seems to have had some sense of 'organic form', of an inevitably 'right' form of verse for a subject, when 'he cursed Petrarch for redacting verses to Sonnets, which he said were like that Tirrant's bed, wher some who where too short were racked, others too long cut short'. In *Timber, or Discoveries* (? 1620), he shows feeling for the relation between matter and manner: '*Knowledge* is the action of the *Soule*, and is perfect without the *senses*, as having the seeds of all *Science* and *Vertue* in its selfe, but not without the service of the *senses*; by those Organs the *Soule workes*.' '*Language* most shewes a man: speake, that I may see thee. It springs out of the most retired and inmost parts of us, and is the Image of the Parent of it, the mind. No glasse renders a mans forme or likenesse so true as his speech. Nay, it is likened to a man; and as we consider feature and composition in a man, so words in Language, in the greatnesse, aptnesse, sound, structure, and harmony of it.'

These few writers have little to say on metre, but they show at least that there was some general sense of the need for listening to speech, of the fact that quantity in verse could be important even where syllabic quantity is uncertain, of the 'musical' essence of lyric writing, of the possibility that verbal form may express matter and mood, of the sheer pleasure of 'measured language' in itself, and of the necessity of 'rightness' of form for purpose. The writers now to be considered dig deeper into their subject, and often come near to reaching its foundations.

The first of these, George Gascoigne, is not apparently a very deep thinker. His *Notes of Instruction* are pleasantly casual and lighthearted in tone, and he is content to accept common English usage in pronunciation as his guide to verse structure. He is concerned mainly with those forms of verse which repeat the structure of a single line or pair of lines, and has no interest in free forms: 'I say, then, remember to holde the same measure wherwith you begin, whether it be in a verse of sixe syllables, eight, ten, twelve, etc.; and though this precept might seeme ridiculous vnto you, since euery yong scholler can conceiue that

he ought to continue in the same measure wherwith he beginneth, yet do I see and read many mens Poems now adayes, whiche beginning with the measure of xij. in the first line, and xiiij. in the second (which is the common kinde of verse), they wil yet (by that time they haue passed ouer a few verses) fal into xiiij. and fourtene, *et sic de similibus*, the which is either forgetfulnes or carelesnes',[1] though he has brief references to stanza forms such as those of the Ballade or the Sonnet (of which he appears to know only the English form with final couplet), dixains, sixains, virelays and quatrains. He is anxious to preserve the genius of English in verse: 'And in your verses remembre to place euery worde in his natural *Emphasis* or sound, that is to say, in such wise, and with such length or shortnesse, eleuation or depression of sillables, as it is commonly pronounced or vsed.'[2] Unfortunately, he does not appear to have thought very carefully what he means by 'natural *Emphasis*': 'To expresse the same we haue three maner of accents, *grauis, leuis, et circumflexa*, the whiche I would english thus, the long accent, the short accent, and that whiche is indifferent: the graue accent is marked by this caracte ` , the light accent is noted thus ´ , and the circumflexe or indifferent is thus signified ~ : the graue accent is drawen out or eleuate, and maketh that sillable long whervpon it is placed; the light accent is depressed or snatched vp, and maketh that sillable short vpon the which it lighteth; the circumflexe accent is indifferent, sometimes short, sometimes long, sometimes depressed and sometimes eleuate. For example of th'emphasis or natural sound of words, this word *Treasure* hath the graue accent vpon the first sillable; whereas if it shoulde be written in this sort *Treasúre*, nowe were the second sillable long, and that were cleane contrarie to the common vse wherwith it is pronounced.'[3] Now, accent is one thing and length is another, and to speak of long and short accents is, strictly speaking, meaningless. What Gascoigne means, to judge from his example, is that the grave accent indicates loud stress, and he has confused two different ways of giving importance to a syllable, length and loudness. (He is not consistent in his use of accent signs

[1] Smith, vol. I, p. 49. [2] Op. cit., p. 49. [3] Ibid., pp. 49–50.

in examples.) Yet, though his definitions may be confused, he is observant, and casually strikes out an important statement: 'Also our father *Chaucer* hath vsed the same libertie in feete and measures that the Latinists do vse: and who so euer do peruse and well consider his workes, he shall finde that although his lines are not alwayes of one selfe same number of Syllables, yet, beyng redde by one that hath vnderstanding, the longest verse, and that which hath most Syllables in it, will fall (to the eare) correspondent vnto that whiche hath fewest sillables in it: and like wise that whiche hath in it fewest syllables shalbe founde yet to consist of woordes that haue suche naturall sounde, as may seeme equall in length to a verse which hath many moe sillables of lighter accentes.'[1] Now this seems to show Gascoigne on the brink of understanding something which was to be very important in lyric measures—the fact that proportion in time may still obtain in verse where there is no strict proportion between the lengths of syllables taken singly, without their setting. He has not made the point quite clear, even to himself, for he says later: 'There are also certayne pauses or restes in a verse, whiche may be called *Ceasures,* whereof I woulde be lothe to stande long, since it is at discretion of the wryter, and they haue bene first deuised (as should seeme) by the Musicians: but yet thus much I will aduenture to wryte, that in mine opinion in a verse of eight sillables the pause will stand best in the middest; in a verse of tenne it will best be placed at the ende of the first foure sillables; in a verse of twelue, in the midst; in verses of twelue in the firste and fouretene in the seconde wee place the pause commonly in the midst of the first, and at the ende of the first eight sillables in the second.'[2] Pauses and rests are not the same thing in music, and cæsura, strictly speaking, corresponds more closely to pause than to rest—that is, it is a prolongation of, or silence after, a certain sound, which is not reckoned in measuring the duration of the whole line or phrase of which it forms a part. I suspect that the 'pause' in the midst of the twelve-syllable line of his pair of twelve and fourteen is really a rest, whereas the pause

[1] Op. cit., p. 50. [2] Ibid., p. 54.

after the eighth syllable of the fourteener is indeed a pause; the first has value in the reckoning, enabling the reader to make six syllables seem equivalent in length to eight. Certainly, in unmixed fourteeners, the tendency for the break after the eighth syllable to be a mere pause while the break after the fourteenth has become a real rest has resulted in hymn measure, where six-syllabled lines are given, with the rest, as long a passage of music as the eight-syllabled lines. For all the confusion, these passages show some perspicacity in Gascoigne.

Further, Gascoigne does not do violence to the nature of English, though he does not study it very deeply. He accepts the fact of a high proportion of monosyllables in English, and never dreams of evading it: 'The more monasyllables that you vse the truer Englishman you shall seeme, and the lesse you shall smell of the Inkehorne'[1] (a sentence of twenty-one words in which Gascoigne proves his Englishness by using seventeen monosyllables). His justification for such true Englishry in verse is that 'woordes of one syllable will more easily fall to be shorte or long as occasion requireth, or wilbe adapted to become circumflexe or of an indifferent sound'.[2] Here, he has an inkling both of the extreme flexibility of English syllable-lengths and of the value of such flexibility in verse.

He remains true English in his acceptance of rime, which he regards as important, for he devotes his seventh paragraph to practical hints on how to find rimes. This does not prevent him from referring with some scorn to 'English rimes (for I dare not cal them English verses)', but his reason for such scorn is different from Ascham's. 'And surely I can lament that wee are fallen into suche a playne and simple manner of wryting, that there is none other foote vsed but one; wherby our Poemes may iustly be called Rithmes, and cannot by any right challenge the name of a Verse'[3]; the foot is 'of two sillables, wherof the first

[1] Op. cit., p. 51.

[2] Ibid., p. 51.

[3] P. 50. It should be noted that the spelling 'rithme' is for Gascoigne simply an alternative to 'rime' or 'ryme': it does not mean 'rhythm'.

is depressed or made short, and the second is eleuate or made long'. That is, Gascoigne has no feeling that rime in itself means bad verses; he simply deplores the lack of interest in structure within the line in contemporary English poetry. He sees no reason why the pleasure of rime should not co-exist with the pleasure of intricate structure. That he has a strong sense of true metrical structure is shown when he gives 'suche rules or precepts that euen in this playne foote of two syllables you wreste no woorde from his natural and vsuall sounde. I do not meane hereby that you may vse none other wordes but of twoo sillables, for therein you may vse discretion according to occasion of matter, but my meaning is, that all the wordes in your verse be so placed as the first sillable may sound short or be depressed, the second long or eleuate, the third shorte, the fourth long, the fifth shorte, etc.'.[1] He knows quite well that metrical divisions must be independent of word divisions if they are to have any structural significance in verse. He knows, too, as his last paragraph shows, that different verse forms are proper to different emotions. Altogether, Gascoigne's conversational ease covers a livelier intelligence on metrical questions than some more solemn discourses.

Ane schort Treatise, by King James VI of Scotland, contains material applicable to English verse, although his examples are Scots, and the very difference of his terms from those of English critics sharpens the eye for the exact meaning of terms. His guiding principle appears admirable: 'For gif Nature be nocht the cheif worker in this airt, Reulis wilbe bot a band to Nature, and will mak yow within short space weary of the haill airt: quhair as, gif Nature be cheif, and bent to it, reulis will be ane help and staff to Nature.'[2] This does not prevent him from giving very detailed rules, and using marks for scansion: 'I haue markit the lang fute with this mark ¯, and abone the heid of the shorte fute I haue put this mark ˘.' It appears from this that by 'fute' King James means what his contemporaries in England called 'syllable', and this is confirmed by an example.

[1] Op. cit., pp. 50–1. [2] Smith, vol. I, p. 210.

'Sen Patience I man haue perforce,
I liue in hope with patience.

Ye se there are bot aucht fete in ather of baith thir lynis abone written. The cause quhairof is that *patience* in the first lyne, in respect it is in the beginning thairof, is bot of twa fete, and in the last lyne of thrie, in respect it is the hinmest word of that lyne.'[1] He does, however, use also 'syllable': 'That ye ryme nocht twyse in ane syllable.' At one point it seems as though there might be in his mind a distinction between the terms: 'Ye aucht alwayis to note that, as in thir foirsaidis or the lyke wordis, it rymes in the hinmest lang syllabe in the lyne, althoucht there be vther short syllabis behind it, sa is the hinmest lang syllabe the hinmest fute, suppose there be vther short syllabis behind it, quhilkis are eatin vp in the pronounceing and na wayis comptit as fete.'[2] This might suggest that King James regards one long syllable as the only essential part of a foot, and that therefore a long syllable may be called a long foot because short syllables are unimportant, and this would be an interesting idea; but there is nowhere else any hint that this is his meaning, and he refers too often to short feet when he clearly means short syllables for us to believe that he had this subtlety in mind. There is one more possible difficulty over the use of the word 'fute'; it is conceivable that King James may mean by a 'fute', not a syllable in actual pronunciation, but the length of time allowed for it in the line, whether the speaking fills up this time or not. 'Remember also to mak a *Sectioun* in the middes of euery lyne, quhether the lyne be lang or short. Be *Sectioun* I mean, that gif your lyne be of fourtene fete, your aucht fute man not only be langer then the seuint, or vther short fete, but also langer nor any vther lang fete in the same lyne, except the secound and the hinmest. . . .

'Ye aucht likewise be war with oft composing your haill lynis of monosyllabis onely (albeit our language haue sa many as we can nocht weill eschewe it), because the maist pairt of thame are indifferent, and may be in short or lang place, as ye like. Some wordis of dyuers syllabis are likewayis indifferent, as

[1] Op. cit., p. 212. [2] Ibid., p. 216.

Thairfore, restore.
I thairfore, then.

'In the first *thairfore*, (*thair*) is short and (*fore*) is lang; in the vther, (*thair*) is lang and (*fore*) is short; and yit baith flowis alike weill. Bot thir indifferent wordis, composit of dyuers syllabes, are rare, suppose in monosyllabes commoun. The cause then quhy ane haill lyne aucht nocht to be composit of monosyllabes only is that, they being for the maist pairt indifferent, nather the secound, hinmest, nor *Sectioun* will be langer nor the other lang fete in the same lyne. Thairfore ye man place a word composit of dyuers syllabes, and not indifferent, ather in the secound, hinmest, or *Sectioun*, or in all thrie.'[1] This must mean, either that King James thinks of some long syllables as being actually longer than other long syllables, or that he expects a pause after long syllables in certain positions in the line. Either interpretation is interesting. The first would mean, not only that James certainly uses 'fute' to mean 'syllable', but also that he had a good idea of the variety of syllabic length in Scots (and English); the second would mean, not only that with him 'fute' is not quite synonymous with 'syllable', but also that he was sensible of the part that silences can play in verse rhythms. The passage is therefore important both as evidence for judging what King James meant by his use of words and as clear indication that he was among the writers most sensitive to flexibility of speech and rhythm. I think it likely that he was not himself certain about, or even conscious of, the choice between meanings here; he does sometimes definitely use 'fute' for 'syllable' ('put in na wordis . . . for filling furth the nomber of the fete'), but he says also 'quhen your lyne is of fourtene, that your *Sectioun* in aucht be a lang monosyllabe, or ellis the hinmest syllabe of a word alwais being lang, as I said before. The cause quhy it man be ane of thir twa is for the Musique, because that quhen your lyne is ather of xiiij or xij fete it wilbe drawin sa lang in the singing, as ye man rest in the middes of it, quhilk is the *Sectioun*: sa as, gif your *Sectioun* be nocht ather a monosyllabe, or ellis the hinmest syllabe of a word, as I said before, bot the first

[1] Op. cit., p. 215.

syllabe of a polysyllabe, the Musique sall make yow sa to rest in the middes of that word, as it sall cut the ane half of the word fra the vther'.[1]

The passage is still further interesting, in that it is one of the places where he shows a very strong sense of the prime importance of the end and beginning of the line and, in long lines, of the middle. 'Ye aucht alwayis to note that, as in thir foirsaidis or the lyke wordis, it rymes in the hinmest lang syllabe in the lyne, althoucht there be vther short syllabis behind it, sa is the hinmest lang syllabe the hinmest fute, suppose there be vther short syllabis behind it, quhilkis are eatin vp in the pronounceing and na wayis comptit as fete.

'Ye man be war likewayis (except necessitie compell yow) with *Ryming in Termis*, quhilk is to say, that your first or hinmest word in the lyne exceid not twa or thre syllabis at the maist, vsing thrie als seindill as ye can. The cause quhairfore ye sall not place a lang word first in the lyne is that all lang words hes ane syllabe in them sa verie lang, as the lenth thairof eatis vp in the pronouncing euin the vther syllabes quhilks ar placit lang in the same word, and thairfore spillis the flowing of that lyne. As for exemple in this word, *Arabia*, the second syllable (*ra*) is sa lang that it eatis vp in the prononcing (*a*), quhilk is the hinmest syllabe of the same word. Quhilk (*a*) althocht it be in a lang place, yit it kythis not sa, because of the great lenth of the preceding syllabe (*ra*). As to the cause quhy ye sall not put a lang word hinmest in the lyne, it is because that the lenth of the second syllabe (*ra*), eating vp the lenth of the vther lang syllabe (*a*), makis it to serue bot as a tayle vnto it, together with the short syllabe preceding.'[2]

These positions are indeed important. As King James says, the first indicates the 'flowing' (or rhythm) of the line, while the last must be treated carefully, because it is the indicator of line divisions, without which no sense of the relation between significant sections of the metre can be felt. The middle of long lines may sometimes turn out to be indistinguishable from the division between short lines, and the insistence on cæsura here went

[1] Op. cit., p. 214. [2] Ibid., pp. 212–13.

far to turn the fourteener into hymn measure. James himself already hints at this possibility: 'Bot specially tak heid, quhen your lyne is of fourtene, that your *Sectioun* in aucht be a lang monosyllabe, or ellis the hinmest syllabe of a word alwais being lang, as I said before. The cause quhy it man be ane of thir twa is for the Musique, because that quhen your lyne is ather of xiiij or xij fete it wilbe drawin sa lang in the singing, as ye man rest in the middes of it, quhilk is the *Sectioun*: sa as, gif your Section be nocht ather a monosyllabe, or ellis the hinmest syllabe of a word, as I said before, bot the first syllabe of a polysyllabe, the Musique sall make yow sa to rest in the middes of that word, as it sall cut the ane half of the word fra the vther, and sa sall mak it seme twa different wordis, that is bot ane. This aucht onely to be obseruit in thir foirsaid lang lynis: for the shortnes of all shorter lynis then thir before mentionat is the cause that the Musique makis na rest in the middes of thame, and thair fore thir obseruationis serius nocht for thame.' [1] His reference to music here makes it clear that he expects the proportions of verse to be established in terms of time. He also shows, as clearly as casually, that he understands that metre must be a structure independent of word divisions, although it must be indicated by pronunciation and a servant to meaning. In fact, he is a prosodist with some real understanding, and it is to be regretted that he gives serious attention only to the rising dissyllable among feet, and refers only cursorily to 'kyndes of brokin or cuttit verse, quhilks ar inuentit daylie be Poetis'. One wishes, too, that he had expanded his observations on alliteration. 'Let all your verse be *Literall*, sa far as may be, quhatsumeuer kynde they be of, bot speciallie *Tumbling* verse for flyting. Be *Literall* I meane that the maist pairt of your lyne sall rynne vpon a letter, as this tumbling lyne rynnis vpon F.

Fetching fude for to feid it fast furth of the Farie.' [2]

This figure, jeered at as 'hunting the letter' by most sixteenth-century prosodists, is evidently taken seriously by James, and it may be that he had an inkling of the use of speech sounds to

[1] Op. cit., p. 214. [2] Ibid., p. 218.

indicate structure within an English line as certainly as quantities could do in Greek and Latin. Certainly, he is observant, thoughtful and not unsubtle as a prosodist.

Puttenham's *Arte of English Poesie* is one of the most interesting of all the Elizabethan critical works, not so much for its detailed instructions, as for its hints of the attitude of mind to the art of poetry which explains many otherwise obscure phenomena. The first book, *Of Poets and Poesy*, is a discussion of the honour and value of poetry. The second, *Of Proportion*, opens with a very important statement: 'It is said by such as professe the Mathematicall sciences, that all things stand by proportion, and that without it nothing could stand to be good or beautiful. The Doctors of our Theologie to the same effect, but in other termes, say that God made the world by number, measure and weight; some for weight say tune, and peraduenture better. For weight is a kind of measure or of much conueniencie with it; and therefore in their descriptions be alwayes coupled together *statica et metrica*, weight and measures. Hereupon it seemeth the Philosopher gathers a triple proportion, to wit, the Arithmeticall, the Geometricall, and the Musicall. And by one of these three is euery other proportion guided of the things that haue conueniencie by relation, as the visible by light colour and shadow; the audible by stirres, times, and accents; the odorable by smelles of sundry temperaments; the tastible by sauours to the rate; the tangible by his obiectes in this or that regard. Of all which we leaue to speake, returning to our poeticall proportion, which holdeth of the Musical, because, as we sayd before, Poesie is a skill to speake & write harmonically: and verses or rime be a kind of Musicall vtterance, by reason of a certaine congruitie in sounds pleasing the eare.' [1]

Two points stand out here: first, Puttenham naturally relates his thinking on art to his convictions in philosophy and religion; second, as a necessary result of his first position, he relates his thinking on poetry to his convictions about other arts, each related to the sense which it peculiarly satisfies. It seems to him axiomatic that, as 'all things stand by proportion' in God's

[1] Smith, vol. II, p. 67.

created universe, 'conueniencie by relation' must be the underlying secret of the satisfactions of art, whatever form it takes. At this point, he appears to regard verse as essentially a part of music, and his first discussions of it bear this out. In the two chapters 'Of Proportion in Staffe' and 'Of Proportion in Measure', he refers to poetry in musical terms,[1] and defines measure in terms of duration in time. 'Meeter and measure is all one, for what the Greekes called μέτρον, the Latines call *Mensura*, and is but the quantitie of a verse, either long or short. This quantitie with them consisteth in the number of their feete: & with vs in the number of sillables, which are comprehended in euery verse, not regarding his feete, otherwise then that we allow, in scanning our verse, two sillables to make one short portion (suppose it a foote) in euery verse. And after that sort ye may say we haue feete in our vulgare rymes, but that is improperly; for a foote by his sence naturall is a member of office and function, and serueth to three purposes, that is to say, to go, to runne, & to stand still; so as he must be sometimes swift, sometimes slow, sometime vnegally marching or peraduenture steddy. And if our feete Poeticall want these qualities it can not be sayd a foote in sence translatiue as here. And this commeth to passe, by reason of the euident motion and stirre which is perceiued in the sounding of our wordes not alwayes egall, for some aske longer, some shorter time to be vttered in, & so, by the Philosophers definition, stirre is the true measure of time.'[2] His sense of 'motion and stirre' is a true sign of the extent to which he experienced the passing of time in verse, and he shows it again when he says: 'This was a pretie phantasticall obseruation of them, and yet brought their meetres to haue a maruelous good grace, which was in Greeke called ῥυθμός; whence we haue deriued this word ryme, but improperly & not wel, because we haue no such feete or times or stirres in our meeters, by whose *simpathie*, or pleasant conueniencie with th'eare, we could take any delight:

[1] 'The shortest staffe contemeth not vnder foure verses, nor the longest aboue ten; if it passe that number it is rather a whole *ditty* then properly a staffe.' (Italics mine.) Op. cit., p. 68.

[2] Op. cit., p. 70.

this *rithmus* of theirs is not therfore our rime, but a certaine musicall numerositie in vtterance, and not a bare number as that of the Arithmeticall computation is, which therfore is not called *rithmus* but *arithmus*.'[1]

This is the first attempt to give some description of the satisfactions of rhythm, the first sign of recognizing that dissatisfaction with 'bare number' (of syllables) rises out of its insufficiency in itself to create 'musicall numerositie' (or rhythm). He shows further understanding that number of syllables is not the only guide to rhythmical effect on the ear:

> 'The smoakie sighes, the bitter teares,
> That I in vaine haue wasted,
> The broken sleepes, the woe and feares,
> That long in me haue lasted,
> Will be my death, all by thy guilt,
> And not by my deseruing,
> Since so inconstantly thou wilt
> Not loue, but still be sweruing.

And all the reason why these meeters in all sillable are alowable is, for that the sharpe accent falles vpon the *penultima* or last saue one sillable of the verse, which doth so drowne the last, as he seemeth to passe away in maner vnpronounced, & so make the verse seeme euen: but if the accent fall vpon the last and leaue two flat to finish the verse, it will not seeme so; for the odnes will more notoriously appeare, as for example in the last verse before recited, *Not loue, but still be sweruing*, say thus, *Loue it is a maruelous thing*. Both verses be of egall quantitie, vidz. seauen sillables a peece, and yet the first seemes shorter than the later, who shewes a more odnesse than the former by reason of his sharpe accent which is vpon the last sillable, and makes him more audible then if he had slid away with a flat accent, as the word *swéruing*.'[2] 'There is also a musicall or audible number, fashioned by stirring of tunes & their sundry times in the vtterance of our wordes, as when the voice goeth high or low, or sharpe or flat, or swift or slow: & this

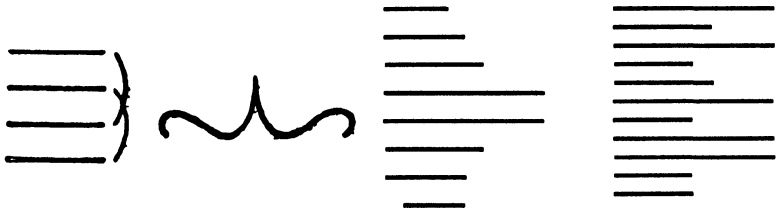
[1] Op. cit., p. 72. [2] Ibid., pp. 74–5.

is called *rithmos* or numerositie, that is to say, a certaine flowing vtteraunce by slipper words and sillables, such as the toung easily vtters, and the eare with pleasure receiueth, and which flowing of words with much volubilitie smoothly proceeding from the mouth is in some sort *harmonicall* and breedeth to th'eare a great compassion.' [1] His sense of hearing is acute, and so is his respect for care in 'making'. 'There is no greater difference betwixt a ciuill and brutish vtteraunce than cleare distinction of voices; and the most laudable languages are alwaies most plaine and distinct, and the barbarous most confuse and indistinct: it is therefore requisit that leasure be taken in pronuntiation, such as may make our wordes plaine & most audible and agreable to the eare.' [2] Therefore he can understand the pleasure of rime as well as rhythm. 'For wanting the currantnesse of the Greeke and Latine feete, in stead thereof we make in th'ends of our verses a certaine tunable sound: which anon after with another verse reasonably distant we accord together in the last fall or cadence, the eare taking pleasure to heare the like tune reported and to feel his returne.' [3] Feeling the pleasure of rime, he senses also its relation to emotional effects: 'And the accented sillable with all the rest vnder him make the cadence, and no sillable aboue, as in these words, *Agíllitie*, *facíllitie*, *subiéction*, *diréction*, and these bissilables, *Ténder*, *slénder*, *trústie*, *lústie*; but alwayes the cadence which falleth vpon the last sillable of a verse is sweetest and most commendable; that vpon the *penultima* more light, and not so pleasant; but falling vpon the *antepenultima* is most vnpleasant of all, because they make your meeter too light and triuiall, and are fitter for the Epigrammatist or Comicall Poet then for the Lyrick and Elegiack, which are accompted the sweeter Musickes.' [4]

A further reason why rime is important to Puttenham is that, like King James, he knows how essential it is, especially in lyric measures, to mark the end of the line. In Chapter XI, 'Of Proportion by Situation', he writes: 'This proportion consisteth in placing of euery verse in a staffe or ditty by such reasonable dis-

[1] Op. cit., pp. 80–1.
[2] Ibid., p. 77.
[3] Ibid., p. 80.
[4] Ibid., pp. 83–4.

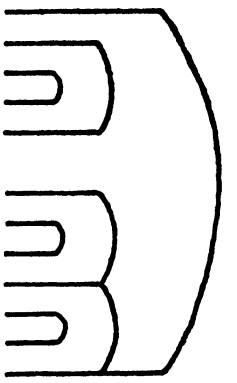
tuances as may best serue the eare for delight, and also toe shew the Poets art and variety of Musick. And the proportion is double: one by marshalling the meetres, and limiting their distaunces, hauing regard to the rime or concorde how they go and returne; another by placing euery verse, hauing a regard to his measure and quantitie onely, and not to his concorde, as to set one short meetre to three long, or foure short and two long, or a short measure and a long, or of diuers lengthes with relation one to another, which maner of *Situation*, euen without respect of the rime, doth alter the nature of the Poesie, and make it either lighter or grauer, or more merry, or mournfull, and many wayes passionate to the eare and hart of the hearer, seeming for this point that our maker by his measures and concordes of sundry proportions doth counterfait the harmonicall tunes of the vocall and instrumentall Musickes.' [1] Here we have something remarkable among these critics, a simultaneous appreciation of time as the dimension in which verse is measured, and of the qualities of speech sounds (here shown by rime) as the means by which the measuring is marked. It may appear that he is uncertain of the idea of time when he says 'this may be an ocular example:



Yet I do not think Puttenham himself is uncertain in his sense of measure in time. First, he is probably aware that many people are quicker to respond to visual than to aural teaching. 'I set you downe an occular example, because ye may the better conceiue it.' [2] Second, the belief that the different senses respond to similar relationships in the different materials which affect them is deep in him. 'Likewise it so falleth out most times your occular proportion doeth declare the nature of the audible; for if it so please

[1] Op. cit., p. 88. [2] Ibid., p. 89.

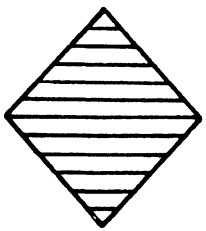
the eare well, the same represented by delineation to the view pleaseth the eye well, and *e conuerso*; and this is by a naturall *simpathie* betweene the eare and the eye, and betweene tunes & colours, even as there is the like betweene the other sences and their obiects, of which it apperteineth not here to speake.'[1] For both these reasons, he continues to set down ocular examples, many of them of lyric measures. '*Petrarch* hath giuen vs examples hereof in his *Canzoni*, and we by lines of sundry lengths and distances.'

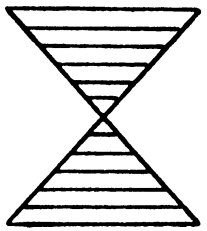


All these examples, though 'ocular,' are certainly attempts to make clear relationships in time and rime, to show visually the proportion of like answering to like as it is perceived by the ear: 'And all that can be obiected against this wide distance is to say that the eare by loosing his concord is not satisfied. So is in deede the rude and popular eare, but not the learned; and therefore the Poet must know to whose eare he maketh his rime, and accommodate himselfe thereto, and not giue such musicke to the rude and barbarous, as he would to the learned and delicate eare.'[2] The curved lines drawn to show the connections of time by rime are Puttenham's means of indicating to readers, whose hearing may be less acute than his own, how strong and sure a 'band' (his term for binding or holding together) is provided by 'proportion in concord, called symphonie or rime'. His very strong sense of structure makes him insist on close and careful binding. 'A staffe of seuen verses, most vsuall with our auncient makers, also the staffe of eight, nine, and ten of larger complement then the rest, are onely vsed by the later makers, &, vnlesse they go with very good bande, do not so well as the inferiour staues. Therefore, if ye make your staffe of eight by two fowers not entertangled, it is not a huitaine or a staffe of eight, but two quadreins: so is it in ten verses; not being entertangled, they be but two staues of fiue.'[3] Clearly, rime is for him more than a mere jingle or ornament.

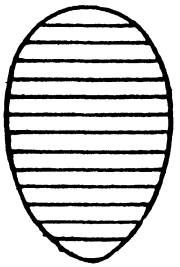
[1] Loc. cit. [2] Op. cit., p. 91. [3] Ibid., pp. 69–70.

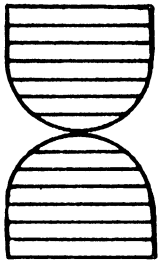
Puttenham, however, goes beyond using ocular examples to demonstrate time relationships. In Chapter XII, 'Of Proportion in Figure', he says: 'Your last proportion is that of figure, so called for that it yelds an ocular representation, your meeters being by good symmetrie reduced into certaine Geometricali figures, whereby the maker is restrained to keepe him within his bounds, and sheweth not onely more art, but serueth also much better for briefenesse and subtiltie of deuice'; and here he has begun thinking of verse visually. He still says that he has hearing in mind, admitting that 'at the beginning they [geometrical figures] will seeme nothing pleasant to an English eare', but supposing that this is purely because of their novelty. It is, however, probable, that the failure of verses in figure to please the ear results from the fact that they are not designed for the ear, and that lines arranged in lengths making up plane shapes will be seen but not heard as 'lozange, fuzie or spindle, triangle or tricquet, square, pillaster or cillinder, spire or taper called piramis, rondel or sphere, egge or figure ouall, tricquet reuerst, tricquet displayed, taper reuersed, rondel displayed, lozange reuersed, egge displayed, or lozange rabbated.' It is no doubt possible to hear, vaguely and uncertainly through lines first expanding and then diminishing in length, something which might be called the aural equivalent of the 'lozange' or the 'tricquet displayed':





but I do not think that the egg or the egg displayed are audible as such. Unless the eye shows us the curve of the outline, we can hardly expect to distinguish between the egg and the fuzie, or between the egg displayed and the tricquet displayed.





If this were not enough demonstration that Puttenham is truly thinking visually here and not aurally, proof must come when he gives his examples of the spire or taper and the 'piller or cillinder.' There are two examples of each, of which one is to be read downwards and the other upwards. The latter is as follows:

> Her Maiestie, for many parts in her most noble and vertuous nature to be found, resembled to the spire. Ye must begin beneath according to the nature of the deuise.
>
> Skie. 1
>
> Azurd 2
> in the
> assurde,
>
> And better, [3]
> And richer,
> Much greter,
>
> Crown & empir
> After an hier
> For to aspire 4
> Like flame of fire
> In forme of spire
> To mount on hie,
>
> Con ti nu al ly
> With trauel & teen
> Most gratious queen

Ye haue made a vow, 5
Shews us plainly how
Not fained but true,
To euery mans vew,
Shining cleere in you
Of so bright an hewe,
Euen thus vertewe

Vanish out of our sight
Till his fine top be quite
To Taper in the ayre 6
Endeuors soft and faire
By his kindly nature
Of tall comely stature
Like as this faire figure

I do not know by what device the fact that this is being read upside down can be made audible. The forcing of the printing in Puttenham's examples, and his statement that 'the Grecian Liricks . . . many times . . . would (to giue it right shape of an egge) deuide a word in the midst, and peece out the next verse with the other halfe',[1] suggest that these patterns of verse must be as external and arbitrarily imposed as the Mouse's Tale in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. One might judge these figures in Fury's words, 'I'll try the whole cause and condemn you to death'.

This, however, would be less than fair. First, it may be said that Puttenham's interest in figures is one of the proofs of his eager care for craftsmanship. 'Some fewe measures composed in this sort this gentleman gaue me, which I translated word for word, and as neere as I could followed both the phrase and the figure, which is somewhat hard to performe, because of the restraint of the figure from which he may not digresse.'[2] Second, this interest is a direct result of his conviction that all arts obey the same rules and that all the senses work to the same end, a conviction which has certainly given his inquiry into artistic effects some depth and accords well with the Elizabethan desire to find order,

[1] Op. cit., p. 105. [2] Ibid., p. 96.

degree and harmony in Nature and art alike and to accommodate artefacts to Divine symmetry. It is not as pleasant irrelevancies that he says of the 'Lozange': 'The Greekes and Latines both call it *Rombus*, which may be the cause, as I suppose, why they also gaue that name to the fish commonly called the *Turbot*, who beareth iustly that figure'; or of the 'Roundell' or 'Spheare': 'He conteyneth in him the commodious description of euery other figure, & for his ample capacitie doth resemble the world or vniuers, & for his indefinitenesse, hauing no speciall place of beginning nor end, beareth a similitude with God and eternitie', and gives what he takes to be the cause of the shape of an egg: 'And it seemeth that he receiueth this forme not as an imperfection by any impediment vnnaturally hindring his rotunditie, but by the wisedome and prouidence of nature for the commoditie of generation, in such of her creatures as bring not forth a liuely body (as do foure footed beasts), but in stead thereof a certaine quantitie of shapelesse matter contained in a vessel, which, after it is sequestred from the dames body, receiueth life and perfection, as in the egges of birdes, fishes, and serpents: for the matter being of some quantitie, and to issue out at a narrow place, for the easie passage thereof it must of necessitie beare such shape as might not be sharpe and greeuous to passe, as an angle, nor so large or obtuse as might not essay some issue out with one part moe then other, as the rounde; therefore it must be slenderer in some part, & yet not without a rotunditie & smoothnesse to giue the rest an easie deliuerie.' This is of a piece with that kind of allegorical thinking which finds confirmation of the truth of a proposition in one set of terms if it holds true also in another set of terms.

It is not surprising to find Puttenham proceeding from figures in verse to emblems, from which again contemporary and later taste derived a peculiar satisfaction in feeling that ear and eye alike told the same tale. 'These be the short, quicke, and sententious propositions, such as be at these dayes all your deuices of armes and other amorous inscriptions which courtiers vse to giue and also to weare in liuerie for the honour of their ladies, and commonly containe but two or three words of wittie sentence or

secrete conceit till they [be] vnfolded or explaned by some interpretation. For which cause they be commonly accompanied with a figure or purtraict of ocular representation, the words so aptly corresponding to the subtilitie of the figure that aswel the eye is therwith recreated as the eare or the mind. The Greekes call it *Emblema*, the Italiens *Impresa*, and we, a Deuice.' [1]

A third cause for interest in Puttenham's 'ocular figures' is suggested by the passage saying that emblems 'commonly containe but two or three words of wittie sentence or secrete conceit till they [be] vnfolded or explaned by some interpretation. For which cause they be commonly accompanied with a figure or purtraict of ocular representation'. This embodies another characteristic of Elizabethan delight in art, the tendency to approve works of art in which different kinds of skill have collaborated to make a beautiful thing. On a large scale, this produced the masque, in which line, colour, movement, music, poetry and allegorical meaning were combined. On a small scale it produced a 'poetic conceit', reduced 'into metricall feet', and put 'in forme of a Lozange or square, or such other figure; and so engrauen in gold, siluer or iuorie, and sometimes with letters of ametist, rubie, emeralde, or topas curiously cemented and peeced together, they sende them in charmes, bracelets, collars, and girdles to their mistresses to weare for a remembrance'. It helped also to produce the song. Puttenham says that the great Princes of China and Tartarie did not 'delight so much as we do in long tedious descriptions, and therefore' they chose these devices as expressions of their conceits, and this suggests the fourth reason for taking serious note of these 'figures'.

Clearly, Puttenham is very near to demonstrating that he understands one of the major functions of form in art, its power to suggest in itself some part of the artist's meaning, without explicit explanation. So, 'the Piller is a figure among all the rest of the Geometricall most beawtifull, in respect that he is tall and vpright and of one bignesse from the bottom to the toppe. In Architecture he is considered with two accessarie parts, a pedestall

[1] Op. cit., p. 106.

or base, and a chapter or head; the body is the shaft. By this figure is signified stay, support, rest, state, and magnificence'; and Puttenham finds it fitting to give for an example a 'Piller' of verse, on the theme, 'Her Maiestie resembled to the crowned pillar. Ye must read vpward' because 'Her trymest top of all ye see Is blisse with immortalitie'. It is probably natural to find significance in pictorial structure before we find it in any other, and this is why Puttenham uses 'figures' rather than other forms of verse to demonstrate his sense of the meaning of form. We may feel that this is not a very helpful treatment of the subject for poetry, but Puttenham remains worthy of honour for his perception of the value of form.

Moreover, he returns from this excursus to a consideration of the audible qualities of words and their uses for metres. He discusses the suitability of English for classical metres and, unlike his predecessors, points out that while Anglo-Saxon may have left a heritage of monosyllables, there have been plenty of polysyllables in the language since the Norman conquest. Though he recommends accepting stress for length in English versifying, he is not confused about it. 'The Greeks and Latines . . . made not their sharpe accent any necessary prolongation of their times, but vsed such sillable sometimes long, sometimes short, at their pleasure.' [1] (It is curious that he regards this as a 'licence'.) Many of his examples of verses have higher poetical qualities than some in these books, but he disappoints us a little when he scans some lines. 'The Earle of Surrey vpon the death of Sir *Thomas Wiat* made among other this verse *Pentameter* and of ten sillables,

What holy graue? alas, what sepulcher?

But if I had the making of him, he should haue bene of eleuen sillables and kept his measure of fiue still, and would so haue runne more pleasantly a great deale; for as he is now, though he be euen, he seemes odde and defectiue, for not well obseruing the natural accent of euery word; and this would haue bene soone holpen by inserting one *monosillable* in the middle of the verse, and

[1] Op. cit., p. 118.

drawing another sillable in the beginning into a *Dactil*, this word *holy* being a good *Pirrichius* and very well seruing the turne, thus,

What holie graue? a las, what fit sepulcher?

Which verse, if ye peruse throughout, ye shall finde him after the first *Dactil* all *Trochaick* & not *Iambic*, nor of any other foot of two times. But perchance if ye would seeme yet more curious, in place of these foure *Trocheus* ye might induce other feete of three times, as to make the three sillables next following the *Dactil* the foote *Amphimacer*, the last word *sepulcher* the foote *Amphibracus*, leauing the other midle word for a *Iambus* thus,

What holie graue? a las, what fit sepulcher?

If ye aske me further why I make *what* first long & after short in one verse, to that I satisfied you before, that it is by reason of his accent sharpe in one place and flat in another, being a common *monosillable*, that is apt to receiue either accent, & so in the first place receiuing aptly the sharpe accent he is made long; afterward receiuing the flat accent more aptly than the sharpe, because the sillable precedent *las* vtterly distaines him, he is made short & not long, & that with very good melodie; but to haue giuen him the sharpe accent & plucked it from the sillable *las* it had bene to any mans eare a greate discorde: for euermore this word *alás* is accented vpon the last, & that lowdly & notoriously as appeareth by all our exclamations vsed vnder that terme.'[1]

It is puzzling that Puttenham should have been so tender of '-las', and yet willing to 'pluck' 'the sharpe accent' from 'ho-'. As he allows 'sharpe accent' to constitute length, the actual pronouncing length of 'ho-' cannot have been the reason, even if it had a short ŏ; and we may guess from contemporary verses that the first syllable of 'holy' (alone or in 'holiday') took stress.[2] What is truly interesting about this passage is the evidence it gives of Puttenham's delight in manipulating the internal structure of a

[1] Op. cit., pp. 130–1.

[2] See, e.g., Spenser's use of the words in the Roundelay of the August Eclogue in *The Shepheardes Calender*.

line. He never forgets the interest of movement which must exist through the whole line: 'Omission of letters in the middest of a meetre to make him the more slipper helpes the numerositie and hinders not the rime.'[1] Altogether, his concern with classical metres seems to arise out of true delight in them because of their rhythm, and not out of fashion-following; and his care for rhythm is integral to his care for poetry's whole effect. 'If ye vse too many *Dactils* together ye make your musike too light and of no solemne grauitie such as the amorous *Elegies* in court naturally require, being alwaies either very dolefull or passionate as the affections of loue enforce, in which busines ye must make your choise of very few words *dactilique*, or them that ye can not refuse, to dissolue and breake them into other feete.'[2] In fact, he is acutely aware of the link between movement and meaning:

'Gèue mé mìne ówne ànd whén I dó dèsìre,
Geue others theirs, and nothing that is mine,
Nòr gíue mè thát wherto all men aspire
Then neither gold, not faire women, nor wine.

Where in your first verse these two words, *giue* and *me*, are accented one high, th'other low; in the third verse the same words are accented contrary: and the reason of this exchange is manifest, because the maker playes with these two clauses of sundry relations, *giue me* and *giue others*, so as the *monosillable me*, being respectiue to the word *others*, and inferring a subtilitie or wittie implication, ought not to haue the same accent as when he hath no such respect.'[3] Puttenham, in fact, is intelligent, sensitive, thoughtful and a true lover of poetry as art and craft.

Campion's *Obseruations in the Art of English Poesie*,[4] is the only treatise on verse written by a musician of this age in England, and as such it would claim some attention even if its contents were less subtle and illuminating than in fact they are, and as we might

[1] Op. cit., p. 120. [2] Ibid., p. 132. [3] Ibid., p. 138.
[4] Published in 1602, but entered in the Stationers' Register in 1591. See *The Library*, December 1927, article by G. B. Harrison on 'Books and Readers, 1591–4.'

expect them to be from a critic who can include the beautiful *Rose-cheekt* LAWRA simply as 'The Example' of an English Sapphic. Because Daniel's *Defence of Ryme* successfully defended rime against Campion's attack, it has been commonly supposed that Campion's other arguments about verse have been confuted, but from the moment he opens in a modestly brisk sentence, we may feel justified in expecting sense from him. By his fourth sentence he is defining: 'Number is *discreta quantitas*: so that when we speake simply of number, we intend only the disse[r]uer'd quantity; but when we speake of a Poeme written in number, we consider, not only the distinct number of the sillables, but also their value, which is contained in the length or shortnes of their sound.' [1] Here he shows, first, that in English he has in mind the line as a unit of time, and feet are merely fractions of this unit, instead of themselves being units to be built into a larger unit; and, second, that he is aware that rhythm depends, not on mere counting, but on groupings of different kinds of syllables. It is implied that he knows English syllable-lengths to be too variable to serve in themselves as measuring-units of time: 'As in Musick we do not say a straine of so many notes, but so many sem'briefes (though sometimes there are no more notes then sem'briefes), so in a verse the numeration of the sillables is not so much to be obserued as their waite and due proportion.' [2] He makes it clear, however, that he will have time in mind as the dimension of poetry throughout his discussion. '*Terence* saith, speaking of Poets, *artem qui tractant musicam*, confounding Musick and Poesy together. What musick can there be where there is no proportion obserued?' [3]

It comes as something of a shock after this lucidity to meet Campion's attack on rime. His reasons, however, are respectable. He attacks the use of rime as a substitute for, and not as an addition to, careful structure of the line: 'Some eares accustomed altogether to the fatnes of rime may perhaps except against the cadences of these numbers; but let any man iudicially examine them, and he shall finde they close of themselues so perfectly that

[1] Smith, vol. II, p. 328. [2] Loc. cit. [3] Op. cit., p. 329.

the help of rime were not only in them superfluous but also absurd.'[1] Now this is the only true *casus belli* between the rimers and the classicists. Where it can be demonstrated that the 'fatnes' of rime has been used as showy decoration to cover up shoddy workmanship in the line, one can fully sympathize with distaste for it, and it must be admitted that so obvious a means of indicating the end of a line may prove tempting to the careless workman. No doubt such workmen had provoked Campion's irritation to the point where he forgot to distinguish between use and abuse. 'That Rhetoricall figure which we tearme *similiter desinentia*, . . . being but *figura verbi*, ought (as *Tully* and all other Rhetoritians haue iudicially obseru'd) sparingly to be vs'd, least it should offend the eare with tedious affectation. Such was that absurd following of the letter amongst our English so much of late affected.'[2] Similarly, he confuses the effect of rime with the effect of too rigid adherence to prearranged rules: 'But there is yet another fault in Rime altogether intollerable, which is, that it inforceth a man oftentimes to abiure his matter and extend a short conceit beyond all bounds of arte; for in Quatorzens, methinks, the poet handles his subiect as tyrannically as *Procrustes* the thiefe his prisoners, whom, when he had taken, he vsed to cast vpon a bed, which if they were too short to fill, he would stretch them longer, if too long, he would cut them shorter.'[3] Yet this (temporary) hatred of rime on Campion's part is but a superficial manifestation of his longing for verses that 'close of themselves', and of minor importance in his argument. It is better, as Campion said, to 'leaue these follies to their owne ruine, and returne to the matter intended', which is that 'the eare is a rational sence and a chiefe iudge of proportion'. For Campion, verse is essentially audible, and its structure, as for Puttenham, is essentially a matter of proportion, of recognizable relationships between parts.

He is unusually practical and observant in his treatment of his native language and its verse-forms. 'I haue obserued, and so may any one that is either practis'd in singing, or hath a naturall eare

[1] Op. cit., p. 350. [2] Ibid., p. 330. [3] Ibid., p. 331.

able to time a song, that the Latine verses of sixe feete, as the *Heroick* and *Iambick*, or of fiue feete, as the *Trochaick*, are in nature all of the same length of sound with our English verses of fiue feet; for either of them being tim'd with the hand, *quinque perficiunt tempora*, they fill vp the quantity (as it were) of fiue sem'briefs; as for example, if any man will proue to time these verses with his hand.' [1] This is fundamental: it shows a recognition of quantity in its simplest, strictest sense, and a real, not formal, reliance on the ear. It may be that he is right in his opinion of the relative lengths of lines in different languages, and for the reason that he gives: 'Our English monasillables enforce many breathings which no doubt greatly lengthen a verse, so that it is no wonder if for these reasons our English verses of fiue feete hold pace with the *Latines* of sixe.' If here we substitute 'strongly consonantal syllables' for 'monasillables', a very interesting suggestion is made [2]; and we may the more confidently make this substitution, as Campion's statements on monosyllables are among the few where he appears to rest on fashion and authority rather than on observation. 'The concurse of our monasillables make our verses vnapt to slide', he says. Puttenham knew better, and Campion himself hastens to add a reference to the 'heauinesse' of 'our polysillables'. After giving examples of Latin and English lines differing in number of syllables, Campion says: 'The cause why these verses differing in feete yeeld the same length of sound, is by reason of some rests which either the necessity of the numbers or the heauiness of the sillables do beget. For we find in musick that oftentimes the straines of a song cannot be reduct to true number without some rests prefixt in the beginning and middle, as also at the close if need requires.' [3] This both confirms Campion's adherence to time as the dimension of verse, and shows

[1] Op. cit., p. 334

[2] It is worth noting that, in European languages which have a recognized 'staple' line for long poems, the staple line *appears* shorter or longer in direct relation to whether the language is highly consonantal or highly vocalic. Observe, for instance, the O.E. line, the modern English heroic decasyllable, the French alexandrine and the classical hexameter.

[3] Ibid., pp. 334–5.

that he understands that the organization of this time into relationships is indicated by, but not entirely contained in, speech sounds; metre is for him a felt structure independent of word structures, though related to them. This becomes clear in his examples, where he allows a sense break to occur in the middle of a foot.

'Appeare the sterner, if the day be cleere'

is an example of his English *Iambicks*;

'Still where Enuy leaues, remorse doth enter'

of the English *Trochee*.

For all his clear-headed perception that metrical divisions are significant only if they are independent of word divisions, Campion has a sensitive respect for the utterance of words in his native English. He is anxious to make full use of native resources, approving certain 'numbers' 'because they entertaine so willingly our owne British names', and approving only those 'which by my long obseruation I haue found agreeable with the nature of our sillables'. Therefore he says of '*Iambicks*, they fall out so naturally in our toong, that, if we examine our owne writers, we shall find they vnawares hit oftentimes vpon the true *Iambick* numbers'[1]. If we interpret iambic as meaning an unstressed followed by a stressed syllable, we can see that he is right; the reason is that a heavily stressed language tends to move towards stress as a mark of closure and a resting-place. This also explains the feeling that a (stressed) trochee is swift and suitable for light verse, for it drives each foot on to the next in the search for a point of rest; Campion says of 'the English Elegeick verse' that 'the second Dimeter consists of two Trochyes (because it requires more swiftnes then the first)', the first being iambic. His second kind of Sapphic is described as 'voluble', for its last feet in the last lines of each stanza must always be trochees. Many of Campion's examples of numbers are true poetry, and might persuade us of the truth of his arguments if we did not remember that his very gifts perhaps make him a bad guide. He was himself, on the evidence of many

[1] Op. cit., p. 333.

epigrams, a competent Latinist in verse, and therefore more at home than many in classical metres; he had a musician's strong and subtle sense of time; and he had clearly a most delicate ear for speech, which enables him to pick, out of English, words whose syllables will genuinely, in natural pronunciation, come near to fulfilling the needs of classical feet. Others, with less acute ear, cannot so readily make this choice, any more than they dare risk emulating Milton's choruses in *Samson Agonistes*; they cannot so clearly hear the felt but inaudible background of measure into which words fit as the trained musician can hear it; and only the confident Latin versifier can hear Latin rhythms without effort.

Unfortunately, Campion cannot wrap up his own talents as a present in his paper of rules, and the rules themselves are not adequate to explain his practice. Though he says, 'Also, because our English Orthography (as the French) differs from our common pronounciation, we must esteeme our sillables as we speake, not as we write; for the sound of them in a verse is to be valued, and not their letters, as for *follow* we pronounce *follo*; for *perfect*, *perfet*; for *little*, *littel*; for *loue-sick*, *loue-sik*; for *honour*, *honor*; for *money*, *mony*; for *dangerous*, *dangerus*; for *raunsome*, *raunsum*; for *though*, *tho*; and their like' [1]; and 'aboue all the accent of our words is diligently to be obseru'd, for chiefely by the accent . . . the true value of the sillables is to be measured' [2]; he says also that 'position' (in the classical sense) can alter English accent, and that 'words of two sillables that in their last sillable mayntayne a flat or falling accent, ought to hold their first sillable long, as rīgŏr, glōrie, spīrĭt, fūrie, lāboŭr, and the like: ănу, mănу, prĕty, hŏly, and their like are excepted.' [3] Certainly, many of Campion's rules about quantity in syllables are confused and impracticable, but this should not be allowed to obscure his sense of rhythm, his apprehension of the true nature of metre and his anxious care for honest and subtle workmanship in verse. It was a respectable ambition. 'What honour were it then for our English language to be the first that after so many yeares of barbarisme could second

[1] Op. cit., p. 352. [2] Ibid., p. 351.
[3] Ibid., p. 353. For 'holy', *vide supra*, p. 54 and footnote.

the perfection of the industrious *Greekes* and *Romaines*?'[1] In practice, Campion helped to achieve this, because he had a special skill for 'such verses as are fit for *Ditties* or *Odes*; which we may call *Lyricall*, because they are apt to be soong to an instrument, if they were adorn'd with conuenient notes',[2] and loved what is 'passing gracefull in our English toong, and will excellently fit the subiect of a *Madrigall*, or any other lofty or tragicall matter.'[3]

With this we come to an end of the important writings on versification in this period. There has been some bad temper, a good deal of nonsense and a great deal of confused expression in these writings. Yet much has emerged which is suggestive, and it is not unlikely that the theoretical arguments had some effect on the practice of verse. Certainly, as the years pass, the critics show themselves increasingly aware of the poetry which is being written around them; they quote more by way of example as time goes on, of either their own or others' writing, and one poem, which of right finds its way into anthologies of the period, *Rose-cheekt* LAWRA, would have been unknown to us if Campion had not been prepared to illustrate his idea of a Sapphic. It may be that the poets in their turn were increasingly aware of the criticism which was being written around them, and that the criticism did some good.

From the beginning of the period there were valuable elements in it. Ascham, for all his love of Latin authors, takes delight and pride in his own tongue, and he and all his successors urge observation of English and care for its genius. With varying degrees of practical success, they insist on respect for natural speech as 'God and his Englishmen' have made it in this island. This is important for the growth of any sense of metre in the vernacular, as words are the only notation indicating verse-forms, and where there is no care to preserve common pronunciation, the notation and, therefore, the form itself, will be misunderstood. There are occasional signs of some understanding of the use of qualities of speech sounds as guides to the turning-points in verse structure.

It might seem that this respect for the nature of the language

[1] Op. cit., p. 332. [2] Ibid., p. 346. [3] Ibid., p. 349.

was contradicted by the pleas for classical verse-forms. There are, however, explanations of these pleas which show that this is not quite true. For all their love of English, these critics would like to see it even better, richer and more beautiful. It was not unreasonable for them to suppose that, as Latin had transformed its verse from the accentual form of the Saturnian metre, to its great gain, English might transform its verse into something more rich and subtle than it had been before. This, in fact, did occur during this period, and while English verse did not become 'classical', it did undoubtedly benefit from this discussion. The most ardent classicists had all conceded that there must be 'some respect of the accent' in deciding English quantities, and their object was to effect a balance between natural utterance and fine artificial manipulation of words which is, after all, an accomplished fact in all intricate verse-forms. Further, their longing for classical metres arose principally out of their recognition of the sure and beautiful structure of those metres. They knew fine craft when they saw it, and they wanted to see it in English poetry. It seemed to them, particularly in the earlier years of the period, that the self-assertive and stolid 'close' provided by rime could be used to deafen its hearers to irregularity or dullness within the line. Without rime, the line must establish its integral unity by true rhythm and balance in its structure. A consistent proportional relationship between the lengths of syllables provided in Greek and Latin verse a sure means of effecting such rhythm and balance. This relationship was not in fact achieved in English, but the inquiry into its possibility did lead to some careful examination of English syllables in speech and writing.

A further cause of the interest in classical metres lies in the critics' consciousness that their work is experimental and tentative. Nearly all of them admit, with Campion, that no work is begun and perfected at one enterprise. This inability to believe their own findings final is itself valuable, and it led to some curious experiments. This uncertain craft, with its uncertain theory, naturally looked for support and guidance to crafts with a more established rationale. It looked, for instance, to the verse of

languages with an established prosody. It looked to the visual arts, where there was much practice and precept concerning structure. We may find Puttenham's figures funny, but they were the result of an earnest desire to find form, and a search for it in that field of the senses where it is most easily perceived. Moreover, the search did lead to discussion of relations between the arts instead of mere vague acceptance of the idea that they are related, and it forced the consideration of poetic form into greater depth and closer concern with the question as to why—or whether—form matters in art. It is not impossible that this very aberration of the discussion into the domain of the spatial arts hastened and clarified the certainty that poetry is essentially temporal, that if it is to be measured, it must be measured in terms of time. Spatial structures were then clearly seen to have but metaphorical relevance to verse, and the critics were confirmed in a tendency, frequently seen in their writings, to turn for help to that other art of time, music. Campion is, naturally, the most consistently 'musical' of the prosodists, but many of them clearly find help in turning to the practice of music in their discussion of rhythms. Of all the props on which verse tried to lean, this is undoubtedly the strongest.

It was natural, therefore, that discussion should spread wider and wider beyond the narrow subject of the hexameter or the fourteener, and embrace varying lyric-forms. The other cause for this spreading is the reiterated desire of the critics for greater variety in English verse-forms. They desired this variety, not only for its own sake, but also because, as several of them demonstrate, they have some understanding of the differing effects which differing rhythms have on mind and emotions. They are trying to make of English versification an instrument flexible enough for the expression of the whole range of subjects and impulses of a poet; and they show by this that their concern with technique is no sterile thing, but a true part of their anxiety for the whole condition and significance of poetry. It is informed throughout by the belief that body must answer to the soul's direction, that soul is form and doth the body make, that soul must therefore find

flexible and malleable material with which to make the body of poetry.

No one can claim that any one of these critics, or even all of them taken together, succeeded in stating fully how language can be handled so as to serve as such a material. Between them, however, they at least touch upon all the necessities of a consideration of metre. All are acutely conscious of words, most of them listen carefully to their sounds, and Gascoigne, King James, Sidney for a few moments, Puttenham, Campion and Daniel make real contributions to the subject of metre proper. They are aware of the principal problem of the subject: the problem of how to make words, which are used in poetry for their meaning-reference, serve also, without wrenching them from their natural utterance, to indicate a form independent of the meaning, though not contradictory of its emotional effect, a form which can give pleasure in itself and also, at best, deepen the meaning. They realize with increasing clarity that such form must be rhythmical, and that it must be an organization of time. They wrestle with this problem of time in speech and, taking many falls, yet return to the struggle and score some points. They learn to take help from music and therefore become subtly sensitive to lyric-forms. They find in this connection the part that silence, whether as pause or as rest, can play in organizing sound into rhythmical arrangements of time. Finally, they begin to see how attributes of syllables other than their duration can be used to emphasize these arrangements and bring out their significance.

It may, in fact, be claimed with some justice that while they explored none of them fully, they made some entry into every single one of the roads along which later metrists and prosodists have found it profitable to travel. It has been necessary to extend the discussion beyond their consideration of purely lyrical metres, in order to show the general groundwork of their theories, but now we are in a position to narrow it to lyric measures.

Chapter 3

PROSODIC TERMS

AND ELIZABETHAN VIEWS ON THE LYRIC

FROM the general views of Elizabethan critics on metre, some statement of what they expected to find in lyric metres and of their explanations of lyric effects may be drawn; and this statement may be applied to lyric poetry of their time, so that we may see how far it is capable of explaining the metrical structure of that poetry. It will be convenient if this statement can be made in terms readily understandable to the modern reader, but this requires first some elucidation of the terms used by the critics discussed in Chapter 2. Their use of words has, of course, been considered in the general discussion of their work, but it will be easier to carry in mind what they (or a majority of them) meant when their use of a term differed from ours if we define their terms in a glossary, and show the relation between their meaning and ours. In the following list of definitions, the meaning most commonly accepted by Elizabethan critics will be given, with some reference to vagaries of especial interest; each definition of the Elizabethan sense will be followed by a definition of the sense in which these words will be used in the rest of this discussion. This double defining of words, in their Elizabethan and their modern sense, should make it possible at once to understand Elizabethan views quickly and easily, and to see whence my statement of these views is drawn. It will, further, be convenient if I add to this glossary my definitions of terms not used by the Elizabethans which will be needed in analysis of their verse; thus, the alphabetical list of their terms will be followed by the alphabetical list of modern additions to their prosodic vocabulary. Then the brief summary of their beliefs about lyric verse will follow.

Accent There are two main senses in which Elizabethan critics use this word: first, when they say generally that syllables are to be treated in verse 'with regard to the accent', they usually mean no more than 'pronunciation in common speech' [1]; when, however, they analyse more particularly the relationship between the 'accent' of a word and its use in a foot or line, they customarily mean 'stress', or 'importance of a syllable shown by comparative loudness in utterance'. Even this second use is not consistent: Gascoigne, for instance, speaks of 'long' and 'short' accents, and it is impossible to tell whether his confusion is between length and loudness as marks of importance in a syllable or between different terms for a long syllable. A majority of critics appear to believe that length always accompanies loudness in English syllables, and to recognize loudness as a certain mark of accent. It may therefore be said that the Elizabethan meanings of 'accent' were: (1) pronunciation; (2) stress.

ACCENT any kind of importance given to a spoken syllable. Thus, emphasis, stress and ictus (*vide infra* for definitions) are all forms of accent; they may coincide in a syllable, and be reinforced by length, but any singly may give 'accent'.

Air, Ayre This usually means a song for single voice with instrumental accompaniment. The word commonly covers both words and tune of the song, but it appears occasionally to be used, as Dante used 'canzone', simply for the words, always, however, with the understanding that these words are intended to have a musical setting. Songs called airs usually have a melody repeatable for several stanzas of words.

AIR a song for solo voice in which the stanza form of the words is repeated to go with repetition of the melody, so that words and notes are 'coupled lovingly together' (Campion).

Breathing This is used by Campion to mean, apparently, a break in the continuity of the voice in uttering verse while breath is being taken. He regards the necessity for such breaks as having effect upon the choice of the commonest line-lengths in English, so that they have metrical importance in a general sense; but when he refers to 'the

[1] Note the continuance of this use in, e.g., popular novels, where the 'broken accents' of grief have been frequently mentioned for generations, and in phrases referring to the good or bad 'accent' of a speaker of a foreign language.

naturall breathing-place of our English *Iambick* verse', he says that this may occur in different places in the line, so that it cannot be metrically provided for. It seems, therefore, that it must mean 'pause' rather than 'rest' (in the musical sense) or cæsura, which cannot be shifted at will. It cannot be defined in terms having strictly metrical significance; yet to a profound and subtle rhythmical sense, like Campion's, it is clearly of great importance.

BREATHING pause.

Cæsura Usually, this means to the Elizabethan simply 'cutting' the line for a sense-pause. It is therefore extra-metrical.

CÆSURA a metrical break in the line, less marked than the break at the end of the line, occurring only at certain strictly defined places in the line.

Depressed This is Gascoigne's term for 'unstressed' or 'unimportant' (of a syllable), though he makes definition difficult by confusing it with 'short'.

[DEPRESSED unimportant. Not used in modern prosody.]

Ditty. A song, or words for a song.

[DITTY a light song. Not used.]

Elevated Gascoigne uses this of the syllable carrying accent; whether it has stress or emphasis or not, in his use it has ictus. Probably, therefore, it should be defined as carrying ictus.

[ELEVATED metrically important. Not used.]

Flowing (subs.) This is King James's very interesting word, a translation from the Greek, for 'rhythm'. He uses it always as a noun, never as a generally describing adjective. His choice of this word suggests that he was aware of the value of a general sense of satisfying movement in verse, which it is the function of metre to secure. The associations of pleasant easy movement which this word has show

that King James was no rigid syllable-counter, and that he regarded metrical structure as a means to the end of pleasure in the audible part of verse.

FLOWING (adj.) moving freely.

Foot There is disagreement among Elizabethan critics about this. King James uses it to mean either a single syllable, or the length of time allowed for its utterance, in a line, but he is alone in taking this meaning. Critics of the earlier years of the period seem disinclined to allow the term to be used of anything but verse constructed on classical models, so that it is by them used of groups of syllables related to each other by a ratio between their individual quantities and arranged in a certain order (capable of repetition) of long and short. Ascham, for instance, says uneasily that so-called feet in English, when their syllables are not arranged with care for a quantitative relation between them, are 'feet without joints', which he compares with artificial limbs for insensitive clumsiness. Later writers, however, allow groups of syllables arranged according to an order of stressed and unstressed to bear the name of feet. Usually, however, the feet are given names properly applicable only to those quantitatively constructed, and when Elizabethan critics not avowedly concerned with pleas for quantity speak of iambs or trochees, it is not always possible to decide whether they mean groups of two syllables in which a long syllable follows (or precedes) a short syllable, or groups of two syllables in which a stressed syllable follows (or precedes) an unstressed syllable. It may therefore be said that to the Elizabethans a foot was a group of two, three or (occasionally) four syllables arranged *either* according to a relationship of comparative length [1] *or* according to a relationship of comparative loudness in utterance, capable of being combined with other feet (groups of syllables) to form a verse or line.

FOOT the shortest metrically significant unit of verse; in English, a group of two or three (rarely more) syllables arranged in an order of stressed and unstressed syllables; there can be no foot unless one of the group of syllables can be stressed, either to show ictus or because it naturally has emphasis. It should be noted that in English

[2] For their ideas of this relationship, see *Quantity* (*infra*).

the foot is usually [1] to be regarded as a division of the line, which is the more important unit, and not as the most important verse unit which is to be built into a larger (but less metrically important) structure, the line. There are forms of English verse in which the idea of the foot is virtually valueless.

Harmony This is used by most Elizabethan critics to mean simply 'concord', 'agreement', 'symmetry', or 'proportion', without necessarily any musical connotation. Sometimes it means, more generally and superficially, 'pleasant sound'.

HARMONY the simultaneous sounding of notes of different pitch to make a chord; nowadays usually thought of as supporting one, or a very few, melodic lines, rather than the chance effect of the simultaneous sounding in a recognized chord of independent melodic lines at some points in their movement; the idea of harmony in this sense develops with the practice of 'vertical' rather than 'horizontal' thinking in music.

Line This is used by the classically minded Elizabethan critics to mean a group of a certain number of feet; others mean by it a group of a certain number of syllables. Nearly all of them think of it simply as the result of adding together the requisite number of feet or syllables. Gascoigne and King James, however, show signs of allowing that silences may make a part of a line as well as the audible syllables; while Campion, in his serious discussion of 'natural' line-lengths in different languages, seems to be near to regarding the line as the principal organic temporal unit of English verse. In general, however, it seems to mean a set number of feet or syllables, frequently balanced with other lines of identical numbers.

LINE a unit of metrical structure, usually containing more than one foot, but never divisible into parts by any division as marked as that which separates it from other lines; where such heavy division is possible, it means that the supposed line was properly two lines, as is frequently apparent in the tendency of the so-called fourteener to divide into two lines, one of eight syllables and one of six syllables and a rest. In English verse, the line is usually the most important metrical unit, and it preserves far more stability of quantity than the

[1] 'Usually' not 'always', because I believe that in Milton's *Samson Agonistes* there are passages where the foot is of prime importance.

English foot. It is a space of time in the utterance of verse, largely filled by syllables arranged in the repeated order of stressed and unstressed syllables constituting English feet, but containing also spaces between some syllables varying greatly in length. The whole time occupied by a line usually stands to the time occupied by the other lines in the same poem or stanza in a relation of either equality or simple proportion; while the feet in the line, even though constructed in a repeating arrangement of stress and unstress, may vary widely in the time they occupy.

Long This should be obvious, but occasionally Gascoigne and others apply this to a syllable, by a kind of metonymy, in the meaning of 'important' or 'accented'.[1] A 'long' syllable to most Elizabethan critics, however, was a syllable longer than its neighbouring syllables, though not in any stated ratio; sometimes its greater length was what they actually heard in utterance, sometimes it was a fiction preserved by accepting certain rules of spelling.

LONG (in classical verse) having duration twice that of a short syllable or, sometimes, in the ratio 3:2 or 3:1; (in English verse) having duration audibly greater than that of surrounding syllables, whether in the vowel alone or in the vowel and consonants together constituting a syllable; this quality of a syllable is rarely of any structural importance in English verse.

Lyric (adj.) This is used by all Elizabethans who use the word at all in its etymological sense, suitable for singing to the accompaniment of a (lyre or other) musical instrument; (subs.) a metrical composition intended for such singing; or (2) a lyric poet.

LYRIC (subs.) a short, metrical composition suitable for singing.[2]

Madrigal This is very occasionally used to mean simply a piece of vocal music. More frequently and more strictly, however, it means a song

[1] The twentieth century should be chary of blaming them for this: Saintsbury says, in Chapter I of his *History of English Prosody* (1906–10): 'I call the two classes "longs" and "shorts" without the very slightest innuendo or insinuation that I believe the source of difference to be the greater length of time, the greater *quantity*, in the technical sense, of the one as compared with the other . . . just as I might call them "Abracadabra" and "Abraxas".'

[2] But see Chapter 1. The formal sense is that which will be useful in all the following discussion.

for several voices singing contrapuntally. It was regarded as suitable treatment for grave or deeply passionate subjects.

MADRIGAL as above.

Measure A number of syllables arranged in a set plan of relationships of quantity or loudness; metrical arrangement; counting or careful judging of syllables.

MEASURE a passage of music or sung or spoken words conforming to proportionate divisions of time.

Metre Earlier Elizabethan critics tend to deny this term to English verse-forms, and to confine it in application to classical forms. Gradually, however, it is extended to English forms,[1] and even to be used contemptuously, like 'riming', and comes to mean strict arrangement of syllables in repeating rhythmical groups capable of being combined into a larger rhythmical whole; or any one of such rhythmical combinations.

METRE a strict arrangement of all the syllables in a spoken passage into repeating rhythmical groups, combinable into larger groups proportionately related in time; the strictest kind of organization of rhythm in speech. The arrangement is indicated by using the attributes of speech sounds: pitch (observable in rime), intensity (observable in stress) and duration (observable in quantity).

Number This is nearly always used quite simply by Elizabethan critics to mean the actual number by counting of syllables in a line. Campion gives the philosophical definition 'discreta quantitas', which distinguishes it from continuous (or concrete) quantity.

[NUMBER as above; not used.]

Numbers This is not used as the simple plural of 'number'; it means rather, as 'measure' often does, 'metrical arrangement', or even poems or verses.[2]

[1] Shakespeare makes Hotspur use the word in a sense obviously applicable to kinds of verse to which, e.g., Ascham would have sternly refused it:

> 'I had rather be a kitten and cry mew
> Than one of these same metre ballad-mongers.'
>
> *Henry IV*, Pt. I, III, 1.

[2] The most famous example of this use is in Herrick's title, *Hesperides and Noble Numbers* (1648), but this was not a neologism. Cf. Shakespeare, *L.L.L.*, IV, iii, 55.

[NUMBERS as above; not used.]

Numerosity This is Puttenham's pleasant word for 'rhythm' or the achieving of metrical construction successfully subservient to the sense of rhythm moving throughout a passage of poetry.

[NUMEROSITY as above; not used.]

Proportion This is rarely used by Elizabethans in a strictly mathematical sense. They use it rather as they use 'harmony' or 'symmetry', to indicate a sense of relationships satisfactory to senses or mind, or both, in the structure of natural objects or artefacts. They point to the 'proportion' of the universe, by which they recognize the divine hand of a creator, as the quality which should be the purpose of the artist when he 'makes'; in poetry, it should reveal itself in the succession of spoken sounds as much as in the relationship of ideas and images. Puttenham's long book on Proportion shows him devoting most of his attention to the 'proportion' of external qualities of words rather than to the 'proportion' in their denotations and connotations. 'Proportion' to the Elizabethan meant something very similar to what 'æsthetic quality' has meant to recent generations; and we might call it 'that which satisfies the æsthetic sense'—without, I fear, coming any nearer than Puttenham and his fellows to precision in defining, but at least renaming the concept in terms more familiar to modern readers.

PROPORTION ratio.

Prosody This is used by Harvey in two senses: first, from the Greek meaning of 'tone or accent of a syllable', to mean 'pronunciation', 'natural utterance'; second (if we may judge from the likely meaning of his desire to see 'M. Drant's Prosodye'), the rules for versifying. Webbe uses both 'prosodia' and 'prosodye' in the latter sense.

PROSODY the theoretical or academic study and science of metre.

Quantity This is used by Elizabethan prosodists in reference to both classical and English verse, and it is clear that they do, in fact, mean by it 'duration', 'length of time occupied' by a syllable (or other unit of speech); what is curious is that not one of the 'classicizing' prosodists states the idea of a quantitative *ratio* between long and short

syllables, although they frequently refer to the necessity for 'quantity' in true feet and to the 'jointlessness' of feet not observing rules of quantity. It is true that the idea of a strict 2:1 ratio between long and short may be ideal and fictitious rather than strictly actual in classical verse, but it is strange that, when emphasizing the need for quantity in feet, these writers should not have enunciated the idea of at least an approximation to ratio as the principle of quantitative construction. When they use the word more generally, they also use it more precisely, to mean simple duration, as when Campion speaks of the total 'quantity' of a line, or philosophically defines 'number' as 'discreta quantitas'.

QUANTITY (in classical verse) duration of a syllable; (in English verse) duration.

Rhythm This and the word 'rime' (both variously spelt) are the cause of endless confusion among Elizabethans, as they were for the Pléiade. The passion of the age for etymology as a part of the idea of good scholarship was unfortunately not supported by much knowledge of semantics or of linguistic usage in what the sixteenth century genuinely believed to be the 'barbarous' middle ages or in the 'dark' ages. Thus, sixteenth-century writers, recognizing the descent of 'rime' or 'ryme' from ῥυθμός, ignored what had happened to its meaning in the course of its journey from Greek by way of the Latin 'rythmus' and 'rithmus' and the French 'rime', and, in attempting to indicate the original derivation by using spellings like 'rythme' and 'rhythme', and to restore something of original meaning, confused the useful distinction which had arisen in usage between the ideas of rime and rhythm as we now know them. 'Rime', reaching English through French, had first been applied (as 'rithmus') to late Latin stressed, as distinct from quantitative, metres. As the former were frequently—and increasingly—rimed (in our sense), it naturally came to be applied to verse using consonance of sound in the last stressed syllable (and all following) of two or more lines, and then to this phenomenon of final consonance itself. This was useful. So also was a word meaning 'rhythm' in our sense, but the difficulty arose when critics, who disliked 'beggerly ryming', resented the narrowing and diverting of the meaning of ῥυθμός to the meaning of 'rime', and tried to restore all forms of the words descendant from ῥυθμός to the meaning of the original. The result was uncertainty in

the use of both rhythm (rythme, rithme, etc.) and rime (ryme, rithme, etc.). King James comes nearest to solving the problem in using sheer translation, 'flowing', for rhythm. Puttenham seems also to be attempting this in his use of 'numerosity'. What can be said with certainty is that the ideas of both rhythm and rime occur in Elizabethan writings, but that great care must be taken to study the context before deciding whether any one of the variants, rhithme, rhythm(e), rithme, rime, rythme, ryme, has definitely one meaning or the other. Sidney, for instance, seems clearly to use 'ryme' in both senses. In Chapter 2 I have drawn attention to all passages where serious difficulty may arise from ambiguity, but that such ambiguity is possible must be remembered whenever these words are encountered. It remains to state what meanings belong to the words.

Rhythm appears, in accordance with its application to late Latin stressed verse, to be used less of classical than of English (or French or Italian) verse, where the time is clearly and strongly marked by voice stress; it means, then, the arousal and satisfaction by means of speech sounds, particularly marked by recurrent stress, of an expectation of events in speech sounds occurring at regulated intervals of time.

RHYTHM the arousal and satisfaction, by means of sounds or visible motion, of an expectation of events in sound or visible motion occurring at certain times; (in language) arousal and satisfaction of such expectation by means of speech sounds; (in verse) arousal and satisfaction of such expectation by certain repetitions (with the possibility of limited variations) in the use of speech sounds.

Rime 1, consonance of sound between the last stressed syllables and all following of two or more lines; 2, verses using this consonance.

RIME as above. (I use this spelling to mark the distinction from rhythm.)

Short See under *Long*.

Slipper (adj.) This is used of words or syllables to mean 'easily moving'; thus, it usually implies 'not overweighted with consonantal groups'.

[SLIPPER not used.]

Song This is used to mean either a complete, usually short, composition of words and music for singing, by either one voice or more than one, or the words for such singing.

SONG a short composition of words and music to be performed by a singer or singers, with or without accompaniment.

Syllable An element of speech, forming a word or part of a word, and containing either a vowel alone or a vowel with consonants, uttered by a single effort of articulation; thus I, ice, nice, i-(tem). The syllable tends to be regarded as identical with the single element of a foot, but it is important to remember in prosody that the single element of a foot is a division of duration occupied and indicated by the syllable, which does not always, though most frequently, entirely fill this division, and which is far from always indicating perfectly the value of the division in relation to other divisions. It is, therefore, not a metrical element at all. One of the interests and difficulties of prosody is to observe the relation between metrical structure, which is not made in terms of syllables, and syllabic grouping, by which alone the metrical structure can be indicated though it is not, and cannot be, a strict notation for metre.

SYLLABLE as above.

Verse This is largely reserved by Elizabethan prosodists for application to classical forms; English measures are not to them 'verse' or 'verses'. Note the references by Ascham, Harvey and Spenser to 'trew' or 'new' versifying in deliberate contrast to English 'riming' or 'rithming'. It appears, therefore, that to them it must mean (1) the arrangement of language into a metrical order based on strict temporal relationships between the syllables used; (2) a single line in such an arrangement.

VERSE (1) metrical arrangement of language; (2) a single line in such an arrangement.

The following words are not used by Elizabethan prosodists, but they require definition before being used in discussion of Elizabethan verse.

Anacrusis up-beat; an extra syllable or syllables occurring at the beginning of a line before the point at which the reckoning of the metrical structure begins.

Catalectic lacking an expected syllable at the end of the line.

Emphasis[1] sense-importance, logical importance, of a syllable or word. This is, of course, not in itself an audible quality, but in English speech it is always indicated by some audible quality in the syllable; in normal utterance this will usually be slightly greater loudness than that of surrounding syllables, but it may also be an unusual prolongation of the time given to its utterance, while in moments of dramatic or emotional tension marked quietness may show emphasis as certainly as marked loudness. Now, the results of dramatic or emotional tension cannot, of course, be regarded as phenomena of essential value in describing the characteristics of the utterance of any language, but it must be remembered that it is a universal English habit of speech to indicate audibly the location of greatest sense importance in a sentence, clause or phrase, and that habits of speech are not readily discarded for the purpose of reading verse. Therefore, the construction of verse in English is made very difficult if the malleability of the language to emotional manipulation is ignored. There is always the tendency to read phrases in verse with the accentuation which their prose sense would demand; to remember and allow for this tendency without being completely dominated by it seems therefore to be an essential of English versification, and the relation of emphasis to ictus will vary between full coincidence and deliberate extreme clash.

Falling an order of speech in which stressed syllables precede unstressed; a construction of foot in which a stressed element precedes an unstressed.

Ictus metrical accent; the indication that a syllable is important by virtue of its position in a metrical scheme, whether or not it has emphasis. It may be clearly observed in the usual manner of chanting nursery-rhymes: 'Peáse púdding *ín* the pót.'

Intensity volume of sound in utterance; the greater the intensity, the louder the sound.

Inversion the altering of the expected order of syllables in a foot into its opposite; where a pair of syllables having an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed is expected in the metrical construction, and a

[1] Elizabethan use of this term has no prosodic significance.

pair in which the stressed precedes the unstressed occurs, the stress is said to be inverted.

Pitch the position of a sound in relation to other sounds determined by the rapidity of vibration of the sounding instrument: where the rapidity of vibration is great, the resulting sound is 'high' in pitch, where the vibration is slow, the sound is 'low'. Notes in a scale are related to each other in terms of pitch; voices are classified by their characteristic pitch. Differences of pitch are audible in ordinary speech, and some languages (probably ancient Greek, and Chinese) have used pitch as a recognized regular means of indicating sense, having a 'pitch accent'. In general, rise or fall in pitch is a common means of indicating, e.g., interrogation or finality in a sentence, and continual slight variations of pitch are a fact of normal English utterance. As will be seen later, pitch may have some structural importance in English verse because of its function in differentiating vowels from each other.

Rising an order of speech in which stressed syllables follow unstressed: a construction of foot in which a stressed element follows an unstressed.

Stress a means of audibly indicating the importance of a syllable by giving it greater intensity in utterance than its neighbours. There are in English continual alterations and variations of relative stress between different syllables, and in completely unemotional speech it is always possible to distinguish between stressed and unstressed parts; in nearly all polysyllabic words, stress is given to some syllables and withheld from others, so that it can be said definitely that stress lies on a certain syllable or syllables and not on others. There are, however, differing degrees of stress on naturally spoken syllables, and these degrees can be altered, interchanged, or assimilated to each other. Further, ordinary unemotional stress may be intensified or overridden by stress specially showing a particular emotional meaning in utterance. Thus, the simple question, 'Are you coming?', will usually have stress on 'Are' and 'com-', with a slightly greater degree on 'com-'; some annoyance in a questioner growing impatient will intensify the difference, making 'com-' more than usually louder than 'Are'; but a further stage of impatience will throw suddenly the main force of stress almost entirely on 'Are',

with a corresponding decrease in that on 'com-'; and if an unexpected person comes in answer to the call, 'you' will take more stress than either 'Are' or 'com-'. It is only the 'natural' stress of syllables spoken without special emotional purpose that is usually of any structural value in English verse, but the possibility of the other, 'emotional' stress may at times either hinder or help a metrist who has suggested some special meaning or force in his words.

Stress is of very great importance in English verse. It is not a 'dimension' in which verse structure is measured, but it is the most important of the means by which measurement is indicated, it is the only means by which foot structure in English can be marked, it is required for both emphasis and ictus, and it is our usual method of pointing rhythmical movement.

It is now convenient to state briefly what Elizabethan critics expected of the metrical construction of lyrics, as a preliminary to examining how far their theories are capable of accounting for their practice. Their disagreements among themselves may seem to make it unlikely that there will be any opinion common among them, and it is true that divergences must be noticed, but they have all in fact common ends in view, though they may disagree about the means to those ends.

Firstly, none of them seems to share Cicero's scorn of the lyric. It is true that much time and space is given to the hexameter in talking of classical measures, and that there are prosodists who do not mention lyric forms, but no one of them suggests that lyrics are of no importance. Gascoigne, for instance, talks lightly of songs and ditties, but in fact devotes much attention to discussion of them, and it is clear that all the prosodists who discuss lyric are fascinated by the possibilities of its varying forms. The lyric is a real, a true, a characteristic form of divine poetry to them, and they therefore take the problems of its construction seriously. It might almost be said that they find in the lyric the exemplar and representative of essential poetry, for they remember the early musical associations of all poetry, and regard 'the well enchanting skill of music' as a main cause of its delight and power to move.

It is then, secondly, natural that they look for certain and often

elaborate structure in the form of lyric. If lyrics are to be written at all, they must have beautiful workmanship in metrical construction. All Elizabethan critics share a horror of careless writing that blunders and jingles towards obtrusive alliteration or insistent rime as a means of concealing unrhythmical and unbalanced structure. Whether they are 'rimers' or classicists, they want in lyric lines that will 'close of themselves' in the sure finality of a completed rhythmical movement. Thus, if they are classicists, they try to ascertain the value of every single syllable, they describe the structure of several kinds of feet, they explain the possible ways of combining feet into a line and lines into a stanza. If they are 'rimers', they pay great attention to rime and its position, to the combination of varying lengths of line and to the choice of syllables to ensure 'slipper' movement. We may, then, expect to find, at least in their own work, structures answerable to rules in almost every detail.

Thirdly, they regard this formal element of structure as decisive in singling out lyric from other kinds of poetry. Though Sidney, for instance, protests against the classification of writers according to the forms they use, nevertheless he himself uses the formal division when he refers to lyric. All these critics, in fact, interpret 'lyric' etymologically, and think of it as 'song', and therefore its musical associations are never to be forgotten. Some expect the music to be there in its strict sense, in the form of melodic line for the words to follow, some perhaps feel that the 'well enchanting skill' may be sufficiently demonstrated in the sounds of the words themselves; but all demand that lyric poetry shall be submitted to the judgment of the ear, which such poetry must please, whatever other qualities it may have or lack. We may therefore expect their lyric poetry to reveal great care in the choice of speech sounds for euphony.

It may seem that the care of Puttenham, and occasionally of others, for visual verse-forms implies a denial of this last point. It is, however, only an unusual form of the fourth point to be made, which itself rises naturally out of the third. The idea of lyric as 'song', combined with an uneasy feeling that their metric

and prosody are unsure and unfinished, naturally produces a tendency to look for supports and explanations of the metrical practice of Elizabethans in arts and studies of more certain rules. Thus, Puttenham looks to visual forms as a means of clearly explaining, sometimes even shaping, metrical structure; yet he still speaks of its effect on the ear. The classicists hope for help from practices and theories established for other tongues than their own. The musicians and more firmly 'English' prosodists rely on music to supply or explain metre: if lyric is 'song', then it is natural to expect the collaborating art to help. So, whether it is to visual or to other forms of aural construction that they turn, we must expect to find, if we follow the guidance of these critics, traces of arts other than the arts of speech in Elizabethan lyric metres.

Finally, all Elizabethan prosodists pay at least lip service to the natural accent', or normal pronunciation, of their own language. They justify us, then, in looking for some use of the habits of ordinary speech in the building of their verse.

Whether or not it was possible for their lyric verse to satisfy all their demands simultaneously, and whether the satisfaction of their demands is an adequate explanation of their forms, we shall now see. It will be well to consider first those Elizabethan ideas which seem to the modern mind least likely to be helpful, that is, their reliance on visual arts and foreign prosodies.

Chapter 4

ELIZABETHAN LYRICS

INFLUENCED BY VISUAL THINKING AND BY FOREIGN PROSODIES

THE concern of this chapter must be, not simply to find out how dependence on alien arts and prosodies may explain the practice and criticism of some Elizabethan lyrics, but also to discover whether the understanding so acquired can truly contribute to enjoyment of these lyrics. Contrary to common supposition, it is not sufficient for criticism to find out why an artist has used a particular technique or included a particular detail of material in his work; the discovery must then be put to a test. The test is, does the increased knowledge lead to readier enjoyment and fuller appreciation of the work concerned? Does it fall naturally into place in relation to the responses to the work, making them fuller and more pleasurable? Does it, once acquired, remain effortlessly and integrally connected with the work, constantly illuminating it? Or does it remain separate, a fact or series of facts which may be remembered when the work is considered without, however, affecting its meaning for the beholder? Does it give us information about the artist while leaving unaltered the effect of his art upon us? If the increased knowledge is of true critical value, the answer to the first three questions must be 'Yes', to the last two 'No'. Thus, the discovery that *La Belle Dame sans Merci* occurs in a letter from Keats to his brother and sister-in-law, and that he makes jokes about the 'kisses four', adds to our knowledge of, for instance, the degree of detachment from his own work which Keats could achieve; but I cannot see that it makes any difference to our comprehension of the poem. The discovery of the nature and extent of the literary associations which references in the *Ode to a Nightingale* had for Keats may, however,

affect our responses to the poem whenever we read it afterwards.

We may find that we are able to understand the motive of some metrical practices among the Elizabethans when we study them in relation to their theoretical background; but this will not necessarily mean that the theories in the background will give us natural enjoyment of those practices. Those theories which fail to facilitate our enjoyment will probably prove to be too far away from the central artistic problem of the verses.

It would be a mistake to suppose that discussion of English verse in terms of other arts or foreign verse will necessarily be fruitless. The descriptions of poetry as 'a speaking picture' or of architecture as 'frozen music' and the like have occurred frequently enough to suggest that the habit of transferring terms has been truly helpful to artists and critics, and it is possible that we may find, in examination of the effects on English verse-making of the visual arts and of classicism, a key to a hitherto locked Paradise of Dainty Devices. It will be well to postpone consideration of the effect of music on verse until after these other influences have been studied. The body of lyric verse produced under them is very small, and the influences have been direct and consciously felt; study of their effects can therefore be both comprehensive and straightforward.

The apparently startling use of visual thinking about verse-forms may be divided into two kinds, of which the first is at once natural and superficial, the second strange but more fundamental. Once poetry is written down, some use of the eye is required for readers to receive an art primitively intended for the ear, and it is natural that writers and printers should take pains so to set out their work to the eye that it may facilitate the reader's understanding of how the visible signs for sounds are to be translated into aural images in the mind which may then result in reading aloud in a fashion closely related to the author's intention. In all writing, conventions of punctuation, capitalization, italicization, paragraph-spacing and the like have developed into established usage as a means of indicating, not only logical relationships, but also the proper use of the voice to give fitting emotional signifi-

cance to the words in utterance. There are letter-writers, such as Queen Victoria, who will go to extreme lengths of underlining to make their vocal stress audible through visual communication with their correspondents. The more anxious writers and printers are to ensure that aural qualities shall be correctly indicated, the more carefully do they arrange the visible signs they use. It is therefore of interest to see that Elizabethan printers occasionally use a punctuation largely metrical in purpose. For example, in printing fourteeners (the line of fourteen syllables with stress on every second syllable) and poulter's measure (alternating lines of twelve and fourteen syllables with stress on every second syllable), after the time of Tottel's *Miscellany*, there is a tendency to use a comma, and sometimes even a heavier stop, after the fourth stress in every fourteener and after the third stress of twelve-syllabled lines, even where the sense does not apparently need a break. Thus, in *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* (1573),[1] the poem *The careful lover combred with pleasure, thus complayneth*, runs as follows:

Now have I found the way, to weepe & wayle my fill,
Now can I end my dolefull dayes, & so content my will.
The way to weepe inough, for such as list to wayle,
Is this: to go abord ye ship, where pleasure beareth sayle.
And there to marke the jests, of every joyfull wight,
And with what wynde and wave they fleete, to nourish their delight.
For as the striken Deare, that seeth his fellowes feede,
Amid the lustie heard (unhurt) & feeles him selfe to bleede.
Or as the seely byrd, that with the Bolte is brusd,
And lieth a loofe among the leaves, of al hir peeres refusd.
And heares them sing full shrill, yet cannot she rejoyce,
Nor frame one warbling note to passe, out of hir mournfull voyce.
Even so I find by proofe, that pleasure dubleth payne,
Unto a wretched wounded hart, which doth in woe remaine.
I passe where pleasure is, I heare some sing for joye,
I see som laugh, some other daunce, in spight of dark anoy.

[1] Ascribed at first entirely to George Gascoigne, but see the discussion of authorship in the Introduction to the edition in The Haslewood Books (series), London, 1926.

But out alas my mind, amends not by their myrth,
I deeme al pleasures to be paine, that dwel above ye earth.
Such heavy humors feede, ye bloud that lends me breath,
As mery medicines cannot serve, to kepe my corps from death.

The punctuation of lines five, twelve, seventeen and twenty certainly appears to be metrical rather than logical, and to encourage a metrical break in the line. In other lines, the medial punctuation seems heavier than it would be in our day, but it does coincide with a slight sense break. Such heavy punctuation, showing a break where the sense neither denies it nor needs it, is frequent throughout the fourteeners and poulter's measure of this collection.

In *A gorgious Gallery, of gallant Inuentions* (1578),[1] metrical punctuation occurs in numbers two, four, five (where the break is very heavily marked: 'Euen hee that whilome was: thy faithfull freend most iust'), and six, with heavy punctuation in other fourteeners and poulter's of the collection for very slight sense breaks occurring at the third or fourth stress. Purely metrical punctuation is to be found in *The Phœnix Nest* (1593),[2] and in *Englands Helicon* (1600)[3] and the other anthologies of the age, punctuation made heavy for metrical reasons is frequent, though not consistent; for instance, to take an example at random, the twenty-fifth poem of *Englands Helicon*, 'Shep. Tonie's answer to *Harpalus complaynt on Phillidaes loue bestowed on Corin*', shows heavy and metrically clear punctuation in the first stanza, whereas in the following stanzas, lines divided from each other quite as much in sense as in the first stanza are not divided by punctuation. This is particularly noticeable in—

Bide a while faire *Phillida*,
List what *Harpalus* will say
Onely in loue to thee,
Though thou respect not mee,
yet vouchsafe an eare:

[1] Ioyned together and builded up: By T. P. Imprinted at London, for Richard Iones, 1578.
[2] Set forth by R. S., of the Inner Temple Gentleman.
[3] At London. Printed for I. R. by Iohn Flasket.

in the second stanza; and in—

> *Phillida*, who all this while
> Neither gaue a sigh or smile:

in the last stanza; compared with—

> She did dreame on nothing lesse,
> Than his continuall care,
> Which to grim-fac'd Dispaire,
> wholely did him yield.

in the first stanza. It is, of course, very possible that mistakes were made in printing, but it is clear that this poem, like the rest in *Englands Helicon*, was on the whole very carefully printed, as in the lines—

> Meete me heere again to morrow,
> Then I will conclude my sorrow
> mildly, if may be:

where it seems certain that the run-on sense is deliberately indicated by the punctuation. It would appear that the later anthologies were using metrical punctuation with less obviousness than earlier collections, but still employing it far enough to establish divisions quite clearly at the beginning of a poem. The more concealed nature of such punctuation at this stage is certainly partly explicable by the fact that the poems in *Englands Helicon* have sense phrasing which coincides with metrical division far more frequently than the poems in *A Hundreth Sundrie Flowres* and *A gorgious Gallery*: that is, the poets have so used words and syntax as to indicate metrical divisions without the aid of external signs, so that the external signs of division are equally valid for sense and sound and therefore not obtrusively independent of sense. It may well be that the careful use of the visible signs of metrical divisions had helped to sharpen the sense of such divisions while their very irrelevance to sense divisions (as in the example quoted from *A gorgious Gallery*) had made poets more anxious to let their metrical construction inhere in their arrangement of words,

revealing itself without the aid of external signs. The use of metrical punctuation is not dissimilar to Matthew Arnold's use of italicized words in some lines of verse: it obtrudes itself where the relative importance in sound of some words is not clear without it, but may be acceptable as a help where it is not the only means of showing this importance.

Where punctuation shows division occurring at invariable points in the fourteener and twelve-syllabled line, and that division occurs between words and not within a word, it naturally tends to suggest that it is possible to break the line, not into two part-lines, but into two shorter lines; and this is, I think, undoubtedly what is suggested by the examples in *A gorgious Gallery*. Cæsura of the classical type, which divides a word, appears never to be recognized in English[1]; absolutely regular division between words makes it impossible to feel any certainty that the parts of the line really belong to each other. It is not, therefore, unnatural that the fourteener in pairs should come to be regarded as interchangeable with the quatrain of alternating eight- and six-syllabled lines; and it is this natural tendency which brings this measure into the margins of a discussion of the lyric. These quatrains, and those into which poulter's measure can be divided, are the various forms of ballad, or hymn, measure, essentially a singable form. In fact, the more habits of printing emphasize a break which is then taken seriously enough by poets to make them wish to show the break clearly in verbal grouping, the more in the end they actually produce a change in the measure. True fourteeners or poulter's, in which the long lines have no real break, are not, and cannot be, lyrical in the sense of singable: a musical phrase long enough to carry the unbroken line is difficult to sing, and almost impossible to sing in unbroken repetition. Hymn measure shows by its name its essentially singable quality. That is, broken fourteeners make a measure essentially different from

[1] Gascoigne describes it in the thirteenth paragraph of *Certayne Notes of Instruction*, but gives no examples, and is, probably, not taking it very seriously; he does not in fact state whether the break is to occur within a word or between words.

unbroken fourteeners; and the effect of attempting to show visibly a form of cæsura is in fact to change the measure. In Tottel's *Miscellany*,[1] there are five [2] poems in ballad measure with the first and third as well as the second and fourth lines riming. As the rime emphasizes the division, the poems are printed with short lines; but, apart from the rimes, there is very little difference between (No. 199)—

Geue place you Ladies and begon.
Boast not your selues at all:
For here at hande approcheth one
Whose face will staine you all;

and (No. 139)—

Charis the fourth, Pieris the tenth, the second Cypris, Iane,
One to assemblies thre adioynd: whom Phebus fere, Diane,
Among the Nymphs Oreades, might wel vouchsafe to place:
But you as great a goddesse seeme, the quenes most noble grace;

though there is much difference between both and No. 140—

To you, I trow, Ioues daughter hath the louely gyrdle lent,
That Cestos hight: wherin there bee all maner graces blent,
Allurements of conceits, of wordes the pleasurable taste:
That same, I gesse, hath she giuen you, and girt about your waste
Beset with sute of precious pearl, as bright as sunny day.

The decline in use of the fourteener [3] and poulter's may possibly be partly attributed to printing habits which encouraged a transmutation into other forms.

Tottel's book shows serious interest in metre in another printing device. Some care has been taken to show by indentation the mingling of longer and shorter lines in various verse-forms, and

[1] Second Edition, July 31st, 1557, with additional poems.

[2] Nos. 181, 193, 255, 287 and 304.

[3] Chapman's translation of the *Iliad* in 1614–15 was the first renewal of the form after a long decline through Queen Elizabeth's reign, and the last important use of it on a large scale in English.

this practice continues throughout the period. The eye is enabled quickly to convey to the mind some expectation of the proportions to be expected in the lines, which are to be heard by the mind's ear. Further, this device is so used in the anthologies as to give some pleasure to the eye, making the reading of a poem a pleasurable experience for two senses. A printed poem becomes a small work of art—or craft—designed to be pretty and attractive in every way open to it. In this way, too, printing had a little effect on the structure of poems as well as being affected by it. Acrostics are essentially a result of seeing, rather than of hearing, verse. Number 141 in Tottel's *Miscellany*,[1] Grimald's poem *Of m. D.A.*, has the letters of Damascene Awdley's name as the first letters of the lines, and this means that the poem must have fifteen lines, so that to some extent metrical form has been imposed by the visual effect of the printing; the lines must be seen if the words formed by the initial letters are to be understood without great effort. This very fact means, of course, that the effect of the printing is finally quite valueless to metrical development. If the number of lines in the poem is dictated by a parlour-trick for the sight, and no reason for that number can be grasped without co-operating in the trick, then this part of the metrical construction is not controlled by rhythmical or emotional intent, and cannot therefore perform metre's function of revealing this intent. It need not be taken seriously. The thing was a pretty toy of compliment, and like all acrostics important only as another slight sign of possible interaction between sight and sound.

It would be unwise to dismiss Puttenham's figures as such toys. It is true that he too relied on printing-house devices to reveal form in the poems he produces as examples in his chapter on Proportion in Figure, and that he says somewhat cynically that they are 'fittest for the pretie amourets in Court to entertaine their seruants and the time withall, their delicate wits requiring some commendable exercise to keepe them from idlenesse'. Yet Puttenham's belief in a real connection between the senses,

[1] Second Edition.

enabling one to make clear some effect or meaning of another, lay deep in him. As to the allegorists, it seemed to him that if a belief or a proposition were true in one set of terms, it must be true in another; that if the eye perceived some quality of relationships in an object that gave satisfaction apparently similar to the satisfaction given by relationships in sound to the ear, a value in such relationships must be more nearly proved; that a significant form in printing could be a sign of true formal significance in the poem. I suspect that in the background of his reading or talking lay some such discussion as Pico della Mirandola's[1] of the sight as a kind of archetype of the senses. He was, I think, undoubtedly the most serious of the writers of his time who dabbled in visible poetry, and if we examine the effects on poetic structure of his ideas, we shall have seen all that is significant in such ideas. It will be best to confine ourselves to Puttenham's own compositions[2] at first, that is, his examples of the Spire, the Pillar and the Roundell. He says that he 'translated word for word' his examples of Lozange, Fuzie, Triquet reuerst and standing Triquet, though it is impossible to tell whether his translation was from the Italian of the 'certaine gentleman' who told him of these forms, or from the languages of those 'Courts of the great Princes of China and Tartarie' where the gentleman 'had long travailed', and I have not traced any originals; it is, of course, possible that the poems are in fact Puttenham's own compositions, and his story of translation is a means of giving to them a mysterious atmosphere of Oriental courtliness. Certainly, however, he offers the examples of the other three as his own.

First, it is important to notice that Puttenham chooses his forms from a sense of their suitability to subjects; or rather, as his purpose is to exemplify the forms, he chooses his subjects from a sense of their suitability to forms. This need not mean that he was thinking preposterously: Milton wavered between a choice of subjects for his great epic as much as he wavered between forms suitable to the subject of lost paradise. To recognize that certain

[1] *Vide supra*, pp. 27 *et seq.*

[2] Given in his treatise discussed in Chapter 2.

forms may mould some subjects more happily than others may show as much imaginative perception as to feel that certain subjects flow more happily into some forms than into others. It means at least that there is some sense of integral relation between matter and manner. Thus, for a spire, Puttenham finds it proper to use the subject of Her Majesty's high-aspiring nature, and the subject of God as single high source of all good spreading below. Her Majesty again supplies matter for the steady magnificence of the crowned pillar, and for the all-encompassing perfection of the roundell. The pillar may be used also by the lover when he praises royal state in his lady. It is easy to perceive a propriety between subject and form here, and certainly the climbing point of the spire and the firm symmetry of the pillar are readily seen on Puttenham's page. His roundells present a slightly different problem, to which we must return.

It remains to be seen whether the words of the poems can, without benefit of printing-house favour, make clear what the arrangement should be. The two 'spire' poems, when printed without division into lines, run as follows:

Like as this faire figure of tall comely stature by his kindly nature endeuors soft and faire to Taper in the ayre till his fine top be quite vanish out of our sight, euen thus vertewe of so bright an hew, shining cleere in you to euery mans vew, not fained but true, shews vs plainly how ye haue made a vow, most gratious queen, with trauel & teen continually to mount on hie, in forme of spire like flame of fire for to aspire after an hier crown & empir much greter, and richer, and better, assurde, in the azurd skie.

God on hie from aboue sends loue, wisedome, iustice, courage, bountie, and doth geue al that liue life & breath, harts ese, helth, children, welth, beauty, strength, restfull age, and at length a mild death; he doeth bestow all mens fortunes both high & low, and the best things that earth can haue or mankind craue, good queens & kings; finally is the same who gaue you (madam) seyson of this Crowne with poure soueraigne, impugnable right, redoubtable might, most prosperous raigne, eternall renowme, and that your chiefest is sure hope of heauens blis.

In the first, the rimes make it possible to observe that the first clause may be divided into seven phrases of six syllables each. The next clause, beginning 'euen thus', is, according to its rimes, divisible into five-syllabled phrases certainly for nine lines, but then the rimes are confusing; '-ly' evidently rimes with 'hie', but 'continually' has five syllables and 'to mount on hie' four, so that the riming does not help in grouping phrases. Five four-syllabled phrases follow, clearly indicated by rime, and then three of three syllables each, adequately hinted by the half-rime on the weak '-er' ending, and held together by the 'greter-better' dissyllabic chime. Then, however, we have apparently the dissyllabic 'assurde', followed by a quadrisyllabic phrase, 'in the azurd', and finally 'skie', unrimed and therefore isolated. Now, it is possible that a vague and general sense of narrowing through shortened phrases to a point may be felt in reading this, aloud or silently, though it is not very easy to observe when the shortening is done by dropping only one syllable at each move, and there are several phrases in each length; but this sense, vague as it is, must be shaken by the apparent expansion of 'in the azurd', and if the figure on p. 49 is consulted, it will be seen that Puttenham cheated in printing this. The isolation of 'skie' is exactly what he wanted for the purpose of pointing his spire, with one unfortunately fundamental objection.

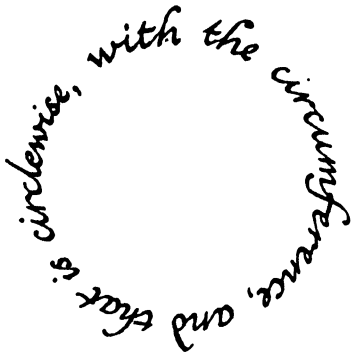
To all occidental readers, associative memory will always suggest that what occurs last in time in reading will occur lowest in space on any one written page. That is, in so far as Puttenham's words can suggest in themselves the figure he had in mind, they must suggest it reversed: as though reflected in water, the sky will hang below the rest. It will be seen (p. 49) that Puttenham warns 'Ye must begin beneath', and the mere fact that the warning must be given outside the poem shows that the words within the poem will not themselves adequately suggest the form in Puttenham's mind.

The second spire is not open to the same objection. The reader may begin at the top with 'God' and, in his mind, descend. Yet it is to be feared that he will begin with 'God on hie' at least, if not

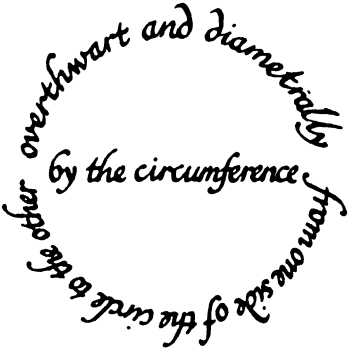
with 'God on hie from aboue', which is the only phrasing suggested by the rime until 'bountie' is reached; and 'bountie' is prevented from giving a satisfactory rime to 'hie', not only because its riming syllable is unstressed, but because its lack of stress has been confirmed by its linking with 'wisedome, iustice, courage', words of similar stress-relationships. In this group, stress-structure and logical division are used instead of rime to give phrasing, which works quite effectively, but is a little confusing when it is not used consistently, but mixed with rimes occurring at variable positions, sometimes close, sometimes far apart. In this, as in the other spire, the intended form can be perceived only by looking at Puttenham's ingenious spacing. This method is, in fact, the nearest thing I have found to metre 'superadded' in the literal sense, a sense whichWordsworth could hardly have had in mind when he used the word of metre as one of the charms of poetry. That is, the 'form' of these poems cannot be perceived through the words themselves, is not inherent in the words necessary to the poems.

Puttenham's visual method, therefore, must be dismissed as failing to establish metre in terms proper to the materials essentially used by poetry.

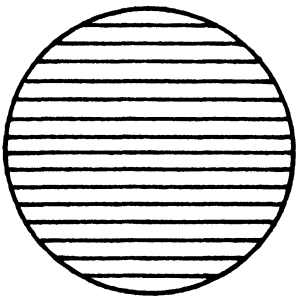
Yet the method had this advantage: it compelled Puttenham to work out closely the idea of relative lengths of line as a means of building significant form, and it can make the reader give great care to his reading. If it could have been carried farther into the heart of the essential qualities of words, it could have been of intrinsic metrical importance; but the translation of terms is incomplete. In examples of the roundell, however, the translation is in a way more complete than Puttenham himself seems to realize. At the end of his description of the roundell, he says, 'our maker may fashion his meetre in Roundel, either with the circumference, and that is circlewise, or from the circumference, that is like a beame, or by the circumference, and that is ouerthwart and dyametrally from one side of the circle to the other'; and one wonders how he can fashion such metres, expecting perhaps something like the following:







What in fact follows is a pair of poems written straight out in lines like any other poem, with no visual resemblance to the roundell he has given thus :



in his collection of geometrical figures. It is curious that Puttenham nowhere shows himself conscious of having completely abandoned his idea of an 'ocular presentation' of this form. So far as structure can give any idea of a sphere in these poems, it is only from the sense of having metaphorically come full circle when the last four rime sounds of the first poem prove to be identical with the first four.

A generall resemblance of the Roundell to God, the World, and the Queene.

All and whole, and euer, and one,
Single, simple, eche where, alone,
These be counted, as Clerkes can tell,
True properties of the Roundell.
His still turning by consequence
And change doe breede both life and sence.
Time, measure of stirre and rest,
Is also by his course exprest.
How swift the circle stirre aboue,
His center point doeth neuer moue:
All things that euer were or be
Are closde in his concauitie.
And though he be still turnde and tost,
No roome there wants, nor none is lost.
The Roundell hath no bonch nor angle,
Which may his course stay or entangle.
The furthest part of all his spheare
Is equally both farre and neare.
So doth none other figure fare
Where natures chattels closed are:
And beyond his wide compasse
There is no body nor no place,
Nor any with that comprehends
Where it begins, or where it ends:
And therefore all men doe agree,
That it purports eternitie.
God aboue the heauens so hie
Is this Roundell; in world the skie;

Vpon earth she who beares the bell
Of maydes and Queenes is this Roundell:
All and whole, and euer alone,
Single, sans peere, simple, and one.

The second poem does not give even this suggestion of a circle.

Both poems, however, use another way of suggesting the sphere. Their content describes its qualities. They are about 'the Round', 'his many perfections' and the significance, emotional and symbolic, of the figure. The images, similitudes and descriptions in the poem are intended to call up in the mind an image of 'the most excellent of all the figures Geometrical', which should, as it were, hang before the mind's eye while the Queen and her qualities are mentioned. In fact, Puttenham has come, apparently without realizing it, to the point of trying to use language to suggest the visual without literally showing it, and instead of making lines form a diagram suitable to a subject, he is using descriptive and associative terms to summon up a shape which is associated on another side with the meaning of the subject. It is almost as though this were a combination of an emblem and a riddle, in which the answer to the riddle would be the picture part of a complete emblem. This is not unlike a curious little poem in Tottel's collection, Grimald's *Description of Vertue*:

What one art thou, thus in torn weed yclad?
Vertue, in price whom auncient sages had.
Why, poorely rayd? For fadying goodes past care.
Why doublefaced? I marke eche fortunes fare.
This bridle, what? Mindes rages to restrain.
Tooles why beare you: I loue to take great pain.
Why, winges? I teach aboue the starres to flye.
Why tread you death? I onely cannot dye.

In this poem, the questions are so worded as to give a complete description of a figure of Virtue, while the answers explain the details of description. It is an emblem, complete without literally pictorial addition, and so are Puttenham's roundells. It seems to

me that the roundells, in their failure to form pictures on the page as in their suggestion of symbolic pictures for the mind's eye, show both the depth of Puttenham's feeling for links between the senses and the impossibility of following his attempts to make verse-forms visible. The roundells are metrical; but the metre has nothing whatever to do with circularity. The varying lengths of line in his other figures do to some small extent control the metre, but not to the extent of immediately increasing our pleasurable appreciation of either the sound or the meaning of the words. Hope must be abandoned of finding here critical illumination of the dark places in Elizabethan metre.

Interest in the visual, then, explains the genesis of a few Elizabethan lyrics without enabling us to enjoy them more as poetry than formerly. Interest in classical forms explains the genesis of others. There are numbers of would-be classical hexameters among Elizabethan poems, but not many classical lyric forms. Harvey and Spenser exchange a few lines, Webbe turns some of Spenser's verse into classical forms, and Campion writes a few poems as illustrations of his rules in the *Obseruations*, and one Sapphic, *Come, let us sound*, for the *Booke of Ayres* produced by Philip Rosseter and himself in 1601. The only classical lines by Spenser which can be called lyrical are the *Iambicum Trimetrum* of his first letter to Harvey, and *See yee the blindfoulded prettie God* of the next letter. Now, I confess that I find the scansion of the following lines very difficult.

IAMBICUM TRIMETRUM

Vnhappie Verse, the witnesse of my vnhappie state,
Make thy selfe fluttring wings of thy fast flying
Thought, and fly forth vnto my Loue, whersoeuer she be:
Whether lying reastlesse in heauy bedde, or else
Sitting so cheerelesse at the cheerfull boorde, or else
Playing alone carelesse on hir heauenlie Virginals.
If in Bed, tell hir that my eyes can take no reste;
If at Boorde, tell hir that my mouth can eate no meate;
If at hir Virginals, tel hir I can heare no mirth.

Asked why? say, Waking Loue suffereth no sleepe;
Say that raging Loue dothe appall the weake stomacke;
Say that lamenting Loue marreth the Musicall.
Tell hir that hir pleasures were wonte to lull me asleepe;
Tell hir that hir beautie was wonte to feede mine eyes;
Tell hir that hir sweete Tongue was wonte to make me mirth.
Nowe doe I nightly waste, wanting my kindely reste;
Nowe do I dayly starue, wanting my liuely foode;
Nowe do I alwayes dye, wanting thy timely mirth.
And if I waste, who will bewaile my heauy chaunce?
And if I starue, who will record my cursed end?
And if I dye, who will saye, *this was Immerito*?

It is clear that we cannot take it that natural English stress has been substituted for classical length, partly because Harvey objects, in his second answer, to Spenser's refusal to accept natural English stress in place of length, and this is probably based on Spenser's habit in the actual verses as well as on his famous worry about the middle syllable of 'Carpenter', which he regards as long but unstressed; and partly because in actually reading these lines, natural stress will not give the sense of the iambic movement in the second foot of each of the three dipodies of the line. This difficulty occurs as early as the first line, where '-pie Verse' and '-pie state' satisfy the demands, but the middle dipody is very difficult. I suppose that 'of my' is intended as an iambus and 'the witnesse' as the allowed tribrach substitution; but if this is so, it seems an offence against accent to treat 'my' and 'wit-' as unstressed; 'lying' in line three is even more difficult, and there are other examples. Yet it is even more difficult, for the English reader at least, to find in these lines any means of easily following length and shortness independent of stress. The iambic trimeter ought, when strictly used, to allow no substitution for the iambus in the second foot of each dipody, and only a tribrach or, less frequently, a trochee or, very rarely indeed, a spondee in the first foot. It is true that in practice substitutions are made sometimes in the even feet, but when this occurs frequently, the iambics are very licentiate indeed. Very licentiate iambics are exceedingly

difficult to follow, where there is any uncertainty about syllabic quantity, and Spenser's lines suffer very much from such uncertainty. Thus, 'flying' at the end of line two appears to be used as a single long syllable by elision, so that we cannot judge what value he allowed to '-ing' here, and therefore are still, by the end of the line, uncertain how to treat '-ing wings' in the middle. Natural stress would make 'wings' much more important than '-ing', and it may be that in Spenser's mind 'wings' was given by position length denied to '-ing'. '-ing' would therefore appear to be short, and this fits well enough for 'sitting' and 'playing' at the beginning of lines five and six, where trochaic substitution is possible. 'Lying', however, in line four, 'raging' in line eleven and 'wanting' in lines sixteen, seventeen and eighteen, ought to have '-ing' long, being in the even foot.

It may be these syllables are supposed to have length by position because of the following initial consonants; but if that be the explanation, I do not see what we are to make of the '-ing' syllable in 'wanting' in line ten and 'lamenting' in line twelve, which ought to be long if that rule of position is to hold, but are clearly short because of their place in the metre, unless Spenser is using trochaic substitution extremely freely, and treating '-ing Loue' as a trochee in lines ten and twelve, and the end of one iambus and the beginning of another in line eleven. The probability is that he used '-ing' as 'common', and that he took the easiest way out of some of his difficulties by overworking a 'common' syllable. Certainly, however, this makes his structure very difficult to follow, and Harvey has pointed out other difficulties: 'The thirde, [whyche] hathe a foote more than a Lowce (a wonderous deformitie in a righte and pure SENARIE), and the sixte, [whiche] is also in the same Predicament, vnlesse happly one of the feete be sawed off wyth a payre of SYNCOPES: and then shoulde the Orthographie haue testified so muche: and, in steade of *Hēauēnli Virginals*, you should haue written *Heaūnli Virgnals*, and *Virgnals* againe in the ninth, and should haue made a Curtoll of *Immĕritō* in the laste: being all notwithstandyng vsuall, and tollerable ynoughe, in a mixte and licentious IAMBICKE: and of two euilles

better (no doubte) the fyrste than the laste, a thyrde superfluous sillable than a dull SPONDEE. Then me thinketh you haue in my fancie somwhat too many SPONDEES beside.' So far as this poem reveals any structure to the English reader, it does so through the very frequent verbal repetitions, which are used to link lines together and to chime within the lines; and this has nothing to do with classical metrical forms. Again, the explanation of a poem fails to enhance pleasure in it.

Spenser's other fragments of classical verse, Harvey's few lines and Webbe's painstaking attempts to classicize Spenser's *Lay to Eliza* have no interest.

Campion's examples in the *Obseruations* set us a quite different problem. It is not only the famous *Lawra* that has evident poetic quality: several of the pieces have real charm and imagination, among them *Rauing warre*, *Greatest in thy wars*, *Constant to none*, *Faiths pure shield*, *Iust beguiler* and *Follow, followe*. Of these, only the last three are classed by Campion as 'such verses as are fit for *Ditties* or *Odes*; which we may call *Lyricall*, because they are apt to be soong to an instrument, if they were adorn'd with conuenient notes'. Yet the others clearly have lyrical qualities, and Campion himself applies the word 'lyrical' to *Greatest in thy wars*, and we may without impropriety treat these poems as lyrics. *Rauing warre* and *Greatest in thy wars* are both given as examples of 'the Iambick Dimeter, or English march'. 'It consists of two feete and one odde sillable. The first foote may be made either a *Trochy*, or a *Spondee*, or an *Iambick*, at the pleasure of the composer, though most naturally that place affects a Trochy or *Spondee*. . . . In the second place we must euer insert a *Trochy* or *Tribrack*, and so leaue the last sillable (as in the end of a verse it is alwaies held) common.' That is to say, the line has five (or very occasionally six) syllables, of which the penultimate must be short, so that the last must seem longer, if not fully long, while the first three syllables must either include two longs, or allow the third syllable to be substituted by two shorts. It will be found, I think, that in the examples which follow, Campion has in fact succeeded in giving English syllables that really do sound fairly 'long'

in the required places. (-dĭtĭoŭs in line sixteen of the first is a tribrach.)

'Rauing warre, begot
In the thirstye sands
Of the *Lybian* Iles,
Wasts our emptye fields;
What the greedye rage
Of fell wintrye stormes
Could not turne to spoile,
Fierce *Bellona* now
Hath laid desolate,
Voyd of fruit, or hope.
Th'eger thriftye hinde,
Whose rude toyle reuiu'd
Our skie-blasted earth
Himselfe is but earth,
Left a skorne to fate
Through seditious armes:
And that soile, aliue
Which he duly nurst,
Which him duly fed,
Dead his body feeds:
Yet not all the glebe
His tuffe hands manur'd
Now one turfe affords
His poore funerall.
Thus still needy liues,
Thus still needy dyes
Th'vnknowne multitude.

An example Lyrical

Greatest in thy wars,
Greater in thy peace,
Dread *Elizabeth*;
Our muse only Truth,
Figments cannot vse,
Thy ritch name to deck
That it selfe adornes:
But should now this age

Let all poesye fayne,
Fayning poesye could
Nothing faine at all
Worthy halfe thy fan

Moreover, it will be seen that Campion has almost always reinforced length with stress. This is indeed an 'English' march: stress provides a guide to structure sufficient for a reader innocent of all knowledge of classical feet.

'Of the English Elegeick verse', Campion gives *Constant to none* as an example.

'*An* Elegye

Constant to none, but euer false to me,
Traiter still to loue through thy faint desires,
Not hope of pittie now nor vaine redresse
Turns my griefs to teares and renu'd laments.
Too well thy empty vowes and hollow thoughts
Witnes both thy wrongs and remorseles hart.
Rue not my sorrow, but blush at my name;
Let thy bloudy cheeks guilty thoughts betray.
My flames did truly burne, thine made a shew,
As fires painted are which no heate retayne,
Or as the glossy *Pirop* faines to blaze,
But toucht cold appeares, and an earthy stone.
True cullours deck thy cheeks, false foiles thy brest,
Frailer then thy light beawty is thy minde.
None canst thou long refuse, nor long affect,
But turn'st feare with hopes, sorrow with delight,
Delaying, and deluding eu'ry way
Those whose eyes are once with thy beawty chain'd.
Thrice happy man that entring first thy loue
Can so guide the straight raynes of his desires,
That both he can regard thee and refraine:
If grac't, firme he stands, if not, easely falls.'

Here, 'the first verse is a meere licentiate *Iambick*', and once again stress reinforces length in the odd lines, so that the ordinary English reader can take them as ordinary heroic lines with simple variation. 'The second is fram'd of two vnited *Dimeters*. In the first

Dimeter we are tyed to make the first foote either a *Trochy* or a *Spondee*, the second a *Trochy*, and the odde sillable of it alwaies long. The second *Dimeter* consists of two *Trochyes* . . . and an odde sillable, which, being last, is euer common.' A curious effect is observed in reading the even lines: the first four syllables use stress to reinforce length in the first and third places with such certainty that the reader comes to expect a continuation of the stressed-unstressed (and long-short) movement, and therefore almost automatically pauses between the fifth and sixth syllables, which are, according to Campion's theory, long and, according to his practice, stressed. The result may not be exactly what he wanted us to hear, but it is at least genuinely a feeling that the line is of two 'dimeters'; the check or hesitation in the midst makes us feel that this is a kind of 'hinged' line of two phrases, as in the following examples:

1.2. Traitor still to loue/through thy faint desires
1.4. Turns my griefs to tears/and renu'd laments.

The second of these examples reveals another curious fact: the check after the fifth syllable tends to make us prolong the following one, so that 'and', which is not helped by stress, is in fact treated as the 'long' that Campion's theory says it should be. 'And' occurs twice more in this position, and other unstressed words, such as 'if', 'with' and 'which', receive a similar dragging prolongation. Lastly, the last five syllables of the 'iambic' lines give a phrase very similar to the dimeters. Again, I doubt whether the English reader hears classical elegiacs, but I think he hears a line structure.

In his chapter, '*of* DITTIES *and* ODES', Campion gives examples of three forms. 'Of that kind I will demonstrate three in this Chapter, and in the first we will proceede after the manner of the *Saphick*, which is a *Trochaicall* verse as well as the *Hendicasillable* in Latine. The first three verses therefore in our English *Saphick* are meerely those *Trochaicks* which I handled in the sixt Chapter, excepting only that the first foote of either of them must euer of necessity be a *Spondee*, to make the number more graue. The

fourth and last closing verse is compounded of three *Trochyes* together, to giue a more smooth farewell, as you may easily obserue in this Poeme made vpon a Triumph at *Whitehall*, whose glory was dasht with an vnwelcome showre, hindring the people from the desired sight of her Maiestie.

The English Sapphick

Faiths pure shield, the Christian *Diana*,
Englands glory crownd with all deuinenesse,
Liue long with triumphs to blesse thy people
At thy sight triumphing.

Loe, they sound; the Knights in order armed
Entring threat the list, adrest to combat
For their courtly loues; he, hees the wonder
Whome *Eliza* graceth.

Their plum'd pomp the vulgar heaps detaineth,
And rough steeds; let vs the still deuices
Close obserue, the speeches and the musicks
Peacefull arms adorning.

But whence showres so fast this angry tempest,
Clowding dimme the place? Behold, *Eliza*
This day shines not here; this heard, the launces
And thick heads do vanish.'

Again, Campion has cunningly chosen many genuine 'longs' for his 'long' positions, and reinforced them with stress; and again, the three opening longs of the first three lines seem to enforce a check before the following phrase. In fact, there is a tendency to allow a long enough rest to balance the three syllables with a length of time corresponding to one of them, thereby creating something of musical timing.

The next example is *Rose-cheekt* LAWRA.[1] The third 'begins as the second kind ended, with a verse consisting of two *Trochy* feete, and then as the second kind had in the middle two *Trochaick* verses of foure feete, so this hath three of the same nature, and ends

[1] For a detailed analysis of this, see Chapter 6.

in a *Dimeter* as the second began. The *Dimeter* may allow in the first place a *Trochy* or a *Spondee*, but no *Iambick*.

The Example

Iust beguiler,
Kindest loue, yet only chastest,
Royall in thy smooth denyals,
Frowning or demurely smiling,
Still my pure delight.

Let me view thee
With thoughts and with eyes affected,
And if then the flames do murmur,
Quench them with thy vertue, charme them
With thy stormy browes.

Heau'n so cheerefull
Laughs not euer, hory winter
Knowes his season, euen the freshest
Sommer mornes from angry thunder
Iet not still secure'.

Like the others, this seems to me to be using English methods of giving importance to a syllable to resolve any difficulties in understanding the structure. So, too, does his 'Anacreontick':

'Follow, followe,
Though with mischiefe
Arm'd, like whirlewind
Now she flyes thee;
Time can conquer
Loues vnkindnes;
Loue can alter
Times disgraces;
Till death faint not
Then but followe.
Could I catch that
Nimble trayter,
Skornefull *Lawra*,
Swift foote *Lawra*,
Soone then would I
Seeke auengement.

Whats th'auengement?
Euen submissely
Prostrate then to
Beg for mercye.'

Here, it is perfectly easy to follow stress-groupings, and certain echoes at the ends of lines almost supply the place of rime, as with 'conquer', 'alter', 'trayter', 'Lawra' used twice, 'followe' used twice, and 'submissely', 'mercye'.

All these poems by Campion present a curious and interesting problem. They all, with the exception of 'the English march', use forms admittedly unusual in English (the Anacreontic is unusual, in that forms consistently using a stressed-unstressed order are very rare in English); yet all, while leaving a strong impression of unusualness, are easy to follow once a little consideration has been given to them. The explanation appears to be that, though Campion has undoubtedly theoretically planned these forms on a classical quantitative foundation, he has not relied on the rules of classical quantity alone to indicate the forms. He has, with great certainty of ear, chosen from among the widely varying lengths of English syllables, a large number of syllables which nearly all readers would recognize as long (though not necessarily equally long) to use in his 'long' positions; this is particularly noticeable in the opening three syllables of *Faiths pure shield*, and throughout *Rose-cheekt* LAWRA. He has thereby avoided much dependence on classical rules of length-by-position, and has not shirked difficulties by relying on many 'common' syllables. He has eased our acceptance of doubtful syllables as long by placing them in positions where the preceding phrase suggests to us a pause or other means of prolonging the doubtful syllable, as in *Constant to none*. Very often his long syllables are reinforced by stress, and therefore reveal their importance to us first of all through the usual English fashion of loudness before we even notice their length. In fact, nearly all his longs are made recognizable by purely English means. He has made many of his foot-groupings recognizable by letting them coincide with the grouping of syllables into words. Thus, a high proportion of the trochees of *Lawra* and

Follow, followe are made by words like 'Lawra', 'trayter', 'mercye' and the like, so that the shape is readily accepted, being confirmed by logical divisions. He has used echoes and half-rimes to help to indicate line-divisions. Finally, he has made large though unobtrusive use of assonance and alliteration both to hold lines and stanzas together and to make certain syllables grow in importance by coming into places prepared by the relating of vowels and consonants to each other. This is clear in *Lawra*, where each stanza has its system of consonant and vowel groups.[1]

In fact, it would seem that classical prosody has undoubtedly given Campion ideas, but that his success in putting them into practice comes almost entirely from his remarkably delicate and acute perception of the facts of English speech. There is no doubt that his readers derive their pleasure in this verse from his understanding use of the qualities of spoken English words, and that if their pleasure is at all increased by recognition of his classical models, it is because such recognition encourages careful handling of every syllable with full regard for its properties in themselves and in relation to those of other syllables. Such careful handling is really the due of all good verse, and it is not solely dependent here on knowledge that classical verse makes use of syllables strictly measured; the reader is already incited to it by his pleasurable hearing of skilled and subtle sound-relationships in the words. I think it is true to say that several of Campion's examples in the *Obseruations* may almost certainly be enjoyed by any reader prepared to follow the guidance of his ear, whether he has troubled himself with the theoretical descriptions or not. That means that what is interesting in these metrical forms depends on understanding, not classical rules, but English speech. The prop of classical prosody is weaker than the poet's feeling for his own tongue.

In his other classical poem, *Come let us sound*, Campion uses, not only this prop, but also that of the precise notation of musical accompaniment; but this raises another problem, and it is time that we turn to look at verse influenced by music.

[1] See Chapter 6.

Chapter 5

ELIZABETHAN LYRICS
INFLUENCED BY MUSIC

COME let us sound has brought us to the poetry which uses music as a prop for its structure, and it is reasonable to suppose that music will provide more fruitful suggestions for interpreting verse-forms than those other supports which we have already examined. In the first place, music like poetry (and all forms of speech) has extension in time, and therefore exists under some of the same conditions as poetry. To consider musical form is not to confuse the discussion of poetry by thinking in terms of a largely irrelevant dimension, as too long thought of visual (spatial) forms must do. Music and lyric verse appeal to the same sense, and the ear is the judge of form in both. In the second place, music is an art of strong native growth in England, as the arrangement of syllables in strict quantitative proportions is not, and never has been. To this day the English are a great singing race, and the high standing of English music beside that of most of the rest of Europe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries is now well known.[1] No more is necessary than to state that English poets of the Elizabethan age were writing in an isle full of noises, sounds and sweet airs. When they linked their art to music, they linked it to an art german to itself in kind, and a kindly fruit of their native earth.

Their music was still mainly vocal (though the use of instruments was developing), and this vocal music may be broadly divided into two main kinds, both of which have their importance

[1] See, for instance, the *Oxford History of Music* (Introductory volume, 1st edition, and vol. I, 2nd edition, 1929); *A History of Music in England*, by Ernest Walker (1907); and *English Madrigal Composers*, by E. H. Fellowes (Oxford, 1921).

for our study.[1] It is important to recognize the division as a real one, for the effects of the two on verse-forms are not identical. The two main kinds are the Madrigal and the Air.[2] The madrigal is generally regarded as being the more 'learned' form of the two, and it certainly has for ancestors both the learned polyphonic writing for the Church and the secular madrigals brought from Italy for English admiration.[3] Madrigals were written for several voices, in which all were of equal importance. Each voice had an independent melodic line of great interest, and usually each voice sang all the words of the verses set, instead of mere supporting phrases. Though the parts were of independent importance, they were linked, not only by the skilful intertwining of their melodies, but by free use of 'points of imitation'; these were musical phrases, often apparently composed to illustrate musically some emotional or dramatic sense of the words, repeated sometimes by the voice which first introduces them, but always by the other voices entering with the phrase some little time after its first introduction. Thus, one of Morley's canzonets[4] for two voices contains the passage quoted as example (*a*) on p. 110: this is a clear and simple example of the idiom. Example (*b*) is a more elaborate treatment

[1] This division is an over-simplification in a period when other forms of vocal writing certainly existed, but it will clarify without falsifying prosodic discussion connected with music.

[2] Dr. Fellowes has pointed out that there is no virtue in retaining the spelling 'ayre'; to me this spelling is a positive nuisance, as it obscures the real connection between Elizabethan airs and what we now mean by an air, and suggests that the Elizabethan 'ayre' is a form of music more remote and strange than in fact it is.

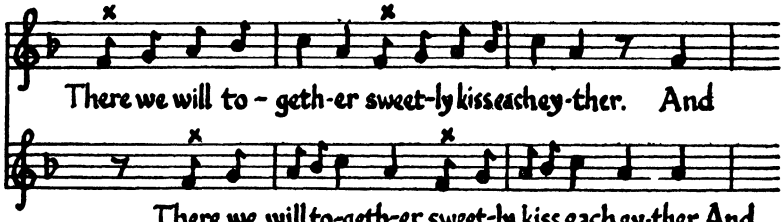
[3] Byrd, now gaining increasing recognition as one of the noblest composers in sixteenth-century Europe as well as in the whole course of English music, brought the experience and much of the style of his church compositions into the secular madrigals of *Psalms, Sonnets and Songs of Piety* in 1588. In the same year, the publication of Yonge's *Musica Transalpina* gave renewed impetus to the interest in foreign fashions in music.

[4] The canzonet was said to be a somewhat lighter and simpler composition in the same style as the madrigal; in fact, some canzonets were as elaborate as compositions called madrigals, some madrigals as slight as compositions called canzonets. See E. H. Fellowes, *English Madrigal Composers*. We may therefore for our purposes treat the two terms as interchangeable.

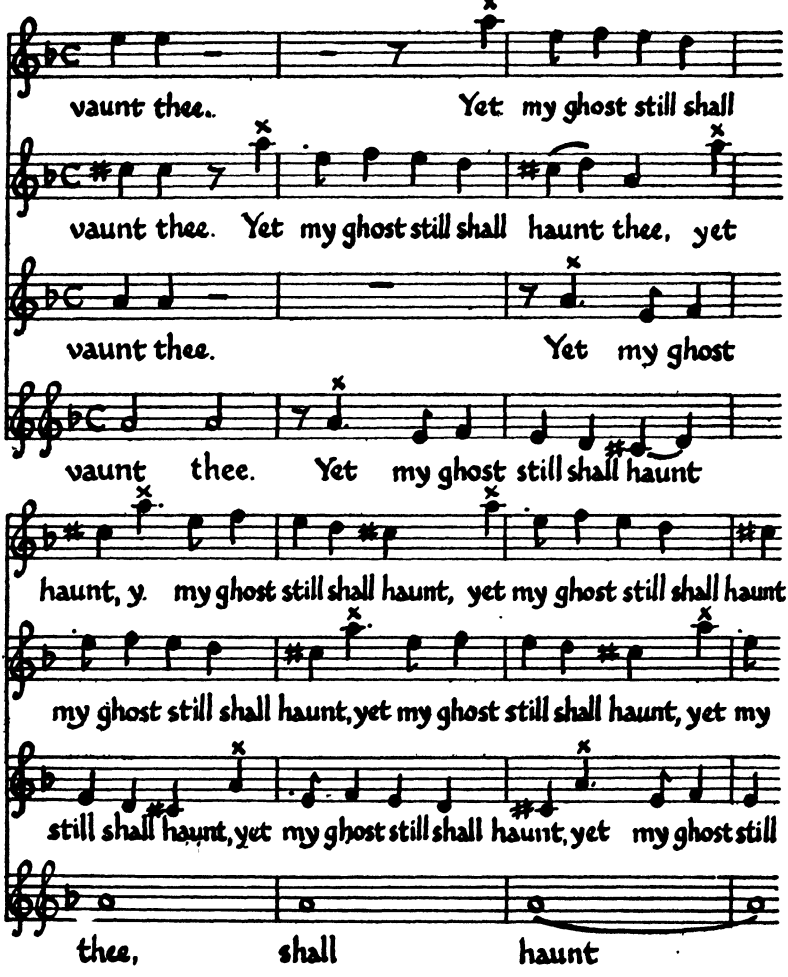
of the method; it comes from No. 3 of the same composer's madrigals for four voices. Both are quoted in *English Madrigal Composers*, by E. H. Fellowes, and I have given the examples in his form, with his barring.

The Elizabethan printings (and manuscripts), however, do not give this barring, as their system was different from ours. The Elizabethan system is discussed in *English Madrigal Composers* and the *Oxford History of Music*, but all that concerns us here may be simply stated. Bar-lines were used, more or less freely by different composers, but they were not used to divide the music into isochronous sections, each containing a certain number of whatever was the musical unit of quantity, crotchet or minim; they were placed where they might indicate the phrasing required from the voice to bring out the significance of words and music. It will readily be seen that this kind of barring would be very confusing to the eye if the several voices of the madrigal were printed in score, as the entries of the different voices occur at points separated by time intervals different from the times of whole phrases, which in any case were not always equal to each other; the bar-line would therefore not coincide in position in the score of several parts. This is why I have quoted Fellowes's barring, as the illustration of imitation requires score, and this barring assists easy reading. Elizabethan madrigal parts, however, were printed separately, so that each singer had only his own part to read as he sang; and if he lacked the guide to entries given by seeing the other parts, he was free from the confusion of seeing bar-lines which did not coincide with his phrasing. The independent importance of each voice, combined with this use of the whole phrase as the only marked rhythmical unit, meant, of course, that differing rhythmical constructions were often to be heard simultaneously. Some indication of the principal rhythmical movement was given by use of time-signatures, and a change in that movement was sometimes shown by the insertion of other signatures in the course of the work; but these changes were not always so indicated, and the singer and hearer had to be alert for their arrival. The final rhythmical complication was that the co-

(a) I go before, my darling : Morley 2-part canzonets, No. 4.



(b) In dew of roses : Morley 4-part madrigals, No. 7



incidence of all voices in a full rhythmical close was avoided (after the manner of earlier church music) either until the composition reached its end or at least until some very important turn in the meaning of the poem was reached.

In setting the words, composers sometimes restricted themselves for long passages at a time to one note for each syllable, as in Example (*a*) on p. 110; equally often, they gave two (as for 'haunt' in Example (*b*)) or several more, in runs or more elaborate groups; single notes given to a syllable could vary in length (as in Example (*b*)) from a quaver to two semibreves (the latter sixteen times as long as the former). Several composers used onomatopœic devices, such as notes suggesting bell-peals, or a short rest for breathing before 'Ay, me!' to suggest a sigh, when the words seemed to them to ask for this. They would do so even when they had to expand the meaning of the words to find the suggestion. Fellowes says[1] of Farnaby's *Canzonets to Fowre Voyces* (1598): 'There are many . . . good things in the Set. Among these is the realistic representation of Vulcan's hammer-strokes towards the close of *Some time she would, and some time not* (No. 16). This is one of those cases in which the composer could add something to the work of the poet, thus widening his range of vision; the poet naturally makes no allusion to the hammer and the anvil, but the musician sees in the mention of Vulcan's name the opportunity for painting in a background that recalls leading ideas associated with that deity, yet without distracting attention from the poet's main theme. Thus, for several bars, each of the two strong beats is punctuated in one voice-part or another with the word *Vulcan*, while the anvil rings again on the ear.' Certainly the composer has added 'something to the work of the poet', but we cannot be sure that he widened 'his range of vision' in the direction the poet wanted: it may be that the poet might have felt with Tennyson that he did not care for these musicians, for they made him say twice what he wished to say once. The words of the poem are as follows:

[1] Op. cit., pp. 233–4.

Sometime she would, and sometime not;
The more request, the more disdained.
Each woman hath her gift, God wot,
And ever had since Venus reigned.
Though Vulcan did to Venus yield,
I would have men to win the field.

To emphasize 'Vulcan' rather than 'woman', 'men' and 'Venus', seems to me to run some slight risk of 'distracting attention from the poet's main theme'. I have treated this point at some length for a reason which will appear later.[1] Though these devices were sometimes used with a naïveté which drew scorn from Campion,[2] they certainly appear to have been very popular.

Airs were written in an idiom differing considerably from that of the madrigal, and seem to have derived their ancestry from secular and probably popular music. Early popular ('folk') vocal music is essentially music of the melody of a single voice (or voices taking the melody in unison), and airs were written for a single voice with instrumental accompaniment, usually by the lute.[3] The 'popular' origin of airs meant no disgrace. Their fore-

[1] *Vide infra*, p. 148.

[2] 'There are some, who to appeare the more deepe, and singular in their iudgement, will admit no Musicke but that which is long, intricate, bated with fuge, chaind with sincopation, and where the nature of euerie word is precisely exprest in the Note, like the old exploided action in Comedies, when if they did pronounce *Memini*, they would point to the hinder part of their heads, if *Video*, put their finger in their eye. But such childish obseruing of words is altogether ridiculous.'—*A Booke of Ayres*. . . . London, 1601: To the Reader.

[3] It is true that some of the later collections of airs, when accompaniments were rather more elaborated than in earlier sets, were announced as being suitable for performance by several voices, of which all but one would take accompanying parts; but this is, I think, simply the answering movement to that of the madrigalists who announced some of their sets as being equally suitable for performance by voices or viols, or by one voice with viols. As instruments developed, madrigal musicians hastened to assure the music-buying public that their works could be used for the family chest of viols, and it became a common practice to advertise the diverse uses of several forms of compositions. Though madrigals and airs might perhaps be performed by similar combinations of voices, their effect would remain different, with a difference akin to that between a mature Beethoven string quartet and the slow movement of Borodin's Quartet in D Minor, which is largely an accompanied solo for the first violin.
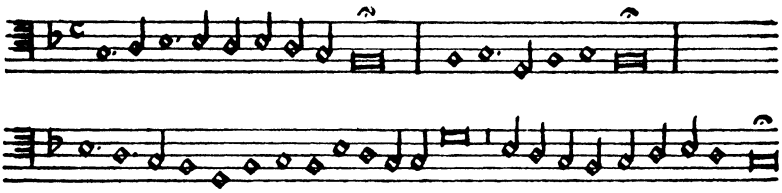
bears included the wonderful *Greensleeves*, which may come to us from days even before Henry VIII, and was certainly very well known and widely sung for years before many of the air-composers known to us by name were at work. It may, of course, have been the work of a learned musician, but if so, his name is lost, and only his melody went on being named, and used over and over again. Words for *Greensleeves* were printed in 1584, in *A Handful of Pleasant Delights*, and the melody is printed in a Lute Book of 1594. Like many (though certainly not all) of the later airs, the song has a refrain, here as long as the main stanza, each consisting of four lines. The refrain contains much repetition, and though not nonsense, cannot be said to add much to the sense of the song.

Alas, my love! ye do me wrong
To cast me off discourteously:
And I have loved you so long,
Delighting in your company.
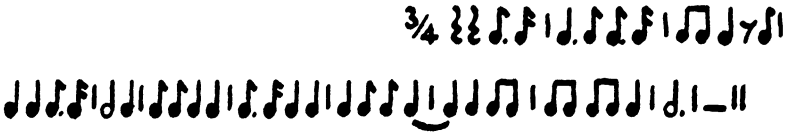
Greensleeves was all my joy,
Greensleeves was my delight,
Greensleeves was my heart of gold,
And who but my Lady Greensleeves.

The tune can be repeated for many stanzas of verse: eighteen stanzas are given in *A Handful of Pleasant Delights*. Many of the second and fourth lines of the stanzas end in weak syllables, as in that quoted. The stanzas themselves contain repetition, ten of them ending with the line, 'And yet thou wouldst not love me', and three more with the words 'love me'. The tune, however, shows that this song is of a type which not all the air-composers followed. It has a very simple repeating rhythm, readily fitting into modern barring with a 6/8 time signature, and this suggests that it has some associations with dance music. Dance rhythms, of course, were used in song-writing, and influenced the one form of part-writing for voices which seems to be a meeting-place between madrigals and some airs, the ballet or 'Fa-la'. The ballet (cf. the Italian Ballate, and Dante's comment, *supra*, p. 27) was based on songs for dancing, and unlike the madrigal, had frequent

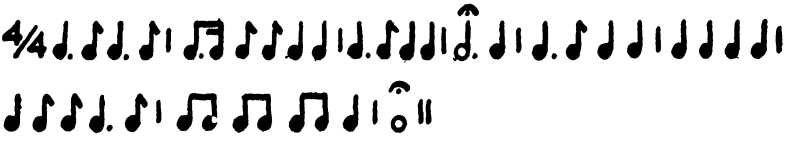
rhythmical full closes, with passages of strongly marked rhythms sung by all voices together to the syllables 'Fa-la-la'. Songs like *Greensleeves* belong to a similar tradition, but some air-composers followed rather the example of *Western Wind*, another well-known song dating from the early sixteenth century. As it is given in B.M. Reg. MSS. 58, the tune is as follows:



The tune of this is clearly not divisible by bar-lines into simple isochronous units; how incapable it is of such division may be demonstrated by the fact that two attempts to modernize the rhythm have resulted in versions quite different from each other. The first is from *English Melodies from the Thirteenth to the Eighteenth Century* (J. M. Dent, London, 1910), where the tune is given thus:



The second is from *Melody and the Lyric* (J. M. Dent, London and Toronto, 1930), by John Murray Gibbon, who says that he is quoting the version I have just given; it must have suffered some sea-change on its way to Canada, for what he actually gives is this:



The two modernized versions are almost as different from each other rhythmically as they are from the original, and they are equally capable of giving a false impression of the effect of the original, which clearly refuses to have its melodic and rhythmical interpretation of the words bound by any strict bonds of metronomic beat. Many air-composers exercised considerable freedom of phrasing in setting words, and it would be dangerous to suppose that their work was as much simpler rhythmically than that of the madrigalists as a song like *Greensleeves* might suggest.

Yet the very fact of their use of accompanied solo freed their work from the complication of many cross-rhythms. The need to repeat the tune for several stanzas gave one element of clear and simple repetition to the form of their work, and possibly tended to simplify the tune. The use of a plucked instrument like the lute for accompaniment may have produced a further tendency towards repetitive rhythms, as it is difficult to make the sounds of such instruments appear shapely without such methods, for they lack melodic interest. Certainly there are signs that, while strict barring is as unjust to the free phrasing of airs as it is to madrigal music, yet whole phrases (often corresponding to whole lines of verse) were often made more nearly equal to each other in their total duration than is common in the madrigal. For an example taken at random, the setting by Cavendish (from his *Ayres in Tabletoire* of 1598) of Fulke Greville's *Loue, the delight* gives musical phrasing of equal length for each of the first two pairs of lines in the stanza, and phrases of equal length for each of the last two lines, though the rhythmical movement has free changes within the phrases.

> Loue, the delight of all well-thinking minds,
> Delight, the first of virtues dearly lou'd,
> Virtue, the highest good that reason finds,
> Reason, the forge on which men's thoughts are prou'd
> Are from the world by Nature's power bereft,
> And in one creature for her glory left.

The phrases for each separate line are not exactly equal in length, though very nearly so. Each syllable has one note to itself, and

those within the lines mostly vary in value only between crotchet and quaver, but there is an exception: the second syllable of the second line has a minim—four times the quantity of the quaver, twice that of the crotchet. *Tobacco*, No. 3 of Tobias Hume's *Musicall Humors* of 1605, also for the most part gives one note to a syllable, but occasionally allows two, as for each syllable of 'wanton' and for 'the' in 'the ears'. 'So doth tobacco' is usually given a phrase half as long as that for the preceding line, but the third and fourth 'So doth tobacco's' have phrases half as long again as the others for these words.

Tobacco, Tobacco.
Sing sweetly for tobacco!
Tobacco is like loue, O loue it,
For you see I will proue it.
Loue maketh lean the fat men's tumour,
So doth tobacco.
Loue still dries up the wanton humor,
So doth tobacco.
Loue makes men sail from shore to shore,
So doth tobacco.
'Tis fond loue often makes men poor,
So doth tobacco.
Loue makes men scorn all coward fears,
So doth tobacco.
Loue often sets men by the ears,
So doth tobacco.
Tobacco, tobacco,
Sing sweetly for tobacco.
Tobacco is like loue, O loue it,
For you see I have proued it.

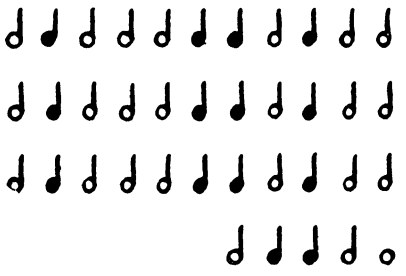
For *Me, me and none but me* (No. 5 in *The Third And Last Booke Of Songs Or Aires*, 1603), Dowland varies the length of notes given to syllables very widely: his first 'me' is twice as long as his second, and the third is six times as long as the second, while 'too' and 'long' are eight times as long as the second 'me'.

Me, me and none but me, dart home, O gentle Death,
And quickly, for I draw too long this idle breath.

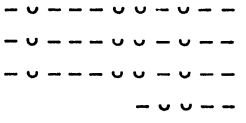
Robert Jones, for *Once did my thoughts* (No. 11 in *The Muses Gardin for Delights*, 1610), gives four notes for syllables like 'and', 'pas-' and 'them'.

> Once did my thoughts both ebb and flow,
> As passion did them move.

Many composers give several notes for a single syllable, though airs on the whole have such divisions of the syllable occurring comparatively rarely in relation to the number of syllables having only one note each. It is, however, even rarer to find a song in which the relation between notes and syllables is as strict as in Campion's *Come let us sound*, which appeared in the book of airs he published with Philip Rosseter in 1601. Here, one note is given to each syllable, there are no rests, and every syllable 'long' according to the metrical scheme has a note exactly twice as long as that given to every short syllable. The musical pattern, which is as follows:



therefore coincides exactly with a quantitative metrical pattern as follows:



though Campion makes no attempt to insert bar-lines corresponding with divisions into feet. It is possible that he knew of the attempt made in France by Jean-Antoine de Baïf, Thibaut de Corneille and Claude le Jeune, to write 'musique mesurée à

l'antique',[1] but neither he nor any other English composer pursued the idea as fully as the French originators. So far as I am aware, this is the only Elizabethan English song which carries out the idea,[2] and its very uniqueness should put us on our guard. Music was here used to indicate exactly the metrical structure precisely because the Sapphic was felt to be a strange metre in English, and the composer thought it advisable to use his musical notation to show clearly a structure for which the words themselves were an unreliable notation.[3] Where there was no attempt at a foreign metre, composers allowed themselves greater freedom, though the air was certainly more direct and simple in effect than the madrigal.

In illustrating the effects of these two forms of music on metrical structures, it will be impossible to take more than a few of the hundreds of poems printed in the sets of madrigals and airs. I have attempted to choose poems both truly characteristic of their kinds and valuable as poetry, that time and space may not be wasted on verse interesting for nothing but its capacity to demonstrate a theory. If the poems are characteristic, what is true of their structure in relation to the companion music will be true of other poems of the same type, and the bibliography for this chapter will provide lists of collections of poems of the two types which may be subjected to similar examination. I propose to discuss both poems of which we still have the music, and poems of which the music is lost (or never existed), to ensure that the argument may not be led into talking of the music when it should now consider the poetry.

As examples of lyrics characteristic of madrigal verse I have chosen *Slow, slow, fresh fount*, from *Cynthia's Reuels* (1600), by

[1] For discussion of this see Frances A. Yates, *The French Academies of the Sixteenth Century* (London, 1947), and Bruce Pattison, *Music and Poetry of the English Renaissance* (London, 1948).

[2] There is a setting by Byrd of hexameters, but this is not, of course, metrically a lyric measure.

[3] It should, however, be pointed out that Campion did make some attempt to use qualities of the words themselves to help the reader through any uncertainty about quantities; see Chapter 6.

Ben Jonson, which was set by Henry Youll as No. 8 of his *Canzonets to three voyces* (London, 1608); *I follow, lo, the footing* (anon.), which has the interest of being set by two composers, Thomas Morley, who used it for No. 17 of *Canzonets or Little Short Aers to Fiue and Sixe Voices* (London, 1597), and Francis Pilkington, who used it for No. 2 of *The First Set Of Madrigals And Pastorals of 3, 4, and 5 Parts* (London, 1613); *What is life or worldly pleasure?* which is set by William Byrd as No. 14 of *Psalmes, Songs, and Sonnets: some solemne, others ioyfull* (London, 1611); and *My thoughts hold mortal strife*, by William Drummond of Hawthornden, who called the poem 'Madrigal V' in *Poems, the second part*, in *Poems: Amorous, Funerall, Diuine, Pastorall, in Sonnets, Songs, Sextains, Madrigals*, 'By W. D., the Author of the Teares on the Death of Mœliades' (Edinburgh, 1616), though it was not in fact set to music. Drummond appears to have been the first English poet to use the term 'madrigal' of a form of verse not necessarily attached to a musical setting.

Slow, slow, fresh fount is printed in *Cynthia's Reuels* in the 1601 quarto and 1616 folio in the following arrangement of lines:

> Slow, slow, fresh fount, keep time with my salt tears:
> Yet slower, yet; O faintly, gentle springs:
> List to the heavy part the music bears,
> Woe weeps out her division when she sings.
> Droop herbs and flowers:
> Fall grief in showers,
> Our beauties are not ours;
> O, I could still,
> Like melting snow upon some craggy hill,
> Drop, drop, drop, drop,
> Since nature's pride is now a withered daffodil.

In Youll's setting, the arrangement of words for the bass voice[1] is this: Slow, slow fresh fount, *Slow, slow fresh fount*, Keep time with my salt teares, *Keep time with my salt teares*, with my salt

[1] Bodl. Antiq. e. E. $\frac{1608}{1}$, CANZONETS TO THREE VOYCES NEWLY COMPOSED BY HENRY YOULL PRACTICIONER IN THE ART OF MUSICKE . . . BASSUS.

teares Yet slower, yet O faintly, gentle springs, O faintly, faintly gentle springs. List to the heauie part the Musicke beares, List to the heauie part the Musicke beares. Woe weeps out her deuision, when she sings, Woe weepes out her deuision when she sings Droope hearbes and flowres, Fall griefe in showres, Our beauties are not ours, *Our beauties are not ours*, Droope hearbes and flowres, fall greife in showres, Our beauties are not ours, *Our beauties are not ours*, O I could still, like melting Snow vpon some craggy hill, *vpon some craggy hill*, Drop, drop, drop, drop, drop, O drop, O drop, drop Since natures pride is now a withered Daffadil Since natures pride is now a withered Daffa, Daffa, Daffa dill Since, natures pride is now a withered Daff a dill.

I have given the words exactly as they are printed by Youll, or rather by Thomas Este, the printer, with the exception of the italicized phrases, which I have expanded from the indications 'Slow, ij', 'Keep ij', 'Our, ij', 'Our, ij', 'vpon ij'. The note values given by Youll vary from quaver to breve, with as much difference as between a crotchet and a semibreve for the different 'slow's (the first two have 𝅝 and 𝅗𝅥., the second two ♩ each). These two facts, of the repetitions and variations of words, and of the fluctuating value of notes for syllables, should make it quite clear that there is no slightest hope of finding in the music an exact indication of the way in which the words should be read. There is no need to fear that the music has used any other of its possible devices to point out consistently the relative importance of different syllables: though 'Our beauties are not ours' is treated consistently in the melodic line, 'Woe weepes out her deuision when she sings' has runs moving in opposite directions in the two melodic phrases given to it, so it cannot be said that changes in pitch give a guidance lacking in the words. In fact, neither the music here, nor that of any other of the madrigal verses for music in the chosen group can possibly help to decide details of interpretation in the words, and I believe this fact to be true of all the madrigal verse of the Elizabethan age. If it be objected that we should not read poetry originally sung, it must be pointed out yet again that much of this poetry is in fact read with pleasure without

the music; that collections like *Englands Helicon* print without music poems which elsewhere had music, for the enjoyment of contemporaries of the composers; and that Drummond's practice of writing 'madrigals' without music presumably indicates that Elizabethans as well as later readers felt no guilt in looking for the satisfactions of poetry proper in some of the poems set to music.

What the arrangement of words in the musical setting of this poem does show is that, while words were altered, manipulated and repeated to suit the convenience of the composer, they were never so altered at the expense of the integrity of the phrase. The only alterations of poetic phrases here are in the repetition of 'faintly' in the second treatment of 'O faintly, gentle springs', in the expansion of the 'Drop, drop' passage, and in the 'Daffa, Daffa' expansion of 'Daffadill ' in the second treatment of 'Since natures pride is now a withered Daffadill'. Of these, it may be said that the last is some violation of the poetic intention in the phrase, but at least the phrase is not broken up: it is only expanded. The other two preserve the sense of the phrase by repeating words of which the repetition is in keeping with the emotional meaning (as, for instance, repetition of 'springs' would not be). They also avoid rhythmical dislocation by repeating words in which the stress arrangement is one which is repeated elsewhere in the passage; thus 'faintly' has stress similar to that in 'gentle', and therefore its repetition merely emphasizes a repetition already present, while the isolation of 'drop' in its heavy single stress makes it obviously capable of repetition without disturbing the main rhythmical movement. Apart from these slight manipulations the phrase appears to be regarded as inviolable.

This is the principal fact of the connections between madrigal music and verse which have metrical relevance. In order to enjoy *Slow, slow, fresh fount*, it is essential to allow whole phrases to remain undivided by any attempt at ordering into simple repeating 'feet', and to read the phrases with sufficient care to make their rhythm perceptible. Where such writing is the work of a sensitive poet, it is wise to begin by reading naturally, though carefully and slowly. So read, the first line of this poem gives us

two phrases, the first consisting unmistakably of four stressed syllables which must be read slowly, the first two both because of the meaning and because of the slight drag enforced by immediate repetition, the third because it is hardly possible to hurry through the consonant group '-sh f-' from 'fresh' to 'fount' the fourth both because it is in any natural English speech a long syllable and because it closes the phrase. The phrase may then be represented either by four of the signs for classical 'longs', – – – –, or by four signs of primary stress, / / / /. I prefer the latter, because there is less doubt about the equal value of stresses than about the equal length of syllables here.

The following phrase, if read quite naturally, would probably give the form / / × × / /[1]; it is, however, possible that there may be some tendency to feel for a repeating movement, thus × / × / × / as the line draws to its close. I think that there is no doubt that / / × × / / represents the more natural utterance, and I think too that it is probable that most readers would pause after 'fount' for long enough to make the opening phrase / / / / with its following rest roughly equivalent in time to the phrase / / × × / /. The second line gives us the two phrases / / × / and / / × / × /; this is an interesting pair, as the second simply adds × / to the same structure as that of the first, and it is probable that the natural pause after 'yet;' would be roughly equivalent in time to '-le springs', so that the second line like the first suggests to the reader some desire to equalize the length of time for the two phrases. The third line seems to run / × × / × / × / × /, without interruption, and it confirms the movement × / suggested at the ends of the preceding lines. Line four must, I think, give / / / × × / × / × /, where again the end of the line tends to steady repetitive movement. The next two lines are particularly interesting, as they show signs of being influenced by, or at least in sympathy with, another characteristic of madrigal music.

[1] I use the marks / for primary stress, \ for secondary stress, and × for lack of stress, as they are commonly used in scanning Old English verse according to the Sievers Types.

The 'imitation' of melodic and rhythmical phrases in the music occurred at short intervals, but it was such a marked feature that it would be likely to impress itself fairly strongly on a hearer, so that he might expect it to be noticeable even when the 'imitation' began some time later than the first example. Here, I think it is evident that the first phrase of line two / / x / provides the model for lines five and six, with six bringing in its imitation close upon five. Line seven might be taken simply as x / x / x /; but with the second phrase of the first line ready in our memory for imitation, I think it likely that / / x x / / should be the form; it has the added advantage of giving similar importance to 'our' and 'ours', and making the apparently paradoxical denial of 'not' stand out. Line eight repeats the first phrase of all, / / / /. Line nine is very nearly the same in structure as line three; it may go x / x / x / x / x /, but I feel that 'like' has some increased importance because of the tendency of all the lines to move heavily at the beginning, and its structure is more probably \ / x / x / x / x /. (It is possible that line three may seem, on greater familiarity with the poem, to run / \ x / x / x / x /, for the same reason.) Line ten obviously imitates again the first phrase / / / /. Line eleven moves into the longest passage of steady repeated movement after a dragging opening on the model of the earlier lines, \ / x / x / x / x / x /. Throughout, the lines are connected by rimes which hold the form together without mathematically sharing it out into equal parcels. The last long line is held as a whole because of the wait for the satisfaction of rime, and the only apparently unrimed line (ten) in fact is a piece of persistent riming in itself. The poem, then, has both freedom and stability in rhythm; it uses varied, but also imitated, phrases which give a considerable satisfaction to the ear in themselves, relates them to the whole by means of passages of steady repeating movement, and by varied repetitions and postponements of rime succeeds in maintaining movement to the very end, without the possibility of a false close before the end.

The following gives a kind of 'ocular proof' (repeated phrases

are indicated by various forms of underlining, while the passages of steady flow may be seen at the end of lines 2, 3, 4, 9 and 11):

Slow, slow, fresh fount, keep time with my salt tears : *a*

Yet slower, yet ; O faintly, gentle springs : *b*

List to the heavy part the music bears, *a*

Woe weeps out her division when she sings. *b*

Droop herbs and flowers: *c*

Fall grief in showers, *c*

Our beauties are not ours; *c*

O, I could still *d*

Like melting snow upon some craggy hill, *d*

Drop, drop, drop, drop, *e*

Since nature's pride is now a withered daffodil.[1] *d*

It would, I suppose, be possible to call these phrases 'feet', and to divide the repeating × / passages into dissyllabic rising feet, but this does seem to me to suggest a simplicity and rigidity not felt in the actual reading of the poem. These rhythms should move fluently, but slowly enough to allow a sense of balanced time to make itself felt.

I follow, lo, the footing shows again that its music cannot give detailed guidance to its structure, as Morley's and Pilkington's settings differ from each other in rhythm. As Fellowes says[2]: 'Thus, in *I follow, lo, the footing*, Pilkington exhibited little of

[1] It may profit as well as amuse the reader to apply this method of marking to the other poems discussed. A quick eye may even perceive the pattern most clearly when it is marked out without the words.

[2] *English Madrigal Composers*, p. 284.

Morley's subtle imagination and humour. His treatment of the words *proud of herself* in this madrigal will serve to illustrate the statement. At that point Morley introduced in the Tenor-part a triple rhythm of more stately measure than that of the other voices, and he thus imparted a suggestion of haughty superiority which cannot be mistaken. Again, in this same composition Pilkington employed a rapid quaver figure for the words *will run me out of breath till I have caught her*, yet he failed to convey that vivid impression which is inseparable from Morley's handling of the same words, both as regards the breathless race and its termination.' The poem runs:

I follow, lo, the footing
Still of my lovely cruel,
Proud of herself that she is beauty's jewel;
And fast away she flieth,
Love's sweet delight deriding,
In woods and groves sweet Nature's treasure hiding.
Yet cease I not pursuing,
But since I thus have sought her,
Will run me out of breath till I have caught her.[1]

This is clearly considerably simpler in structure than Jonson's poem, but it has many of the same characteristics. Here, again, it is important to preserve whole phrases intact. Any attempt to divide some of these lines into feet will almost certainly lead to the squabbling questions which have been asked about, for instance, the seven-syllabled lines of *L'Allegro*: is line one here a three-foot dissyllabic falling line with anacrusis, or is it a four-foot dissyllabic rising line catalectic? Is it a four-foot dissyllabic falling line with the first syllable missing, or is it a three-foot dissyllabic rising line ending in an extra weak syllable? It is, of course, none of these things: it is a seven-syllabled phrase running × / × / × / ×, a phrase repeated in lines four and seven. Line two has the variant / × × / × / ×, the first four syllables of which provide a point of imitation for 'Proud of herself' in the following line. Lines five and eight give further variants, probably / / × / × / × and

[1] As quoted by Fellowes in *English Madrigal Verse* (Oxford, 1929), p. 173.

\ \ x / x / x. Line nine runs quite clearly x / x / x / x / x / x, establishing the movement / x into which all the lines settle, and which is nearly complete in line six, x / x / \ / x / x / x. It might seem that, as lines one, four and seven are unrimed, they might each be printed in one with their following lines, but one and four have assonance with two and five, which in their turn rime with three and six, thus clearly suggesting the division given here. Line seven has assonance, not, as might be expected, with eight, but with one, two and three, thus linking the last group with the first. Like Jonson's poem, this uses shaped phrases in a general movement, this time / x instead of Jonson's x / , and the free running of the whole would be ruined by the attempt to divide it into feet.

The poem set by Byrd is:

What is life or worldly pleasure?
Seeming shadows quickly sliding.
What is wealth or golden treasure?
Borrowed fortune never biding.
What is grace or princes' smiling?
Hoped honour, time beguiling.
What are all in one combined, which divided so displease?
Apish joys and vain delights, mind's unrest and soul's disease.[1]

Here, the first five lines or phrases are long and simple, / x / x / x / x / x. Line six, however, though by foot divisions it would appear the same, is really two phrases, each / x / x. It is important to recognize this, for then some sense is felt of real break between the phrases, and this is a necessary preparation for the two last lines, which would present serious problems to a foot scanner. What would division into feet make of / x / x / x / / x / x / x / x / ? In fact, each of these two lines has two phrases of the structure / x / x / x /, which by foot scansion would appear to be the same as the first line catalectic, but satisfies the ear by resting on the last /, which in each phrase gains extra fullness and close by settling into as long a time as is taken by the / x at the end of each of the first phrases. In this poem again, rime and

[1] As quoted by Fellowes, *E.M.V.*, p. 65.

assonance hold all the lines together in a single whole. The longest passages of simple movement in this run, like the preceding poem, on the movement / x; but whereas the chief phrase carried on this movement in *I follow* is x /x / x /x, in *What is life?* it is the opposite, /, x / x / x /, with corresponding difference in effect.

Drummond's Madrigal V, in *Poems, the Second Part*, runs thus:

My thoughts hold mortal strife;
I do detest my life,
And with lamenting cries,
Peace to my soul to bring,
Oft call that prince which here doth monarchise;
But he, grim-grinning king,
Who caitives scorns, and doth the blest surprise,
Late having deckt with beauty's rose his tomb,
Disdains to crop a weed, and will not come.

Here, the most consistent movement is x /, and it would be possible to say that the whole poem is constructed of dissyllabic feet in rising rhythm with inversion of stress in some feet, particularly at the beginning of lines. Yet this would lead to the feeling that the feet were being altered so frequently and freely as to endanger the rhythmical movement, and that feeling is not in fact present in reading the poem; this division into feet is therefore probably wrong. If, however, we interpret the structure of this 'madrigal' as we have interpreted that of verse set in musical madrigals, we find a more satisfying shape emerging. The first words of the first line seem to require at least the stressing x / /, if not \ / /, which suggests some tendency to give weight to the beginning of phrases. If the reader allows himself to follow this tendency, as he might look for chances of imitation in madrigal settings, he will then take the first four phrases rather like this:

\ / / / x /
\ \ x / x /
\ \ x / x /
/ \ x / x /

Here, every phrase is heavily weighted at the beginning, and this provides a model for those phrases which, instead of standing separated as the first four do, are carried on longer passages of the characteristic × ⁄ movement. Thus, 'Oft call that prince' gives us ⁄ ⁄ × ⁄, 'grim-grinning king' ⁄ ⁄ × ⁄, 'Who caitives scorns' ⁄ ⁄ × ⁄, 'Late having deckt' ⁄ \ × ⁄ and 'Disdains to crop a weed' \ ⁄ × ⁄ × ⁄, which balances, though it does not exactly repeat, the second and fourth phrases. So, by retaining the madrigal practice of allowing a whole phrase to constitute a rhythmical unit, we may find a satisfying sequence of variable repetitions of pattern supported by the underlying movement of Drummond's poem which, like other madrigal poetry, moves continuously to its one close, compelled by syntax and rime to form one whole.

All poetry which has been influenced by association with madrigal music will, I think, show some of the characteristics described above. It will tend to consist of one stanza only, to be a single structure, of less or more complexity, for poetry written under this influence moved like the madrigal to one close only, the full close at the very end. Fellowes's collection, *English Madrigal Verse*, includes a number of poems written in several stanzas, but this does not invalidate the argument; it simply means that the actual writing of this verse was not directly influenced by this habit of madrigal music. When the madrigalists set verse written in stanzas, they treated it as though it were a single whole; when poets wrote verse under the influence of madrigal music, they wrote a single whole. The lines of this verse will often be of varying lengths, but the divisions between them will be clearly marked either by rime or by a clear sense-break or, most often, by a combination of the two. The rimes will usually not be placed in a strict order of couplets or alternate quatrains, except at the end, but will be so spaced and connected as to encourage the reader in feeling that the whole poem is single, that beginning is linked through middle to end. There will often be detectable a simple repeating movement of stressed and unstressed syllables occurring here and there from beginning to

end of the poem, but rarely running right through it without interruption.

Interspersed in this movement or, as it were, laid upon it will be groups of syllables belonging to a sense-phrase of the words in which the arrangement of stresses will not only differ from that in the repeated movement, but probably resist explanation by any such simple formulæ as 'inversion' or 'reduction' of stress. It will, in fact, usually be impossible to explain such groups except as whole phrases, having their own rhythmical structure which must be accepted as whole and given due importance in reading. When such phrases occur, it will usually be found that the respectful treatment recommended for them is justified by a recurrence sooner or later of phrases either identical in stress structure or obviously following the model with but slight variations.

Finally, it will often be found that the 'special' phrases tend, on the whole, to be rather heavier or slower than the repeating movement, so that it is easy to give them deliberate reading. Such deliberate reading is essential if the rhythmical quality of this verse is to be felt; there must be world enough and time for the phrases to spread and settle into a division of the whole duration of the poem, which will reveal that their temporal position is controlled and deliberate. In fact, this poetry must be spoken and heard with care equivalent to that with which music is sung and heard; then natural treatment of the stressing of the words will be found adequate to indicate rhythmical phrasing as sure and satisfying as simple feet. These are the only characteristics of Elizabethan lyric verse which can be said to be possibly direct results of association with madrigal music. Others of its qualities may be the result of musical influences, but they are not specifically caused by the nature of the madrigal; they may be found equally surely in verse influenced by the air.

As examples of poetry influenced by characteristics of the air, I have chosen *Weep you no more* (anon.), which was set by John Dowland as No. 15 of *The Third And Last Booke Of Songs Or Aires* (London, 1603); *What should I say?* by Sir Thomas Wyatt (first published in G. F. Nott's edition of Wyatt's poems in 1816);

When thou must home, by Thomas Campion, which is No. 20 of Campion's part of *A Booke Of Ayres* (London, 1601), put out by Philip Rosseter, who composed the music of the songs in the other part of the book; and *Fair stood the wind for France*, Michael Drayton's Ballad of Agincourt from *Poems, lyrick and pastoral* (London, 1606). Like the poems illustrating the effect of madrigal music, these poems include both some for which we have music and some for which no music now exists. Again, they seem to me characteristic of verse affected by airs, and may therefore be treated as types of this kind of poetry.

Weep you no more does not come first chronologically, but it may be taken first, not only because of its rare beauty and its capacity to demonstrate to the full nearly all important traits of air poetry, but also because, as I pointed out in Chapter 1, it is clearly related in subject-matter and imagery to Jonson's *Slow, slow, fresh fount*, which was our first example of madrigal poetry. Jonson's poem is an admirable example of its kind; *Weep you no more* is an admirable example of another kind. It is particularly interesting that poems so close to each other in content should be capable of illustrating forms of different kinds.[1]

[1] *Weep you no more* is No. 15 of Dowland's Third Book, which contains as No. 8 the following:

Flow not so fast, ye fountains;
What needeth all this haste?
Swell not above your mountains,
Nor spend your time in waste.
Gentle springs, freshly your salt tears
Must still fall dropping from their spheres.
Weep they apace whom Reason
Or lingering Time can ease.
My sorrow can no Season,
Nor aught besides, appease.
Gentle springs, freshly your salt tears
Must still fall dropping from their spheres.
Time can abate the terror
Of every common pain;
But common grief is error,
True grief will still remain.
Gentle springs, freshly your salt tears
Must still fall dropping from their spheres.

Bullen, Q, Ault and Fellowes all print the following form of the poem:
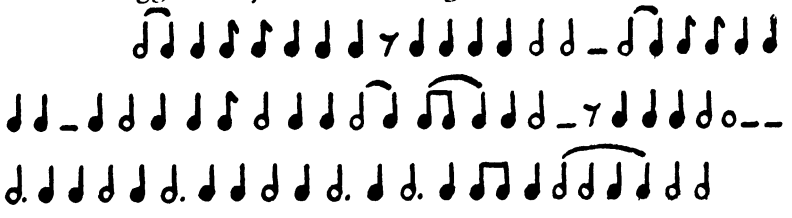
Weep you no more, sad fountains;
What need you flow so fast?
Look how the snowy mountains
Heaven's sun doth gently waste!
But my sun's heavenly eyes
View not your weeping,
That now lies sleeping
Softly, now softly lies
Sleeping.

Sleep is a reconciling,
A rest that peace begets;
Doth not the sun rise smiling
When fair at even he sets?
Rest you then, rest, sad eyes!
Melt not in weeping,
That now lies sleeping
Softly, now softly lies
Sleeping.

This unanimity is understandable when we see that Dowland's setting arranges the words as follows: 'Weep you no more, sad fountains; What need you flow so fast? Look how the snowy mountains Heaven's sun doth gently waste. But my sun's heavenly eyes View not your weeping, That now lies sleeping, that now lies sleeping, Softly, softly, now softly lies sleeping.' It is clear that the later editors have adjusted the words only by the removal of

Fellowes says of this and No. 15: 'The first four lines of the two poems correspond so closely as to suggest a common origin, or possibly a common author.' I do not quite follow Fellowes's distinction between 'common origin' and 'common author'. If his explanation is right, it must be thought that Ben Jonson was the author, as *Flow not so fast* has not only links with *Weep you no more* in its first four lines, but, in its refrain lines, links with *Slow, slow, fresh fount* through the use of 'gentle springs', 'salt tears' and 'dropping'. This may be so; but I think it more likely that Dowland if, as has been suggested, he wrote poetry, wrote only some of his songs; that he received one of these poems for setting, liked it and its possibilities for music, and wrote another on the same model for another song. Either he or another author probably knew *Slow, slow.*

two obvious repetitions in the refrain. The isolation of the last word is suggested by the note arrangement of the music.



It should be evident at once that we have here a different relation between words and notes from that found in madrigals. The words go straight forward, and repetitions of them for singing purposes are very few and limited to obvious places such as the end, where tune and thoughts linger over the meaning of the close. There is never for one moment any doubt as to the order of the words and phrases. Further, the tune is intended for repetition without alteration for the second stanza. Now, this last is on the whole true of all popular songs, old and new, but this repetition frequently involves difficult and finally unsatisfactory adjustments in the stressing of words in different stanzas; all who have sung hymns know how often we must ignore the sense of the words if we are not to be offended by the failure of words and music to continue a perfect collaboration often happily achieved in the first stanza.[1]

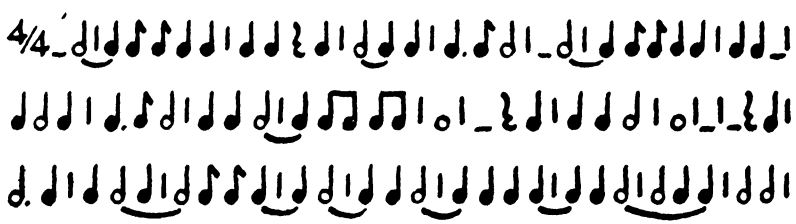
Here, however, there is no such need for awkward adjustment. The first line of the first stanza is given by the music a long note on 'weep', thereby gaining an importance which can be indicated by a stress mark – / –, so that the whole line might run / × × / \ / ×. The first line of the second stanza follows exactly the same pattern, although it is not a pattern common in English verse lines. 'Sleep' fits perfectly into the same position as 'weep'.

[1] The second stanza of *The strife is o'er* is a good example: where stanza 1 has 'Now is the Victor's triumph won', the second has 'And Jesus hath his foes dispersed', and every congregation sings 'And Jesus hath', in rather serious violation of sense.

I have here used the note value of the word in the music to show how the first syllable is given obvious importance, but there is in fact no need to go to the music to see this. The music, indeed, gives some prolongations which seem at first sight startling. For instance, it gives to 'so' in 'flow so fast' twice the value of 'flow', an apparent reversal of the order of things which has led a twentieth-century editor[1] of the music to drastic alteration, giving to 'so' one-third the value of 'flow'. Without accepting the modern version, we may understand why Jackson gave it, and probably feel that in this detail he comes nearer than Dowland to repeating in note values the natural utterance of the words. Yet this is merely detail. Dowland's setting (apart from its superior beauty in whole effect) at least does not pick out for important treatment words or syllables really incapable of carrying it.

What is essential for our purpose is to note that the first stanza has a clear structure of important and unimportant syllables occurring in relationships often far from simple, and that the complexity of these relationships is increased by the fact that some syllables, like the 'so' just mentioned, appear capable of variable treatment. The tune for this stanza perfectly fits this complex relationship of words, and the experience of most modern composers and singers would suggest to them that it would be unlikely that the words of the next stanza could be easily fitted into the tune. Simple foot-scanning prosody, very naturally, regards many of the complexities in the lines of the first stanza as 'inversions' or other variants on feet having regular repeating stress,

[1] Vincent Jackson who, in *English Melodies from the Thirteenth to the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1910), gives the following rhythms for the notes:



and attempts to state what is the repeating pattern on which these variants are made. The repeating foot pattern is probably felt, on the evidence of line two and the most frequent movement of other lines, to be x /. Then the first line would be explained as having either inverted stress in the first foot, or an extra stress on the first syllable, in addition to stress on the second syllable; extra stress occurs again on 'sad', which is in an unstressed position; and the line ends in a weak extra syllable. Line two would appear regular. Line three would have variants at the beginning similar to those at the beginning of line one. Line four again appears to have an extra stress on the first syllable. Line five seems to need an extra stress on 'sun's', coming as it does in an unstressed position in this scheme. Line six needs inverted or distributed stress in its first foot and, like lines one and three, a weak extra syllable. Line seven needs the extra syllable and also extra stress on 'lies'. Line eight requires inversion in the first foot, and extra stress on the first syllable of the second foot if 'now' is to correspond in importance to the 'now' of line seven. Line nine appears to consist of a single inverted foot.

Now, any scheme requiring so many alterations and variants to explain it must rouse some suspicion that it is perhaps not a very good scheme, and the suspicion becomes certainty when the apparent irregularities are found to be almost exactly repeated in the next stanza. In fact, the second stanza may be as readily sung to the tune as the first. The correspondence between 'weep' and 'sleep' has already been pointed out. 'Reconciling' requires only a lingering utterance (savouring its meaning) to correspond to 'more sad fountains'. Line two of the second stanza is as regular as line two of the first, and it is interesting that the music's prolongation of 'so' is effective on 'be–'. 'Rise' in line three perhaps asks for more importance than '-y' in line three of the first stanza, but it is natural to make 'sun' more important than 'rise' in the second stanza after the two references to 'sun' in the first stanza. 'When' in line four certainly seems much less important than 'Heaven's' in the corresponding place in the first stanza, but the extra weight given to it to bring out its correspondence with 'Heaven's' helps

to make clear its extra meaning of 'though'. The line leading into the refrain has a little more weight than the corresponding line in the first stanza in the first 'rest' and in 'sad', but it does not violently alter the stressing. The refrain lines, which are varied only in the form of their introduction, naturally fall into the same shape as in the first stanza. Throughout, the weak syllables ending some lines in stanza one occur again in corresponding places in stanza two.

Clearly, what looked like irregularities on a foot-scanning scheme in stanza one must have been part of another scheme. Irregularities carefully repeated cannot but turn into the regularities of another plan. The two stanzas of this poem should make us jettison the hope of finding an explanation of its metre in terms of simple repetition with recognized variations. The repeating tune of most airs made the sensitive poet acutely aware of arrangements of stress, so that he became capable, as here, of repeating the most complex and subtle of syllabic structures. It does not much matter how we 'explain' the structure of the lines of this poem so long as we do not explain away its subtleties as irregularities. Air poetry could take a phrase that might seem to be dictated entirely by needs of logic or emotion, and treat it as a model on which to mould another, following it in every apparently artless detail. 'Weep you no more, sad fountains' seems the unique and spontaneous expression of a need for utterance; 'Sleep is a reconciling' seems as natural as the other phrase, but it was made by art to repeat in perfection the structure of the first. This is true of the whole relationship of the two stanzas, and this is the most significant of the gifts made by air music to the technique of poets. The practice of writing and hearing airs made the ear sensitive to the requirements of tune, so that words could be fitted to it naturally and, more important, another set of words could be fitted to it as naturally as the first set. That is, such music was as helpful as any grammatical theorist in encouraging poets to have 'regard to the accent' of their mother tongue while using it for artificial (in its Elizabethan, and best, sense) structures. The poets developed an almost miraculous sense of the shape of phrases, and

a capacity for manipulating syllables into shape without doing violence to their natural utterance.[1]

Any explanation that may be given of the line structures must be similar to that given for parts of madrigal verse. The phrase, which here always makes up a whole line, is the rhythmical unit, and it must not be broken down if it is to satisfy the ear. The phrases, however, are arranged into a structure of more evidently balanced repetitions and alternations than the phrases of much madrigal verse. Syllables within the lines are freely manipulated into complex orders, but the line once established is given other lines of like length and structure to balance it, as well as lines of simply related proportion to alternate with it. The music for this song gives passages of equivalent length to each of the first two pairs of lines, and phrases in simple proportion to the first phrases

[1] It is, of course, this command of art which gives to many Elizabethan songs the appearance of that artless spontaneity often ascribed to them. Great artifice gives the effortless certainty of phrasing which naïve critics praise as 'natural', 'direct' and 'simple'. A poem which may have been genuinely spontaneous and direct is quoted by Norman Ault (*Elizabethan Lyrics*, London, 1928) from Bod. MS. Ashm. 36-7:

> Sir Francis, Sir Francis, Sir Francis is come;
> Sir Robert, and eke Sir William his son,
> And eke the good Earl of Huntington
> Marched gallantly on the road.
>
> Then came the Lord Chamberlain with his white staff,
> And all the people began to laugh;
> And then the Queen began to speak,
> 'You're welcome home, Sir Francis Drake.'
>
> You gallants all o' the British blood,
> Why don't you sail o' the ocean flood?
> I protest you're not all worth a filbert
> If once compared to Sir Humphry Gilbert.
>
> For he went out on a rainy day,
> And to the new-found land found out his way,
> With many a gallant both fresh and green,
> And he ne'er came home again. God bless the Queen!

The poem has freshness and imagination, but it is difficult to read rhythmically. It is a good example of how 'unnatural' natural speech may appear when used without artifice in verse.

for the later lines. In reading, there is a strong tendency to use, at the ends of the second and fourth lines, a rest long enough to make these lines as long as the first and third. The fifth line is as long as the second and fourth, the sixth and seventh equal to each other, and the eighth and ninth together balance the length of the longest earlier lines, though they will probably always be taken rather more slowly, with heightened sense of the controlled balance of the words—with, indeed, utterance like that which Sir Philip Sidney demanded for poetry: 'Not speaking (table talke fashion or like men in a dreame) words as they chanceably fall from the mouth, but peyzing each sillable of each worde by iust proportion according to the dignitie of the subiect.' The descent of airs from popular music certainly tended, I think, to give them greater directness and clarity in balancing their phrases against each other, however freely they might set syllables within the phrase.

Elizabethan airs are far from simple in comparison with much later song-writing, but they move to clearer closes in simpler divisions than the madrigal. They therefore play their part in encouraging the development of stanza-forms that remained clear in outline, however complex. The use of refrain strengthens this movement. This poem is certainly complex in structure, but its complexity is of a different kind from that of *Slow, slow, fresh fount*. The latter announces its difficulty at once, in its shifting rimes, line-lengths and rhythms; examination shows how well controlled its 'free verse' is. *Weep you no more* announces its well-balanced structure; examination shows what subtle complexity is controlled into its balance. Both poems use the phrase as a rhythmical unit, but their ways of preserving its integrity while using it to serve a larger structure are different.

The 'weak endings' and dissyllabic rimes of *Weep you no more* may be an indirect result of its being a poem for music. In most English verse, the free use of light last syllables and dissyllabic rimes is felt to make the movement quick, light, even frivolous. This is because rest and finality are rarely felt in a heavily stressed language except on a stressed syllable. Heavy stressing robs the un-

stressed syllables of all deliberation and importance in ordinary speech. In singing, however, even the shortest and quietest note can be sure and deliberate, because it has its definite time value in relation to the other notes. Moreover, as musical rhythm comes closer to modern practices of relating rhythmical phrases to the timing of isochronous bars, there is an increased tendency, both to mark the beginning of a bar, and to insist that the full time of a bar must be filled out by either notes or rests at the end of a phrase. This means that very often a last note may come after the last strong beat, where the last loud note would occur. This last note will then be quiet and unmarked, yet have its due value in the rhythmical structure. Very many of the poems written for airs use weak last syllables and therefore (because true rime must include a stressed syllable) dissyllabic rimes. It might seem that madrigal verse would show this tendency as frequently as air verse, but in fact it does not do so, and this may well be because airs are often rhythmically simpler and more repetitive than madrigals. So long as their verse is read with that care related to care in singing, which is as essential for airs as for madrigals, these light final syllables may be as delicate yet as certain in effect as they are in singing. This characteristic of metrical structure in Elizabethan lyrics contributes to their effect of floating lightness.

This ending is frequent in Wyatt's verse,[1] though it is only limited in the poem chosen. This poem was first printed by G. F. Nott from B.M. MS. Add. 17492, where the fourth line of stanza three is missing. Nott emended the 'though ' at the beginning of this stanza to 'thought', and inserted for line four 'One so unkind'. E. M. W. Tillyard in *The Poetry of Sir Thomas Wyatt, a selection and a study* (London, 1929), restored the 'though', on the grounds that an editor must struggle to make sense of his data before he alters them, and supplied 'I am not blind' for line four. The

[1] This fact makes me suspect that it was Wyatt's love and practice of song which caused his difficulties with sonnet form. It is frequently the lack of firm single rime which obscures the construction of his sonnets, and it may well be that he tended to think of sonnet lines as though they were song lines, so that he gave them the floating end he loved in songs. If one tries to forget sonnet

'though' may certainly, I think, be supported, though not necessarily with the sense he gives for his suggested line. It is clearly impossible to decide what the line should be, though I think it not unlikely that 'unkind' (in the sense, still valid in the sixteenth century, of 'unnatural') may have indeed been one of the missing words, and that the poet was either denying unnaturalness in his behaviour in the given circumstances or giving his lady's unnaturalness as the justification of his 'mind to forsake'. The line may possibly have been simply 'You are unkind', as a parenthetical explanation in keeping with the elliptical syntax of the rest of the poem, and I propose to read this as perhaps the simplest possible way of filling the lacuna.

What should I say?
  Since faith is dead,
And truth away
  From you is fled,
  Should I be led
    With doubleness?
    Nay, nay, mistress.

---

structure, and to think of a fourteen-line song, the following is less unsatisfactory than it normally appears:

My galley charged with forgetfulness
Thorough sharp seas in winter nights doth pass
'Tween rock and rock; and eke my foe, alas,
That is my lord, steereth with cruelness:
And every oar, a thought in readiness,
As though that death were light in such a case.
An endless wind doth tear the sails apace
Of forced sighs and trusty fearfulness;
A rain of tears, a cloud of dark disdain,
Have done the wearied cords great hinderance;
Wreathed with error and with ignorance;
The stars be hid that led me to this pain;
  Drowned is reason that should me comfort,
  And I remain despairing of the port.

If, in lines 1, 4, 5, 8, 10 and 11 we accept the rhythmical group / x x or / x \ instead of a clear / x / with firm rime on the last syllable, we hear, not indeed a true sonnet, but a fourteen-line poem of some rhythmical subtlety.

I promised you,
  And you promised me,
To be as true
  As I would be.
  But since I see
    Your double heart,
    Farewell, my part.

Though for to take
  It is not my mind
But to forsake,
  [You are unkind:]
  And as I find
    So will I trust.
    Farewell, unjust.

Can ye say nay
  But you said
That I alway
  Should be obeyed,
  And thus betrayed
    Or that I wist?
    Farewell, unkist.

The construction of this poem cannot possibly be indicated to us by music, for the music does not survive. Yet Wyatt is known to have been a lutenist, several of his songs addressing or referring to the lute in the refrain, and this poem bears the marks of being composed for singing. There is no refrain in the strictest sense, for the 'farewell' which is consistently placed in the last three stanzas does not occur in the first. The 'farewell' line, however, is so exactly repeated in structure after its first appearance, which itself repeats perfectly the shape of 'Nay, nay, mistress', that it serves the function of a refrain, particularly as the line preceding its first appearance repeats the 'double' of the corresponding line in the first stanza. The varied repetition of these closing lines is a characteristic of work by a man who was both poet and musician.

It is true that other parts of the stanzas do not seem to carry out the perfect repetition of stressing which I have suggested as a distinguishing feature of air poetry. The second line is the obvious difficulty here. In the first stanza it has four syllables, in the second and third stanzas five syllables, and in the last stanza only three. It might be that 'It is not my mind' was to be taken as ''Tis not my mind', but this does not help to explain 'And you promised me' or 'But you said'. I think the explanation is to be found in this very fact that the apparent difficulty occurs always in the same line. It suggests that a musical phrase for this line might be one using either running short notes which could each carry either one whole syllable or only a part of a syllable, or long notes which could be divided where more syllables were used. The structure of these stanzas, in fact, shows clearly that mingling of freedom and control that writing for airs could give. There is a place (here the second line) allowed for licence, a kind of Saturnalia, which is not permitted to disturb the order of the rest, and in fact helps to emphasize that order.

Elsewhere, the order is remarkable. The stressing of the opening line is repeated in all the first lines of stanzas and, most remarkable of all, in every single stanza the fifth line runs straight into the sixth, closely linking refrain (where the rimes are new) through the backward-looking rime of line five to the main body of the verse. With very slight variants, each stanza conforms freely and neatly to the pattern.

For Campion's poem we have his own music, and a text printed in his lifetime.

> When thou must home to shades of underground,
> And there arrived, a new admirëd guest,
> The beauteous spirits do ingirt thee round,
> White Iope, blithe Helen and the rest,
> To hear the stories of thy finished love
> From that smooth tongue whose music hell can move.
>
> Then wilt thou speak of banqueting delights,
> Of masks and revels which sweet youth did make,

Of tourneys and great challenges of knights,
And all these triumphs for thy beauty's sake.
When thou hast told these honours done to thee,
Then tell, O tell how thou didst murder me!

This poem will give us no examples of strange complexity in structure. It is perfectly possible to scan it on the basis of a repeating x / rhythm, and the variants on this will be so few and commonplace that they will no more invalidate such scansion than the inversions of stress common in blank verse necessitate altering our idea of what is the underlying movement. Yet I suspect that no sensitive reader can feel completely satisfied with such scansion. The first four monosyllabic words seem so nearly equivalent to each other in sense importance that there is a tendency to read them with markedly level stress, and we should be wrong to ignore this tendency, for it is confirmed by the first four, also monosyllabic, words of the second stanza. When we find that this level utterance is the only means of giving equivalent importance to each 'thou', for the two 'thous' occur in different positions without having different implications, we may see how subtly Campion has repeated the form of his first natural phrase. The music here confirms this reading: it gives no short notes until it reaches 'to' and '-der' in the first line and 'a' and '-ed' in the second. We hardly need this music to tell us to take the lines as the music takes them, but the needs of the music which fits beautifully the first stanza may well have been the subconscious reminder to the poet of what was needed for his second stanza. A similar effect may be observed in 'To hear the stor-' and 'When thou hast told', and in 'that smooth tongue' and 'tell, O tell'. Throughout, the music confirms our sense of what is proper in speaking these words, though we do not strictly need it to show us this propriety. Certainly, however, as with *Weep you no more*, the measured utterance suggested by the poem's association with music is necessary to bring out the structure of the stanza.

Drayton's poem is another for which we have no music. It appears in the 1619 edition of *Poems Lyrick and Pastoral*, and begins as follows:

Fair stood the wind for France
When we our sails advance,
Nor now to prove our chance
  Longer will tarry;
But putting to the main,
At Caux, the mouth of Seine,
With all his martial train
  Landed King Harry.

And taking many a fort,
Furnished in warlike sort,
Marcheth towards Agincourt
  In happy hour;
Skirmishing day by day
With those that stopped his way,
Where the French general lay
  With all his power.

The last two stanzas are famous:

Warwick in blood did wade,
Oxford the foe invade,
And cruel slaughter made
  Still as they ran up;
Suffolk his axe did ply,
Beaumont and Willoughby
Bare them right doughtily,
  Ferrers and Fanhope.

Upon Saint Crispin's day
Fought was this noble fray,
Which fame did not delay
  To England to carry;
Oh, when shall English men
With such acts fill a pen?
Or England breed again
  Such a King Harry?

It is natural to look to the old Agincourt Song of the fifteenth century to see if it has provided the formal inspiration of Dray-

ton's work, but in fact it has clearly not done so. Slightly modernized, the words of the old poem run like this:

Deo gratias Anglia
Redde pro victoria.
Our King went forth to Normandy
With grace and might of chivalry.
There God for him wrought marvellously;
Wherefore England may call and cry,
Deo gratias.
Deo gratias Anglia
Redde pro victoria.

The music fits well enough to these words to be unsuitable for the form of Drayton's stanza.

It needs only a hasty reading of Drayton's poem to see that much of what we have already said of the skill of air poets in exactly repeating the form of natural-sounding phrases is not quite true of this poem; it may therefore seem that it is a mistake to classify the poem with air poetry. It might appear more suitable to scan it as 'speech' verse might be scanned, and look for subtleties of emotional meaning expressed in variations of stress from stanza to stanza. I think, however, that this would be a mistake. In referring to the frequent need in hymn-singing for doing violence to the words (p. 132), I have mentioned so far only the faults of the practice. It must, however, be remembered that a tune, or other formal shaping of the sounds of utterance, may on occasion carry in itself so strongly a desired emotional suggestion as to make it rewarding to sacrifice the obvious everyday stressing of words to the suggestions of the form. The splendid triumph of fortitude in the tune (*sine nomine*) to *For all the saints* reconciles singers to the need for stressing at times words like 'and', 'in' or even 'the'; the minor violations of sense are more than paid for by the great gain of an overriding emotional meaning provided by the invincible continuing repetitions of the musical form. Such certainty of victory for the form may be fairly readily provided by music, with its certain notation and technical means of ensuring the marking of beats. It may, however, be provided to some ex-

tent by a stanza-form, once it is clearly established, and I suggest that this is what happens in Drayton's *Agincourt*. From the very first stanza, there is a strong suggestion that some stress is required on the first syllable of each line. The 'fair' of line one certainly demands it, 'when' and 'nor' in lines two and three allow it, and the short fourth line cannot do without it. Nor can the similar eighth line. In fact, once the first stanza has been completed, the reader has been driven to begin each line with a heavy marching tread. The short lines 'Longer will tarry', 'Landed King Harry' punctuate the march like a periodical counting. Now, in order to continue this movement, such words as 'and' must at times take stress nearly as heavy as that on the first syllable of 'marcheth'; yet the reader willingly gives such stress, for if he once neglects it, he is constantly reminded by the heavy beat of the short lines. It is not often that whole stanzas coincide exactly with the suggested form. When they do, they stand out in the clarity of fulfilment.

And turning to his men,
Quoth our brave Henry then,
'Though they to one be ten,
  Be not amazed;
Yet have we well begun,
Battles so bravely won
Have ever to the sun
  By fame been raised.

'And for myself', quoth he,
'This my full rest shall be:
England ne'er mourn for me,
  Nor more esteem me;
Victor I will remain
Or on this earth lie slain,
Never shall she sustain
  Loss to redeem me.

Poitiers and Cressy tell,
When most their pride did swell,
Under our swords they fell;
  No less our skill is

Than when our grandsire great,
Claiming the regal seat,
By many a warlike feat
Lopped the French lilies.'

Here, the suggested form is as nearly fulfilled as seems possible. As if to guard against any possibility of relaxing in the march, Drayton uses proper names where they must intensify the metrical effect.

Warwick in blood did wade,
Oxford the foe invade,
And cruel slaughter made
Still as they ran up;
Suffolk his axe did ply,
Beaumont and Willoughby
Bare them right doughtily,
Ferrers and Fanhope.

The whole comes to its climax in the final fulfilment of the metrical form of the last line: 'Such a King Harry.'

Now, this trampling of form upon apparent sense is, I think, one of the metrical possibilities fostered by the idea of writing for tunes. It is only very rarely that so brutal and so complete a victory of form can justify itself, but when it is justifiable (as I think it is here), it can be achieved only by a writer having great certainty in establishing a structure, a certainty which frees him, on the one hand, from the need to outline the structure at times by obviously unnatural wrenching of word order,[1] and, on the other hand, from the constant scrupulous regard for the natural stress.[2]

Any familiarity with strong tunes clear in repetitive rhythmical outline may give a composer or singer such certainty, and a poet brought up, as Drayton was, in an age when the air used with art the simple certainties of popular music might well feel safe in re-

[1] Cf. 'You must take care and choose your time
The mountain when to cross.'

[2] Cf. all the poems we have examined where the more delicate and subtle emotional needs of each poem enforced skilled repetition of natural rhythmical phrases.

lying on tunes or their equivalents to carry a form through any resistance of words in their ordinary use. As we have seen, we have in fact no music for this poem, but Drayton was writing when the confidence engendered by reliance on tunes was well established. He used an equivalent for a tune—phrases of very strongly marked rhythmical structure occurring at obviously important points in the stanza. They established a movement from which it was impossible for other phrases to break free.

This is, in general, probably the most permanently valuable gift of music to metrical practice. Unlike words, musical signs can give a sure notation. Length, loudness, all the degrees of comparative importance among syllables, and the linking of syllables into rhythmically satisfying phrases can all be indicated by music with absolute certainty. Words are kittle cattle, and a writer not completely sure of their tricks and their manners may hesitate before he goes far in experimenting with them. If, however, he may rely on his experimentation's being supported by musical notation, he has an ally strong enough to bring him mastery over words. I am sure that the fact that many of the poems of the Elizabethan age had their first publication through singing is a major cause of the bold and free experimenting with metrical forms which shows itself in every song-book and miscellany of the time. A poet could experiment with some hope of success, and dozens of poets did in fact experiment with great success.

Further, the actual nature of the music itself had some effect on the nature of the experiments. Both madrigals and airs made use of long rhythmical units, tracing their patterns in phrases rather than in bars, and this encouraged the poets towards complex arrangements of stressing rather than towards simple feet. There are lyric poems of this age which may be scanned in simple feet, but there are many more where to break the phrases is to break, not only sense, but rhythmical form. The madrigal taught that a continuous flow of shifting movements could come safely to a close, and so made long complex units seem possible. It taught, too, that there were few limits to the varieties of phrase which could be recognized as having formal unity so long as imitation was used to

make them acceptable to the ear through memory. The air taught the value of outlines firm and clear, however delicate they might be, and the possibility of repeating an apparently inimitable miracle of form. Together, air and madrigal taught both the lesson of respecting the natural movement of words and the lesson that they might on occasion be disciplined to the alien movement of an absolute military drill. They taught, continuously and convincingly, that words uttered with care and deliberation have more capacities of beauty and meaning than words gabbled and obscured. From beginning to end of the period, the practice of music trained the only fundamental skill for a metrist, quickness and acuteness of ear.

Further, music more than any other art clearly depends on its own structure, and may make its beauty in its own terms independent of reference to external 'meaning'. If 'all art aspires to the condition of music', it does so in the sense that it looks for means of making its meaning complete and clear in its own terms, without the need for further explanation. This is a lesson which all arts may unconsciously learn from music.

Beyond this, we cannot say that music helped poetry. The help it gave to poetic technique is great enough in the fields described above to earn the gratitude of all English lyrists from the Elizabethan age to ours and for years to come. Yet the great alliance could do some disservice to poetry. The very certainty it gave to poets could do harm when it led the poets to rely too entirely on music for the establishing of their chosen form, instead of making the words themselves reliable. It is not impossible that the difficulties in reading a poem like Donne's *Confined Love* may be the result of the poet's assuming that a tune could make all clear and if necessary carry off awkwardnesses by virtue of its own grace. Even musical gifts, at first sight most valuable, might be Greek gifts, and music properly to be feared. Farnaby's treatment of the word 'Vulcan' described above (p. 112) will provide an example of this. The danger here is not merely that the musician may misinterpret poetic intention; it lies much deeper than this. The use of music to suggest bells, sighs and the like may or may not suit a

poem's purpose; that is irrelevant to the nature of the danger. This is simply that the whole question of what constitutes structure in verse may be confused. What music does in such onomatopœic passages is to expand and underline some part of the sense meanings and associations of the words. This is clearly not structural but decorative. Where it is so clear as this, the danger is not perhaps great. It is great where music is less obviously using its suggestive or imitative powers. The power of music in song comes, not only from its purely musical beauty, but from recognized emotional suitability in its melodic, rhythmical and harmonic nature to the content of the words. This certainly is true in, for instance, Dowland's setting of *Weep you no more*, where sorrow may well be proud to be advanced so.

Now, there can be no quarrel with the artistic perfection of this song. Its perfection, however, conceals the danger of all music to all poetry. Vocal music, in fact, is a means of using those manipulations of speech described in my paragraph on stress in Chapter 3 (pp. 77-8). As I have pointed out there, the possibility of such manipulation is neglected at peril by any metrist. It is right and proper that he should make use of the possibility; what he must not do is let the possibility blind him to the fact that emotional manipulations of words by the voice do not, and cannot, in themselves make structure. They are extras. They may contribute much to the clarification of his structure, they may even form parts of it, as does the unusual emotional stressing of 'I' in the fourth line in the second stanza of Wyatt's poem on p. 140. Yet they may never indicate structure as fundamentally as the natural unforced pronunciation of words may indicate it. If verse-structure is true and integral, it is a structure indicated by the more stable and usual ordering of important and unimportant syllables in common speaking; it may then be emphasized, adorned or even momentarily broken by the unusual ordering of syllables for special meaning.

Now, music always gives to speech a 'special' quality of utterance. It cannot, when well used, do anything but exaggerate the emotional implications of words exactly as dramatic speech may

do 'in a state of vivid sensation'. It does so with propriety; but the fact remains that its power of emphasizing the meaning carried in the form may be mistaken for the very making of the form. The more perfectly it clarifies the intention of the form the greater is the danger that this mistake may be made. It is the danger that waylays all criticism of art: the more perfectly artifice serves its purpose, the more likely is it that the art may be either denied or sought in the wrong place, that the story and teaching of *Paradise Lost* may be mistaken for the poem, that the associations of Milton's diction and imagery may be treated as the whole purpose of their use. If we look too closely for the guidance of music to metrical practices in Elizabethan lyrics, we may forget what it is that constitutes metre.

It may be said, and properly, that many of these songs are indeed 'songs' in the full sense, and not mere poems, and that therefore it is wrong that we should even attempt to examine their poetry in isolation from the music with which it collaborated to make the song. There are, however, as we have seen, poems written under the influence of airs and madrigals which were nevertheless intended to stand independently as poems. It is also true that hundreds of readers have recognized as poetry, and loved and admired, the verse for songs, who not only have not known the music, but have for various reasons failed to enjoy the music when known. It is, I think, justifiable to look for the causes of such enjoyment of the poetry alone in elements of the poetry alone. There is in this poetry a structure, which contributes to enjoyment, made in words alone, words which cannot do all that music can do, but can in themselves make a purely poetic (or literary) beauty that it is not music's function to make.

Among the lyrists of this time was one, Thomas Campion, who was deeply affected by both classical theories and music, in which he was both practitioner and theorist. He was also an admirable poet. If we look at some of his work, we may gather some guidance towards understanding what makes beautiful verse, if there is any difference between theory and practice in the making.

Chapter 6

THE LYRICS OF THOMAS CAMPION

IT will be illuminating to take six, very varied, poems by Campion, examine each in the light of his own theories, and then consider whether there are in them elements of versification not mentioned in his theories.

I

ROSE-CHEEKT *LAWRA*

(from the *Obseruations in the Art of English Poesie*, 1602)

Rose-cheekt *Lawra*, come
Sing thou smoothly with thy beawties
Silent musick, either other
Sweetely gracing.

Lovely formes do flowe
From concent devinely framed;
Heav'n is musick, and thy beawties
Birth is heavenly.

These dull notes we sing
Discords neede for helps to grace them;
Only beawty purely loving
Knowes no discord,

But still moves delight,
Like cleare springes renu'd by flowing,
Ever perfet, ever in them-
selves eternall.

It should be easy to decide what is the intended effect of this poem, for *Rose-Cheekt* LAWRA occurs in the *Obseruations* as the example of the second kind of English Sapphic. Campion says that it 'consists of *Dimeter*, whose first foote may either be a *Sponde* or a *Trochy*'. The Dimeter he has described earlier as being

'of two feete and one odde sillable. The first foote may be made either a *Trochy*, or a *Spondee*, or an *Iambick*, at the pleasure of the composer, though most naturally that place affects a *Trochy* or *Spondee*; yet, by the example of Catullus in his *Hendicasillables*, I adde in the first place sometimes an *Iambick* foote. In the second place we must ever insert a *Trochy* or *Tribrack*, and so leave the last sillable (as in the end of a verse it is alwaies held) common'. 'The two verses following are both of them *Trochaical*, and consist of foure feete, the first of either of them being a *Spondee* or *Trochy*, the other three only Trochyes. The fourth and last verse is made of two *Trochyes*.' It seems quite clear that Campion is here using the names of feet in the strict sense, and therefore expects us to look for a quantitative pattern independent of stress.

The first line of each stanza agrees punctiliously with the pattern described for the dimeter. He does not even allow himself the freedom of using an iamb in the first place. At first sight this foot in the last stanza might seem to be an iamb but, according to his rules of position, the 'but' is lengthened by the following three consonants in the combined words 'but', 'still'; the foot must therefore be accepted, so long as we accept his terms, as a spondee.

Even for those readers who cannot automatically apply the detailed rules of syllable length given at the end of the *Obseruations*, it is quite easy to read this poem as a trochaic measure. Campion has used a large number of adjectival and adverbial forms ending in '-y', and these forms are certainly always pronounced with a length in the first syllable much greater than that in the second. 'Smoothly', 'Sweetely', 'Lovely', 'beawty', 'purely', are words which come probably as near as possible to the strict trochaic shape of a long followed by a short in the ratio of two to one. It is therefore perfectly simple to scan a line like—

Sing thou smoothly with thy beawties

as consisting of trochees from beginning to end, and this is probably how any unprepared reader would scan it. Campion, however, would probably call the first foot a spondee as it seems likely that he would consider 'thou' lengthened by position. The last

syllable of 'beawties' he certainly considered long: 'The last sillable of all words in the plurall number that have two or more vowels before *s* are long, as *vertues, duties, miseries, fellowes.*' These liberties are in complete accord with his instructions; so this line and, in fact all the lines on this pattern in the poem, can be read in a manner satisfying to the ear, and still theoretically agree with his rules about individual syllables. The only difficulty that is likely to arise is that the satisfactory reading of the line will omit some of his points of detail, and therefore not quite achieve his intended effect.

On the whole, however, the poem in reading, even by a comparatively careless reader, will come very near to the poem that Campion wrote, for it is noticeable that nearly all his long syllables have their length reinforced by the natural stress of English speech.

2

COME, LET US SOUND WITH MELODY

(No. XXI of the First Part of *A Booke of Ayres*, 1601)

Come, let us sound with melody, the praises
Of the kings king, th'omnipotent creator,
Author of number, that hath all the world in
Harmonie framed.

Heav'n is His throne perpetually shining,
His devine power and glorie, thence he thunders,
One in all, and all still in one abiding,
Both Father and Sonne.

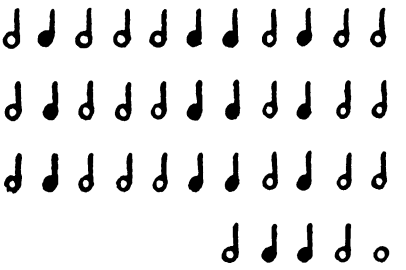
O sacred sprite, invisible, eternall
Ev'ry where, yet unlimited, that all things
Canst in one moment penetrate, revive me,
O holy Spirit.

Rescue, O rescue me from earthly darknes,
Banish hence all these elementall obiects,
Guide my soule that thirsts to the lively Fountaine
Of thy devinenes.

Cleanse my soule, O God, thy bespotted Image,
Altered with sinne so that heav'nly purenes
Cannot acknowledge me, but in thy mercies,
O Father of grace.

But when once thy beames do remove my darknes,
O then I'le shine forth as an Angell of light,
And record, with more than an earthly voice, thy
Infinite honours.

In his scrupulous determination to join words and notes lovingly together, Campion has given us, in the music for this poem, a definite indication of the scansion. The notes are:



This gives us, in the terms of prosody, three lines of the pattern, – ∪ – – – ∪ ∪ – ∪ – –, followed by a short fourth line, – ∪ ∪ – –. These lines are easily divisible into strict classical feet, the long ones consisting of trochee, spondee, dactyl, trochee, spondee, or: – ∪ / – – / – ∪ ∪ / – ∪ / – – ; and the short one of a dactyl followed by a spondee, or: – ∪ ∪ / – –.

Now it is easy to keep to this line in singing, when the notation indicates the precise value to be assigned to each syllable, and comparison of the syllables with the rules given in the *Obseruations* makes it clear that Campion has taken great care to give each long of the musical and metrical pattern a syllable, either long in itself or lengthened by position. In some cases the pattern shows itself instantly through the words: the line—

And record, with more than an earthly voice, thy

would usually be spoken in an arrangement of longs and shorts corresponding to the indicated feet; the lengthening of 'And',

which he ascribes to the effect of massed following consonants, would almost certainly be supplied, as most readers hesitate to run too many short syllables together, and the short 're-' tends to give length to the preceding word. This is, indeed, a kind of 'lengthening by position', but not quite in the same sense as Campion understands it. It is, however, difficult to see how the reading voice, if it is unrestrained by musical exigencies, is to be dissuaded from precipitating itself off 'thy' on to 'Infinite', before the metre is ready for it.

Difficulties of this kind are more evident in other parts of the poem. 'Of' occurs twice in a position requiring a long syllable, and it is lengthened only by a following 'th-'. Again, two words, 'Both Father', are intended to make up a dactyl, and it requires strong self-discipline to read 'Both' as though it were twice as long as the first syllable of 'Father'. It is clear, then, that he has remembered his rule that 'position . . . can alter the accent of any sillable in our English verse' more strongly than the principle that 'above all the accent of our words is diligently to be observ'd, for chiefely by the accent . . . the true value of the sillables is to be measured'. Given a carefully trained reader, Campion himself, for instance, the rules would provide sufficient guide for overriding the accent. With an untrained reader, the question is bound to arise whether the form of the poem is adequately held together by Campion's rules alone.

3

THE MAN OF LIFE UPRIGHT

(No. II in the First Part of *Two Bookes of Ayres*, c. 1613)

The man of life upright,
  Whose chearfull minde is free
From waight of impious deedes
  And yoake of vanitee;

The man whose silent dayes
  In harmless ioyes are spent,
Whom hopes cannot delude
  Nor sorrowes discontent;

That man needes neyther towres,
  Nor armour for defence:
Nor vaults his guilt to shrowd
  From thunders violence;

Hee onely can behold
  With unaffrighted eyes
The horrors of the deepe
  And terrors of the Skies.

Thus, scorning all the cares
  That fate or fortune brings,
His Booke the Heau'ns hee makes,
  His wisedome heav'nly things;

Good thoughts his surest friends,
  His wealth a well-spent age,
The earth his sober Inne,
  And quiet pilgrimage.[1]

The music set for this poem, if translated into the long and short signs of prosody, gives us a series of impossible lines, impossible, that is, from the classical point of view; it is difficult to imagine any Greek or Roman poet writing entirely in a series of tribrachs strung together. The notes are nearly all of exactly the same length, with an occasional lingering on one, followed by a hurried movement on the next. It is, therefore, useless to look to the music for an indication of any of the feet described in the *Obseruations.*

[1] This song occurs also as No. XVIII in the First Part of *A Booke of Ayres*, 1601. There is another printed version of it in Alison's *An Houres Recreation in Musick*, 1606, and manuscript versions in Sloane MS. 4218; Harl. MS. 4064; MS. 17 B.L.; Rawl. MS. Poet. 31; Chetham MS. 8012.

MSS. Sloane and B.L. state that the verses are by Fra. Bacon.

Harl. MS. omits Stanza 4 and not, as Percival Vivian says, Stanza 5. Its variants are: line 2, life for minde; line 6, ioy for ioyes; line 9, tower for towres; line 17, But scorning all the chaunce: Vivian gives this line's variants for line 21.

Variants in Sloane MS. are: line 17, care for cares; line 22, life for wealth.

MS. B.L. has: line 8, fortune for sorrowes; line 17, care for cares; line 22, life for wealth.

Yet the music gives no impression of formlessness, and the poem as read has a very clear form. The most conventional prosodists would agree that it was written entirely in an iambic or 'rising-stress' metre, according to whether they were using terms derived from classical prosody or names invented to agree as nearly as possible with the accepted theory of English utterance. Now, the music, showing as it does no trace of iambic structure, and the words, which can be satisfyingly read by anyone, actually agree as happily as Campion could have hoped. It follows that he has thrown over all his stated desires to write English poems on classical principles, and on those principles only.

This self-contradiction is underlined by his firm and unmistakable use of rime in the poem. According to his own views, this should mean that the poem is a rickety structure concealed under the fatness of ornament. He would hardly have published it if he himself really agreed with this verdict; certainly, no reader of this and other English verses can agree with the verdict. The poem does hold together; but if we are to find the integrating principle of its structure, we must look elsewhere than in the detailed instructions to versifiers with which he concludes the *Obseruations*.

4

NEVER WEATHER-BEATEN SAILE

(No. XI in the First Part of *Two Bookes of Ayres*)

Never weather-beaten Saile more willing bent to shore,
Never tyred Pilgrims limbs affected slumber more,
Than my wearied spright now longs to flye out of my troubled brest.
O come quickly, sweetest Lord, and take my soule to rest.
Ever-blooming are the ioyes of Heav'ns high paradice,
Cold age deafes not there our eares, nor vapour dims our eyes:
Glory there the Sun outshines, whose beames the blessed only see;
O come quickly, glorious Lord, and raise my spright to thee.

The music of this poem, again, gives us lines which are apparently metrically impossible. Once more, the notes are for the most

part of equal length, and no prosodist can make classical feet out of a collection of tape-measured inches. There is a further difficulty here: the first phrase of the fourth line of each stanza, 'O come quickly', is made by the music to occur three times. Campion never published the poem without the music, and therefore, presumably, thought of the verse-form as having always this lengthened last line. Modern editors of the words alone give the phrase only once. In either form the stanza gives the impression of being well-balanced. If it were written on a strict arrangement of classical feet, according to Campion's principles, this change of form would be impossible; the slight necessary change in the order of the feet would break down the form altogether and make it unrecognizable.

Manifestly, the form does not fall apart. Yet an attempt to scan the poem in terms of rising or falling stresses provides almost as many difficulties. The first phrase of the first line, 'Never weather-beaten Saile', would at first sight instantly be put down as a group of falling-stress feet; the second half of the line, 'more willing bent to shore', would, if treated by itself, be called a collection of rising-stress feet. There is no suggestion in the first half of the line that the poet is deliberately producing an effect of clash between words and ideal pattern. Unless we are to say simply that a syllable has been omitted at the beginning or the end, which is the usual explanation of this kind of line, or that there has been indecision in the creation of the line, we must look for an explanation in different terms. If there were any doubt that the first half of the line coincides instead of clashing with the pattern, it should be necessary only to look at the corresponding line,

Ever-blooming are the ioyes of Heav'ns high paradice,

in the second stanza. It cannot be supposed that this line is intended to give an impression of restlessness and difficulty. In fact, the whole poem is obviously constructed of words chosen to clarify the pattern and not to obscure it. Campion himself gives no description of the pattern we find here.

5

NOW WINTER NIGHTS

(No. XII in the *Third Booke of Ayres*)

Now winter nights enlarge
The number of their houres;
And clouds their stormes discharge
Upon the ayrie towres.
Let now the chimneys blaze
And cups o'erflow with wine,
Let well-tun'd words amaze
With harmonie divine.
Now yellow waxen lights
Shall waite on hunny Love
While youthfull Revels, Masks, and Courtly sights,
Sleepes leaden spels remove.

This time doth well dispence
With lovers long discourse;
Much speech hath some defence,
Though beauty no remorse.
All doe not all things well;
Some measures comely tread;
Some knotted Ridles tell;
Some Poems smoothly read.
The Summer hath his ioyes,
And Winter his delights;
Though love and all his pleasures are but toyes,
They shorten tedious nights.

Once again, we are faced by the fact that the notes lovingly joined to the words of this poem are no help to anyone searching for Campion's practice of Campion's theories. Once again, the notes translated into metrical terms would give a fantastic collocation of tribrachs, divided impossibly at times into half-shorts. Some lines, in fact, will not provide the right number of syllables to be divided into an arrangement of any complete feet. 'Now winter nights enlarge', for instance, is given by the music the

pattern ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ –; any good Roman would agree that this is ridiculous.

A prosodist adhering to any other system would find some difficulty in deciding where he was to divide the lines, not only internally into feet, but among themselves. The first line of each stanza must run without a pause into the second, and the third into the fourth, unless reason is to be denied. The decided rimes, however, cannot be denied. There is obviously some structural intent in the division of lines. It is an intent appearing clearly in most of the poems, and occasionally bursting its way into the well-mannered ranks of classical rules in the *Obseruations.*

6

FOLLOW YOUR SAINT

(No. X in the First Part of *A Booke of Ayres*)

Follow your Saint, follow with accents sweet;
Haste you, sad noates, fall at her flying feete:
There, wrapt in cloud of sorrowe pitie move,
And tell the ravisher of my soule I perish for her love.
But if she scorns my never-ceasing paine,
Then burst with sighing in her sight and nere returne againe.

All that I soong still to her praise did tend,
Still she was first; still she my songs did end.
Yet she my love and Musicke both doth flie,
The Musicke that her Eccho is and beauties simpathie;
Then let my Noates pursue her scornfull flight:
It shall suffice that they were breath'd and dyed for her delight.

By this time it must be obvious that we shall find no undeviating adherence to classical rules in many of the songs, least of all perhaps in this. The music makes no recognized classical metrical shape; rime is made very obvious by the early appearance of the second of each pair of riming words; there is never the slightest need to wrest a syllable from its customary form in the pronunciation of everyday speech. None of the rules of lengthening by position, length from spelling, or arbitrary length or shortness

ascribed to any monosyllable, appears to indicate a form not at once apparent. The form is apparent. The most insensitive reader could be dared to do his worst with this poem and a sense of shape would still emerge.

As in the fourth example, the first line may at first sight give an impression of indecision in the choice between rising-stress and falling-stress rhythms. Nobody can read 'Follow your Saint' as a phrase in pure rising stress; if he wishes to do so he had better emend to 'Pursue your Saint'. Nobody, on the other hand, can read 'with accents sweet' as a phrase in falling-stress rhythm. Yet the whole line—

Follow your Saint, follow with accents sweet;

fits into its place in the construction of the stanza as a whole, with a sense not only of ease, but of perfection. This is the more remarkable when we find one line at least—

The Musicke that her Eccho is and beauties simpathie;

constructed in perfect rising-stress rhythm from beginning to end. Obviously, Campion has not decided arbitrarily on a novel shape for a single line, and made all other lines agree with the first; the relationship of syllables and lines is something more complex.

Neither classical theory nor music fully explains the structure of these poems. There are in them, however, other elements emphasizing structure.

In *Rose-Cheekt* LAWRA and *Come, let us sound with melody*, Campion is attempting to prove that English can be persuaded into providing relationships of length sufficiently strict to form a staple of pattern, and it therefore seems unlikely that any of these extra marks of shape will be used, though they may, of course, appear accidentally from time to time. Rime certainly is rigorously excluded, as might be expected from the fierce denunciation of this *figura verbi* in the *Obseruations*. Echoes and repetitions of vowel and consonant sounds, on the other hand, occur so fre-

quently in both poems that they begin to enforce an examination of the reasons for their presence; and that examination soon shows that sounds of a similar nature are always closely grouped.

In *Rose-Cheekt* LAWRA, the first stanza has four words—'sing', 'smoothly', 'silent' and 'sweetely'—beginning with the latter 's'. The same sound, or a sound closely related to it, occurs internally in the words 'rose', 'musick' and 'gracing', while 'beawties' ends with a sound belonging to the same group. Next in frequency to these come the liquids and nasals, in 'rose', 'Lawra', 'come', 'sing', smoothly', 'silent', 'musick', 'sweetely' and 'gracing'. The next stanza employs this last group more obviously, only the words 'do', 'is' (which occurs twice), 'thy' and 'birth' showing no examples; in this stanza, too, the related sounds 'd' and 't' put in an appearance, occurring six times. In the third stanza, they come to the fore with nine appearances, while the background is quietly filled in by the unobtrusive work of the sibilants, liquids and nasals that have been more evident in the earlier stanzas. Finally, the fourth stanza rests upon all these sounds together, 's' having six entries, 'd' and 't' six, and 'l', 'm' and 'n' fourteen between them. In these four lines, moreover, the hard 'k' sound, which has come six times into the first twelve lines, is suddenly emphasized by being used twice in the adjacent words 'like' and 'cleare'.

The arrangement of vowels, though not so obvious, is quite as interesting as the grouping of consonants. Vowels related, by pronunciation as well as spelling, appear in 'come', 'smoothly', 'beawties', 'musick' and 'other', while 'ee' occurs in both 'cheekt' and 'sweetely', in the course of the first stanza. Stanza two has the same sounds, though less frequently, and a new one in 'concent', 'heav'n' and 'heavenly'. The third stanza adds to these an emphasized use of the sound which has appeared in 'Lawra' and 'formes' by repeating the word 'discord'. Both the 'o' and the 'e' groups are used impartially in the last stanza.

Come, let us sound with melody moves straight into a bold collection of hard consonant-sounds in 'come', 'kings', 'king' and 'creator', supporting them with frequent 's's, 'l's and 'm's or

'n's. Stanza two abandons the 'k' sound in favour of 'p' in 'perpetually' and 'power', and 'th' in 'throne', 'thence', 'thunders' and 'Father', with an undercurrent similar to that in the first stanza. In the next stanza this undercurrent comes to the surface, in every word except 'O' (twice), 'yet', 'that', while 'k' and 'p' are present, though subdued, in 'sacred', 'spite', 'canst', 'penetrate' and 'Spirit'. The following stanza has the same sounds with the addition of 'th' and 'v' or 'f' in 'earthly', 'three', 'that', 'thirsts', 'lively', 'Fountaine' and 'devineness'. The fifth stanza uses all the sounds that have yet appeared without any apparent preference, while stanza six disregards 'p', and has 'k' only twice, sunk in the middle of the words 'darkness' and 'record'.

The vowels grouped in stanza one are the rounded 'oo', 'u' and 'o' sounds in 'come', 'us', 'omnipotent', 'author', 'of', 'number', 'all', 'world' and 'harmonie', while the second and fourth lines both end in words containing the same sound, 'creator' and 'framed'. Their placing in this position creates something like the shadow of a rime, and the shadow is deepened by the use of the same trick in all but the last two stanzas, stanza two having 'thunders' and 'Sonne' in the corresponding places, stanza three 'things' and 'Spirit', and stanza four 'objects' and 'devinenes'; these last two words have the syllable containing 'e' long, according to its place in the quantitative pattern indicated by the music. Stanza two even repeats the effect by closing the first and third lines in 'shining' and 'abiding'; stanza three uses this sound again in 'sprite' and 'revive', and adds the group in 'invisible', 'unlimited', 'things', 'in' and 'Spirit'; stanza four has chiefly the sound of its semi-rime ('-iects', '-nes'), in 'rescue' (twice), 'darknes', 'hence', 'elementall', 'obiects' and 'devinenes'; the fifth stanza, though keeping this sound, returns to a fuller use of rounded vowels in 'soule', 'O', 'God', 'bespotted', 'altered', 'so', 'purenes', 'cannot', 'acknowledge', 'O', 'Father'; while the characteristic trick of the last stanza is to repeat any one sound very soon after its first appearance in the stanza, line one having 'do' and 'remove' next to each other, line two 'I'le' and 'shine' next to each other, with 'light' at the end of the line, and line three picking up, from

'forth' in line two, the sound repeated in 'record' and 'more', with only a single intervening syllable.

Now, whether or not Campion's choice of all these linked sounds drawing out a pattern was deliberate, the fact remains that the linking of both vowels and consonants in these two poems is so close and complex that it compels the ear to sense some connection other than semantic between the parts of a group and between the groups themselves. The succession of vowels and the succession of consonants almost give the impression of two melodic lines in the older music going their independent but companionable ways, and between them supporting and emphasizing, after the fashion of the old music, the rational meaning of the words. In any case, the arrangement of actual sound in these poems makes it quite impossible for the verse to fall apart. '*Rose-Cheekt* LAWRA' has always had its beauty admitted; and *Come, let us sound with melody*, though in official disgrace in both Bullen's and Vivian's editions of Campion, seems to me to have a beauty both rich and delicately subtle when it is read aloud with a due care for the intricate weaving of the two threads of vowels and consonants. It is not, after all, very difficult to notice and perhaps slightly emphasize sounds which the poet thought important enough to repeat; and the slight effort has in this case the tremendous reward of an increased facility in ascribing to difficult syllables their right length, for words like 'of' and 'with' and 'thy', by joining more obviously important words in their scheme of sound, emerge quite naturally to take their position as 'long' syllables where the pattern requires it. The possibility begins to arise that these *figuræ verbi*, as Campion himself would almost certainly have called them, have some structural function in the verse.

Now the figure most evident in the other four poems is, of course, rime. Number three in the six poems examined has a simple abcb scheme, number four has aabb, number five has ababcdcdefef and number six aabbcc. All these schemes are quite unmistakable; it is impossible to suppose that at the moment of writing these songs Campion was in the least ashamed of rime or had any desire to conceal it. *The man of life upright*, indeed, posi-

tively hammers its rimes, either by repeating a part of the rime-sound at the end of one of the strictly unrimed lines, as in stanza one, where 'deedes' occurs between 'free' and '(vani)tee', or by giving these lines a half-rime, as in stanza three, where lines one and three end in 'towres' and 'shrowd' respectively. In *Never weather-beaten Saile* the rimes are made to stand out with almost startling clarity in the first two lines through the two facts that the rime-words are literally the only possible points of repose in restless lines of thirteen syllables each, and that the rime is on a sound '-ore', completely different in character from the thin 'e's and 'i's of the rest of the words in the lines. This introduction to the scheme makes the ear unconsciously expectant of the rimes which are to come, and ready to pick them out in high relief. A different method makes the rimes equally obvious in *Now winter nights enlarge*, where they thrust their heads into some positions where nobody would expect a point of rest. It is natural to say 'Now winter nights enlarge the number of their houres' and 'And clouds their stormes discharge upon the ayrie towres' as phrases with hardly a pause; yet the insistent 'enlarge-discharge' chime makes some division inevitable. The refusal to provide a rime for 'lights' in the first stanza and 'ioyes' in the second until the expected interval has been increased by nearly half as much again makes a continuous run of the voice equally inevitable for the lines 'While youthful Revels, Masks, and Courtly sights' and 'Though love and all his pleasures are but toyes'. After the boldness and occasional shock of some of these uses of rime, it is impossible to find anything but a natural use of speech in the practice in *Follow your Saint*; it is sufficient to say that the rimes are neither obtrusive nor hesitant, but occur with the quiet confidence of perfect art.

Rime, however, though far the most important, is not the only device of sound used even in these poems. It is noticeable that each stanza of number three tends to use a clearly defined vowel-group of its own: 'e's and 'i's in the first stanza, 'o's and 'a's in the second, 'e's or 'i's and 'ow' in the third, 'e's and 'o's in the fourth, full round 'o's in the fifth, and in the sixth a mingling of nearly all

the vowels of the preceding stanzas. Moreover, alliteration, repeated words and strong echoes like 'horror' and 'terror' occur within each stanza. This last device occurs at the beginning of number four, where 'never' and 'weather' stand side by side. There is also unobtrusive alliteration on 'beaten' and 'bent' in line one, 'deafes' and 'dims' in line six, and a more obvious use in the placing of 'beames' and 'blessed' with only 'the' intervening in line seven. The two stanzas of *Now winter nights enlarge* are differentiated from each other by the avoidance until the end of the first of hard consonants likely to create even a short pause, and the early and frequent employment in the second of 'p', 't' and 'k' sounds. This, and all other devices, are, like rime, less obvious in *Follow your Saint* than in any of the other poems; it can be remarked, however, that the whole poem tends to move on swift sibilants and liquids, pausing only in the middle of stanza two with the combined weight of 'k', 'p' and 't'.

Now it is obvious that the devices of repetition and echo in speech sounds can be used never for dividing, but always for connecting, the parts of verse. An extensive use of these devices must indicate a desire on the part of the poet to emphasize the larger units of his form rather than the small elements which are grouped to make those units. This, surely, is what Campion is doing throughout his poetry. Whether he does it deliberately or unconsciously it is impossible to determine. The use of the devices is so sure and sensitive that it seems to argue a deliberate craftsmanship, specially from a poet so scrupulous and so determined as he in maintaining the principle, unwelcome to many would-be artists, that artistic creation involves training and effort. On the other hand, those remarks in the *Observations* which suggest this very attitude, of looking for large organized units, appear to be the spontaneous utterance of impulse, and are different in tone from the careful reports of his conscious reflections on the structure of individual feet. In any case, these unreasoned remarks have proved more permanently interesting than the theories which the essay formally sets out to prove; and the elements of his practice which seem to bear the closest relationship to those remarks

promise to be more fruitful than the painstaking performance of his imagined duties as a poet.

In *Rose-Cheekt* LAWRA, for instance, the trochees demanded by his stated ideal pattern are contrived out of English material with remarkable ingenuity, and a very brief inspection will reveal them. Each one stands by itself in something like the ideal shape of a long syllable followed by a syllable half the length of the first. Yet when we compare one of these feet with another, it is sometimes difficult to find a real correspondence between them: 'smoothly' does not seem to have quite the same shape as 'either'; even more obvious is the discrepancy between 'either' and 'other', which stand side by side in the first stanza and are supposed to represent exactly the same foot. Surely 'smoothly' occupies in utterance a greater length of time than 'either', and 'either' than 'other'. Yet no whole line gives the impression of being out of balance with other lines, still less any whole stanza with other stanzas. In fact, it is almost impossible to feel certain that a stable unit has been found until a stanza has been completed. This sounds dangerous: if the correspondence between feet is really erratic, it seems unsafe to depend on the organization of those feet into a larger whole to secure a sense of form. But in this, perhaps the most surely and exquisitely satisfying of Campion's attempts at classical metres, he has been very much wiser than his critics. Bullen and Saintsbury, for instance, admitting the poem's beauty, sigh, 'But how much more beautiful would it have been with rime'!

Now rime would have exercised precisely the wrong function here: it would have suggested a division into strictly proportionate pairs of lines, whereas Campion needs, and secures, an irresistible run-on from beginning to end of at least the first stanza, which must indicate the form. If there were any doubt about this, it would be set at rest by a glance at the deliberate use of a single word to connect the last two lines of the poem. Having secured this movement, Campion proceeds to control it by that use of connecting sounds, varied from stanza to stanza, which has already appeared. The result is never rigid, always sure; for in the

end the unit certainly is one of quantity, but it is a *quantitas discreta* into so many and such variable parts, through lines which differ slightly among themselves, to feet which preserve recognizable shapes together with incalculable proportions, that the effect is one of safety quite unmixed with boredom. The length of the stanza as a whole is dependable.

The same principle holds good throughout *Come, let us sound with melody*, and here perhaps it is even more interesting to watch. The acid comments which have been made about this poem, and about its music in the article by Janet Dodge 'On Campion's Music', in the introduction to Bullen's edition of Campion's Works, suggest that it is some enormity. A generation which has seen the return of music, since the time of Miss Dodge's article, to some of the methods of free barring used by Campion and his contemporaries probably has an advantage in the ability to see that the lack of four-square rhythm in this song certainly does not rob it of form; the phrases which accompany each line of the verse are balanced mathematically and there can be no doubts as to their outline. In fact, it is much easier to see and understand than the outline of the words; for Campion, relying no doubt on the fact that the music will always be able to settle disputes, has allowed himself a greater dependence on arbitrary rules of length in his syllables. According to the music, this poem is stricter than *Rose-Cheekt* LAWRA. According to the natural utterance of speech, it is much less strict. Yet words and music are in a comfortable alliance, and the fact that moderately careful reading can make the words alone sound shapely is due once more to instinctive trust in the principle of making sure of the length of the line, which is itself stable in this poem, each long line corresponding to any other long and each short to any other short, and allowing the feet to vary among themselves. Once more the shape is held together by unobtrusive linking of letters; and if the voice is led by the prepared importance of certain sounds to linger over some syllables more than in normal speech, the effect is the very suitable one of imparting a kind of impassioned gravity to the whole poem.

Now these principles, though probably a sound basis for the treatment of quantity in English, are certainly far removed from the true principles of classical prosody, and it is as well to remember, in reading Campion's supposed examples of classical metres, that they are certainly examples of very subtle quantitative verse, and therefore require a slightly different approach from that required by the commoner English measures, but that the ordinary approach to Latin verse is equally useless. With the poems which frankly jettison most of the classical rules, there is, of course, no temptation to use this approach, but it is still sometimes necessary to be prepared for slight variations from straightforward stressed measures.

In *The man of life upright* the necessity for open-minded alertness is, perhaps, not very evident. Campion is quite simply using stresses to mark out a regular beat compatible with the mood of steady decision pervading the whole poem. He never deviates from rising-stress rhythm, but it is worth observing from the evidence of his accompanying music that he did not in this case intend stress to induce length, for the notes are all, with a very few exceptions, of the same length. It is certain, too, that he was not attempting to produce the foot that some prosodists apparently regard as possible, an 'iamb' with stress substituted for length, for the music gives at the beginning of each line a rest equivalent to the note used as the normal unit for each syllable, while the last syllable of each line is given a note lasting for two of these units; this makes hay of an attempt to scan on any 'iambic' basis, however licentiate. In fact, the prosodist is left in his usual precarious position of having to decide for himself where he is to divide one foot from the next. If he chooses the better part of valour, he will probably accept no divisions except those indicated through rimes by the poet himself. This particular poem may seem temptingly easy to deal with when it offers a disarming regularity of stress, but the fact that its author gave eight musical units to each line of six syllables should be an indication that he neither worked nor desired to work on the idea of a strict mathematical value for each syllable.

Such an idea would be impossible for the next poem. *Never weather-beaten Saile* asks for, and is given by the music, a lingering on the last syllable of the first two and the last lines of each stanza; it is absolutely essential that these rather long and unpausing lines should have a decided rest on the rime-word. The third line of each stanza, which has two more syllables than the other lines, is allowed only the same aggregate in notes, and it will be found that in reading, the voice, hurrying to the resolution of the last line, actually allows this line no more time than the others. If the last line is read as it is usually now printed, it is exactly commensurate with the others. The music, by repeating 'O come quickly' twice, makes it half as long again. In either case, all the lines are in a remarkably simple ratio to each other. The syllables, on the contrary, fluctuate considerably; the phrase, 'more willing bent to shore', for instance, seems to demand at least four different syllable-lengths, for 'more', 'will-' and 'bent', '-ing' and 'to' and 'shore'. Stress changes from falling to rising in so many lines that the change can hardly be considered as variations on a pattern based on one stress-order. In fact, the only calculable unit is the line.

The next poem seems at first sight to demand a grouping of lines for its unit, for the music prefixes to some of them a rest which brings the first of several pairs of lines into the curious relationship with the second of seven and a half units to six and a half. This seems absurd to the Euclidean mind, but the phenomenon occurs so often that the ear becomes accustomed to it, and appreciates the delicate variety lent by this refusal to march with plantigrade steps. It learns, too, to move with an absolute trust in the placing of the rimes, which occur, as always in Campion's poetry, at intervals exactly calculated to give an effect of balance without solidity. The lines are short but, as they rime alternately and not in couplets, the effect is not that of the battering-ram. It is the dependable use of rime throughout ten lines bearing a repeated proportion to each other that makes the eleventh line, which is nearly twice as long as any of the others, run on its way without an awkward break at the point where the other lines end.

If all these poems show how securely a sensitive poet can move in the dangerous freedom of large units, *Follow your Saint* makes this freedom seem the only possible condition for poetry. Only one line in the whole poem has a regular rising-stress movement from beginning to end, and the way is so subtly prepared for this movement that it comes with that sense of combined freshness and inevitability that has sometimes been described as the essence of poetry. The first three lines of each stanza end with a rising-stress movement definite enough to give a suggestion of flight by the metre and pursuit by the words to the earlier part of the lines, though it would be rash to put forward the theory that the whole line is based on that movement. There must be a pause on 'Saint', 'noates', 'soong' and 'first' that will involve hurrying elsewhere, and so rule out the possibility of a regular, stress-marked arrangement of feet. Obviously, it is the stable proportion of lines, varying only between ten and fourteen syllables and indicated by rimes, that must provide the unit. But the persistent scrupulous use of this unit gives Campion the right suddenly to shape a line on a more definitely modelled pattern and so introduce a sense, not of the banal, but of the perfection of freshness. The exquisite coincidence of material and ideal pattern in the line 'The Musicke that her Eccho is and beauties simpathie' might occur in the midst of a series of lines on a regular foot-basis and lose half its breath-catching loveliness. Coming as it does among minutely fluctuating but highly organized groups of feet, it is perfect.

Even a casual glance at the matter of Campion's poetry will reveal characteristics of subject and imagery that themselves illumine the effect on some Elizabethan poetry of preoccupation with the means of establishing metrical form. Any reader of Campion's poetry will find that all Campion's subjects are neatly listed for him in the index of every other anthology of Elizabethan poetry. For it is evident that he—like Shakespeare—had no shyness or hesitation in drawing from the common poets' storehouse. The first complete book of English songs published by himself bears on the title-page his own division into 'Divine and Morall Songs' and 'Light Conceits of Lovers', and that is as good

a classification as any of Elizabethan subjects. Campion's religious songs are all characterized by a quite simple reverence that may sometimes appear naïve, as in *Tune thy Musicke to thy hart*; but that reverence embraces complexities of religious experience that, perhaps more than anything else in his poetry, remind us of the fact that he lived through twenty years of the seventeenth century. Sometimes he reveals a personal vision of heaven with a luminous clarity that looks forward to Vaughan.

> Ever-blooming are the ioys of Heav'ns high paradice,
> Cold age deafes not there our eares, nor vapour dims
> our eyes;

and that Heaven evidently marches with the 'country far beyond the stars'. Sometimes Campion sees himself in personal relationship with God:

> View mee, Lord, a worke of thine:
> Shall I then lye drown'd in night?

and then he seems to 'surfet On the poysoned baytes of sinne' with Donne. And then he can forget them, with Herbert, to—

> Rise now and walke the waies of light;
> 'Tis not too late yet to begin.

Always, whether he is writing a version of one of the Psalms or crystallizing his own view of the world as—

> thou masse of meere confusion,
> False light, with many shadowes dimm'd,
> Old Witch, with new foyles trimm'd,
> Thou deadly sleepe of soule, and charm'd illusion,

there is something describable only as tone, which declares that he means what he says.

In 'Light Conceits of Lovers' we should hardly expect him always to mean what he says. With very few exceptions, as in *When the God of merrie love*, the lightness of his love-poems is always enchantingly delicate, amused and amusing. He can play the devout

lover with just sufficient solemnity to be suspect, swearing with lying hand on heart that his pallor comes—

> not with poring on my booke:
> My Mistris cheeke, my bloud hath tooke,
> For her mine owne hath me forsooke.

He can admit placidly that—

> Though Love and all his pleasures are but toyes,
> They shorten tedious nights,

and assign them to their proper place in the gay list of 'harmonie divine, yellow waxen lights, youthfull revels, Masks, and Courtly sights' that 'give Winter his delights'. He will recognize and simultaneously pity the folly of love-lorn man or woman—and then turn in his tracks to confound us with the delicate sincerity of *And would you see my Mistris face* or *Followe thy faire sunne*. For his love is not always light or, in any sense, conceited, and he is capable of sounding with implacable sureness the deep note whose grave harmonies affect the whole key of that perfect lyric, *When thou must home to shades of under ground.*

In all these the balance of occasion and feeling, import and response, is preserved with finished poetic tact. Campion was sensitive enough to reflect nearly all the sides of Elizabethan alertness to the multitudinous delights of earth and the happiness of heaven, the pains of life and the darkness of death—and he reflected nothing else. It is useless to search him for *aliquid novi*, and there is no need to do so.

Yet there is a newness about the forms which many of his reflections take. His Corinnas and Lesbias and Bessies may be related to the Delias and Chloes and sweet Kates, but they have their individuality, and it arises partly from the fact that Campion draws attention to qualities in them hardly noticed by other poets. They may have golden wires for hair and pearls for teeth, but he is not particularly interested if they have. Yet if they move or speak or sing, his awareness quickens at once. Poem after poem reveals an almost total disregard for visual imagery in its usual

forms. Colour, for instance, except in the dubious form of black, appears less than half a dozen times in all the songs, and when the mention of it is as general as 'thy red and white', it argues a decided lack of interest. Colour in itself seems to him too static to be stimulating, and he evidently passed the same disapproving verdict on unchanging shapes: his 'lovely formes do flowe'.

One of the few places where he presents a picture beautiful in its very freedom from change is in the description of 'heav'ns high paradice', and at that point, obviously, he has turned his back on his interests in the world; the beauties of heaven are *ipso facto* unsuitable for the earth. So when he descends from the rarefied atmosphere of Paradise he looks instantly and instinctively for something either in movement or capable of it. Darkness and light are so much relative terms that each implies the possibility of changing into the other, and he varies the lighting of his poems with sun and shadow, day and night and, occasionally, life and death. Natural description appears only through the varying forms of the seasons, when the 'peacefull westerne winde' tames the winter storms only to let the delights of winter replace the joys of summer; or in flowing sea and river; or in the lightly poised shapes of eagle or dove. Everything, in fact, is at the point of that 'sweete delicious morne' in his 'Mistris' face, 'Where day is breeding, never borne'. Love dies or flames like a fire. Human beings hardly seem alive to him until they begin to move or speak or sing. His saints and his wantons alike must be flying, his suns must flee their shadow, his ladies moving swiftly and lightly from raging to kindness.

> Awake, thou spring of speaking grace, mute rest becomes not thee;
> The fayrest women, while they sleepe, and Pictures, equall bee.

Naturally, then, he delights to think of anything which seems in itself the essence of movement. Winds blow through his fields and gardens, and the abstract word 'flight' occurs over and over again. Above all, he loves and praises and calls upon music in all he does, music which cannot exist without movement. 'Heav'n is Musick', 'To Musicke bent' is his mind, the beloved's voice 'is

an Eccho cleare which Musicke doth beget', she has a 'smoothe toong whose musicke hell can move', God—

> hath all the world in
> Harmonic framed.

Music sounds through his poetry as it probably sounded through all his existence; the reader cannot escape it if he would. It is significant that when he wishes to suggest, in *The man of life upright*, the complete absence of bustle and hurry with their possible attendant distresses, he speaks, not of 'quiet' days, which ninety-nine poets out of a hundred would have said, simply because the general term 'quiet' seems more inclusive than any other; but of 'silent' days, as though he could not make the idea immediate to his imagination unless he reached it through his hearing. It has exactly the same awakening effect on the mind as the use of the word 'crocus', by any other poet, instead of the more general 'yellow'.

Here is a poet in whom the sense through which the majority of men and women receive their clearest impressions is, by comparison with other senses, dormant. Campion simply is not interested in keeping his eye on the object; if he must use his eyes, he prefers to have to search, and follow movement. He likes the feel of air. But above all he loves the sound of things. His aural imagination is developed so much more fully than other perceptions in him, or than hearing in other poets, that it sometimes seems a will-o'-the-wisp fancy that he has consented to live anywhere but in the world of pure sound. But the poems are here as evidence of his wider human sympathies, and they are a sufficient proof of the rare rewards of that aural sensitiveness. Again, it seems impossible that anyone who disregards the sense of sight, the most generally and highly developed of the human senses, should succeed in conveying any of his auditory experiences. He is handicapped from the beginning by the fact that the technical terms of music are unfamiliar to most readers: either he must give up the idea of exact description, or he must create a musical-poetic diction of his own. Campion never seems to feel

the need of technicalities; he does not go even as far as Jonson, who writes, 'Woe weeps out her division when she sings'. Campion is content with the general word 'music' and the occasional use of 'melody' and 'harmony'. He makes no attempt to translate his experience through analogies from other activities. There seems no solution to his problem of communication.

There is a solution, and it is the same as the answer to the earlier question. The study of Campion's versification is important, because without it a sharing of his experience is impossible. To examine subject alone leaves us with no means of distinguishing him from Anon.; to examine imagery alone is to find ourselves abandoned on an interesting road without a signpost. His matter as a whole remains meaningless until it has been defined and clarified by the sympathetic moulding of verbal form.

The six examples chosen from his poems, differing so widely as they do among themselves, do not nearly exhaust the variety of his metrical forms. It never seemed to occur to him that it was possible to write many songs in exactly the same measure. He knew instinctively that form affects mood; in the *Obseruations* he is obviously interested in the emotional effect of different forms of verse. But he never attempted to depend on the usually accepted effects of single feet; that left no room for subtlety. Always his ear was alert for the balance of groups, just as the ear of the musicians of the day was listening for balanced phrasing. The effort to relate one note or one syllable rigidly to the rest has been for the moment abandoned, and the result in the music and poetry of this period is an impression of directness and, deceptively, simplicity. The sureness of handling in those larger groups, a sureness setting the hearer's mind at rest and satisfying his rhythmical sense, gave room within the groups for a flexibility of utterance, for shifts of stress and complex syncopation, for resting and hurrying, for flying almost silently through the air-like movement of the 'f's and 'l's and 's's of a poem like *Follow your Saint*, till something very like the complete re-creation of the artist's experience has been achieved. Campion's verse gives us a sense of sharing the completed mood of his poetic experience that no description

could have conveyed, and it is the essence of a poem that its form should work on the emotions through the ear till it awakens the exact mood fitted for the reception of its matter.

Perhaps the hints given to us by Campion's practice will now enable us better to understand the poetry of his contemporaries.

Chapter 7

SOME ELIZABETHAN LYRICS MORE FULLY EXAMINED

THERE have, of course, been many changes in pronunciation between Queen Elizabeth's days and our own, and it may seem dangerous to examine the language of more than three centuries ago, believing that we may understand what it sounded like when first spoken. Study of the work of phonologists, however, will show clearly that, on the whole, where modern readers would detect rime or assonance in verse, Elizabethan readers would also detect it, though the assonance might be on a slightly different sound. The evidence of the diphthongs suggests that even more rimes were possible than for us; while habits of stressing rigid with us were freer among the Elizabethans, so that here, too, correspondences in sound might be more, rather than less, easily secured than with us.

There are qualities of speech in which all languages and all ages may be said to be alike. Every uttered syllable must, if it is to be audible, have these qualities of sound. It must have pitch, intensity and duration. These physical characteristics of speech, and their connection with the human organs of speech, are well described in *The Foundations and Nature of Verse* (New York, 1918), by Cary F. Jacob. (The conclusions he draws about the nature of verse from his study of its physical foundations are not, I think, helpful to much of this study, even if they were unquestionably true.) Every heard sound is 'pitched' somewhere in a scale of sounds; that is, whatever instrument produces the sound vibrates at a certain rate, and the rate of its vibrations determines its pitch. The more rapid its vibrations, the 'higher' its pitch, and vice versa. This is as true of speech sound as of any other. Every heard sound must have some degree of intensity, which is what we hear as

loudness. Unless it 'makes a noise', a spoken syllable cannot be heard. It may, of course, like the schoolboy, 'make a noise quietly', but its quietness must be an audible degree of intensity. Every heard sound must have duration. There is no such thing as an instantaneous sound. In fact, the length of time that sound-waves continue is immensely longer than the length of time in which we hear them; what concerns us is the audible length of time. Physically, then, the speech of which verse is made depends for its audibility on these three qualities, which it shares with music as it does with all sound, though the nature of the sounding instrument makes the sounds of speech different in effect from the sounds of lutes, lions or waterfalls. All these must, I think, be studied if the structure of verse is to be detected in the sounds of speech, though it will become clear that they are not all of equal structural value.

At first thought it might appear that pitch can be of no assistance to a study of verse structure in English. Music makes constant use of the factor of pitch in constructing melodies, but poets do not, wittingly at least, write melodies (in the literal sense) as part of their verse-forms. Where the poem is a song in the strict sense, the music obviously uses pitch, but the words detached from the music are not regarded as having literal 'melody'. No attempt at giving to verse a pitch notation has succeeded, from Joshua Steele's in the *Prosodia Rationalis* (London, 1779) to that of Sidney Lanier in *The Science of English Verse* (New York, 1880). The reasons are obvious and twofold. Firstly, the pitch of speech varies within very much narrower limits than the pitch of the singing voice or of most musical instruments, and uses closer degrees of variation; to use it deliberately for verse would therefore require a system of notation making very fine distinctions and so difficult to follow. Steele's attempt at such a notation was not detailed and elaborate enough to represent the fine distinctions of speech pitch, but it was altogether too detailed and elaborate for most readers. This was because of the second and more fundamental reason for the failure to make deliberate use of voice pitch in verse-forms: the fact that manipulation of this pitch, which is instinctive rather

than intended in most speakers, varies widely from one individual to another. Not only do individual speakers differ from each other in their practice of using lower or higher pitch for different parts of a sentence or word, they also differ in the range of pitch that they naturally use. One man will lower his pitch at the end of a question when his neighbour would raise it, and also lower it by many degrees of pitch when his neighbour would raise it by a bare semitone. Such wide variation as this in common natural practice with voice pitch makes it impossible that it could be deliberately used in any verse except that intended for a very small group of very hard-working readers.

Nevertheless, there is a form of pitch in speech which can be used in verse. This is the pitch of the characteristic resonance of vowels. In the last decades of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth, several investigators [1] had shown that the position and movement of the speech organs in uttering vowels varied so as to produce different frequencies for different vowels. The principal source of interest in discussion at this time lay in the question whether the frequencies of the different vowels were directly related to voice tone, or whether they were independent of the frequencies of different pitch in the voice tone. The important point for us is that vowels whispered varied from each other in pitch. Later, in the work of Sir Richard Paget,[2] attempts were made to show that the pitch of different vowels was determinable, that the vowels remained in a constant relation to each other on the scale of pitch. Paget's work, which he based on the use of his natural unaided hearing, was continued, expanded and confirmed by experimentation using laboratory instruments, with the result that it may be stated definitely that the vowels, treated separately from voice tone, may be placed in all but constant relative positions on the scale of pitch, rising in pitch from the back vowels, which are lower-pitched, to the front vowels, which are higher-pitched. The front vowels differ from the back vowels in having two audible resonances, of which the secondary in each case is

[1] See the bibliography for this chapter.
[2] *Human Speech* (London, 1930).

much lower-pitched than the primary and is also nearly related to the resonance of one of the back vowels. An account of this work is given in *Vowel Sounds in Poetry* (Psyche Monographs 13, London, 1940), by M. M. Macdermott. From this I take the order in pitch of the vowels. The vowels of the following syllables fall in pitch as the series goes on: bee, bit, bate, bet, bat, burn, (remem)-ber, but, balm, bog, ball, bone, boom, bull. 'ee' and 'oo' are said to be harmonically related through the secondary resonance of the former, and (b)a(te) and (b)o(ne).

This is an extremely simplified account of the whole subject, which for further detail must be studied in the books named in the bibliography. I have simplified it for various reasons. The first is that, while there can be no doubt of the accuracy of many of the findings, the complications of overtones heard faintly in many of the vowels by the investigators cannot be heard at all by many people, even if they ever hear the 'pure' vowel—that is, the vowel whispered without voice tone. Such details are therefore meaningless to them, and certainly irrelevant to their experience of hearing verse. The second is that vowels heard in poetry are in fact heard when carried by voice tone, which has the most clearly heard pitch, and that voice tone can certainly often be used to deafen most hearers to the characteristic pitches of the vowels. The third is that *Vowel Sounds in Poetry* carries its faith in the importance of vowel sounds to the point of saying 'the elusive secret of the music of poetry seemed at last within grasp', and of classifying in great detail lists of objects, emotions and subjects which can be suitably described or expressed in poetry only by using certain groups of vowels. Thus, we are told that low-pitched vowels express 'deep or ugly hatred; physical loathing', while high-pitched vowels express 'keen, biting hatred; scorn', and that many poems or parts of poems are 'bad' simply because the poet has failed to observe this.

Now I do not believe that we may safely dismiss any poem as bad just because 'the level is wrong'. I do not believe that 'the music of poetry' is contained entirely in its vowels. I do not believe that we can neatly and exhaustively tabulate all the moods

and subjects of poetry as suitable for certain vowels and no other. I do not believe that the characteristic pitches of vowels are always necessarily heard in speech. Therefore, I have extracted from the investigation all that seems to me safe for use; that in general if the voice is allowed to follow the tendencies of natural vowel pitch, differences of pitch will (whether consciously or not) actually be heard; that in passages where either high or low vowels occur in very markedly high proportion to others, the voice will probably move naturally to the appropriate pitch; and that, very generally and tentatively, it may be said that high and low vowels differ from each other in emotional effect.

The importance of these facts for our study clearly lies in their bearing on rime and, less important, on assonance. Definitions of rime have always insisted that the riming part of a word must include a stressed vowel; and it is probably true that in imperfect rimes the imperfection is more noticeable where it is the vowels that fail to correspond than where it is the consonants. 'Keen' and 'beam' satisfy the ear better than 'keen' and 'kine' or than 'beam' and 'balm'. The pleasure of the ear in rime does probably rise largely from the fact that in rime something like a return to the same pitch is felt, that it gives a little of the same kind of satisfaction as a phrase in music gives when it returns to a note already treated as important. The verse of Elizabethan lyric uses this quasi-musical quality of sounds without dependence on music proper, and uses it freely. Thus, Jonson's *Slow, slow, fresh fount* (p. 119) uses this pitch element of speech, not only to link and divide the lines of the poem, but to link them in a manner peculiarly valuable to the apparent irregularities of the madrigal. As we have seen, this poem contains phrases of complex stress patterning, together with passages of more straightforward continuing rhythm, and while the more difficult phrases are made easier of acceptance by repetition, the places of repetition do not occur at anything like equal or easily calculable intervals, and they are so mingled with each other and with simpler rhythm that division of the poem according to its rhythmical movement makes for lines of markedly unequal lengths.

Now rime here not only marks the divisions, but shows clearly that they are divisions of a consistently developing whole, and not pieces of speech arbitrarily put together. Thus, the 'tears-bears' and 'springs-sings' rimes emphasize the near-equality of length in lines where the varieties of stress-placing might make them fall too far apart. The rime 'ours' holds its line, where the rhythmical construction has changed almost startlingly from that of the two preceding lines, in a close connection with those lines. The short length of all these lines is not allowed to sever them from the longer lines of the poem, for their connection with phrases included in these longer lines (as earlier analysis showed) is brought out by the riming of 'still' in a short line with 'hil' and '-dil' in longer lines. The isolation of the 'Drop' line, effective in itself and in its marking of its repetition of the opening rhythmical phrase of the poem, is prevented from leading to too-complete isolation of its parts by its persistent self-rime. This rime at once enforces the necessary separation of the four words (necessary both for emphasis and to make each short 'drop' fill the space fitting for 'slow' or 'fount'), and insists that the separation occurs within a whole. Rime here certainly plays a part, not only of giving sound pleasurable in itself, but of marking divisions and connections of shape in the whole poem.

This is true of the other madrigal poems. In *What is life?* the change from double to single rime goes far in itself to establish the change of mood from the short partial questions with their partial answers to the larger question about 'all in one combined', with its expectation of more inclusive answer. The abab of the first double rimes changes to the closer cc, and as it changes suggests already a movement to close. Then comes the postponement of the satisfaction of rime, enforcing the sense of greater length required for the last question, which is to have its answer in the second long line culminating in the firm single rime. The riming of *I follow, lo, the footing* (p. 125) certainly fulfils similar functions of holding together phrases which might fall apart because of their inequality of length, and it is more subtle than the apparent abbcddeff order might suggest, in a way that will later become

clear. Again, in Drummond's *Madrigal* (p. 127), the rimes link unequally long phrases, and have also an extra quality of the kind referred to in *I follow*. It should be noted that here there seems to be a somewhat marked use of the differences of pitch between vowels—the lowering to 'tomb' and 'come' (the latter probably not far from 'coom' in pronunciation) from the high-pitched 'i' and 'ai' or 'ei' of the earlier rimes seems to me genuinely audible and functional in marking the settling into the sorrow of acceptance from the restless rebellion of the early lines.

In air poetry, rimes of course perform a similar function, but here their importance is most marked in sharpening the sense of repetition between the stanzas. *Weep you no more* (p. 131) shows this clearly, not only in the exact correspondence of single and double rimes between the two stanzas, but also in the repetitions actually within the refrain which is to recur almost exactly. The rime between the fifth and eighth lines ensures formal recognition of the link between the refrain and the rest of the stanza. The 'bb' pair of rimes in Wyatt's *What should I say?* (pp. 139–40) prepares for the final couplet and links it to the opening alternations; the order ababbcc in fact serves perfectly to hold variety into singleness. *When thou must home* (pp. 141–2) uses a very simple rime scheme, ababcc, in keeping with the grave length and content of the lines. The Agincourt poem (p. 143) uses very close riming to establish that overriding force of stanza form to which we referred, and links its short, punctuating, timing lines by rime, which rings in the mind because of its dissyllabic nature, and so is clearly recognized in spite of its separation from its pair by the 'ccc' lines in the order aaabcccb.

The most important element in all these rimes, the vowel, is used in these poems otherwise than in pure rime. Phrases and lines are further linked by assonance. In Jonson's poem, 'Slow', 'woe', 'O' and 'snow' show their importance in their echoing of each other as well as by their emphasis; 'fount', 'flowers', 'showers' and 'ours' lead to some noticing of 'now'; 'time', 'I' and 'pride', spaced far apart, keep echo speaking from beginning to end of the poem. Both the Morley and the Byrd poems use this very inter-

estingly. In the first two three-line groups of *I follow*, the first line is apparently unrimed, but it uses in its penultimate syllable the same vowel as that used in the riming pair: 'footing–cruel–jewel', 'flieth–(de)riding–hiding'. The last group has in the end-syllables the vowel, not of the following rimes, 'sought her–caught her', but of the first group, '(pur)suing' turning back to 'footing–cruel–jewel'. Assonance here links end to beginning, and it is here most necessary, as the stanza might otherwise fall apart into three short stanzas. The '-ing' endings used in all three groups serve the same purpose. In the Byrd poem, assonance links the two rime groups of 'sliding–biding' and 'smiling–(be)guiling'. It links these groups further to the closing pair of long lines, with 'combined', 'divided', 'delights', 'mind's'. The importance of this sound has already been underlined by its extra appearance in the phrase 'time beguiling', and two of its appearances in the last couplet occur at the end of the phrase which forms the first half of each line; thus, 'combined' and 'delights' give some of rime's satisfaction where it is half-expected, but where full rime would divide the lines too heavily. The singleness of the last line is assured by the repetition of the assonant vowel in the first syllable of the closing phrase, so that 'mind's' follows hard upon 'delights'. All these words echo the vowel of the important 'life' in the opening phrase. Drummond's Madrigal again links rime-groups through assonance between 'strife–life' and 'cries–(monar)chise–(sur)prise', and insists on force for certain words within the line by giving assonance between the 'bring–king' rimes and 'prince' and 'grim–grinning'. The insistence of 'grim–grinning king' is obviously purposeful.

The assonance of the air poems begins, in *Weep you no more*, with something unusual—an actual rime between the first syllables of the two stanzas, in 'Weep' and 'Sleep'. This certainly, I think, plays its part in giving us our sense of the remarkable unity of this poem, in which the double ideas, of sorrow for death and rebuke of sorrow inherent in the thought of rest for the dead in sleep, are linked from beginning to end, so that the refrain seems to have peculiar propriety in using the 'weeping–sleeping' rime.

When we find each half of the poem actually introduced by either 'weep' or 'sleep', we find the sound relationships of the poem indicating as closely as seems possible its meaning structure, particularly when 'sleep' follows 'weep' like an answer, in both the order of stanzas and the order of words in the refrain. The other notable assonances of this poem occur in 'flow so' and 'peace be-'. It has already been pointed out that the air gives unexpected length for 'so' and 'be-', and the assonance here appears to be a use of sounds to give something of the same effect in the words without the music. Certainly, I think that the chime with 'flow' gives to 'so' an importance that it would not otherwise have had, and therefore tends to prolong it in utterance. This prolongation established in one stanza perhaps makes us half-ready for it in the next, so that we are prepared to accept the suggestion of the assonance between 'peace' and 'be-', and linger on 'be-' as on 'so'; if we do so linger, we are, I think, reading in a fashion proper to the ends of these lines. It is noticeable throughout the poem that light endings like '-y' and '-ing' are syllables capable of prolongation, however quiet they may be. None of the other air poems uses chiming sounds as fully and subtly as this one, but it is worth noting the repetition in the last stanza of Wyatt's poem of the '-ay' rime of the first, and the similarity between the 'dead–fled–led' and 'said–(ob)eyed–(be)trayed' rimes of these two stanzas. I am not sure whether the chime between the 'mist–' of the first stanza and the 'wist–kist' of the last stanza is audible at a first reading; familiarity with the poem brings it out.

In Campion's *When thou must home*, the chief use of assonance is to hold each long line together as a unit of sound as well as of sense. Many of the lines use one important sound at least twice. In line one it is 'ou'; in line two, 'i' (ai or ei); in line four, 'i' again; in line six, 'oo'. In stanza two, lines one and two are linked by the 'ee' sound, lines three and four by 'i' and 'oo'. Lines five and six are linked by '(th)ou', 'o' and 'e', with the repetition of the last in not only the 'then' but also the two 'tell's of the last line. Drayton's *Agincourt*, with its clustering rimes, makes little use of assonance.

It should now be clear that vowel sounds, which are related to each other in pitch, may be used to point the structure of a poem, and that therefore the element of pitch, unexpected as it may seem, has some part to play in leading us towards the metre of a poem. Yet it cannot be or make the metre: it can only help to mark it. Metre is not a melodic construction, and we do not feel that the poems treated above are metrical on account of their use of linked vowel sounds; we are led by these vowel sounds to give attention to parts of the words which indicate metre to us, but it is not only the words using these sound-connections which tell us what the metre is. We may therefore say that pitch is a quality of speech sounds which helps to mark metre, but not to make it. We should therefore note it and follow its guidance, but not allow it to assume preponderance over other elements of sound, for its guidance is usually only general.

The element of intensity is very important in English which is customarily described as a heavily stressed language. Intensity or loudness shows itself in our stress, which is very variable. It is only very rarely that in ordinary speech several consecutive syllables carry level stress; usually there is a continual variation, slight or great, in the degree of loudness given to one syllable. This variation is one of the most difficult lessons for the foreign speaker of English to learn, as the relative stress of different syllables in a word may be modified, altered or intensified when the word is grouped with other words to form a phrase, and the stress variations of our phrases are highly characteristic of our speech habits. It is the more difficult to learn, as our variations of stress sometimes, though not always, bring other effects in their train. Thus, great stress given to a syllable does often mean that we give increased time to its pronunciation, and it has been suggested that all our stressed syllables are rather longer than any of our unstressed syllables. This, however, has not been demonstrated, and I do not think that it can be demonstrated when the degrees of stress are themselves so uncertain. If all stressed syllables carried the same degree of stress, some relation between stress and length might be shown, but in fact they do not carry the same stress,

and the unstressed part of one word may in some combinations be louder than the stressed parts of others, and either may be longer or shorter than the other. Thus, in 'merry', 'marry' and 'Mary', each first syllable is stressed, but I do not think that they are all the same length; and if Mr. Merry announces that he is to marry Rosemary, pronouncing her name with the main stress on 'Rose', he may very probably give to '-mary' as long a time as he gives to 'marry', though his first syllable in 'marry' will almost certainly be louder than his second in 'Rosemary', while the comments of his friends will certainly include many variations of stress and length in their pronunciation of these syllables.

What is most important, and reasonably reliable in our stress habits, is that, while actual degree of stress is incalculable, neighbouring syllables will always tend to vary from each other in loudness; single polysyllabic words will nearly always give to one or more syllables greater stress than to others, and the stresses will be separated from each other by quieter syllables. Even when monosyllabic words are neighbours, it will be only for special reasons, such as purposeful repetition, that they will receive equal stress. It is therefore the tendency to use stressed syllables interspersed with one or more unstressed that is our consistent habit in dealing with the factor of intensity in utterance, and it is this habit to which we may look for some pointer towards verse structures. It is, in fact, a very valuable pointer, and will lead to more detailed understanding of these structures than the hearing of pitch in vowels can ever do. So valuable is it that there have been many who stated and believed that in stress alone lay the secret of English metres. This, however, is almost certainly one of those half-truths that are more misleading than the obvious untruth.

Nevertheless, stress remains vitally important. We have already, in discussing the poems analysed in Chapter 5, had frequently to refer to stress in such a way as to make it quite clear that most readers feel that poetry deliberately uses and repeats stress to establish a sense of ordered arrangement in words, and this is, I think, true. The phrases occurring as units in the poems of Chap-

ter 5, and the passages of continuous repetition, were marked by an order of stressed and unstressed syllables. For the marking of such an order, the varied degrees of stress are unimportant; all that matters is that differences of intensity in utterance between neighbouring syllables should be heard. The differences need not be great ones. Thus, in *Slow, slow*, it is almost certain that in line nine, the syllable '-on' will be less loud, and very considerably less loud than 'melt' or 'snow' or 'crag' or 'hill'; but it will certainly be louder than its preceding 'up-', and probably rather louder than the following 'some', and it is its greater loudness than its immediate neighbours that gives it its structural importance, not the relation of its loudness to that of other loud syllables in the line. Stress is a matter, not of absolute intensity, but of the relative intensity of a syllable in comparison with its immediate surroundings. This fact gives it its great value in English verse; the occurrence of this relative stress may be relied on, and the poet is not dependent on the vagaries of emotional utterance when he uses stress; nor is his choice of words in using stress as limited by the chances of the English vocabulary as is his use of vowel sounds. It may therefore be said with truth that when feet are marked in English verse, they are marked by arrangements of stress; where feet strictly so-called do not occur, still phrases capable of being apprehended as unities are marked out by stress, as the discussion of poems in Chapter 5 showed.

In using stress to indicate phrasing or foot division, it would seem, from the poems of this period, that poets use one of two principal methods. In the madrigal poems the phrases were always indicated by stress belonging naturally to emphasis. Reading the poems according to the needs of their meaning, though with the extra care and sensitive deliberation required for poetry, was enough to bring out an arrangement of stressed and unstressed syllables which could be recognized as making complete phrases capable of repetition and recognizable variation. Where the normal stress of emphasis was insufficient to mark the phrase, special means were used to cause stress. Thus, in Jonson's poem, alliteration and a difficult grouping of consonants are used to suspend

and distribute stress over both words in 'fresh fount', as the pauses between the repetitions of 'drop' also enforce repeated stresses on the four uses of the word. In the Byrd poem the 'which' of line seven is probably by emphasis louder than the following 'di-', but its stress is increased by the preceding, reining-in pause after 'combined', which seems somehow to release force for the 'which'. *I follow* moves entirely on the stress of emphasis, but Drummond's poem uses alliteration and assonance to secure level stressing of 'grim' and 'grin-' in 'grim-grinning king'; the chiming of actual sounds makes for deliberate use of stress to bring out the insistent repetition, as, for instance, 'grim-looking king' would not do. In these poems of complex metrical structure it is clear that the poet takes no risks in arranging his stresses; they are the natural stresses of emphasis and, as such, little likely to be misinterpreted. Where there is the slightest danger of misreading, devices of assonance and the like are called in to provide extra direction.

At the end of Drummond's poem, however, a stress is intensified by another means. The 'will' of the last line is by nature a little louder than its neighbours in common speech, and is therefore by emphasis adequate to its position in the line. It occurs, however, near the end of a passage in which, for nearly the whole of three long lines, the arrangement of stresses has been almost consistently × /. This consistent movement has continued long enough to arouse expectation of its repetition, and has therefore driven the reader to expect ictus on every second syllable. Ictus falls on 'will', intensifies its emphasis stress, and therefore compels the reader to give 'will' a force that brings out its latent capacity for functioning as a full part of the verb meaning 'to intend or purpose, to will', where an ordinary prose reading would almost certainly treat 'will' as a simple auxiliary expressing futurity. Now this use of ictus is an example of the other possible manipulation of stresses in verse, a method shown more clearly in air poetry than in madrigal poetry.

As we have seen, the poetry written for airs usually contains more than one stanza, and stanzas after the first are required to

repeat the structure of the first in order that they may be easily sung to a repetition of the tune. While the rhythmical phrases of air poetry are not necessarily by any means simple, they nevertheless tend on the whole to a greater simplicity than those of madrigal poetry, just because of the need to repeat them, possibly several times, without the freedom of choice in placing which madrigals give. Now this leads to the placing of emphasis stresses in the first stanza, or in the first part of the first stanza, with firmness and clarity so as to establish in the mind an order of stressed and unstressed syllables which is to be repeated. If this order is quite clearly established, and it is not too complex, the reader acquires a certainty about what he is to expect which makes him to some extent supply what he expects even where he does not actually find it. It is this that makes ictus, and it is ictus that can make certain syllables lacking emphasis nevertheless carry sufficient stress to perform their office in marking metrical structure. This does not mean that natural stress must be completely abandoned in order to allow ictus to demonstrate a structure that is not shown by emphasis. Stress showing ictus may be very slight, enough simply to make it hold its own among syllables where emphasis occurs without ictus. The simpler the repeating order of syllables is, the more freely a poet may rely upon ictus; the more complex it is, the more sparingly must he use ictus unsupported by emphasis.

Thus, of the air poems discussed in Chapter 5, *Weep you no more* certainly has the most complex stanza, and there is, I think, only one point at which the poet relies on ictus alone to ensure repetition of his stanza form. The fifth line of the first stanza certainly has some stress given by emphasis to 'my', for the meaning appears to demand a contrast to be made audible between 'heaven's sun' and 'my sun'. In the corresponding position in the second stanza, 'you' has no emphasis, while 'rest' certainly has it. 'Rest' must be given the importance due to it from the meaning, but 'you' must not be swallowed up between 'rest' and 'then'; carrying ictus, it is given at least more deliberate utterance than in common prose speech, so that 'Rest you then, rest, sad eyes' is made adequate to balance 'But my sun's heavenly eyes'.

Wyatt's poem, having a simpler pattern for repetition, seems to rely more frequently on ictus. Certainly, the beginning of the fifth line in every stanza after the first is marked more than in common speech by the needs of ictus. The Campion poem uses ictus without emphasis occasionally even in the first stanza, for his stress order is simple; and this practice enables him to lighten some lines, such as the third, where 'do' has the very slightest of stresses, and to give lightness and variation to the fourth, in 'Iope, blithe'. In the second stanza, 'which sweet' can be used without upsetting our sense of the stress-order, for by this time we are prepared to give ictus to 'which'. The Drayton poem clearly relies largely on ictus, and is enabled to do so by the close repetitions of pattern in stress and rime which establish the form of the first stanza very firmly in our minds. In this poem our expectation of ictus is so strong that as the march of the stanzas proceeds, we are prepared to let it override emphasis, sometimes simply to maintain the general effect of the movement as in the short lines of the second stanza, but sometimes with unlooked-for benefit to the meaning as in the last line of the third stanza, where stress on 'their' suddenly brings out an extra twist of meaning in the King's response to the French boasts. The stanzas containing his speech certainly benefit much from the activity of ictus in stressing at the beginnings of lines conjunctions apparently unimportant, yet proving when stressed to indicate turns of thought and feeling which add dramatic force to the speech.

It will have been noticed that in several of these poems, and particularly in *Agincourt*, alliteration occurs on syllables where stress is important. This is a part of the use of consonant sounds to assist in marking structure already made clear by other means. Alliteration never seems to have been consistently used by Elizabethan writers to indicate structure as it was used in, for example Old English and some Middle English verse, though it appears largely in several of the poems in Tottel's *Miscellany*. To judge by the comments of Elizabethan writers, including Shakespeare (both in the parody verse of the mechanicals' play in *A Midsumme Night's Dream* and in the 'extemporal epitaph' of *Love's Labour'*

Lost, IV, ii, 50 ff.), 'hunting the letter' was never regarded by them as anything but decoration at best and superficial affectation at worst. There is no doubt that relations between consonants add to the pleasurable sounds of verse, but I suspect that their main structural use is to reinforce stress. Certain consonants, such as the voiceless stops, themselves sound 'loud', and initially may be used to give 'attack', as a musician would call it, to syllables requiring loud clarity. Repetition may help in reminding the reader to give force to words, as in Drayton's line 'Ferrers and Fanhope'. Consonants, in fact, seem structurally valuable mainly as adjuncts to stress.

It should by now be evident that stress is indeed vital in marking the structure of English verse. It shows that intensity, used with a sense of its relative rather than its absolute force, is a quality of speech sounds which can indicate with remarkable accuracy an order of syllables revealing a rhythmical structure in the mind's ear of poet and reader. Yet it should be almost equally evident that the structure itself is not made in terms of loudness. The very fact of the variability in the usable degrees of loudness, that any contrast in intensity, however slight or however marked, will serve to indicate an order of division of syllables, ought to make it clear that it is not actually volume of sound itself that is the material of which the poet's designs are made. If design, 'proportion', in the Elizabethan sense, is the mark of a construction in art; if a series of satisfying relationships is that which reveals proportion to the Elizabethans and 'æsthetic quality' to us, the relationships must surely be subject to some control over their proportions (in our sense). Whatever it is that is organized into relationships must be capable of showing consistent ratios, of being ordered with some certainty into a construction that shall remain reasonably constant in the apprehension of both the maker and the recipient of the work of art. Now it is evident that volume or intensity of sound has not this constancy of relationship in English speech. It may be used more consistently than pitch to mark structure, but its degrees of intensity are beyond control or indication by any means open to the poet. Beyond indicating that

some syllables are to be louder than others, he cannot go with any certainty. Like pitch, intensity, though more reliable and consistent in use than pitch, is a marker and not a maker of metrical form.

The association of much Elizabethan verse with music might well prepare us to expect duration, the third essential of speech sound, to prove the quality of words which provides that in which structure is made; for duration is a matter of time, and music makes its basic structure in terms of time. This expectation should be confirmed when we find, as we have found, that the verse associated with music proves when separated from music still to appear beautiful, well ordered, recognizably 'constructed' and not haphazard. That is, the poetry appears shapely, not only when it appears in association with the companion art, but also when it is divided from that companion; the company it has kept has not unfitted it for independent existence. Now the verse that kept company with visual forms could not retain form when it was divorced from the visual; Puttenham's spires could not stand. The quality that verse shared with picture in his forms therefore proved to have been a quality improper to verse, and falsely attached to it through temporary union with the visual. The success of Elizabethan verse written for music when it is removed from its music shows that the quality which it shared most closely with music was nevertheless proper to itself. This important quality is that of duration.

Both pitch and intensity are used in such widely different ways by poetry and music that these factors, once poetry and music are separated, seem to retain in either of the arts little similarity with their use in the other. Pitch in the melody of music often moves up and down in directions opposite to those suggested by the vowels in the verse set, and changes in the volume of the singing voice bear no necessary relation to the stresses of the verse sung. Verse and music must retain, however, the fact that they have extension in time, that time must pass if they are to exist at all. This is true of poetry and music joined in song, and of each alone. It would therefore appear likely and proper that construction in these

arts should mean the organization of the dimension which is the condition of their existence. Artistic form is an organization of the dimension in which it occurs. Painting, sculpture and architecture use spatial relationships to make form, the first working in two dimensions, the other two in three; whatever the 'subject' of painting or sculpture, whatever the purpose of a building, formally they remain spatial constructions. Ballet and opera must build in both space and time; and again, whatever their 'story', formally they remain spatial and temporal constructions. Whatever their purpose, content or manner of performance, music and poetry remain temporal constructions. Pitch and intensity are necessary for us to detect the structure of a poem; but its structure is dependent on its duration.

A difficulty at once places itself in the way of our accepting this statement as true of English verse. In classical verse, with its system of longs and shorts, it is clear that duration holds the secret of its metrical construction. In English, no more than a handful of experiments in writing verse of this kind has ever come near to succeeding,[1] and the reason given for failure is always the same: English syllables have not in natural speech any consistent relation to each other in quantity. Sensitive ears have always recognized this; it has now been proved for us by recording with instruments more precise in stating, if not necessarily in detecting,

[1] We must leave out of the handful such poems as Longfellow's *Evangeline*, where, in fact, no attempt is made to write quantitatively. Stress is consistently substituted for length, and the measure waltzes trippingly off the tongue in a movement hardly reminiscent of the grave dignity of Vergilian lines:

> Ye who believe in affection that hopes, and endures, and is patient,
> Ye who believe in the beauty and strength of woman's devotion,
> List to the mournful tradition still sung by the pines of the forest;
> List to a Tale of Love in Acadie, home of the happy.
> Fortunati ambo! si quid mea carmina possunt,
> Nulla dies unquam memori vos eximet ævo,
> Dum domus Æneæ Capitoli immobile saxum
> Accolet, imperiumque pater Romanus habebit.

The substitution of stress for length means, of course, that *Evangeline* can have no play of stress moving freely without affecting the stability of the quantitative arrangement.

variations in length than the human ear.[1] E. A. Sonnenschein lists the recorded lengths of vowel sounds, measured in hundredths of a second, as varying between 4·7 and 25·5. Strangely enough, he uses these figures to support a contention that 'the terms "short vowel sounds" and "long vowel sounds" . . . are justified', though his longest 'short' is 10·4 hundredths of a second and his shortest 'long' 12; that is, some of his longs and shorts differ less from each other in length than some of his longs from other longs and some of his shorts from other shorts. As he says, 'Within each class there are great variations of duration', and this fact is unaltered by the statement that 'the short vowel sounds seem on an average to be about half the length of the long vowel sounds'. The trouble here is that we do not hear an average: we hear all the differing syllable lengths that give the data for a simple rule-of-three calculation of the average. We hear syllables and not exercises in arithmetic. Only what we hear is of any value in detecting verse-structure, and while no one has ever doubted that we can indeed hear as 'long' a syllable of 25·5 hundredths of a second, and as 'short' a syllable of 4·7, we must doubt our capacity to distinguish between 10·8 and 12, or at least resist the suggestion that all syllables of duration shorter than an arbitrary time-value must be accepted as short, all syllables longer than this accepted as long. If indeed we could hear with certainty all our vowels, or all our syllables, as definitely long or short, we might feel that English verse could be constructed on a basis of syllabic quantity. We do not, in fact, so pronounce or so hear our syllables. We speak and hear syllables of almost every possible variation of quantity between the obvious longs and the obvious shorts. Such variable material cannot provide a basis for recognizable structure.

I do not suggest that syllabic quantity is entirely useless in English verse. Obvious longs and obvious shorts are in fact used, either decoratively or to reinforce structure. Thus, *Weep you no more* uses many obvious longs, which assist the lingering smooth-

[1] See the experiments by Scripture at Yale (*Studies from the Yale Psychological Laboratory*, 1893), and Appendix II, On Kynographic Measurements, in *Rhythm*, by E. A. Sonnenschein (Blackwell, Oxford, 1925).

ness of its controlled and resigned movement, while *Agincourt* uses many obvious shorts, which assist the military decision of its resolute march, with its drum-beats and trumpet-blasts in 'Ferrers and Fanhope'. It is probable, and study of these poems suggests it, that there is a tendency to use a high proportion of long, or at least prolongable, syllables in verse intended for singing. Yet this use of longs and shorts is not in itself structural. Any supposition that it is so should be shaken by a comparison of the phrases 'Slow, slow, fresh fount' and 'Drop, drop, drop, drop' in Jonson's poem. There cannot, I think, be any doubt that there is length in the actual syllables of the first phrase, while those of the second are audibly much shorter; but no more can there be any doubt that the two phrases are felt to balance each other, to be somehow equivalent to each other in their relation to the whole structure of the poem. Therefore, actual syllabic quantity is not structural in English verse.

In fact, we not only allow but actually cling to the variability of English syllable lengths in our verse, to an extent that may make it seem doubtful whether time is indeed the material of its structure. T. S. Omond, in *A Study of Metre* (London, 1903 and 1920), suggested that 'temporal uniformity underlies syllabic variety' and that '*isochronous periods* form the units of metre'. Now, Omond's 'periods' are what have usually been called feet, with the distinction that his periods are not necessarily completely filled by the syllables that they 'carry', though he feels that a majority of the periods in any one poem must carry at least the same number of syllables. There is, no doubt, verse which fulfils Omond's demands; nursery rimes, which he quotes as his first examples, certainly are usually recited with a strong tendency to make equal in time very short divisions of the verse, possibly because of the early association of many of these rimes with game or dance movements. *Agincourt*, by the insistent use of close riming, alliteration and heavily marked stresses in close and simple relationships, falls fairly naturally into a class of verse constructed of short 'isochronous periods'. The two short lines of each stanza are certainly forced into equality of length, and there are few readers

who will not make some attempt to read the other lines as not only equal to each other in length, but divisible into portions equal in time, either two parts in quick reading or four in slow.

From the other poems in Chapter 5, however, it is hard to choose any which will readily be divided into short 'isochronous periods'. We could, of course, deny true metrical art to these poems, and thereby preserve the formula intact, but Omond himself would not suggest that *Slow, slow, fresh fount*, *Weep you no more* or *When thou must home* were unpoetical in any sense, even the technical. It is just possible to force each line of *When thou must home* into five isochronous periods each 'carrying' two syllables; but surely this does violence to free utterance of, for instance, 'White Iope, blithe Helen', or, still more, of the last line, 'Then tell, O, tell how thou didst murder me!' Surely the duration of separate syllables here is not identical with that in the corresponding line in the preceding stanza, 'From that smooth tongue whose music hell can move'. In the other poems even this forcing into isochronous periods is impossible; we cannot read

Slow, slow,	fresh fount,	keep time	with my	salt tears
Yet slow	er yet,	O faint	ly gent	le springs

with exact equality of length between all the dissyllabic divisions. If we do read thus, we miss the sense of free, yet certain, delicate shifts in timing from phrase to phrase. We do not need the music to which Youll set this poem to tell us that such equalization of short periods makes the poem a metrical monstrosity. Yet the habits of Elizabethan music, with which their lyric verse was associated, may serve us by reminding us that division into isochronous bars was no necessity of the rhythmical structure of their music, and that division into isochronous feet was no necessity of the rhythmical structure of their verse. Their habit of composing music, and writing verse, in phrases and lines rather than in bars and feet is, in fact, of the greatest value in helping us to understand English metres. I believe that Omond's 'syllabic variety with temporal uniformity' is a true and illuminating suggestion if we interpret it elastically: if we substitute for 'uniformity' some

word like 'balance' or 'proportion'; and if we look for this balance or proportion in units larger than that of the foot.

The foot contains too few syllables for the inequalities of English syllable lengths to be added up in a set of balancing totals unless they are pronounced very unnaturally; and we have seen that natural, though careful, pronunciation is essential to bring out both the meaning and the stress arrangements of much Elizabethan lyric verse. Over larger periods, however, the inequalities of syllabic duration may come near to uniting into a total duration at least very near, if not exactly equal, to the total duration of an equal number of syllables also varying among themselves in length. This, I think, is true of *When thou must home*. However freely we vary the lengths of individual syllables, we tend to allow to each line a length of time roughly equal to that which we allowed the first. If the syllables themselves do not fill out the time, we allow silences to make up the sum. Thus, 'From that smooth tongue whose music hell can move' gives an almost uninterrupted flow of sound, whereas 'Then tell, O, tell how thou didst murder me!' has little breaks early in the line which count in the total duration; the total durations of the two lines are identical in speech as, of course, they are necessarily in their part of the tune, which is the same for each. This poem, in fact, satisfies the demands of the formula 'syllabic variety with temporal uniformity'. So do parts of *Weep you no more*. Each stanza is of course equal to the other in total duration, but so are smaller divisions. The first two pairs of lines certainly have equality, and indeed, it is almost certain that the second and fourth lines will be given silences at the end which make them equal in time to the first and third, though these latter have each one syllable more than the second and fourth. Line five seems to need the same length, lines six and seven are equal to each other though not to preceding lines, line eight is probably equal to line five, and the final 'sleeping' is a final repeated statement of a part of some of the preceding lines. Here we have not 'uniformity' between all lines, but certainly 'uniformity' between some, and, I suspect, at least a proportion between these 'uniform' lines and others.

With madrigal verse like *Slow, slow* and Drummond's madrigal, we clearly have no such uniformity. There are some perfect repetitions of elements of the duration, as in 'Slow, slow, fresh fount' and 'Drop, drop, drop, drop', where in the latter silences prove their value in the time scheme of the verse, or between lines one and two and between three and four in Drummond's poem. Yet we have seen already that these passages of absolutely balanced time and stress structure are related by no principle of 'uniformity' in the madrigals, but occur at positions unequally distant from each other and separated sometimes by passages of simple repeating rhythm, sometimes by other, equally marked, complex phrases. 'Uniformity' in temporal division is clearly no guide here. It may be that we must let slip our hope of finding verse-structure in time.

I do not, however, think the hope vain. We are brought now to the very crux of the question, 'What is rhythm?' and its pendent question, 'What is metre?' In the definition given in Chapter 3 (p. 74), I avoided using any word suggesting 'equality' of time in the means used of arousing and satisfying expectation, for it appears that this is not a necessity of rhythmical experience. Mere regularity of beat is never regarded by a musician as constituting rhythm, and it is noticeable that, while sounds like the ticking of a clock or the march of feet are sometimes cited as having rhythm, it is common experience that we seek some means of relieving their regularity before we find rhythmical interest in them. In saying 'tick-tock', we not only insist on taking two strokes instead of the simpler one as a unit of measurement, we also unconsciously pretend to ourselves that there is some difference between the strokes when we give to each a different syllable. We enjoy dividing footsteps into different groupings, of two or three or four, and imagine that we hear a difference in the sound. Where music apparently makes rhythm out of regular divisions, it does not in fact do so.

I have been told by a professional musician who received his training in the heyday of the waltz that in order to give 'life' and interest to the rhythm, it was recognized that the three beats of

the bar must be made very slightly unequal in playing: the first was an accurate one-third of the bar, the second was slightly prolonged, so that the third made a little hurry to reach the first beat of the following bar in time. Without these variations, the rhythm was recognized as 'dead'. Now all this suggests that the satisfactions of rhythm to a hearer arise partly from his making his own contribution to whatever regularity may be sensed in the rhythm. The life of rhythm seems to spring from the necessity of making equalities rather than finding them ready-made. A near-regularity, an almost-equality, a not-quite-perfect proportion, appear to arouse conscious interest and pleasure in the ideas of regularity, equality and proportion, which would not be aroused where these qualities existed in perfection. Listening, then, has something creative in it when it appreciates rhythm.

This delight in sensing regularity just out of sight or hearing, just round the corner or over the hilltop, certainly goes far to explain why the poet may use fickle syllables triumphantly to suggest constancy. The constant failure of naturally spoken English syllables to fill out perfectly any postulated division of time or exact order of degrees of volume, together with their constant success in suggesting that never-achieved perfect division and order, give a perfect example of the pleasures of rhythm.[1] Syllables varying in single duration are grouped together, and so ordered that the ear is made to listen for some sign of regularity. Stress grouping may do this. A repeating order of stresses will be recognizable as suggesting regularity, though they may occur at uneven intervals of time. Thus, *When thou must home* contains many dissyllabic groups of the stress pattern × /, but there is no need for the groups to be equal in length, and in fact in this poem they are not so equal. Equality is not achieved until two whole lines have been read.

[1] I omit here discussion of rhythm in prose, where expectation is often satisfied by the provision of movement reversing a previous movement and so suggesting completion and stopping; e.g. a prose passage may appear rhythmical because it runs through light polysyllables to slow, heavy monosyllables at the end of the passage.

The pleasure of making rather than finding regularity explains also, I think, the satisfaction to be found in highly subtle and variable verse of the madrigal type. In verse of this kind, ear and mind must be alert to change their expectation from time to time, and to accept different forms of satisfaction. Thus they may receive sometimes the satisfaction of regular repetition of small time-divisions within a phrase, sometimes the pleasure of detecting a repetition of complex stress-orders within a simple time-division, sometimes the ease of a steady flow of simple stress-orders in repeated pattern. All these satisfactions are, I think, temporal satisfactions. With all of them we feel some need of recognizing a proportion, if not an equality, between divisions of the total duration of stanza or poem. The proportions are not necessarily simple; but that they are present, or at least sought for, seems to be proved by the tendency of all sensitive verse readers to weigh the syllables and give them sufficient length or a sufficient surrounding of silence to create an impression of careful consideration for the dimension of time in which they exist. I am sure that rhythm in verse is a matter of time as it is in music; but I am equally sure that the use of time is more varied and subtle than most prosodies would suggest. Elizabethan lyric is as helpful in pointing out this truth as any verse could well be, for it is at once clearly rhythmical and clearly free of all rigid regularities of time-division. It uses silences, long phrases, complex variations in forms of phrase and shifts from one time unit to another; yet it succeeds in satisfying the desire to feel that time is organized into proportionate divisions from beginning to end of a poem.

Metre, then, is a high organization of the rhythms possible to speech sounds. It uses repetitions more closely than prose rhythm does, and it makes all the parts of the words it uses perform some rhythmical function. Unlike music, it has no precise notation to indicate its use of time-divisions, but must use the imperfect and variously interpreted notation of words, with all their malleability by individual idiosyncrasy of emotion and pronunciation. In order to make this notation as reliable as possible, it uses all the sound-qualities of words, the pitch of vowels, the force of con-

sonants, the degrees of intensity in stress, to indicate connections and divisions between syllables and groups of syllables. Every indication provided by these qualities should be followed in order to perceive metre. Metre itself is an organization of the time of the poem, but the organization is always indicated by qualities other than duration in the words. Assonance, rime, alliteration and stress must be followed, that a structure may be perceived which consists of none of these things, but of duration. The structure will always be indicated and rarely quite fully drawn out by these qualities. Pleasure in metre comes from recognizing simultaneously the suggested structure and the varying degrees of near-identity with it achieved by the means of suggesting it.

The further question of why we find satisfaction in perceiving rhythm is one that no prosodist can answer. If psychology ever becomes more nearly an exact science than it now is, it may provide the answer. There remains, therefore, some element of mystery in the subject of rhythm and its subdivision metre, and all that can be said with certainty is that the human experience of many generations has been that it is pleasing, often intensely pleasing, to hear sounds which so use the qualities making them audible as to suggest that they occur at intervals in the passage of time related to each other in proportions showing that our awareness of its passing is conscious and controlled; we are experiencing with pleasurable consciousness that which we must experience rather than passively enduring it or dulling and limiting our awareness of it. It may be that there is some little sense of triumph in using what cannot be avoided, in cutting according to our cloth a coat of style. If this be so, the pleasure of technique in manipulating time into rhythm in the temporal arts, or space into design in the visual, is centrally important in achieving that sense of creatively making order of chaotic material which has been claimed as the cause and the triumph of art. Certainly I believe that metre in poetry is less a satisfaction connected with the simple repetitions of instinctive movement in breathing or walking, or the simple recurrence of natural processes in, for instance, the seasons or alternating birth and dying, than a mental and emotional activity

enjoying the making of order far more complex than these recurrences out of experience lacking any such order in itself. It belongs to that part of human activity which wants art as well as nature, and not to the part which satisfies itself in acquiescence with simple natural needs. It is concerned with that which made Bacon say that poetry 'was ever thought to have some participation of divineness, because it doth raise and erect the mind, by submitting the shows of things to the desires of the mind'. Clearly, the desires are themselves natural, but this desire is for an order beyond that of the simple repetitions of instinctive processes.

There can be no question that Elizabethan lyrics have provided a field for investigation into metrical practice as fruitful as could be desired. Among the poems we have studied closely, we have found metres ranging from the simplest to the most complex. We have found that metre is genuinely a literary, and not a musical, study. We have found evidence of the use of different metres to achieve different emotional effects, for we found the insistent repetitions of *Agincourt* used to arouse the excitement of conscious resolve, the smooth and delicate control of *Weep you no more* used to hold emotion in a suspension allowing consciousness to recognize it without murdering to dissect, the mingled irregularities and insistencies of Drummond's madrigal used to convey both rebellion and resignation, the stripped neatness of Wyatt's stanza used to give the irony of rational demonstration of passionate needs, the running and checking of *I follow* used to give the humour of pursuing a recognized absurdity. We have found clear demonstration of the needs of metre to use every quality of speech sound to reveal itself, and of the fact that the more complex the metre, the more it needs revelation by every conceivable device of echo, assonance, rime, alliteration and the rest, while the simpler metres may establish and maintain themselves largely by the mere placing of stresses in a repeatable order. We have found that singing poetry needs longer vowels and fewer clusters of consonants than speaking poetry. We have found, above all, that the ear must be alert to every indication of speech sounds in verse.

We have also come dangerously near to suggesting, by omis-

sion of cautions, two absurdities. The first is that the poet consciously and deliberately uses all these devices of sound in his verse, and expends his major effort as an artist in searching his vocabulary for words which can form these devices. Of course, he does nothing of the sort. Many of the words contributing to the sound pattern are given their place for other reasons, and the poet may note their auditory values long after he has used them, if at all. This is, however, no argument against our listening to and enjoying all these sounds. They give pleasure in themselves, and we are free to find all the pleasure we can in poetry. Unconscious judgment may have been at work in the poet, leading him to words even more suitable to his whole purpose than he consciously knew. It is entirely appropriate that in an Elizabethan study we should find, in the poetry studied, correspondences extra to those intended; almost any Elizabethan critic or poet would have approved, and felt with pleasure that the truth of his intended correspondences was further proved by their expressing themselves partly through unintentional correspondences. Finally, it is obvious that many devices of sound were in fact intentional, and we are therefore simply following a path to which the poet pointed.

The second absurdity is more enormous than the first. It is that we may seem to suggest that the whole pleasure of poetry lies in its organization of sounds and metrical construction. If indeed this study suggests this idea, it should serve as a warning against all prosodic studies. Poetry has a sense content, and it is often a poet's main purpose to convey that content, and it is only 'précieux ridicules' who undervalue his purpose and the poem's content. Yet poetry's content is not merely an argument, or a message or an emotion which can be otherwise stated. It is also the order of the argument, the apprehended beauty of the message, the shape of the emotion in the experiencing personality. If argument, message and emotion lose their order, beauty and shape in the process of communication, they lose their poetic significance. Now, words by their meaning-reference may embody the major part of the poet's purpose, but their meaning-references must

reach the recipient in an appropriate order and in relationships which will clarify, for example, differences between levels of importance in parts of the meaning, the associations required and those less necessary among the many associations of words, and so on. Statements may come with different emotional force according to whether they are made smoothly and plainly or hesitatingly and with struggle. These matters may be made clear by explanation, but they may be made, not only clear, but significant by shorter methods.

The words of poetry, at any rate of lyric poetry, reach the mind through the sense of hearing, and it is a proper economy of effort, a proper economy of the kind called by mathematicians 'elegant', that uses the necessary channel of communication as a means of clarifying and fulfilling the communication. Correspondences between the sounds of different parts of a poem may help to show the relationship of those parts and also to clarify the significance of each. Metre, being a branch of rhythm, may not only make the hearer suggestible, but also suggest specific forms of emotional response. Finally, the whole order of the content of a poem may be suggested by the order of the material in which it is embodied. Words are the most refractory artistic material known to man. Alone among all the materials used by artists, they have both strong and noticeable sensuous characteristics and characteristics of non-sensuous reference arising out of their arbitrary linking to ideas and connectives between ideas. It is their non-sensuous characteristics which are most important in diurnal communication. Yet they cannot lose their sensuous characteristics, and if their sensuous qualities can be used both to command pleasurable attention to their non-sensuous connotations and actually to suggest by their relationships among themselves the force of the relationships among their meanings, a work of art will have been made which for richness, fullness and complexity of effect may not be surpassed by painting, sculpture, music, architecture or any other creation. It will be central art, for it will have used form to embody meaning with completeness. It will have achieved creation out of materials not passive, but only too active in their

own nature, and therefore capable of finer service, when controlled, to the purposes of art than any passive material.

In varying degrees, form and content are related in poetry. Good poetry has a form pleasure-giving in itself which serves to hold and illuminate content. The understanding of its form must then lead towards, and not away from, the comprehension of its content, which indeed almost includes its form. Elizabethan poets and critics were simultaneously believers in the high purpose and value of poetry and conscious practitioners of its sensuous technique. Therefore, to learn to sympathize with their art is to learn much of what poetry can do.

I should like to add, as a kind of coda to this theme, a poem by Phineas Fletcher from *The Purple Island* (printed 1633), which has curious affinities to two of the poems already discussed; and to ask whether, in its apparent A B C simplicity of line structure, its use of assonance intensifying the limitation in number of rime-sounds, its persistent returns to certain syllables, its use within the lines of the same sounds as the rimes to enforce concentration on a single centre of interest, it does not in fact suggest through its metrical organization a subject, situation and mood different from those of the other two poems:

Drop, drop, slow tears,
  And bathe those beauteous feet,
Which brought from heaven
  The news and Prince of peace:
Cease not, wet eyes,
  His mercies to intreat;
To cry for vengeance
  Sin doth never cease:
In your deep floods
  Drown all my faults and fears;
Nor let his eye
  See sin, but through my tears.

Finally, we should test the value of this study by looking to see whether its pursuit will clarify meaning in the work of the poets.

Chapter 8

THE LYRICS OF SPENSER, SHAKESPEARE AND DONNE

FOR analysis by various methods to show the metrical practices of Elizabethan lyric, I chose a group of poems, not only poetically valuable and characteristic of their kinds, but scattered as widely and freely as was reasonably possible among the years and the source-books of the age, in order to give something like a representative selection of the poetry. Now it is well that certain individual poets should be studied when we are in search of signs that understanding of the structure of verse may give, not only its own pleasure, but also sharpened appreciation of the whole intention of a poem.

Three poets have been chosen, for various reasons. First, they are all widely, if not universally, accepted as major poets: Spenser, Shakespeare and Donne are poets unmistakably of a bigger breed than most of their contemporaries, and their lyric poetry is only a part of a large and varied bulk of work of unquestionable quality. Second, they cover between them most of the years of our period: Spenser lived from (probably) 1552 till 1599; Shakespeare lived from 1564 till 1616; Donne lived from 1576 till 1631. Their publications during their joint lifetimes begin in 1579 and end in 1626, and their writing was exposed to all the most important Elizabethan fashions and influences. Their work is therefore worth studying for representative as well as individual quality, which is the third reason for this choice. The fact of their individuality may be indicated by the differences in the history of their reputations: Spenser has had a constant audience, though probably never a large one; Shakespeare has had a constant large audience; Donne has had at times hardly any audience, at times (particularly recently) a very large audience. Spenser, the allegorist, has

been known, revered and often a little feared, for his practice, both sweet and powerful, of embodying ideas in shapes sometimes as vague, more often as vivid, as dreams; Shakespeare has been loved for the width of his human understanding and looked on with awe for its depth; Donne has been reviled and worshipped for his passionate self-absorbed expression of individuality. The three could, it seems, hardly be more different from each other, and they are therefore particularly suitable examples for our present purpose.

PART I

SPENSER

The poetry of Spenser which may be called lyrical in any true sense is a very small part of his work. It is, curiously enough, not the part which composers have set to music. There are settings of parts of *The Faerie Queene*: Carlton set stanza one of Book V, Canto vii, stanzas one and two of V, viii, and stanza one of VI, viii as numbers fourteen, nine, ten and fifteen of his *Madrigals To Fiue voyces* (London, 1601); Gibbons set stanza forty-nine of III, i as numbers ten and eleven of his *First Set of Madrigals And Motets of 5. Parts* (London, 1612). This is all madrigal work. There is also a setting by Kirbye, as numbers twenty-two and twenty-three of his *First set Of English Madrigals, to 4. 5. and 6 voyces* (London, 1597), of two stanzas of the dirge in the November Eclogue in *The Shepheardes Calender*; it is interesting that those too are set to madrigal music and not as airs. With the exception of Kirbye's settings, there is no known music for any of Spenser's lyrical poetry, and this is significant.

The poems of any value which we may call lyrics are: Hobbinol's 'laye Of fayre *Eliza*' in the April Eclogue of *The Shepheardes Calender* (London, 1590); the 'roundle' sung by Perigot and Willye in the August Eclogue; the sestina in the same Eclogue; the dirge in the November Eclogue; possibly *Another of the Same* (An Epitaph vpon the right Honourable sir *Phillip Sidney* knight), from *Astrophell* (1595); *Epithalamion*, from the

group *Amoretti and Epithalamion* (1595); and *Prothalamion* (1596).[1] I have called these lyrics because some of them occur in a context suggesting singing, and the rest are, or are related to, odes, which are in origin songs.

The lay to Eliza is perhaps the best-known passage of *The Shepheardes Calender*. It is introduced by Hobbinol's consenting to sing Colin's 'laye', 'Which once he made, as by a spring he laye, And tuned it vnto the Waters fall'. It begins with a nine-line stanza, of which the rime-scheme is ababccddc; the number of syllables in the lines is 10, 4, 10, 4, 10, 10, 4, 4, 8; the number of stresses is 5, 2, 5, 2, 5, 5, 2, 2, 4, and the arrangement of stresses is usually a repetition of x /, though line seven appears to begin / x and line nine either / x or \ \. There are thirteen stanzas in the poem. Now a lay is defined by the *New English Dictionary* as 'A short lyric or narrative poem intended to be sung. Often *poet.* for "song"'. Illustrative quotations include references to bird song. A poem of a hundred and seventeen lines is not very short, especially when sung. This poem, opening as it does with a stanza made up of an unusual arrangement of lines of different lengths, cunningly linked by rimes, has not the air of a short and simple song. Nevertheless, a quick glance at the pages on which the 'song' is printed in any edition will show that, while the poem is not a short and 'artless' song, it might well be intended for singing as airs were sung; that is, it consists apparently of thirteen stanzas all of the same form of mixed long and short lines, and all following the same rime-scheme. Much too long for the complications and repetitions of madrigal setting, it might be an air poem. If it were, we should expect to find each stanza formally an exact repetition of the first.

The second stanza repeats this form, and so does stanza three, with the exception of line eight, which has five syllables instead of the expected four, though probably still only two stresses. 'And Primroses greene' could no doubt be sung to the same musical phrase as 'Her worthy praise', with some division of the first note.

[1] I use the text given by Ernest de Selincourt in *Spenser's Minor Poems* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1910).

Such division is not necessary for stanza four, but in stanza five it would be required for each of the four short lines, which are 'vpon her to gaze', 'it did him amaze', 'Let him if he dare' and 'His brightnesse compare'. Stanza six also has four five-syllabled lines in place of the four-syllabled lines of the first stanzas, and the first two short lines of stanza seven have also five syllables each. So far, however, it might still be possible to fit these appropriately into equivalent musical phrases. With lines seven and eight of stanza seven, however, this becomes impossible. The two lines run:

> Shee is my goddesse plaine,
> And I her shepherde swayne,

and it is clear that each has not only six syllables but three stresses. Now this presents a very different problem from that of the five-syllabled lines. Where the number and placing of the stresses remained roughly similar, the alteration in number of syllables could be treated as a simple variant of the model form, and fitted into a similar, though not identical, rhythmical phrase. The third stress, however, alters the nature of the phrase, and if these three-stress lines were sung to a musical phrase truly suitable for the two-stress lines of the opening stanza, either music or words must suffer. In the remaining stanzas of the poem, some of the short lines return to the original form, but others break this form. 'To fyll the fourth place', 'Oliues bene for peace', 'Binde your fillets faste' and 'worne of Paramoures' could not possibly repeat the rhythmical effect of 'Helpe me to blaze' or 'Her worthy praise'. That is, this poem could not possibly be used for an air poem of the kind we have studied and is not, in fact, suitable for setting to the characteristic Elizabethan kinds of music.

This does not, of course, in the least affect the beauty of the poem, but it does, I think, tell us something about the kind of poet Spenser was. There is here either unwillingness or inability to repeat a metrical form so perfectly that every embodiment of it would be as happy with a given tune as the first. Unlike most of the poets of the age who wrote lyric, Spenser, in writing what at first sight is a poem for a repeating air, does not apparently hear or

feel the unchanging shape of a tune in the back of his mind as he writes. The introduction to the lay, which quite deliberately and specifically suggests singing as its manner of utterance, is simply a part of a poetic suggestion of appropriate atmosphere, a suggestion which is to be carried out by purely poetical means. It is very much '*poet.* for "song" '. The idea of a song is given in the introductory verse, and the 'lay' itself, so long as it is not in fact sung, beautifully carries out the idea. In reading, the short lines are always sufficiently different from the neighbouring long lines to continue giving at least the impression, 'Here the stanza moves from long phrases to short', and the short lines are sufficiently far removed from each other for the differences between them to remain unobtrusive, and probably actually unnoticed. It is only the test of literally setting to music that will reveal the fact that this is not a 'song' in the strict sense. Unsung, it is very like a song.

All its music lies in the words themselves. Throughout the poem Spenser uses alliteration freely but not excessively, often initially, but equally often, less obviously, medially. Thus, 'b' 'l' and 's' play in and out of the first two stanzas, the second beginning also a use of 'g', which in its turn comes freely into stanza three, together with the related 'k'. This relation between the voiced and unvoiced form of a consonant has already been used, 'v' and 'f' in the first stanza, 'b' and 'p' in the second. 'f' and 'v' are again used in the fourth stanza, together with full alliteration on 'r' and 'm', 'g', 'h', 'b', and 'f' are all used in stanza five, 's' and 'b' and nasals in stanza six, 'p', 'b', 's' and 'f' in stanza seven, 'p', 'b', 's' and 'h' in stanza eight, 'd' and 'r' in stanza nine, 'r', 'p' and 's' in stanza ten, 'f', 'd', 't' and 's' in stanza eleven, and in the last two stanzas nearly all these consonants equally. In all these stanzas, minor alliterations occur in addition to the most obvious examples.

Vowel echoes, too, are used frequently. The 'a' sound as in 'face' is very important throughout the poem, occurring often in rimes, and the 'e' of 'bless' is also very frequent. The second stanza has 'ĭ' and 'ŏ', the third 'ē' ('ĭ'), the fifth 'ō', and all have some share of the persistent 'a' (as above) and 'ĕ' sounds. In fact, the organization of consonant and vowel sounds in the poem is both

rich and delicate, so rich that it might interfere with the hearing of a tune, so delicate that the more subtle relationships, as in medial alliteration or in assonances shifting their place in the line, might be unheard in the company of a tune. The poem is most musical, but its music is its own, and leaves no place for the music of an air. On the evidence of this poem, it might be said that in one sense Spenser is one of the most musical, in another sense one of the least musical, of Elizabethan poets.

The August roundelay on the whole confirms this impression. The lines are given alternately by Perigot and Willye, Perigot 'singing' the narrative lines and Willye the 'undersong'. These lines divide themselves into groups of four, in which the second (Willye's first) always begins with 'hey ho', followed by a repetition of a phrase or word from the first line. The fourth line (the second of the 'undersong') is always some comment on or amplification of the third line (the second of the narrative). It is therefore the second line of each four-line group which is a kind of refrain, a practice unusual but not unique among Elizabethan lyrists.[1] The 'hey ho' and refrain quality of this second line give the poem much of the feeling of the 'hey nonny no' type of song, in which, because singing is the most important part, many nonsense syllables are freely used. In fact, however, the fourth line is used for far fuller and more indirect comment and expansion than is quite compatible with its apparent nature. Thus, while Willye sometimes gives the simple 'she can trippe it very well' as the comment on 'Tripping ouer the dale alone', he adds 'so loue into thy hart did streame' to the group.

Per. All as the Sunny beame so bright,
Wil. hey ho the Sunne beame,
Per. Glaunceth from Phœbus face forthright;

and this clearly is an addition to the narrative beyond what is expected of the undersong. That is, Spenser uses a metrical form of alternately riming quatrains of four-stress lines with a refrain line and another line that begins by appearing to be another,

[1] Cf. No. 19 of *A Booke of Ayres* (London, 1601), by Rosseter and Campion.

though more varied, refrain line. He thus suggests a simple, part-nonsense folk song by his metrical form, but, though the actual form maintains this suggestion, he fills it with more material than might be expected. Once again he uses a form which gives the associations of singing, but would, if actually sung, probably lose its capacity to communicate all that its words contain.

The sestina of the same eclogue shows clearly how completely Spenser is, technically, a poet of words. This very difficult form is not easy to follow in speech: with music it would hardly reveal itself at all. The sestina consists of six six-line stanzas, in which no line of the first rimes with any other, but every word occurring at the ends of lines in the first stanza is used again to end lines in the other stanzas in a revolving order constantly turned on by the use of the last word of one stanza as the end-word of the first line of the next. The rime order is therefore: ABCDEF, FABCDE, EFABCD, DEFABC, CDEFAB, BCDEFA. Then follows an envoy of three lines, in which the six end-words, in their original order, occur at the end of each half-line. The long separation of words from their rimes, with the exception of the turn by means of a couplet from one stanza to the next, means great concentration of attention if the form is to be observed; and the need to use the whole word for the rime involves the poet in shifts and complications of syntax which could not be followed in sung poetry. It is noticeable that the poetry for airs and madrigals customarily uses very simple and direct syntax and a grammatical structure allowing frequent coincidence between logical and metrical divisions; this practice enables the sense to develop clearly through singing. This is obviously untrue of a passage like this:

> And as my cryes
> (Which of my woe cannot bewray least part)
> You heare all night, when nature craueth sleepe,
> Increase, so let your yrksome yells augment.
> Thus all the night in plaints, the daye in woe
> I vowed haue to wayst, till safe and sound
> She home returne, whose voyces siluer sound
> To cheerefull songs can chaunge my cherelesse cryes.

The choice and successful use of a metrical form like this show that the poet is one who must find the music for his lyrics in his words. Any other music for it is unthinkable.

Colin's dirge in the November eclogue preserves its stanzaic form more perfectly than the Eliza lay by using a repeated refrain for the short line, 'O heauie herse' and 'O carefull verse' for the first eleven stanzas, and 'O happye herse' and 'O ioyfull verse' for the last four. Nevertheless, Spenser at times shifts stress so sharply that his form is at least momentarily endangered. Where stanza one has 'Let streaming teares be poured out in store', stanza seven has 'Thereof nought remaynes but the memoree'—a line which plays such havoc with the given form as to be, I feel, simply metrically bad. After observing this, the reader is not surprised to find lines which fail in other ways to correspond with the pattern. Lines six and seven of each stanza, which immediately precede the first short line, usually have four stresses each, but they occasionally have five, and once three. This poem, then, is like the Eliza lay in that it is not in fact suitable for singing, but it is like it also in having a rich use of its own speech music, and in appearing to preserve, though it often departs from it, a complex stanza form; the pattern of this form is a ten-line stanza riming ababbccdbd, the lines containing 6, 5, 5, 5, 5, 4, 4, 2, 5, 2 stresses, and superficial readings would give the impression that the form was preserved.

The epitaph on Sidney, *Silence augmenteth grief*, is not very valuable poetically, and therefore not very important metrically, but it has one point of interest. Written in quatrains of poulter's measure, riming aabb, it uses heavy pause so regularly that it reads readily as a poem written in the 3 3 4 3 form of hymn measure, riming abcb. This is startling proof of the tendency of the long-lined form to break into some version of the shorter-lined measure, for Spenser of all our poets seems to have had least difficulty in writing many unbroken long lines. The alexandrine of *The Faerie Queene* stanza is evidence of this, but so also is the fact, observable in the poems we have studied, that when Spenser breaks his own set form, his tendency is nearly always to lengthen and not to shorten some line in the form.

We come now to Spenser's finest lyric achievements, the two great marriage odes. It will be sufficient to examine the *Epithalamion*, which is probably on the whole the finer of the two, and certainly includes, in its slightly larger scale, all the metrical characteristics of *Prothalamion*. Individual choice may waver between the *Epithalamion* refrain, with its slight variations, and the unchangingly beautiful

> Sweete *Themmes* runne softly, till I end my Song

of the *Prothalamion*, but both perform the same function of persistently reminding the reader of the idea of singing, and with equal success. The *Epithalamion* gives to the reader the peculiar pleasure of hearing a poet's own triumphant bridal song, and it is almost unique in our literature as a prolonged celebration of happy love.

Epithalamion has twenty-three complete stanzas, and a short envoy. Each stanza ends in some version of the lines:

> So I vnto my selfe alone will sing,
> The woods shall to me answer and my Eccho ring.

The variants on this are used to link the lines in sense to the stanza, and they always leave unaltered the words 'sing', 'woods', 'answer', 'Eccho' and 'ring'. Of the twenty-three stanzas, the first, second, fourth, fifth and sixth have eighteen lines with the rime-scheme ababccdcdeefggff RR; stanzas 3, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19 and 20 have nineteen lines with the rime-scheme ababccdcdeefggfhh RR; stanzas 10, 16, 21 and 23 have eighteen lines with slight variants on the first rime-scheme in their last nine lines, the rimes of the first nine being identical in order with those in the other stanzas; stanzas 9, 11[1] and 22 have nineteen lines with slight

[1] In stanza eleven I venture to suggest emending 'womanhood' in the eighth line to 'womanhead'. As it stands, this is the only line in the whole of a richly rimed poem apparently unrimed. In all the other stanzas the first nine lines are absolutely regular in rime-order. According to this order, line eight would be expected to rime with line six, '(Medusaes mazeful) hed'. 'Womanhe(a)d' is a form common with Spenser: cf. *F.Q* II, xii, 55 and V, ix, 45, where it occurs in rimed positions. If in *Epithalamion* we read 'womanhe(a)d', stanza

variants in the rime-order in the last ten lines; and one stanza only, number 15, has only seventeen lines, the first nine riming like the rest, the last eight varying slightly.

In every stanza the sixth and the antepenultimate lines are noticeably shorter than the rest, having three stresses where most of the rest have five or six, and every stanza except the short fifteenth has a similar short line as the ninth or tenth. Each short line rimes with the immediately preceding line. The continuing (and only slightly varied) rhythmical movement throughout is dissyllabic rising. Variations in the rime-scheme of lines after the ninth in each stanza do not occur until after the first eight stanzas, and occur freely only in stanzas 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 21, 22 and 23; that is, whole groups of stanzas at the beginning and the middle and near the end of the poem are consistent. The last stanza is the same length as the first.

It should be clear from this description that the poem is made up of complex stanzas of great length handled with a remarkable balance between freedom and conformity. In no stanza (if the emendation in stanza eleven be accepted) is any variation allowed until after the ninth line. This establishes confidence in the form and a trust in the poet's capacity to continue in it, a necessary reassurance where the form is so long as it is here. The length is confident, but has resting-places: the short line riming with its immediate predecessor gives a point of rest, and lightens the texture by the space for silence it provides. The first marked variations in rime-scheme occur in the stanzas preceding the central climax, giving a sense of freedom in the movement. The poem comes to its final rest on a stanza of the same length as the first stanza, enhancing the ode's processional air of movement up to a central point of importance and back to something like the starting-point. The structure of the whole goes far to explain why the poem, immensely rich in sensuous appeal as it is, is totally un-

eleven has the rime-scheme ababccdcdeefgfghh RR, which is likely according to the example of all the other stanzas: if we read 'womanhood', the scheme is ababccdedffghghjj RR, which is highly unlikely. Renwick incorporated this emendation in his edition.

sensual, and complete belief in the truth of the poet's claim that 'the inward beauty of her liuely spright' is the lady's heart of beauty and the centre of his love for her; the stanzas referring to this 'inward beauty', though they contain few words describing such beauty in comparison with the rich profusion of sensuous description throughout the poem, occur in the very centre of a poem whose rhythmical construction insists on making the centre the climax. Therefore, the very structure of the poem gives, by placing, to the claim of spiritual love an importance which convinces without explanation. Here is economy in the disposition of riches of description.

The wealth of description is equalled by the wealth of verbal music. Every use of vowel and consonant sounds open to the poet is apparent in *Epithalamion*. The words sing fully and richly, with a music leaving no hearing for other kinds of music. The poem is indeed a 'song' in lieu of ornaments, and its rhythm, melody and harmony convey and deepen meaning through their steadily mounting and then falling movement and the long full syllables carried and linked by consonantal impulses and connections.

There is in Spenser's practice of versification some clue to the meaning of his title of 'poets' poet'. It may mean 'poeta poetarum', but it means also something more precise. It means that his technique is so complete a use of the poet's methods of dealing with his material, words, that he is a 'poet' in a full and exact sense, and that few but other poets may fully appreciate his use of material.

His tendency in some earlier poems to lengthen short lines and to use a line apparently merely formal (as in the August roundelay) to add to his meaning shows his need for room to say all he has to say. He has much to say, and he is therefore using words with full regard to their meanings and associations. Yet he is able at the same time to use them with full exploitation of their aural qualities. He makes words sing, partly because he is apparently little interested in playing tricks with rhythm; apart from certain curious experiments in, for example, the February eclogue of *The Shepheardes Calender*, he uses almost always divisions of pas-

sages in repeating dissyllabic rising rhythm, very rarely inverting, reducing or doubling stress, but allowing his flow of sounds to proceed uninterrupted by startling rhythmical complications. The regularity of his rhythmical movement is revealed and filled out by great complexity of the pitch and quality relationships of speech sounds. The full value of the vowels and consonants constituting syllables is given by the verse's freedom from unprepared-for rhythmical changes, and so achieves a singing quality inherent in the speech sounds themselves. Reason and song, therefore, are secured by Spenser without dependence on the other singing art, and an ear acute as a poet's for the beauty of speech sounds is required to hear the rich variety of his winding lengths of phrase.

In fact, Spenser appears to write lyric poetry having the untroubled impersonal quality of sung lyric while using only the singing of speech, speech which is more often used in poetry with emphasis principally upon the personal emotional connotations of its meaning content. His versification, therefore, prepares his audience for his peculiar power of wedding meaning to physical embodiment with the closeness of complete fusion.

Part 2

SHAKESPEARE

Shakespeare's lyrics, unlike Spenser's, were intended for music, for most of them occur in the plays in contexts showing, with one exception, that the songs were to be literally sung. The exception is the introduction of the dirge in *Cymbeline*, where Arviragus says:

> 'And let us, Polydore, though now our voices
> Have got the mannish crack, sing him to the ground,'

and Guiderius answers:

> 'I cannot sing: I'll weep, and word it with thee';

and later Arviragus says again:

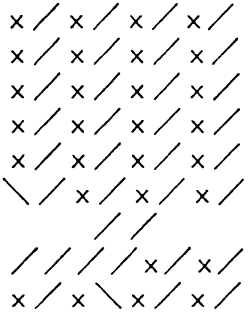
> 'We'll say our song the whilst.'

The likeliest way of accounting for this is that the boy-actors' voices, or one of them, had broken, and so necessitated an alteration in the intention of singing *Fear no more*. The alteration shows both the usual practice of singing Shakespeare's songs in the plays and also willingness to accept reading as a reasonable substitute. That is, we are confirmed in believing that Elizabethan songs, while admirably suited to singing, are capable of utterance independent of the singing voice, and that we merely follow the Elizabethans themselves in recognizing this independence. The rest of the songs, from those in *Love's Labour's Lost*, certainly an early play (printed 1598) to those in *The Tempest*, probably though not certainly Shakespeare's last play, were all sung. For some of the songs we have contemporary settings, for some settings probably contemporary (recorded in Playford's *Select musical Ayres*, 1653, *Select Ayres*, 1659 and *Musical Companion*, 1673, which may well preserve contemporary settings), and for the rest later settings by Arne, Schubert and twentieth-century composers. It is not our purpose to study the music, but simply to remember that the songs were songs in the literal sense.

It is neither possible nor necessary to examine all the songs from Shakespeare's plays in order to detect their nature. It will suffice to select a few from different periods of his years of practice as a playwright, which may serve as examples of his lyric work. We may take *When daisies pied* from *Love's Labour's Lost*, and *Who is Silvia?* from *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* as examples of early lyrics; *Tell me where* from *The Merchant of Venice*, *Sigh no more* from *Much Ado about Nothing*, *Come away* and *When that I was* from *Twelfth Night*, and *It was a lover* from *As You Like It* as examples of the lyrics in mature comedy; *Take, O, take* from *Measure for Measure* as an example from the 'dark comedies'; the Willow Song from *Othello* as an example of song in tragedy; *Fear no more* from *Cymbeline* and *Full fathom five* from *The Tempest* as examples of lyric in the late romances.[1]

[1] The text is that of the First Folio, with spelling modernized. The songs are conveniently collected in A. H. Bullen's *Lyrics from Elizabethan Dramatists* (London, 1889).

The song from *Love's Labour's Lost* is a perfect example of air poetry. The stanza form established at the beginning is as follows:



This is perfectly preserved by the second stanza, which exactly repeats the last five lines of the first, and follows completely the stress and rime-scheme of the first four lines. The third and fourth stanzas, which turn to winter from spring, again repeat the stress pattern, though it is only the last four lines of the first 'winter' stanza that are repeated in the next. The 'winter' stanzas should, I think, be so printed as to show the perfection with which the 'winter' refrain can repeat the form of the 'spring' refrain, thus:

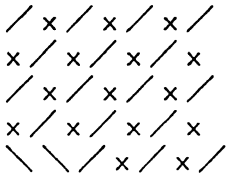
When blood is nipped, and ways be foul,
Then nightly sings the starting owl,
To-whit;
To-who, to-who, a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot;

which perfectly follows the pattern of—

The cuckoo then, on every tree,
Mocks married men, for thus sings he,
Cuckoo;
Cuckoo, cuckoo,—O word of fear,
Unpleasing to a married ear.

It will be noticed that the onomatopœic bird cries occur in exactly corresponding positions. The riming throughout is perfect.

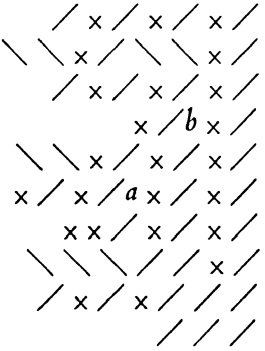
Who is Silvia? has three stanzas, each following the pattern:



a
b
a
b
a

The rimes of lines two and four are double: '(com)mend her–lend her', 'kindness–blindness', '(ex)celling–dwelling'. These lines show the practice, very frequent in Elizabethan poetry for music, of ending on a light syllable. The other lines are obviously whole phrases, neither falling-rhythm lines catalectic nor rising-rhythm lines lacking a light syllable at the beginning; this practice too is, as we have seen, common in Elizabethan lyric verse. There cannot, from beginning to end, be any difficulty in fitting the verbal phrases to music suitable for the first stanza.

Tell me where is clearly fitted for madrigal rather than for air music. It consists of two sections, question and answer, the second section different in form from the first.

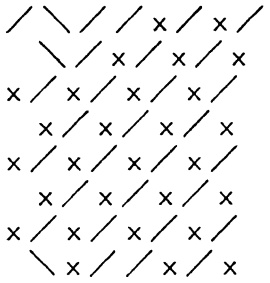


a
a
a
b
c
c
c
d
D
D

It has often been pointed out that the '*a*' rime of this poem is a rime for 'lead', the metal of the casket which is to be chosen as the song is sung. It has less often been noted that question and answer are beautifully linked in sound, both by the repetitions of the '*a*' rime of the first section in the 'fed' of line two of the second section, and by the echoing response to 'reply, reply' at the end of the first section in the rimes 'eyes–dies–lies' of the

second section. This poem has the whole phrasing of madrigal verse, carried by recurring × / movement, linked by rime and assonance, and using onomatopœic syllables 'Ding, dong, bell' for singing purposes.

Sigh no more is an air poem, with double rimes and light endings for the even lines of the two eight-line stanzas, each of which consists of four lines and a four-line refrain. The pattern is as follows:



a	*c*
b	*e*
a	*c*
b	*e*
c	*c*
d	*d*
c	*c*
d	*d*

In reading, the first lines of the two stanzas phrase themselves with a subtle difference which, however, cannot interfere with the singing, 'ditties' fitting neatly into the space for 'ladies', though the grammatical connections are different:

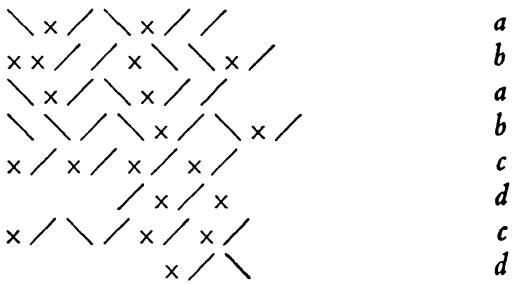
Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more

Sing no more ditties, sing no moe.

The 'hey nonny, nonny' phrases are typical nonsense syllables for singing, and other syllables are used to give pleasurable sound-echoes; 'deceivers ever' chimes within itself as well as with its rime 'never', and the rimes 'heavy–leavey' in the corresponding positions in the second stanza; the first rime of the second stanza 'moe–so' picks up the 'go–woe' rime of the refrain.

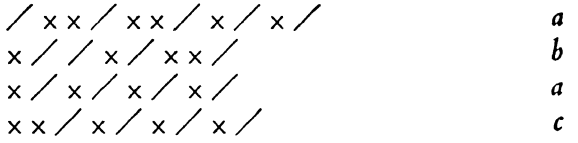
Come away is an interesting example of possible confusion in reading arising from reliance on a tune for first utterance of a poem. It seems to me that the first line might be stressed equally well / × \ / × \ / or \ × / \ × / /; the first line of the second stanza makes it clear that the stressing must be

\ x / \ x / /. Line seven of the second stanza needs note-division to make it fit its position, for 'Sad true lover never find my grave' must correspond to 'My part of death, no one so true', though it may be that we ought to read 'love' for 'lover'. Otherwise, both stanzas beautifully fit the pattern:



Particularly beautiful is the way in which 'O, prepare it' of the first stanza demands a phrasing which makes the 'O' sigh in the corresponding 'Lay me, O, where' in the second stanza.

When that I was is principally interesting for its simple 'popular' form, with the second and fourth lines of a quatrain as refrain, and the use of very loose syntax in the other lines to ensure perfect conformity to the tune pattern.



The triplet hurry of unstressed syllables suggests an almost nursery-rime movement to make the syllables fit.

It was a lover is a sheer singing poem. Three of the five lines of each stanza are refrain lines, they use many nonsense syllables and a full chime on the 'spring–ring–sing–ding' syllables. The remaining two lines are required only to fit into a very simple pattern.

× / × / × / × / *a*
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
× / × / \ \ × / *a*
In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding,
Sweet lovers love the spring.

Take, O, take has only one stanza in *Measure for Measure*, but it appears in Fletcher's *Bloody Brother* with a second stanza. It may be that the song is Fletcher's and not Shakespeare's, but it may equally well be that Fletcher added a stanza to Shakespeare's poem when he came to use it. Certainly the one stanza stands as Shakespeare's in the first printing of *Measure for Measure* (First Folio). The stress and rime-schemes are:

/ / / × / × / *a*
\ \ / × / × / *b*
\ \ / × / × / *a*
/ \ \ × / × / *b*
/ × / × / × / *c*
/ × / *c*
/ × / × / × / *c*
/ × / *c*

It should be noted that the '*a*' rimes have assonance with the '*c*' and also with the opening 'Take'. The balanced drag of the line openings settles easily into the regular × / movement of the endings.

The Willow Song is not entirely Shakespeare's. It occurs in the *Gorgious Gallery* (1578), in Howell's *Devises* (1581), in B. M. MS. Add. 15117 with lute accompaniment, and in various other contemporary and later collections. No one version is quite the same as any other. Shakespeare is adapting a well-known song, and what matters to us is his full retention of the refrain lines consisting entirely of the word 'willow'.

Fear no more, the spoken song, follows the stanza form nearly as strictly as a sung verse. Its three stanzas have the form:

/ × / × / × (×) /	*a*
/ × / × / × / (×)	*b*
/ × / × / × /	*a*
(×) / × / × / × / (×)	*b*
(×) / × / × / × /	*c*
× / × / × / × /	*c*

The envoy runs:

(×) / × / × / ×	*a*
/ × / \ / ×	*a*
/ × / × / ×	*b*
/ × / × / ×	*b*
/ × / × / × /	*c*
/ × / × / × /	*c*

The shift of movement in the first four lines of the envoy, and the closing up of the rimes into couplets, give heightened insistence to the spell of the envoy.

Of *Full fathom five* it should be noted that its 'Ding, dong, bell' is a late use of singing syllables used earlier in *Tell me where*. The form is:

/ / × / × / × /	*a*
\ × / × / × /	*b*
/ × / × / × /	*a*
/ × \ × / × /	*b*
\ × / × × / /	*c*
/ × / × / × /	*c*
/ × / × / × /	*d*
/ × × / × / / /	*d*

The '*b*' and '*c*' rimes have assonance with each other, and f and s alliteration are clearly audible.

Nothing strange has been found in the metrical structure of these songs except, possibly, the degree of their perfection. This is one of the most important points to be noticed about them. They are songs for singing, and Shakespeare has followed as closely as any of the large Elizabethan family of Anon. the needs of

verse for music. There is here no sign of that phenomenon of 'content bursting the bounds of the verse-form' which certain critics have professed to observe as characteristic of Shakespeare's mature work. The purpose of examining the selected poems has been to show that Shakespeare's metrical practice as a lyrist followed the conventions of his contemporaries who wrote verse for music; the selection was made to represent all the parts of his writing life, and it shows this conformity of practice from beginning to end. The poems are clearly 'music' lyrics and, like other men's work in this kind, are carefully calculated in rhythmical phrases which may be repeated when an air is repeated, or made of complex phrases carried on a recurrent movement where there is no need for stanza repetition. Like other men's work, again, these lyrics are surely enough constructed in their use of stress to retain form when the music is removed. The place of the music is to some extent supplied, here as elsewhere, by arrangements of vowel and consonant sounds running through the poems. On the whole, the choice of syllables is such as to provide freely prolongable vowels for singing without the impediments of thick consonant groups. This choice is assisted and confirmed by the use in many of the lyrics of refrain lines of nonsense syllables valuable purely for rhythmical and melodic purposes. Rhythm and melody, in fact, are the most immediately noticeable characteristics of these poems; that is, their formal qualities are as important as their sense content. They have the typically impersonal, though not unemotional, nature of the true song.

It is, therefore, not surprising to find in their content much that is generalized in meaning with, for instance, a high proportion of abstract nouns in the vocabulary. Grace, beauty, kindness; fancy; death; life, love; learning, physic, slander, censure, joy and moan; these are the subjects and examples in the songs. They tell us that beauty lives with kindness; that the cuckoo sings his word of fear when the common flowers paint the meadows with delight and the owl hoots when blood is nipped and ways be foul; that fancy is engendered in the eyes; that men were deceivers ever; that the rain it raineth every day and a great while ago the world begun;

that a life was but a flower and therefore take the present time; that golden lads and girls all must, as chimney-sweepers, come to dust; that coral is made of drowned bones. There is here nothing new, nothing foreign, nothing peculiar to the strange experience of rare natures. Yet these songs occur in plays concerning characters highly individualized and deeply understood, and many of them come at moments important to the action. They are not 'turns' inserted to cover a lack of action, interludes between the parts of the play that matter. They are remembered with the plays, and remembered as parts of them. It is not a complete memory that retains Berowne's jesting wit and dismissal to painful lessons, and not the songs of spring and winter; the jealous rivalries of two gentlemen and not Silvia; Bassanio's ambition and the grief and cruelty and witty triumphs of a Venetian story, and not the song of fancy; the wit-plays and pains and victories of true love, and not the song that rebukes the sighing of ladies for inconstant men; the errors and jokes and tricks and self-deceits of Illyria, and not sad cypress and the wind and the rain; the weariness of courts and the humorously borne distress of love, and not the springtime lover and his lass; the struggle of loyalty and purity against perfidy and lust, and not the seals of love; the cruel jealousies of Cymbeline's Britain, and not the quiet consummation; the tempest and not the sea-nymphs' knell. That is, an essential part of plays showing a care and understanding of the idiosyncratic personality as strong as ever playwright has had is a kind of lyric which, by its reliance on aural qualities and its formal use of words, has tended always to an effect impersonal and generalized; the formal lyric belongs integrally to the treatment of developed human individuals. *Measure for Measure* startles and convinces equally by the leaping into momentary but three-dimensional life of the unimportant Barnadine and by the association of the mature human Mariana, with her vocation for wifehood, with the sweet far sadness of *Take, O take*. Desdemona, distinguished as she is by gaiety and courage from the stock figure of suffering heroine, sings an old song of the lovelorn poor soul sighing 'Willow', and it is of the essence of this moving scene that,

instead of speaking of her personal situation, she sings of the timeless poor soul.

The perfect formality and the perfect propriety of Shakespeare's songs in their given places give an indication of his greatness and special quality as a dramatist, and show why criticism of Shakespeare that has concentrated on his poetry and tended to forget the practical theatrical relevance of his scenes has nevertheless sometimes contributed much of value to the understanding of his work. His psychological knowledge and understanding and his experience of effective theatrical methods are, after all, valuable because they contribute to works of art. It is not the subtle complexity of the development of Hamlet's nature that is finally important in *Hamlet*: it is the fact that this is made into a work of art. This fact alone has preserved, as on a Grecian urn, the interest of his problem for our unending absorbed inquiry. All the human penetration of Shakespeare's plays in black ink still shines bright because it has found form, and all the interest of complex individuality has remained fresh for us because it has been held by its form in some relation with all other human experiences that have found form in art. Neither Shakespeare's plots nor his persons are mere types, but their relationship with types has given them focus and perspective in our view of them. The very fact of the strict formal perfection of his lyrics, and the other fact that they have a proper place in his plays, should warn us off using his writing as the raw material for disquisitions on psychology. They show clearly in miniature the importance of his art.

They show, too, something of the nature of that art. Their impersonal but often deeply moving generalizations occur in situations where the interest in his characters may merge with interest in the kind of experience or set of relationships in which they find themselves. The love-sick Duke of Illyria, the mad Ophelia, the varyingly cheated Beatrice and Hero, are revealed in themselves and in their likeness to others in the songs associated with them, for the songs embody situations and not people, and are yet relevant to these people in the situations in which they find themselves. The songs then show the dramatic imagination which

deepens the emotion with which we respond to characters by relating them to the memory of past situations of feeling without destroying their individual experience of the situations. They show how the famous 'universality' of Shakespeare's plays comes by the great and profound sense of proportion which, simultaneously, loves and admires and pities the lonely individual, and sees that though individual he is not in all his doings unique. The songs with their beautiful and shapely utterance of truisms hint the fact that the course of Shakespeare's stories is often towards the discovery that the truth in many human situations is a truism. Lear's Fool, with his echo of another fool in 'When that I had and a little tiny wit', sings truths that Lear is toiling all his age to find, crying when he finds them 'O, I have ta'en too little care of this'.

Finally, the formal perfection of the songs is a type of the beauty which is the crown of artistic achievement. Their simple secure matter and manner have that delicacy of perfect shape which seems always fragile, and so makes the beholder feel almost with fear that their certainty is 'securus' in its dangerous sense: a change of word, a careless touch, would spoil them. Yet we have no desire that they should seem more robust by being less perfect in form. Their triumph is worth having. This is closely akin to the singular beauty of Shakespeare's comedy, which is full of songs, and which moves in each play to a fullness of happy harmony so delicately balanced on resolved misunderstandings that again it moves us by the pathos in secure happiness. It is at once certain and vulnerable, and worth knowing, however short its life. The short and perilous life of human happiness is perpetuated by the formal beauty Shakespeare gives it. It is not for nothing that Feste sings of the wind and the rain that raineth every day, making a song of the dangers of the world he lives in.

This may seem a far cry from scanning verse. Yet I believe that to recognize the form in Shakespeare's lyrics is to have taken a step on the road to understanding his imagination.

PART 3

DONNE

Spenser was a poet whose lyrical work was antagonistic to the addition of music. Shakespeare's lyrics were intended for music. For some of Donne's lyric poems we have contemporary settings, for the majority none; we shall probably never know how many of them were intended for music. Of the *Songs and Sonets*, *Go and catch a falling star* has a tune found in B.M. MS. Egerton 2013; *'Tis true 'tis day* has a tune in Corkine's *Second Book of Ayres* (London, 1612), and it has also been suggested as an answer to Dowland's *Sweet, stay awhile*, which is set in *A Pilgrimes Solace* (London, 1612); *Send home my long-stray'd eyes* is printed, with variations, to a tune in Ritson's *English Songs* (London, 1783), but there is no knowing the date of this tune; *The Baite* is intended for the same tune as Marlowe's *Come live with me*, which appears in Corkine's *Second Book of Ayres* (London, 1612); *The Expiration*, with very slight differences, is set by Alfonso Ferrabosco in his *Ayres* (London, 1609). *To sue for all thy Love*, in Dowland's *Pilgrimes Solace*, has been ascribed to Donne. A tune for the *Hymne to God the Father* appears in MS. Egerton 2013. The only purpose in listing these settings is to remind ourselves that Donne's verses were sometimes intended for the strictness of musical setting, and that it may therefore be well to look in his lyric poems for strict metrical structure.

It cannot be pretended that Donne's lyrics have that directness of syntax and smooth development of word-order that we have found in typical Elizabethan music-poetry. It is therefore tempting to read his lyrics with complete submission to the emphasis accent, ignoring, or at least reducing, ictus where it is not obviously coincident with emphasis. Grierson, for instance, refers to Donne's poetry as 'not perfect in form, rugged of line and careless in rhyme', and so reminds us of Jonson's censure of Donne for 'not keeping of accent'. Of late years rugged lines and not keeping of accent have been accounted to Donne for praise rather than

blame, but the idea of his technique persists. I do not suggest that there are no imperfections, ruggednesses and careless rimes in Donne's poetry, but it may well be dangerous always to expect them. A search for regularity may bring rewards.

To assume his carelessness in rime, for instance, leads to supposing that his rimes do not matter. Yet a study of his rimes in the *Songs and Sonets*[1] is interesting. Of the fifty-five poems printed by Grierson as *Songs and Sonets*, two only, *Confined Love* and the sonnet *The Token*, have no rimes on any of the personal pronouns; two, *The Canonization* and *A Valediction forbidding Mourning*, use only 'it' of the pronouns in a rime position; *Communitie* has only 'ours' in rime. That is, fifty-three poems use the personal pronouns in rimes, and many of them use them many times, persistently echoing 'I', 'they', 'thee', 'mee', 'hee', 'shee', 'thou', 'you', 'wee', 'us'. One of the uses of 'it', in *The Canonization*, is curiously insistent, and deliberately related to other pronouns:

> The Phœnix ridle hath more wit
> By us, we two being one, are it.
> So to one neutrall thing both sexes fit,
> Wee dye and rise the same, and prove
> Mysterious by this love.

This has the further interest of being related to Shakespeare's *The Phœnix and the Turtle*, which is concerned with the 'two being one':

> Property was thus appalled,
> That the self was not the same;
> Single nature's double name
> Neither two nor one was called.
>
> Reason in itself confounded
> Saw division grow together,
> To themselves yet either neither,
> Simple were so well compounded;

[1] I use the text of *The Poems of John Donne*, edited by Herbert J. C. Grierson, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1912).

That it cried, How true a twain
Seemeth this concordant one.[1]

and the Threnos says:

Death is now the phœnix' nest,
And the turtle's loyal breast
To eternity doth rest,

Leaving no posterity:
'Twas not their infirmity,
It was married chastity,

which seems closely connected with *The Canonization*'s theme of the mystery, legend and 'patterne' of love between two perfect lovers. The 'it' used for rime in this poem seems by this treatment to become as strongly 'personal' a pronoun, by paradox, as any of the others. Now words in rime positions are important in the work of most poets, and no poet can prevent his rime-words from at least seeming important; therefore, unless we assume Donne to be incompetent in his use of form, an assumption hardly justifiable, we should follow the guidance given by his rime-words. I suspect that the persistent sounding of the personal pronouns, their note intensified by their use for rimes, through Donne's *Songs and Sonets*, is a main, though unsuspected, cause of one of our responses to his poetry. His love poems constantly convey a haunting and inescapable sense of personality, not of the details of appearance, behaviour and character, but of the inner sense of existence as an individual; Donne as lover is 'I', his lady is no visible person, but 'shee'. He is filled with the baffling sense of the unbreakable 'I-ness' of 'I', of the 'you-ness' of 'you', of the 'she-ness' of 'she', and the love poetry is filled with the desire to turn this into the one-ness of 'us', or even further into the 'it-ness' of the phœnix. No poetry more strongly conveys the feeling of the defined individual existence we all sense in saying 'I', as we never sense it in repeating our own names, which are rather the external signs to others of our characters; it is in using the pronoun that

[1] It is surprising that little attention is paid to Shakespeare in discussions of the Metaphysical Poets and the influences upon them.

we imply 'I am'. No poetry more strongly expresses the desire to escape from, or to submerge, this invincible conviction of separate existence. The content states these feelings; but the form makes them live in the inexorability with which it dwells on the pronouns.

Once their note has been heard in the rimes, it becomes increasingly audible within the lines. It is surprising how often the pronouns occur in positions requiring ictus, and how easy it becomes, if the rimes have been followed, to give this ictus, where prose reading would deny it. So strong does this sound become that it may lead to questioning of a line's superficial meaning. It is possible to suspect the hint of a pun in *The Extasie*:

> Our eye-beames twisted, and did thred
> Our eyes, upon one double string.

'Eyes' occurs in the same position in the lines as 'we', four lines earlier:

> Sat we two, one anothers best.

Donne certainly puns in the famous Hymn, where he plays throughout on 'done' and 'Donne', with painful intensity of meaning. His use of pronouns is almost like a continuous underlying pun on the meaning of most of his love poems.

Once we have found the power of his rimes to clarify his meaning, we may be prepared to look further for enlightenment from his metrical practice. In *A Valediction: of weeping* the first and second stanzas establish the underlying stress scheme of the third line as:

$$\times / \times / \times / \times / \times / .$$

Now in the third stanza,

> O more then Moone,
> Draw not up seas to drowne me in thy spheare,
> Weepe me not dead, in thine armes, but forbeare
> To teach the sea, what it may doe too soone;
> Let not the winde
> Example finde,

To doe me more harme, then it purposeth;
Since thou and I sigh one anothers breath,
Who e'r sighes most, is cruellest, and hasts the
others death,

the natural prose reading of the third line gives / x x / x x / x x /, a very abrupt change of rhythm, and 'not keeping of accent'. It is clear that 'Weepe' and 'dead' and 'armes' must have stress from their emphasis, but it is not impossible to include ictus in the speaking of the line. We then have / \ x / x \ / \ x /, which accords more nearly with the metrical pattern and also slightly adjusts the sense. If 'me' and 'thine' are given by ictus some slight degree of stress, then the line carries the extra implication of special poignancy in *her*, of all people, doing this to *him*, of all people. 'Weepe me not dead, in thine armes, but forbeare' means more than the natural reading, and it means a 'more' that is in keeping with the intent of this poem as of most of Donne's love poetry.

A clearer example occurs in *The Apparition*. If this is read with respect for the continuing rhythmical movement x /, which is clearly indicated, ictus will pick out for stress the pronouns of the first, second and third persons with a shocking insistence on the points of the ugly triangle. The poem ought to be read like this; until it is, it will never yield up the full painful force of its bitter threat. When it is so read, the sixth line has in it more than may be explained by the annotation that old superstition believed that a candle flickered in the presence of a ghost. It then gives also stress to 'thy':

Then *thy* sicke taper will begin to winke:

and thus concentrates the threat. As he has waned in his relations with and influence upon her, so must she wane in her influence upon the later lover. If the possibility of this meaning is doubted, it should be remembered that in *The Canonization*, Donne says, 'We are Tapers too'.

In these passages it is clear that care for the metrical form can clarify and deepen our understanding of Donne's meaning. It re-

mains true that much of his lyric versification is irregular and difficult, but we ought at least to give it the chance of justifying itself as a container for his sense. Very often it will so justify itself, and when this occurs it gives the lie to the belief that Donne can write characteristically only when he tramples on form. When his form is followed, and allowed to make its contribution to meaning, it will be found, as in the examples given above, that its contribution is to give conviction and definition to our interpretation of his characteristic moods.

These three poets differ as widely from each other in the nature and effect of their work as any three poets well can who write in the same age. Their differences and their achievements are indicated by their metrical practices as surely as by their poetic statements. 'The exact structure of his peculiar versification' is the embodiment of a poet's individual poetic nature.

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