113 f. Shakespeare habitually softens the brutality of murder and brings it in some sort into the sphere of poetry, either by giving a certain refinement and beauty to the character of the murderer (as in *Macbeth*, where the 'murderers' are men "weary with disasters, tugg'd with fortune", iii. 1. 112; cf. scene 3), or by making them repent after the deed (as in *Richard III*. i. 4. 278–286 (the second murderer of Clarence); iv. 3. 1–20 (Tyrrel's description of the murderers of the princes); and here.

Scene 6.

The scene consists of three divisions, each in appearance contributing to seal the success of the new king. The conspiracy has been sternly put down; the Abbot of Westminster, 'the grand conspirator', has died; and finally Richard, the 'buried fear', has been removed. The last, though seemingly the climax in the ascending scale of triumph, at once changes the key to a tragic minor, and the drama closes on a solemn and bodeful note which leaves us mindful of Carlisle's prophecy that the 'woes are yet to come'.

8. **Spencer.** The Quartos give *Oxford*, perhaps written originally through an oversight, no such conspirator being mentioned by Holinshed or elsewhere. Nothing seems gained, in such a case, by rejecting the Folios' correction given in the text.

22. **abide**, 'endure', 'undergo', a common sense of O.E. *âbîdan*; not to be confused with *abide* = 'to pay for' (with the *offence* as object), in the phrase 'dear abide it', from O. E. *â-bycgan*, M. E. *a-bien*, thence through the analogy of meaning *abide*.

24 f. The pardon of Carlisle once more emphasizes Bolingbroke's freedom from malignity.

30 f. Compare the more elaborate version of the same motive in *King John*, iv. 2. 203 f; and with Bolingbroke's reply, that of John (lines 208 f):

> "It is the curse of kings to be attended
> By slaves that take their humours for a warrant
> To break within the bloody house of life,
> And on the winking of authority
> To understand a law,...
> *Hub*. Here is your hand and seal for what I did", &c.

But John draws back out of fear; Bolingbroke out of genuine penitence for his rashness.

32. Exton, who embodies a wish in an action, clothes the report of it in extravagant phrases.

40. Thus Bolingbroke himself admits at last the charm of his fallen rival.

48. **incontinent**, immediately.

49. This forms the motive of the opening scene of *1 Henry IV*.

OUTLINE

OF

SHAKESPEARE'S PROSODY.

INTRODUCTORY.—'Blank verse', the normal metrical form of the Elizabethan drama, is a rhythmic sequence of (commonly) five stressed and five unstressed syllables, commonly alternating without rhyme. Its principal source of effect lies in the intrinsic beauty of the *rhythm*, of which there were many recognized and varied types found in all the dramatists, and many others specially characteristic of one or other of them. To the full appreciation of these rhythms the only guide is a fine ear. But since they are based upon, and largely controlled by, the natural rhythm of the words as pronounced and accented in ordinary speech, the study of this is both the best preparation, and the first condition, of the comprehension of Shakespeare's verse. Thus, a verse is felt to be *rough*, if the ten syllables on which it is built, and the five stresses which it distributes among them, depart beyond a certain degree from the number of syllables customarily pronounced in the given words, and their common accentuation; that is, if the *rhythm* can only be had at the cost of unrecognized contractions or expansions, or of laying *stress* where there is no natural *accent*. But in Elizabethan talk, there was still greater elasticity than now, as to the treatment both of *syllables* and of *accents*; syllables now slurred only in dialect were suppressed, in rapid talk, by choice speakers; others now always contracted into one (*e.g.* the termination *-tion*) were often treated as two (see below, I. § 4); while the *accent*, fixed in the simple word, could be shifted readily from one syllable to another, in many *compounds* and *derivatives*. The two following sections will describe the *material* of Shakespeare's verse, as it was affected by (1) syllabic variation, (2) accent variation. The third will describe the *verse structure* itself.

I. Syllabic Variation.

§ 1. A syllable consists of a *vowel* or *vowel-like* (*i.e. l*, *m*, *n*, *r*) together with such neighbouring *consonants* as can be pronounced with the same continuous effort.[1] Hence a change in the number

[1] For a more precise account of the *syllable* see Sievers' *Phonetik*, § 26 f, a classic which should be in the hands of every student of versification. Also Sweet, *History of English Sounds*, § 19 f. The term 'vowel-like' is borrowed from the latter.

of syllables in a word means a change in the number of separate efforts required to pronounce it. This may come about in various ways. Sometimes an entire syllable is dropped, or inserted; more often, two groups of sounds pronounced by separate efforts are made continuous, or a continuous group is broken up into two. The syllable thus lost or gained is always without accent.

There are three principal cases: (1) *vowel+consonant*; (2) *vowel +vowel-like*; (3) *vowel+vowel*. All of them are abundantly exemplified in Elizabethan pronunciation, double forms of a word often existing side by side, the one supported by *phonetic instinct*, the other by *tradition*. In what follows, a circle under a 'vowel-like' (*l̥*, *r̥*, &c.) is used to mark that it has *syllabic value*; a dot under any letter (*ẹ*), that it is suppressed or slurred.

§ 2. Vowel and Consonant.

A vowel is often lost before a consonant, in any situation.

(i) *At the beginning of a word.*

This especially affected the prefixes of Romance words, and was an ingrained habit of M. E. Hence such double forms as *'stroy—destroy*, *'stonish—astonish*, &c. (Abbott, § 460); and probably *'nointed* (iii. 2. 55) with *anointed* (i. 2. 38, &c.); *'sist* (iv. 1. 148) with the common *resist*.

It was also very common in unemphatic monosyllables, like *it*, as, *for't*, *on't* (still known to good talkers in the eighteenth century, see Boswell's *Johnson*, *passim*): so "I'll hammer't (it) out" (v. 5. 5). So we still use *'s* for *is*, *has*, *us*.

(ii) *At the end of a word.*

This (except in the cases described below) belongs chiefly to Shakespeare's later plays, where it becomes common, as in this line, written in 1607–8:

> Even to *th'* court, the heart, to *th'* seat o' *th'* brain.—*Coriolanus*, i. 1. 135.

It is chiefly found in *the* (compare the present North-Midland dialectic *th' lad*, *th' man*, &c.[1]), mostly after a vowel. In *Coriolanus* it occurs 105 times, in our play 3 times: *e.g.* "Jack o' th' clock" (v. 5. 60).

In some common words a final *-y* was either partially suppressed, or became the consonantal *y*: *e.g. marry* (i. 4. 16); *Harry* (iii. 3. 20) (both monosyllabic); so elsewhere, *busy*. In Chaucer *Caunterbury* appears to be so treated.

(iii) *Within a word.* ['Syncope.']

This takes place in a variety of cases.

(*a*) *in the inflexion.* The unaccented *e* of the verb and noun inflexions was in the sixteenth century gradually becoming suppressed (where no sibilant preceded). The process was, however, much more advanced in some of them than in others. We can divide these inflexions into three *strata*, or *layers*, in the first of

[1] Ellis, *E. Eng. Pronunciation*, vol. v. (D. 21, &c.).

which it is virtually complete in Shakespeare's time, in the second far advanced, in the third incipient or partial. Thus:

(α) *-es* (3 pers. sing.), *-es* (gen. sing.). A few traces of the latter occur in early plays; but no case of the former is found in undoubtedly Shakespearian work. *Knockès* (*1 Henry VI.* i. 3. 5), *provokès* (*2 Henry VI.* iv. 7. 98) need not be Shakespeare's. We must therefore by no means admit *mistakès* in our play (iii. 3. 9) (with Abbott). It is accounted for by the pause (cf. below, iii. § 4).

(β) *-eth*, *-est.* Contraction is here practically universal in the later plays, and common in our play. The examples of *non-contraction* are 6·1 of the whole in *2 Henry VI.*, 2·6 in *1 Henry IV.*, and 4·6 in our play:[1] *e.g. appearèth* (i. 1. 26), *lièth* (i. 2. 4), *comèst* (i. 3. 33).

In the superlative, *-est* is oftener retained, and always in the early plays. But we have *short'st* (v. 1. 80), *common'st* (v. 3. 17), and, in the same line, *strong'st* and *surest* (iii. 3. 201).

(γ) *-ed* (past tense and participle).

The uncontracted forms, *e.g.* in *redoublèd* (i. 3. 80), *fosterèd* (i. 3. 126).

(*b*) *in the last but one syllable.*

Words of three syllables with an accent on the first and a secondary accent on the third, often suppressed the unaccented second, wholly or partially. This was commonest where a vowel-like preceded or followed the unaccented vowel (see below, § 3), but also happened in other cases. It has become fixed in such words as *Leicester*, *business*.

So: *prodigal* (iii. 4. 31), but *pródigàl* (i. 3. 256); *Worcẹster* (ii. 3. 22), but *Wórcestèr* (ii. 2. 58); *majẹsty* (iii. 2. 113, 3. 70, &c.), but *májestỳ* (ii. 1. 295).

§ 3. Vowel and 'Vowel-like'.

Much more various and interesting are the syllabic variations arising from the relation of vowels to 'vowel-likes'. The letters *l*, *m*, *n*, and probably *r* stood in Elizabethan English, as in ours, for two ways of using each sound. Each might (and may) have the function either of a *consonant* (combining with a vowel) as in 'ba*ll*', or of a *vowel* (combining with a consonant) as in 'baub*le*' (=baubl̥).[2] We have examples of both in the word 'little' (*i.e.* 'litl̥').

Through this doubleness of nature we easily see how the presence of a vowel-like may quite alter the syllabic quality of a word. We must distinguish the following different cases:—

(i) *By passing from its consonant* (*non-syllabic*) *to its vowel* (*syllabic*) *value, the 'vowel-like' may form a new syllable.*

[1] König, *Vers in Shakespeares Dramen*, p. 5.

[2] The *syllabic l*, *m*, *n* are expressly recognized by the orthoepist Bullokar (1580). Salesbury (1547) writes *thwndr*, which Sweet (*Hist. Eng. Sounds*, § 903) takes to be *r* following an indistinct vowel. Yet when Salesbury means a vowel he commonly writes it.

Thus the word *entrance* (Lat. *intra-re*) became *ent-ŗ-ance* (thence often spelt *ent-er-ance*).

In our play we have *Eng-ļ-and* (iv. 1. 17: cf. *Richard III.* iv. 4. 263); *redoubled* (i. 3. 80: cf. *resemb-l-eth*, four syllables, *Two Gentlemen*, i. 3. 84).

In this first case and some others the extra syllable had a historic basis (M.E. *Engelond*, cf. *marshal*=F. *maréchal*); but this probably did not influence the change.

As a point of distinction between Shakespeare's and Marlowe's scansion note that *Mowbray's* name is in Shakespeare two syllables, in *Edward II.* three syllables (*i.e. Mowb-ŗ-ay*).

(ii) *By passing from its vowel (syllabic) to its consonant (non-syllabic) value, the 'vowel-like' may cause the loss of a syllable.*

Thus often in the terminations *-able*, *-ible* (*i.e.* -abļ, -ibļ), before a vowel: *e.g.* "let it be tén | able in | your silence still" (*Hamlet*), where *-ab-ļ-in* (three syllables) becomes *ab-lin* (two syllables).

This, like all other kinds of contraction, is rarer in the earlier plays, while the later avoid the full reckoning of syllables which we find, *e.g.* in *wrinkle in*, i. 3. 230 (wrink- | ļ-in); *brittle as*, iv. 1. 288 (britt | -ļ-às).

Similarly, the syllables *-er*, *-el*, *-en*, and even *-in* and *-ain* (which in rapid talk were pronounced *ŗ*, *ļ*, *ņ*) were often further reduced before a vowel, though probably not to the same degree as in the above cases.

Thus: *lie- | giver ànd*, iv. 1. 68 (nearly lie-give | r-and); *bróth | er-in-law ànd*, v. 3. 137 (bro-the-rin-law'nd); *módel our firm*, iii. 4. 42 (mode-lour-firm); *óver him*, ii. 1. 258 (ove-r(h)im); *villain ere*, v. 3. 54.

Similarly, within a word, a vowel-like facilitates contraction.

E.g. sóvereign (i. 1. 29); *innocent* (i. 1. 103); *pelican* (*King Lear*, iii. 4. 77; but *pélicàn*, three syllables, in our play, ii. 1. 126); *Hereford* (always); *benévolenc(es)*, ii. 1. 250; *flourishing*, i. 2. 18; *Destinies*, i. 2. 15. In i. 2. 73 we have in immediate succession *désolàte*, *désolate*.

So, contrary to present usage, we have *búsinèss*, ii. 1. 217; but *business*, ii. 2. 75.

So, in words of two syllables: *belíke* (*belike*) (iii. 3. 30). And in words of more than three syllables: *génerallỳ* (ii. 2. 132); probably *imaginary* (ii. 2. 27), *ímagerỳ* (v. 2. 16), *sóvereigntỳ* (iv. 1. 251); on the other hand: *cústomàry* (four syllables, ii. 1. 196); *hónouràble* (iv. 1. 91); and *pérsonàlly* (ii. 3. 135) (with slurred *y*).

(iii) Vowel-likes often, however, underwent a still further reduction, analogous to the suppression or slurring of vowels, and quite distinct from the conversion into consonant function.

Thus -ļ, ŗ, representing older *-el*, *-er*, could be partially suppressed before a consonant, *e.g. uncle*: "Uncle, for God's sake, speak comfortable words", ii. 2. 76; *cousin*: "We do debase ourselves, cousin, do we not", iii. 3. 127; *remember*, i. 3. 269.

A somewhat violent example is: "be valiant and live", i. 3. 83, where either the *l* or the *n* of 'valiant' is thus reduced.

But *needle* in v. 5. 17 is not an instance of this, as it was pronounced (and often written) *neeld*.

(iv) The 'vowel-like' *r* often added to the syllabic value of a word in a way peculiar to itself; by causing a preceding long vowel to become a *diphthong* out of which, in its turn, two syllables were developed.—Thus: *hour* is commonly 'ow-ər' (i. 2. 7). Similarly: *fire* (v. 1. 48); *Ireland* (ii. 4. 103); perhaps *fair* (iv. 1. 304); and probably *fourth* (iv. 1. 212).

Cf. i. 2. 44, and note to ii. 3. 21.

§4. Vowel and Vowel.

Two adjacent vowels often lose their separate syllabic value, in a variety of ways (technically distinguished by the terms *elision*, *apocope*, *crasis*, *synizesis*, *synaeresis*). We cannot always decide which process is actually assumed in a given passage of Shakespeare, but contemporary spelling is often a valuable clue. As before, the earlier plays tend to permit, and the later to exclude, the treatment of adjacent vowels as separate syllables.

(i) *The adjacent vowels occur in different words.*

Here the final vowel of slightly stressed words like *the* and *to* was probably altogether suppressed, as in *th' one* (ii. 2. 113, v. 2. 18), (pron. *thōn*, not *thwun*); *th' other* (ii. 2. 113, but *the other* v. 2. 18); *th' abundant* (i. 3. 257); *th' earl* (ii. 2. 58); *to insinuate* (iv. 1. 165, *t'insinuate*); *to have learned* (ii. 3. 24).

While other final vowels rather formed a *diphthong* with the initial vowel, as *thy anointed* (ii. 1. 98), *sorrow and grief* (iii. 3. 183); *Henry of* (v. 5. 102).

(ii) *In the same word.*

As the vowel-like nature of the sonants *l*, *r*, *m*, *n* leads to the absorption of syllables, so the consonant affinity of certain vowels may have the same result.

Thus *i* easily passes to *y*, *u* to *w*, and a combination such as *i-a*, *i-o* may acquire the value of one syllable while still retaining clear traces of two.

E.g. such words as *cordial* (still three syllables in modern English), *marriage*, *conscience*, &c. are regularly dissyllabic in Shakespeare.

Other words vary: *e.g. míscreànt* (i. 1. 39), but *miscreant* (*1 Henry VI.* iii. 4. 44); *récreànt* (*Richard II.* i. 3. 106, 111); *récreant* (i. 2. 53).

Other examples are: *followers* (iv. 1. 224), *studying* (v. 5. 1); but *tédiòus* (v. 2. 26).

The retention of *-ion* as two syllables at the end of verse is common throughout Shakespeare[1]: *admonitiòn*, ii. 1. 117; *incisiòn*, i. 1.

[1] Even far into the 17th century *-si-on* (two syllables) was a recognized pronunciation. It is given by Wilkins (1668). Sweet, *History of English Sounds*, § 915.

155; *imitátiòn*, ii. 1. 23; but *nátion*, ii. 1. 22. This was regular in M. E. *-cioùn* (in Chaucer, &c.). Less common is *-ian* as two syllables, *e.g. musíciàns* (i. 3. 288), *physíciàn* (i. 1. 154). The same holds of *ion*, where the *-i-* is not original, but derived from a preceding French *l* or *gn*: as in *companion*, usually three syllables, but in v. 3. 7 scanned *-iòn*.

Again, when a stressed vowel is followed by an unstressed, the two may have the value of one syllable: *e.g. Corioli* (three syllables, or four), *Hermione* (three syllables, or four), *jewel* (one syllable, *Henry VIII.* v. 1. 34; but two syllables in our play, i. 3. 270); *fiery-red* (ii. 3. 58); *being* (v. 1. 91), but *doing* (two syllables) v. 2. 21; *theatre* (*King John*, ii. 1. 375, but three syllables in our play, v. 2. 23). So *voyage* (two syllables), v. 6. 49; *prayers* (two syllables regularly, *e.g.* v. 3. 101).

(iii) Lastly, we may notice here one remarkable case of contraction of vowels, viz. where this follows or accompanies the loss of an intervening *consonant*; which is, in all clear cases, either *th* or *v*. The second vowel is followed by *r* or *n*.

Thus *even* (adv.) is a monosyllable in 85 cases out of 100,[1] and the frequent spelling *e'en* shows that the *v* was then syncopated, not slurred. So probably in i. 3. 208, which might be explained also by ii. 1. (But the adj. *even* is always two syllables, and *un-even* three; ii. 3. 4.) So, *ever*, *never*, *over*, often written *e'er*, *ne'er*, *o'er* (or *e're*, &c.), *e.g.* iv. 1. 91; ii. 2. 143, 3. 33; iii. 2. 72; but *over* in v. 3. 3. *Seven*,—se'en (cf. 'sennight'), probably in i. 2. 11–14 (four times).

The *-th-* is usually lost in *whether* (often written *where*), *rather* (iv. 1. 15), *whither*, *either*. But we have *whither* as two syllables in v. 1. 85. The contraction of the auxiliaries, *'ld*, *'d*, for *would*, *had*, as now, need hardly be noticed. In v. 2. 103, we must assume such contraction for the written *thou wouldst*.

II. Accent Variation.

In Shakespeare's time the word-accent was in the main fixed; even Romance words exhibit only few traces of the conflict between Romance and Germanic accentuation which gave variety to the language of Chaucer.

There was still, however, fluctuation (as even now) in the accentuation of *compounds* and *prefix-derivatives* of both Germanic and Romance origin. In the first case the fluctuations arose from the *compound* or *derivative* being felt, now as a single word (with accent usually on the first syllable), now as a group of words, with accent on the most *important*, which was usually not the first.

§ 1. Germanic Words.—Thus we have such varying stresses as *mankínd* and *mánkind*, *straightwáy*, *stráightway*, and in our play *heárt-blood* (iii. 2. 131) and *heart-blóod* (iv. 1. 28); *wélcome* (iii. 1. 31), and probably *welcóme* (ii. 3. 170).

[1] König, p. 29.

So, in pronominal, adverbial, and prepositional compounds: *thére-fore* and *therefóre* are common; *thérein* and *thereín*; *sómewhat* and *somewhát*. Besides the common *sómething* we have probably to recognize *something* in *Romeo and Juliet* (v. 3. 8), "As signal that thou hear'st something approach".

As cases of derivatives, *e.g.* in *verbs*, besides the common accentuation *outrún*, *gainsáy*, *forgíve*, *uncúrse*, &c., we have *oútpray* (v. 3. 109); *fórbid* (ii. 1. 200); *únfolds* (*Winter's Tale*, iv. 1. 2).

Participles with *un-* have commonly the stress on *ún-* when used attributively, on the participle when used predicatively, as in *ún-born* (ii. 2. 10), but *unbórn* (iii. 3. 88); *únking'd* (iv. 1. 220), but *unkíng'd* (v. 5. 37). But this rule is not absolute: cf. such a line as, "But where *unbruised* youth with *unstuff'd* brain" (*Romeo and Juliet*, ii. 3. 37).

§ 2. Romance Words.

In Md. E. the influence of Latin has often thrust the stress back to its original place, while in Shakespeare it could fall on the first syllable, according to English accentuation. Thus: *sécure* and *secúre*, *cómplete* and *compléte*, *éxtreme* and *extréme*, &c.; cf. *récord* (i. 1. 30), *recórd* (iv. 1. 230).

Regularly we find *aspéct* (i. 3. 127), *exíle* (i. 3. 151); *sepúlchre* (i. 3. 196), but *sépulchre* (ii. 1. 55). On the other hand, regularly *ádverse*, but *advérse* (i. 3. 82).

In *chástise* (ii. 3. 104) the M. E. and O. F. accent (*chastisen*, *chas-tien*, *chastier*) is retained, as always in Shakespeare. The modern accent is due to the analogy of Greek words in *-ίζω*.

In derivations from verbs the accent usually, as now, agrees with that of the simple verb; but occasionally a final *-or*, *-ive*, *-àble* (which in O. F. had the chief stress) bears a secondary stress, as often in Chaucer. Thus: *détestàble*, *déléctàble* (ii. 3. 7), and *púrveyòr* (*Macbeth* i. 5. 22—"To be his púrveyòr"); but *convéyer* (iv. 1. 317); also *pérspectìves* (ii. 2. 18).

In the sentence as in the word there is a normal arrangement of accents; which in O. E. was wholly unlike that of Md. E., and in Shakespeare's time did not entirely correspond.

Thus it is probable that both prepositions and the definite article often bore a stronger accent than now.

III. Verse Structure.

§ 1. Normal Verse.—The essential structure of Shakespearian blank verse, as already stated, is a series of ten syllables bearing five *stresses*.[1] In the earliest English blank verse, and still often in Shakespeare, the *stresses* alternate with *non-stresses*; (*e.g.*) "For time hath set a blot upon my pride" (iii. 2. 81).

[1] The words *stress* and *non-stress* are here used for the metrical *ictus*, or beat, and the pause between. It is essential to distinguish the series of *stresses* and *non-stresses* which form the rhythm, from the word- and sentence-*accents* which are accommodated to them.

Such verses, however, occurring in masses, as they do, *e.g.*, in the first blank-verse tragedy *Gorboduc* (1563), would be insufferably monotonous. The beauty of Elizabethan verse is gained chiefly by several well-marked variations which became *typical*.

§ 2. Normal Variations.

(i) *Stress variation.* Thus, the stresses may vary in degree; syllables which bear a very slight natural *accent* being placed in a normally stressed place. Thus—

> To scárlet indignátion, ànd bedéw (iii. 3. 99).
>
> With nó less térror thàn the élemènts (iii. 3. 55).

Such lines are not to be regarded as a *departure from a type*, but as examples of a *new type* of great beauty. Hence their melodious effect. There were limits, however, to this variation. *E.g.* two *weak stresses* rarely come together; nor are there ever, in the five-stressed verse, *more* than two weak stresses.

(ii) *Stress inversion.* Then, but also within limits, the alternate order of *stress* and *non-stress* may be inverted. As this causes two stresses to come together, and as two stresses can only be pronounced in succession when a slight pause intervenes, this inversion commonly coincides with a pause in the sense, and is thus found most often (1) at the beginning of a line, (2) in the 3rd or 4th foot, sense-pauses commonly occurring in these places. *E.g.*, in the various feet:

> (1) Párdon | is áll | the súit | I háve | in hánd (v. 3. 130).
>
> (3) Should dy' | ing mén | flátter | with thóse | that líve (ii. 1. 88).
>
> (4) Unléss | he dó | profáne, | steál or | usúrp (iii. 3. 81).

In the second foot it is much less usual:[1] *e.g.*

> High bírth, | vígour | of bóne | desért | in sérv | ice
> (*Troilus and Cressida*, iii. 3. 172).

In the fifth the inversion has hardly become typical (*i.e.* when it occurs it is felt as *unrhythmical*). It is found very rarely, and only after a marked pause. At times, however, a striking effect is produced by the use in the fifth place of syllables of which the natural accentuation is variable: *e.g.*

> Nor I' | nor án | y mán | that bút | *man is* (v. 5. 39).

where 'man', being repeated, is unemphatic, so that the three words *but man is* have approximately equal accentuation.

Two inversions may occur in the same line: *e.g.*

> (1, 3) O'ld John | of Gaúnt | tíme-hon | our'd Lán | caster (i. 1. 1).
>
> (1, 4) Speák with | me, pít | y me, | ópen | the doór (v. 3. 77).

But we rarely find *two* inversions in succession and never *three*. Hence in the first of the above lines the second foot must have a stress in the second place. Note that this gives us a means of distinguishing a *shifting of* (*word*) *accent* from *an inversion of* (*verse*) *stress*.

[1] König has reckoned that it occurs 34 times in Shakespeare, in the 2nd place, against c. 500 in the 3rd, and c. 300 in the 1st.

(iii) *Pauses.* One of the most potent sources of varied and beautiful rhythm is the distribution of the *pauses*. It is necessary to distinguish carefully between (1) the *metrical* and (2) the *sense* pause. The first is that assumed by the structure of verse to take place in passing from one line to the next, just as in prose from one paragraph to the next, and in strophic verse also from one stanza to another. A slighter metrical pause occurred within the verse (cæsura), in the older five-stressed verse regularly at the end of the second foot, where in MSS. and old texts it is often marked by a line or space.

In early Elizabethan blank verse (*e.g. Gorboduc*) the metrical pause of both kinds coincides with a more or less marked sense-pause: and examples of this (as of all other kinds of effect) are not wanting in Shakespeare. *E.g.* the following couplet:

> Farewell my blood; | which, if to-day thou shed,
> Lament we may | but not revenge thee dead (i. 3. 57–8).

As Shakespeare proceeds, however, he shows a growing tendency to avoid the monotony of such an effect by detaching the *sense-pauses* from the *metrical* pauses; making the end of one line syntactically continuous with the beginning of the next, and distributing the strong sense-pauses in a great variety of places throughout the line. Such lines are called 'unstopt' or 'run-on' lines; and the non-coincidence of sentence and line is called 'enjambement'.

Sense-pauses are, however, of very different degrees. It is only in the later plays that we find closing the line those 'light endings' or proclitic monosyllables which 'precipitate the reader forward' on to the following words (*e.g.* the prepositions; while the *auxiliaries* and *personal pronouns* ('weak endings') thus used only become *frequent* in these later plays.

The metre of *Richard II.* is that characteristic of Shakespeare's second period. It intermediates between the severely 'end-stopt' verse of the earlier and the bold enjambements of the later plays. In attempting to classify the *pauses* admitted in the verse-end, the following points must be noted.

(1) The pause is diminished by close syntactic connection of the parts separated by the verse-end.

But (2) while the syntactic connection remains the same, the *pause* may be increased by

(*a*) The *weight* or *length* of the parts separated;

(*b*) Insertion of *clauses* or *words* which interrupt the continuity of sense.

(*c*) Inversion of the normal *order*.

Usually the quality of the pause is affected by more than one of these at once. The end-pause may occur in *Richard II.*—

(1) Between *subject* and *predicate*, often without modification by (*b*) (*c*).

> For their *love*
> *Lies* in their purses (ii. 2. 129).

Cf. ii. 3. 51, &c.

In

> the other again
> *Is* my kinsman (ii. 2. 113),

'*again*' increases the end-pause, by 2 (*b*). Examples of 2 (*a b*) abound: *e.g.*

> And you that do abet him in this kind
> Cherish rebellion (ii. 3. 146).

(2) Between predicate and completion (verb and object, infin. and object, auxil. and infin.). Rarely without modification:

> Come, cousin, *I'll*
> *Dispose* of you (ii. 2. 116).
> Then true noblesse *would*
> learn him forbearance . . .

(*b*) The noble duke hath sworn his coming *is*
But for his own (ii. 3. 148).

(*a*) But theirs is sweeten'd with the hope to *have*
The present benefit which I possess (ii. 3. 13).

The king of heaven forbid our lord the king
Should so with civil and uncivil arms
(*b*) *Be* rushed upon (iii. 3. 101).

So, when the object or completion *precedes*, the enjambement being softened by (*c*):

> Harry of Hereford, Lancaster and Derby
> Am I (i. 3. 35).

(3) Clauses and sentences beginning with *than*, *as*, *so*, or *prepositions* regularly follow the verse-pause, however close their connection with the preceding words may be: *e.g.*

> It is no *more*
> *Than* my poor life must answer (v. 2. 82).
> So heavy sad
> *As*, though on thinking, &c. (ii. 2. 30).
> The champions are prepared, and stay
> *For* nothing but his majesty's approach (i. 3. 4).
> to be upright judge
> *Of* noble Richard (iv. 1. 119).
> retired himself
> *To* Italy (iv. 1. 97).
> what thy soul holds dear, imagine it
> *To* lie that way thou go'st (i. 3. 287).

(iv) *Omission of syllables.* Sometimes the number of syllables is less than the normal ten, the stresses remaining *five*. This happens especially after a marked *pause*, and is thus found in the same situation as (ii). But it hardly became a regular type. *E.g.*

(1st foot).

> Stay', | the king' | hath thrown' | his ward' | er down! (i. 3. 318).

So i. 1. 20; iii. 2. 2.

(3rd foot).

> Yea, lookst' | thou pale'? | —Let' | me see' | the writing' (v. 2. 57).

So also iii. 3. 10, 103.

(4th foot).

> Of good' | old A' | braham'. | —Lords' | appell'ants (iv. 1. 103).

This, like all other irregularities, is commonest after a *change of speakers* (the most marked of all dramatic pauses). Cf. *Hamlet*, iii. 4. 139—

> This bodiless creation ecstacy
> Is very cunning in.
> *Hamlet.* Ecstacy!

(v) *Extra syllables.* The pause tends to break the metrical continuity of what precedes and follows it, and thus, as already shown, occasions irregularity. But the irregularity may consist in *addition* as well as the *loss* of syllables. It is commonest immediately before the verse-pause (*i.e.* at the end of the line).[1] In this place, indeed, it is the most frequent of all deviations from the primitive type; in the hands of Shakespeare and his successors it became a typical variation; with Fletcher it tended to exclude the simpler type altogether. Examples abound everywhere.[2] *E.g.*

> To pay their awful duty to our presence (iii. 3. 76).

This is less common immediately *after* the pause (*i.e.* at the beginning of the line): *e.g.*

> And quite lost' | their hearts': the nobles hath he fined (ii. 1. 247).

So ii. 2. 91; iii. 2. 3.

Much less common are *two* extra syllables, where not explainable by *syncope* or *slurring*, as:

> And as I am a gentleman I credit him (iii. 3. 120).

An extra syllable also often accompanies the *pause within the verse* ('caesura').[3] Thus:

> To say King Rich | ard: alack' | the hea | vy day' (iii. 3. 8).

So v. 2. 71; v. 2. 101; v. 5. 109.

And at a break in the dialogue:

> What says his maj' | esty?—Sor' | row and grief' | of heart' (iii. 3. 183).

So v. 2. 110; ii. 1. 141.

In the later plays, extra syllables are freely introduced in other places; and occasionally in our play:

> Now by mine honour, by my life, by my troth (v. 2. 78).

So i. 3. 83; and probably iv. 1. 329.

One class of extra-syllabled lines is found, however, indiscriminately in all periods, and especially in the English Histories: viz.

[1] On the chronological value of double-endings, see Introduction, § 4.

[2] This was common in the oldest (French) iambic verse, and in Chaucer, and normal in Italian; but was almost entirely avoided by the first English writer of blank verse, Surrey.

[3] This was common in the French epic iambic (*Chanson de Roland*), and occasional in Chaucer.

those composed of, or containing, proper names. They appear to be often on principle extra-metrical, and in any case comply very loosely with the metre; *e.g.* ii. 1. 279, 283–4 (and note to the last passage).

§ 3. Less-usual Variations.

(i) *Omission of stresses.* Occasionally, one of the five *stresses* is omitted, likewise in consequence of a strong pause.

Their fruits | of dut | y—' | superfluous branches (iii. 4. 63).

At a break in the dialogue:

Ho! who' (i)s | within' | there.—' | Sad'dle | my horse' (v. 2. 74).

And v. 2. 64 (*fear* as two syllables).

Many of the four-stress lines in Shakespeare come under this head, and are to be thus regarded as irregular specimens of the ordinary iambic rather than as genuine four-stress verses. But the presence of these last is undoubted.

In all Shakespeare's plays we find, scattered among the normal five-stress iambics, short or fragmentary verses of from *one* to *four* feet. Those of one foot are often rather to be regarded as extra-metrical; those of four feet are very rare. Except in the later plays, these short verses are habitually marked off from the normal verses in which they occur by decided *pauses* or breaks in the sense.

Two classes of short line may be distinguished, which we may call the *exclamatory* and the *interrupted*, respectively. In the first class, the brevity of the verse marks the interjectional character of what it expresses; in the second, it marks some abruptness in the *dialogue*, being incomplete merely because the next speaker begins a new verse.

1. *Exclamatory.*—Under this head we find a quantity of expressions ranging from the matter-of-fact *order* and the formal *address*, to the *ejaculation* of high-wrought passion and pathos. The former seems to be detached from the normal verse as being more *prosaic* (just as formal documents, letters, &c., are commonly detached from the verse), the latter to give them greater *moment* and *distinction*.

Thus we have:

(a) *Matter-of-fact remarks, orders, &c.*

"Bring forth these men" (iii. 1. 1); "Call forth Bagot" (iv. 1. 1, also iv. 1. 2); "But stay, here come the gardeners" (iii. 4. 24).

(b) *Exclamations.*

"Help, help, help!" (v. 5. 104); "Amen" (i. 4. 65); "Tut, tut" (ii. 3. 86).

So v. 3. 41.

The exclamation *Oh* appears sometimes even to be intruded into the body of a verse otherwise normal, as an extra-metrical syllable: *e.g.* iii. 4. 55; cf. Abbott, § 512.

(c) *Addresses or appeals.*

Several striking instances occur in this play.

"(*Rich.*) Here cousin" (iv. 1. 182); "(*Carl.*) Marry, God forbid" (iv. 1. 114); "(*Abb.*) My lord" (iv. 1. 326).

The second gives weight to Carlisle's bold protest, the third well expresses the cautious hesitation of the Abbot.

Cf. also: "*Bol.* Carlisle, this is your doom" (v. 6. 24). "*Rich.* Draw near" (i. 3. 123).

Of a simpler kind are ii. 3. 2; v. 1. 95; v. 3. 46; iii. 3. 31, &c.

2. *Interrupted.*—The simplest cases of the line left incomplete by *interruption* is where the following speaker *has not heard it*: *e.g.*

Bol. Have thy desire.
York. [*Within*] My liege beware; look to thyself (v. 3. 38);

or converses with a *different person than the first speaker.*

Gard. That tell black tidings.—
Queen. O, I am pressed to death for want of speaking (iii. 4. 71);

or more commonly, *ignores* the first speaker. So, in *King John*, ii. 1. 276, the Bastard's interruptions are ignored by the kings, whose speeches begin fresh lines.

So York and the Duchess:

Duch. What is the matter, my lord?
York. Who is within there?—Saddle my horse...
Duch. Why, what is it, my lord?
York. Give me my boots, I say; saddle my horse (v. 2. 73).

Or the following speaker impatiently *interrupts* the former: *e.g.*

Bol. My gracious lord—
Rich. Fair cousin, you debase your princely knee (iii. 3. 189);

and

North. My lord—
Rich. No lord of thine, thou haught insulting man (iv. 1. 253).

Thence it is used where a speaker *interrupts himself*; and thus expresses the confused bewilderment of York in ii. 2. 98 f., *e.g.*

Dispose of you.
Gentlemen, go muster up your men (ii. 2. 118).

So, especially where a speaker *breaks off* on the arrival of a fresh person. *E.g.*

Than your good words. But who comes here? (ii. 3. 20).

So ii. 3. 67.

Sometimes the want of continuity emphasizes the *difference of rank* or of *standpoint* between two speakers, and serves to distinguish the formal or business talk of a superior with an inferior from an intimate *conversation.*

York. What is't, knave?
Serv. An hour before I came, the duchess died (ii. 2. 97).

So in the dialogue between Richard and the groom (v. 5. 81); and probably in that of the Queen with her lady (iii. 4. 3); the Queen and Green (ii. 2. 61); Richard and Bushy (i. 4. 53); and, perhaps, of Northumberland and Percy (ii. 3. 23 f.); Bolingbroke and Percy (v. 3. 12, 15).

The irregularity of the dialogue in v. 2. 53 f. seems to emphasize the embarrassed behaviour of Aumerle. Note the two four-stress verses, v. 2. 53 and 55.

Instances of short lines imbedded in the verse, except under these conditions, are very rare, except in the latest plays, where every kind of licence is taken with lordly privilege. Richard's

> I live with bread like you, feel want,
> Taste grief, need friends: subjected thus (iii. 4. 175-6)

may perhaps (if authentic) be an instance of brevity for emphasis. At anyrate, no one with a fine ear will wish this impressive couplet away.

A similar case is i. 3. 279.

(ii) *Extra stresses.* Verses of *six* or more stresses are far rarer; but their existence is unmistakable.

Commonly there is a decided pause after the third foot:

> Found truth in all but one; I in twelve thousand none (iv. 1. 171).

So v. 3. 101; v. 3. 42; ii. 1. 94; iv. 1. 19.

In the following the pause is slighter, but still in the middle:

> How dares thy harsh rude tongue sound this unpleasing news? (iii. 4. 74).

So ii. 3. 29.

Rarely, the pause is after the fourth foot, as in v. 2. 70; or there is no pause, as in ii. 4. 6.

Usually the long verse serves, like some examples of the short verse, to give weight and emphasis; the metrical isolation throwing the thought so isolated into relief. A signal example of this is Exton's recital of Bolingbroke's words:

> Have I no friend will rid me of this living fear? (v. 4. 2).

§ 4. Rhyme.

As noticed in the Introduction, *Richard II.* stands alone among the Histories, and resembles the early Comedies, in its free use of *rhyme*. Shakespeare's use of rhyme in these plays was not severely consistent; and it would be a mistake to discover nice calculation in every instance of it. But neither was it by any means wholly arbitrary; and we easily detect three principles which direct, without absolutely determining, his use of it.

(i) *Final.*—First, it is used, in a purely formal way, to *close* both a *scene* and a *speech*. The former use Shakespeare retained to the end of his career as a single couplet. In our play it may be several couplets, as i. 1. 200 f.; 2. 69 f. Of the latter we have examples in i. 1. 18-19, 43-6, 82-3, 107-8, &c.

Even, apparently, at the end of one division of a speech, as i. 3. 65-9 (where Bolingbroke turns to address his father).

(ii) *Epigrammatic.*—The final couplet of a speech often *clinches* it with an epigram;[1] and the first use is closely connected with the extensive use of the couplet for epigrammatically pointed speech.

This is peculiarly common in the language of Richard, and is used, like his word-play, with evident intention, to mark his

[1] Note the Elizabethan fondness for this clinching final couplet, as shown by the form assumed, in defiance of all Italian tradition, by the Shakespearian sonnets.

character. Thus it is used to point his retort to Mowbray (i. 3. 174-5), to Gaunt (ii. 1. 139-40), to York (ii. 1. 145-6, 153-4), to Bolingbroke (iv. 1. 191-202, 317-18), and his self-mockery (iii. 3. 178-82).

Again, it points the epigrams of Gaunt in i. 3. 221-46.

Bolingbroke, who is throughout very sparing of rhymes (except of the purely formal first type), points with it his bitter comment (i. 3. 214-5) and his raillery (v. 3. 79-82).

(iii) *Lyric.*—The habitual use of rhymed verse for the *lyric*, made it natural to use it also in passages approaching the lyric in character, *i.e.* expressing *emotion*; especially *plaintive* and elegiac emotion.

Thus, it marks the parting of Richard and the Queen (v. 1. 86 f.), the last words of Gaunt (ii. 1. 135-9), and of Richard (v. 5. 109-12); Richard's 'sweet way to despair', iii. 2. 209-19; iv. 214-21; Mowbray's grief, i. 3. 175 (but not his long speech, i. 3. 154-173); Carlisle's lament (iv. 1. 322-3); Exton's penitence (v. 5. 112 f.); and Bolingbroke's (v. 6. 30-52). In the end of iii. 4 it marks the change from *narrative* to *lamentation* ("*Queen.* Come, ladies, go", &c., iii. 4. 96 f.). In the Duchess' appeal (v. 3. 92 f.) it probably marks the plaintive rather than energetic passion of an old woman. Shakespeare clearly did not mean the pleading of the 'shrill-voiced suppliant' to be very pathetic.

On the other hand, rhyme is not used (except of the first type), as a rule, in passages of

(1) *Active movement* or business-like discussion.

It is thus rare throughout the second act, and in the part of Bolingbroke in general. Its use in v. 6. 6 is anomalous, and perhaps marks the close of the play.

(2) *Narrative*: *e.g.* York's account of the entry into London (v. 2); the dialogue of the gardeners (iii. 4).

(3) *Energetic and eloquent passion*: *e.g.* the dying speech of Gaunt, and in the more vigorous outbursts of Richard.