

Repetition and  
Parallelism  
In English Verse

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# REPETITION AND PARALLELISM IN ENGLISH VERSE

A STUDY IN THE TECHNIQUE OF POETRY

BY

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“For man is but his mind, and as his mind is tempered and qualified, so are his speeches and language at large; and his inward conceits be the metal of his mind, and his manner of utterance the very warp and woof of his conceits, more plain or busy and intricate or otherwise affected after the rate.”

—PUTTENHAM, ON STYLE.

# REPETITION AND PARALLELISM IN ENGLISH VERSE.

## CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION ; NATURE AND AGENCIES OF REPETITION  
AND PARALLELISM ; ILLUSTRATIONS.

THIS little treatise is the fruit of a conviction that the current works on English metre, even the most exhaustive of them, do not adequately set forth some of the most important elements that enter into the subject of English verse. If the reader has had frequent occasion to subject some favorite poem, long stored in the memory, to the traditional metrical analysis, however rigid, he has doubtless more than once been convinced that the structural peculiarities most intimately characterizing the given poem are just those that the analysis has left untouched. Has he not in many cases felt that even the lines cited in works on metre to illustrate some principle of verse owe their *distinctive* harmony or rhythm to devices wholly different from those that the writer may be emphasizing?

Prose has been more fortunate in this respect than poetry, for the principles of prose style have been investigated and formulated with a detail and comprehensiveness not to be found in even the most exhaustive works on metre. It is true that Puttenham's *Arte of English Poesie* (1589) antedates by more than two centuries any investigation of prose comparable with it in scope ; but the study of prose, really beginning with

Drake's *Essays* (vol. ii., 1805) and ending with the recent contributions of Renton, Earle, and Minto, has more than made amends for a tardy start. Do we not know the stylistic peculiarities of our great prose writers better than we know those of our great poets? Do not even our school rhetorics teach us to discriminate the style of Macaulay from that of Ruskin, or Carlyle, or Addison, or De Quincey, better than works on poetics teach us to discriminate the style of Longfellow from that of Tennyson, or Swinburne, or Whittier, or Bryant?

It seems to be assumed, tacitly at least, that the style of a poet is not so characteristically individual as the style of a prose writer, that conformity to the laws of metre and rhythm has a levelling tendency, and that to estimate aright the formal\* peculiarities of a poet's style one has but to classify and tabulate the feet employed, to see how many verses occur in each stanza, and to observe by what *bindemittel* at the end the lines or stanzas are united. Scansion, however, even in its most comprehensive sense, does hardly more for poetry than parsing does for prose; the laws of prosody being to the poet what the laws of grammar are to the prose writer.

This is recognized in the study of prose; hence, where grammar ends, rhetoric begins. The one insists that the writer shall use a subject and predicate in each sentence; the other offers him the option of making this sentence long or short, prominent or subordinate, periodic or loose, affirmative or interrogative, balanced or not, as the writer pleases. So, too, the poet must use feet of some sort in his verses, and verses of some sort in his stanzas; but there are various devices of construction belonging to the domain of metre and rhythm that do not fall within any of the categories mentioned. These devices may be said to constitute the rhetoric of poetry, the

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\* I am dealing throughout with formal effects, with varieties of versification (*la poétique*) rather than of poetry (*la poésie*).



employment of them being entirely at the option of the poet. Yet, like the periodic sentence in prose, they are found in all periods of English poetry, and are used by some poets with a frequency and an effect that justify the critic in styling them characteristic.

Our rhetorics, in other words, have been constructed from a study of prose, whereas the devices permissible to poetry have been almost wholly overlooked.\*

It is my purpose in the following pages to direct attention to two structural peculiarities, occurring chiefly in lyric poetry, that seem to me to be deserving of much more generous recognition than has hitherto been accorded them. The rhetorics, it is true, usually devote several paragraphs to repetition and parallelism, the latter being treated under the head of the balanced sentence, but it is to be observed that the functions of repetition and parallelism are widely different in prose and verse.

In prose, a word or group of words is repeated for emphasis; whereas in verse, repetition is chiefly employed not for emphasis (compare the use of the refrain), but for melody or rhythm, for continuousness or sonorousness of effect, for unity of impression, for banding lines or stanzas, and for the more indefinable though not less important purposes of suggestiveness.

Parallelism is only another form of repetition, but in this

\* The following sentence, a model of penetration and comprehensiveness, shows that in France at least the study of poetic form has not been neglected: "Le vers de Baudelaire, qui accepte les principales améliorations ou réformes romantiques, telles que la rime riche, la mobilité facultative de la césure, le rejet, l'enjambement, l'emploi du mot propre ou technique, le rythme ferme et plein, la coulée d'un seul jet du grand alexandrin, tout le savant mécanisme de prosodie et de coupe dans la stance et la strophe, a cependant *son architectonique particulière, ses formules individuelles, sa structure reconnaissable, ses secrets de métier, son tour de main si l'on peut s'exprimer ainsi, et sa marque C. B. qu'on retrouve toujours appliquée sur une rime ou sur un hémistiché.*"—GAUTIER'S *Notice to Baudelaire's Les Fleurs du Mal* (1868).

case constructions are repeated, not words. Its uses, like those of repetition proper, may be illustrated more easily than stated. Here again, however, a note of caution must be sounded against confounding the widely different functions of parallelism in prose and verse. In prose, parallelism of construction, whether of a word or group of words, serves to contrast and distinguish. "Studious likeness of construction, aided frequently by antithesis, is a favorite means of giving special distinction to related thoughts, by setting them in sharp relief against each other. This is called Balanced Structure."\*

In poetry, however, balance, or parallelism, belongs properly to the domain of rhythm. It is usually found joined with repetition. The following stanza will illustrate :

- |     |  |     |
|-----|--|-----|
| (a) | " And <i>all</i> my days are trances,  | (a) |
| (a) | And <i>all</i> my nightly dreams       | (b) |
| (b) | Are <i>where</i> thy dark eye glances, | (a) |
| (b) | And <i>where</i> thy footstep gleams,— | (b) |
| (c) | In <i>what</i> ethereal dances,        | (a) |
| (c) | By <i>what</i> eternal streams."       | (b) |

POE, *To One in Paradise.*

One does not have to put his ear very close to these lines to perceive that their rich harmony is due to the perfect art with which Poe has here blended the effects of repetition and parallelism. Not content with banding his lines by alternate rimes at the end, he has woven them into a closer unity by a series of successive repetitions at the beginning. Denoting the sequence of rimes by the series *ababab*, we denote also the sequence of initial repetitions by the series *aabbcc*. The last two couplets (*bbcc*), if we may use the term of lines banded not by rime but by repetition, furnish examples of repetition passing almost insensibly into parallelism, the parallelism of the one being that of adverbial clauses introduced by "where," the parallelism of the other being that of prepositional phrases

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\* Genung, *Practical Elements of Rhetoric*, p. 164.

having in common the word "what."\* In the first couplet (*aa*), the word "days," unlike the words "dark eye" and "ethereal," is not exactly paralleled in the succeeding line; there is, of course, a correspondence between "days" and "nightly dreams," but the relationship is that of thought antithesis rather than of structural parallelism. The concluding couplet is intensely lyrical; the thought appears to pause, then circle backward to the idea conveyed in the closing part of the preceding line. All verbs, with the noisy activities that they express, are banished, and the emotion of the poet finds utterance more in vague suggestiveness and subtle music than in the presentation of distinct ideas. The same effects could hardly be produced without recourse to some form of repetition or parallelism.

In the two following stanzas, initial repetition is employed (1) to band successive rimed lines, and (2) to band successive unrimed lines:

"Sphere all your lights around, above;  
*Sleep, gentle* heavens, before the prow;  
*Sleep, gentle* winds, as he sleeps now,  
 My friend, the brother of my love."

TENNYSON, *In Memoriam*, ix. 4.

"*I hear* the noise about thy keel;  
*I hear* the bell struck in the night;  
*I see* the cabin-window bright;  
*I see* the sailor at the wheel." †

*Ib.*, x. 1.

\* The parallelism of a phrase may of course pass into the parallelism of a clause, and vice versa. Thus Poe originally wrote:

"To the beauty of fair Greece  
 And the grandeur of old Rome;"

but finally:

"To the glory that was Greece,  
 And the grandeur that was Rome."

† Cf. Platen's *Chor der Seraphim* (in *Christnacht*):

"*Vergesst* der Schmerzen jeden,  
*Vergesst* den tiefen Fall,  
*Und lebt mit uns* in Eden,  
*Und lebt mit uns* im All."

The three following stanzas from *The Ancient Mariner* illustrate the use of parallelism and repetition in alternate lines. In the first stanza, there is complete repetition of the first line in the third ; in the second stanza, there is complete parallelism, word for word, between the first line and the third ; while in the third stanza, the first and third lines show a blending of repetition and parallelism, " sea " and " deck " being the parallel words that are not repeated :

" *Water, water, everywhere,*  
And all the boards did shrink ;  
*Water, water, everywhere,*  
Nor any drop to drink."

Part iii. 9.

" *Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,*  
Yet she sailed softly too :  
*Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—*  
On me alone it blew."\*

Part vi. 13.

" *I looked upon the rotting sea,*  
And drew my eyes away ;  
*I looked upon the rotting deck,*  
And there the dead men lay."

Part iv. 5.

Successive repetition occurs more frequently in the older ballads and romances than in any other distinct variety of verse. If the first line of the stanza contains the direct words of a speaker—usually in the form of command, entreaty, address, or merely of unlooked-for announcement—the second line generally repeats in whole or in part the most emphatic of

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\* Cf. the song in Shakespeare, *T. N.*, ii. 4, beginning :

"*Come away, come away, death,*  
And in sad cypress let me be laid ;  
*Fly away, fly away, breath ;*  
I am slain by a fair cruel maid."

the words that have preceded. The consistency with which this form of repetition is carried out in the older poetry of the language may be said to constitute almost a formula for ballad structure. The following illustrations are taken from the *Percy Reliques* :

“ ‘ *Nowe Christ thee save*, good Kyng Adland,  
*Nowe Christ thee save* and see.’  
 Sayd, ‘ You be welcome, Kyng Estmere,  
 Right hartilye to mee.’ ”

*King Estmere*, 10.

“ ‘ *Tydinges, tydinges*, Kyng Estmere !’  
 ‘ What *tydinges* nowe, my boye ?’  
 ‘ O *tydinges* I can tell to you,  
 That will you sore annoye.’ ”

*Ib.*, 30.

“ Sayes, ‘ *Stable thy steede*, thou proud harpèr,  
 Go *stable* him in the stalle ;  
 Itt doth not beseeme a proud harpèr  
 To *stable* him in a kyngs halle.’ ”

*Ib.*, 50.

“ ‘ *Now stay thy harpe*, thou proud harpèr,  
*Now stay thy harpe*, I say ;  
 For an thou playest as thou beginnest,  
 Thou’lt till my bride awaye.’ ”

*Ib.*, 57.

“ ‘ *Good morrowe, good fellowe*,’ sayd Robin so fayre,  
 ‘ *Good morrowe, good fellowe*,’ quoth he.  
 ‘ Methinks by this bowe thou beares in thy hande,  
 A good archere thou sholdst bee.’ ”

*Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne*, 24.

“ ‘ *Leade on*, good fellowe,’ quoth Robin Hood,  
 ‘ *Leade on*, I doe bidd thee.’  
 ‘ Nay, by my faith, good fellowe,’ hee sayd,  
 ‘ My leader thou shalt bee.’ ”

*Ib.*, 30.

“ ‘ *Nowe nay, nowe nay, thou gentle knight,  
Nowe nay, this may not bee ;  
For aye sould I tint my maiden fame,  
If alone I should wend with thee.’* ”  
*The Child of Elle, 17.*

“ ‘ *Nowe loud thou lyeest, Sir John the knighte,  
Nowe thou doest lye of mee ;  
A knight mee got, and a ladye me bore,  
Soe never did none by thee.’* ”\*

“ ‘ *But light nowe downe, my Ladye faire,  
Light downe, and hold my steed,  
While I and this discourteous knighte  
Doe trye this arduous deede.’* ”  
*Ib. 32, 33.*

“ ‘ *O say not soe, thou holy friar ;  
I pray thee, say not soe :  
For since my true-love dyed for mee,  
'Tis meet my tears should flow.’* ”  
*The Friar of Orders Gray, 14.*

“ ‘ *O stay me not, thou holy friar ;  
O stay me not, I pray ;  
No drizzly rain that falls on me,  
Can wash my fault away.’* ”  
*Ib., 23.*

“ ‘ *But come thou hither, my little foot-page,  
Come thou hither unto mee ;*

\* Cf. Scott's—

“ ‘ *Thou liest, thou liest, thou little foot-page,  
Loud dost thou lie to me !  
For that knight is cold, and low laid in the mould,  
All under the Eildon-tree.’* ”

*The Eve of St. John, 27.*

To maister Norton thou must goe  
In all the haste that ever may bee.' \*"

*The Rising in the North*, 9.

" ' *A boone, a boone*, O Kinge Arthùre,  
I beg *a boone* of thee ;  
Avenge me of a carlish knighte,  
Who hath shent my love and mee.' "

*The Marriage of Sir Gawaine*, I. 5.

" ' *O call now downe* my faire ladye,  
*O call her downe* to mee ;  
And tell my ladye gay how sicke,  
And like to die I bee.' "

*Old Robin of Portingale*, 15.

" ' *Come riddle my riddle*, dear mother,' he sayd,  
' And *riddle* us both as one ;  
Whether I shall marrye with faire Ellinor,  
And let the browne girl alone ?' "

*Lord Thomas and Fair Ellinor*, 2.

" ' *What newes, what newes*, Lord Thomas,' she sayd,  
' *What newes* dost thou bring to mee ?'  
' I am come to bid thee to my wedding,  
And that is bad newes for thee.' "

*Ib.*, 6.

" ' *Despise her not*, fair Ellin,' he sayd,  
' *Despise her not* unto mee ;  
For better I love thy little finger  
Than all her whole bodèe.' "

*Ib.*, 14.

In the citations just given, the quick successions of the

\* Cf. Scott's—

" ' *Come thou hither*, my little foot-page,  
*Come hither* to my knee ;  
Though thou art young and tender of age,  
I think thou art true to me.' "

*The Eve of St. John*, 8.

repeated words, besides adding an element of quaintness, lend a characteristic swing and rapidity to the movement of the verse that could hardly otherwise be secured. In alternate repetition the effects are usually more subdued, the *turnings* being longer and slower. Compare Tennyson's lines, in which alternate repetition is united with perfect parallelism :

“ *O well for the fisherman's boy,*  
     That he shouts with his sister at play !  
*O well for the sailor lad,*  
     That he sings in his boat on the bay ! ”

In the following lines Chaucer has employed the same general structure but with more repetition and less parallelism :

- (a) “ *For out of olde felde*, as men seith,  
 (b) *Cometh al this newe* corn fro yeer to yeer ;  
 (a) *And out of olde bokes*, in good feith,  
 (b) *Cometh al this newe* science that men lere.”

*Parlement of Foules*, ll. 22-25.

Byron, especially in his earlier poems, made frequent use of repetition, both successive and alternate. The following five stanzas from his lines *To Emma*, each following the general scheme *abac*, exhibit a studious attempt to reënforce by repetition (with but slight admixture of parallelism) the rime of the first and third lines of each stanza :

“ *Since now* the hour is come at last  
     When you must quit your anxious lover ;  
*Since now* our dream of bliss is past,  
     One pang, my girl, and all is over.

. . . . .

“ *O'er fields* through which we used to run,  
     And spend the hours in childish play ;  
*O'er shades* where, when our race was done,  
     Reposing on my breast you lay ;

. . . . .



- “ *See still* the little painted bark,  
 In which I row'd you o'er the lake ;  
*See there*, high waving o'er the park,  
 The elm I clamber'd for your sake.
- “ *These times* are past—our joys are gone,  
 You leave me, leave this happy vale ;  
*These scenes* I must retrace alone :  
 Without thee, what will they avail ?
- “ *This is* the deepest of our woes,  
 For this these tears our cheeks bedew ;  
*This is* of love the final close,  
 O God ! the fondest, last adieu ! ” \*

Victor Hugo's lyric poems abound with examples of most subtle effects produced by varieties of repetition, and afford many illustrations of the skilful mingling of alternate with successive repetition. In the poem beginning “ *Puisque nos heures sont remplies*,” † the first seven stanzas observe alternate initial repetition, “ *Puisque* ” being the repetend employed. The first stanza will illustrate :

“ *Puisque* nos heures sont remplies  
 De trouble et de calamités ;  
*Puisque* les choses que tu lies  
 Se détachent de tous côtés.”

---

\* Cf. Shelley's *Lines* (1822) :

“ *When* the lamp is shattered,  
 The light in the dust lies dead ;  
*When* the cloud is scattered,  
 The rainbow's glory is shed ;  
*When* the lute is broken,  
 Sweet notes are remembered not ;  
*When* the lips have spoken,  
 Loved accents are soon forgot.”

† *Les Chants du Crépuscule*, xxix. (1835).

In the eighth stanza the order suddenly changes from alternate to successive correspondence, from *abac*, to *aabb* :

- (a) " Mets ton esprit hors de ce monde !  
 (a) Mets ton rêve ailleurs qu' ici-bas !  
 (b) Ta perle n'est pas dans notre onde !  
 (b) Ton sentier n'est point sous nos pas !"

To appreciate fully the fine effect of this device, one must read the whole poem and compare it with other poems of similar structure. The first seven stanzas constitute, of course, a periodic sentence, but the strain that would otherwise be felt in holding a thought suspended through so many stanzas is lightened by the evenly terraced structure of the stanzas. In cases of this sort, repetition helps to band not only lines but whole stanzas. It thus performs, in part, the function not only of rime but of the refrain as well. Like the runners in Lucretius—

"Et, quasi cursores, vitai lampada tradunt,"—

such repetitions serve to pass the melody down and on, from the beginning of the poem to the end.

Repetition, moreover, has certain liberties not accorded to rime, for rime is usually banished to the end of the line or must recur at fixed sectional intervals within the line ; whereas repetition may reënforce the structure of a stanza at any point. It is to be observed, also, that the study of repetition in the works of any poet brings us much nearer to a right appreciation of his characteristic style than the study of his rimes, his line-lengths, or his poetic feet can ever do. For in repetition we trace the precise movement of the poet's thought, we gauge his pace ; and this cannot be shown with equal clearness in any other way.

In the following lines I am convinced that Schipper has failed to note the influence of parallelism in binding two stanzas together :

"I have had playmates, I have had companions,  
In my days of childhood, in my joyful schooldays,  
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

"I have been laughing, I have been carousing,  
Drinking late, sitting late, with my bosom cronies,  
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces."

LAMB, *The Old Familiar Faces*.

Schipper's comment upon these lines is that they illustrate how, even in purely unrimed verses, the repetition of a refrain at definite intervals may suffice to bind the stanzas together.\* The principle is true, but the lines cited show rather that poets who adopt such strophic structures fall, perhaps unconsciously, into the employment of some form of parallelism, so as to reënforce the weakened rhythm.

In the Middle English poem entitled *Wolcum Yol* † (Welcome Yule), initial repetition reënforces the refrain :

"*Wolcum* be thu, hevene kyng,  
*Wolcum*, born in on morwenyng,  
*Wolcum* for hom we xal syng,  
*Wolcum yol*.

"*Wolcum* be ye Stefne and Jon,  
*Wolcum* Innocentes everychon,  
*Wolcum* Thomas martyr on,  
*Wolcum yol*."

Compare also the following stanza among many similar ones from Victor Hugo's *Le Chasseur Noir*, the title being also the refrain :

"*Chasse* le daim, *chasse* la biche,  
Cours dans les bois, cours dans la friche,  
Voici le soir.  
*Chasse* le Czar, *chasse* l'Autriche,  
*O Chasseur Noir!*"

---

\* *Englische Metrik*, II. 464. The refrain is, of course, the line,  
"All, all are gone, the old familiar faces."

† Printed in Ritson, *Ancient Songs*, I. 140.

The four stanzas composing Lovelace's *To Althea from Prison* end each as follows :

" The birds that wanton in the aire  
*Know no such libertie,*"

" Fishes that tipple in the deepe  
*Know no such libertie,*"

" Th' enlargèd windes that curl the flood  
*Know no such libertie,*"

" Angels alone that soare above  
*Enjoy such libertie.*"

Here the parallel relative clauses aid the effect of the refrain.

In each of the two following stanzas Spenser has employed a curious system of interwoven parallelisms and repetitions. He bands the two stanzas by repeating "waste," "starve," and "dye:"

" Now doe I nightly *waste*, wanting my kindly reste,  
Now doe I daily *starve*, wanting my lively foode,  
Now doe I always *dye*, wanting my timely mirth.

" And if I *waste*, who will bewaile my heavy chance?  
And if I *starve*, who will recorde my cursed end?  
And if I *dye*, who will say, ' this was immerito ' ?"

*Iambicum Trimetrum* (written in a letter  
to Harvey, October 16, 1579 : last two stanzas).

Note also the perfect correspondences, word for word, between these stanzas from Suckling's *Aglaura* :

" Why so pale and wan, fond lover?  
Prithee why so pale?  
Will, when looking well can't move her,  
Looking ill prevail?  
Prithee why so pale?"

“ Why so dull and mute, young sinner ?  
 Prithee why so mute ?  
 Will, when speaking well can't win her,  
 Saying nothing do't ?  
 Prithee why so mute ? ”

It is evident that a structure so highly artificial as the foregoing must be used with caution, except in the lighter veins of verse. In the three following stanzas, banded by a similar though not so intricate system of correspondences, the mechanical movement of the verse suggests the ridiculous. It is to be feared that the pathos of the “ fayre ladye's ” situation is lost in the artificiality of the narrator's manner :

“ The Soldan strucke the knyghte a stroke  
 That made him reele asyde :  
 Then woe-begone was that fayre ladye,  
 And thrice she deeply sighde.

“ The Soldan strucke a second stroke,  
 And made the bloude to flowe :  
 All pale and wan was that ladye fayre,  
 And thrice she wept for woe.

“ The Soldan strucke a third fell stroke,  
 Which brought the knyghte on his knee:  
 Sad sorrow pierced that ladyes heart,  
 And she shriekt loud shriekings three.”

*Sir Cauline (Percy Reliques).*

The danger of excessive repetition has never been more artfully shown than in the two following stanzas, taken from an anonymous parody of Ronsard's style. It occurs in *Tarlton's News out of Purgatory* (1590), and is headed, “ *Ronsard's Description of his Mistris,* ” etc. :

“ Downe I sat,  
 I sat downe,  
 Where Flora had bestowed her graces :

Greene it was,  
 It was greene,  
     Far passing other places :  
     For art and nature did combine  
     With sights to witch the gasers eyne.

“There I sat,  
 I sat there,  
     Viewing of this pride of places :  
 Straight I saw,  
 I saw straight,  
     The sweetest fair of all faces :  
     Such a face as did containe  
     Heavens shine in every veine.”\*

It is doubtless to Ronsard's influence that Lodge † owes such measures as,

“Phœbe sat,  
 Sweet she sat,  
     Sweet sat Phœbe when I saw her,” etc.

“Phœbe sat,  
 By a fount,  
     Sitting by a fount I spied her,” etc.

MONTANUS'S *Sonnet*, in *Rosalynd*.

\* There is evidently some connection between this parody and the *Madrigal*, first printed in *England's Helicon*, and attributed to Greene. The first stanza of the *Madrigal* is as follows :

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

Has this similarity ever been noted ?

† “Lodge's lyrical measures have frequently a flavor of Ronsard. He does not adopt the metres invented by Ronsard, but his own inventions seem to have been inspired by Ronsard's example.”

*Poems chiefly Lyrical from Romances and Prose Tracts of the Elizabethan Age.* Ed. by A. H. Bullen, 1890. (Intro.)

Shakespeare's parody of repetition is familiar: Pyramus is thus made to apostrophize night and the wall:

“ O grim-look'd *night!* O *night* with hue so black!  
 O *night*, which ever art when day is not!  
 O *night*, O *night!* alack, alack, alack,  
 I fear my Thisbe's promise is forgot!—  
 And thou, O *wall*, O sweet, O lovely *wall*,  
 That stand'st between her father's ground and mine!  
 Thou *wall*, O *wall*, O sweet and lovely *wall*,  
 Show me thy chink, to blink through with mine eyne!” \*

*M. N. D.*, v. 1, 171-178.

Schipper cites the following peculiar use of repetition as the only English example known to him. † The lines are taken from Furnivall's *Early English Poems and Lives of Saints*, and called by him a *Rhyme-beginning Fragment*. Furnivall dates them before the year 1300. Their peculiarity consists in making the last word of a preceding line serve as the first word of the line immediately following: ‡

“ Loue hauip me brozt in lipir *pozt*,  
*pozt* ic ab to *blinne*;  
*Blinne* to pench hit is for *nozt*,  
*Nozt* is loue of *sinne*.

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\* This passage satirizes repetition in the service of rhetoric, not in the service of metre. Cf. also *L.L.L.*, iv. 2, 57-63.

† *Englische Metrik*, I. 317.

‡ The last three lines of the following stanza exemplify the same device:

“ Hath your God no rod,  
 That ye tread so light?  
 Man on us as *God*,  
*God* as man hath *trod*,—  
*Trod* us down with might.”

SWINBURNE, *Christmas Antiphones*.

“*Sinne* me hauip in care *ibrozt*,  
*Brozt* in mochil unwinne:  
*Winne* to weld ic had *ipost*;  
*Post* is pat ic am *inne*.

“*In me* is care, how i ssal *fare*,  
*Fare* ic wol and *funde*;  
*Funde* [Furn : fare] ic wiþouten *are*,  
*Ar* i be brozt to grunde.”

As rare as this structure is, Schipper has failed to observe that it occurs again even in Elizabethan times, and with an easy grace of movement that would hardly have been deemed possible. The following lines are found in *England's Helicon* and are the contribution of John Wootton : \*

“ Her eyes like shining lamps in midst of *night*,  
*Night* dark and dead :  
 Or as the stars that give the seamen *light*,  
*Light* for to lead  
 Their wandering ships.

“ Amidst her cheeks the rose and *lily* strive,  
*Lily* snow-white :  
 When their contend doth make their *colour* thrive,  
*Colour* too bright  
 For shepherd's eyes.

“ Her lips like *scarlet* of the finest dye,  
*Scarlet* blood-red :  
 Teeth white as snow, which on the *hills* doth lie,  
*Hills* overspread  
 By Winter's force.

“ Her skin as soft as is the finest *silk*,  
*Silk* soft and fine :  
 Of colour like unto the whitest *milk*,  
*Milk* of the kine  
 Of Daphne's herd.

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\* See Minto, *Characteristics of English Poets*, p. 184.



“ As swift of foot as is the pretty *roe*,  
*Roe* swift of pace :  
 When yelping *hounds* pursue her to and fro,  
*Hounds* fierce in chase  
 To reave her life.”

The two structures are not, it is true, the same throughout, but the device used as well as the distinctive effect is the same in each poem. Many stanzas of the *Braes of Yarrow* (Percy *Reliques*, Book VI.) employ practically the same device, not throughout any one stanza, but at regular intervals in the different stanzas, thus producing effects more allied to the refrain.

The French call this device “*la rime fraternisée*.” The Abbé Massieu,\* quoting deterrent examples of the metrical puerilities that characterized the tribe of versifiers under Charles VIII. and Louis XII., cites the following illustration of “*la rime fraternisée* :”

“ Dieu Gard ma maitresse et regente,  
*Gente* de corps et de façon :  
 Son cœur tient le mien dans sa tente,  
 Tant et plus en mortel frisson.”

There are certain conceptions that can hardly be expressed without recourse to some form of repetition. This is especially true of the qualities of sameness, unchangeableness, continuousness.† In the following lines Tennyson has thus almost photographed the placidity of sleep :

“ *Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,*  
*Father will come to thee soon;*

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\* See *Studies in Early French Poetry*. By Walter Besant. London and Cambridge, 1868. (Introduction.)

† Could monotony be better expressed than in these lines?—

“ So many hours must I tend my flock ;  
 So many hours must I take my rest ;  
 So many hours must I contemplate.”

*Henry VI.*, ii. 5, 31-33.

*Rest, rest, on mother's breast,  
 Father will come to thee soon ;  
 Father will come to his babe in the nest,  
 Silver sails all out of the west  
 Under the silver moon :  
 Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep."*  
*The Princess, iii.*

Compare also the following :

" Dreams of the summer night !  
 Tell her, her lover keeps  
 Watch ! while in slumbers light  
 She *sleeps* !  
 My lady *sleeps* !  
*Sleeps* ! "

LONGFELLOW, *Serenade* (in *The Spanish Student*, i. 3).

" *Sleep*, little babe, on my knee,  
*Sleep*, for the midnight is chill,  
 And the moon has died out in the tree,  
 And the great human world goeth ill.  
*Sleep*, for the wicked agree :  
*Sleep*, let them do as they will.  
*Sleep.*"

MRS. BROWNING, *Void in Law*.

" Ther thise goddes laye and *slepe*,  
 Morpheus, and Eclympasteyre,  
 That was the god of *slepes* heyre,  
 That *slepe* and did non other werk."

CHAUCER, *The Book of the Duchesse*, 166-169.

" Besyde a folk men clepe Cimerie,  
 Ther *slepeth* ay this god unmerie  
 With his *slepy* thousand sones  
 That alway for to *slepe* her wone is."\*

CHAUCER, *The Hous of Fame*, Book I., 73-76.

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\* Hood's *The Death-Bed* and Swinburne's *The Garden of Proserpine* are longer examples of similar effects produced largely by repetition.

The dreamy, crooning repetition of the word "sleep" in the foregoing citations seems to mimic the quiet that it would express.

The repetition of "calm" in the following lines not only expresses what could not otherwise be expressed, but lends a soothing effect even to "despair:"

- " *Calm* is the morn without a sound,  
*Calm* as to suit a *calmer* grief,  
 And only thro' the faded leaf  
 The chestnut pattering to the ground :
- " *Calm* and deep peace on this high wold,  
 And on these dews that drench the furze,  
 And all the silvery gossamers  
 That twinkle into green and gold :
- " *Calm* and still light on yon great plain  
 That sweeps with all its autumn bowers,  
 And crowded farms and lessening towers,  
 To mingle with the bounding main :
- " *Calm* and deep peace in this wide air,  
 These leaves that redden to the fall ;  
 And in my heart, if *calm* at all,  
 If any *calm*, a *calm* despair :
- " *Calm* on the seas, and silver sleep,  
 And waves that sway themselves in rest,  
 And dead *calm* in that noble breast  
 Which heaves but with the heaving deep."

*In Memoriam*, xi.

*In Memoriam* furnishes many illustrations of the more shy and subtle agencies of repetition. In the following stanzas from the Invocation, the futility of man's unaided efforts to solve the problems of existence and of moral responsibility is indicated by language which, in its enforced repetitions, hints, if it does not purposely share, an equal futility :

“ Thine are these orbs of light and shade ;  
*Thou madest* Life in man and brute ;  
*Thou madest* Death ; and lo, thy foot  
 Is on the skull which *thou hast made*.

“ Thou wilt not leave us in the dust :  
*Thou madest* man, he knows not why,  
 He thinks he was not *made* to die ;  
 And *thou hast made* him : thou art just.

“ Thou seemest human and divine,  
 The highest, holiest manhood, thou :  
*Our wills are ours*, we know not how ;  
*Our wills are ours*, to make them thine.”

The same inability to understand our destiny, touched now with petulant sorrow, is again finely suggested by repetition :

\* “ So runs my dream : but what am I ?  
*An infant crying* in the night :  
*An infant crying* for the light :  
 And with no language but a *cry*.”

*Ib.*, LIV. v.

Coleridge employs it with unsurpassed skill to suggest the weird and uncanny :

“ *Is the night chilly and dark ?*  
*The night is chilly but not dark.*  
 . . . . .  
*The night is chill*, the cloud is gray :  
 . . . . .  
*The night is chill* ; the forest bare ;  
 Is it the *wind* that moaneth bleak ?  
*There is not wind enough* in the air  
 To move away the ringlet curl  
 From the lovely lady's cheek—

" *There is not wind enough* to twirl  
 The one red leaf, the last of its clan,  
 That dances as oft as dance it can,  
 Hanging so light, and hanging so high,  
 On the topmost twig that looks up at the sky.

. . . . .

" Outside her kennel, *the mastiff old*  
 Lay fast asleep, in moonshine cold.  
*The mastiff old* did not awake,  
 Yet she an angry moan did make !  
 And *what can ail the mastiff bitch ?*  
 Never till now she uttered yell  
 Beneath the eye of Christabel.  
 Perhaps it is the owlet's scritch :  
 For *what can ail the mastiff bitch ?*" \*

*Christabel*, Part I.

Keats has utterly failed to catch the abrupt, terror-inspired movement that came so easily at Coleridge's beck :

" *O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,*  
 Alone and palely loitering ?  
 The sedge has wither'd from the lake,  
 And no birds sing.

" *O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,*  
 So haggard and so woe-begone ?  
 The squirrel's granary is full,  
 And the harvest's done."

*La Belle Dame sans Merci*.

Closely allied to the foregoing is the use of repetition to suggest the quaint and fantastic. "Quaintness," says Poe,† "within reasonable limits, is not only not to be regarded as an

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\* Professor Corson has some suggestive remarks on these lines in his admirable *Primer of English Verse*, pp. 19-20.

† *The Works of Edgar Allan Poe* (6 vols.). By Richard Henry Stoddard. New York (1884). Vol. v., p. 209.

affectation, but has its proper uses in aiding a fantastic effect." Poe illustrates by quoting from Miss Barrett's *Song of a Tree-Spirit*.\* The italics are his own :

"The divine impulsion cleaves  
 In dim movements to the leaves  
*Dropt and lifted—dropt and lifted—  
 In the sun-light greenly sifted—  
 In the sun-light and the moon-light  
 Greenly sifted through the trees.  
 Ever wave the Eden trees,  
 In the night-light and the noon-light,  
 With a ruffling of green branches  
 Shaded off to resonances  
 Never stirred by rain or breeze."*

"The thoughts here belong," says Poe, "to a high order of poetry, but could not have been wrought into effective expression without the aid of those repetitions—those unusual phrases—those *quaintnesses*, in a word, which it has been too long the fashion to censure indiscriminately under the one general head of 'affectation.'"

In his *Literati of New York*,† Poe cites this stanza from Hoyt's *Old* :

"*By the wayside, on a mossy stone,  
 Sat a hoary pilgrim sadly musing ;  
 Oft I marked him sitting there alone,  
 All the landscape like a page perusing ;  
 Poor unknown,  
 By the wayside, on a mossy stone."*

"The quaintness aimed at here," says Poe, "is, so far as a single stanza is concerned, to be defended as a legitimate effect, conferring high pleasure on a numerous and cultivated class of minds. Mr. Hoyt, however, in his continuous

\* From *A Drama of Exile* (1844). † Stoddard, *l. c.*, p. 470.

and uniform repetition of the first line in the last of each stanza of twenty-five, has by much exceeded the proper limits of the quaint and impinged upon the ludicrous."

That Poe is here defending his own practice is evident. It is this that lends a special significance to his criticisms, for these are the only passages in which Poe alludes to the device of repetition apart from the refrain, a device which, in his hands at least, became an art. But as Poe's employment of repetition for the purpose of introducing quaint and fantastic effects will be separately treated elsewhere, I shall here merely call attention to the fact that such repetitions have been in use in English poetry for more than six centuries. This has been strangely and persistently overlooked by the critics, and conclusions have been arrived at in the discussions of Poe's style wholly at variance with the facts. The two following selections from *The Owl and the Nightingale*, written before the year 1250, exhibit repetition used in precisely the manner commented upon as well as practised by Poe :

"Bet þušte þe drem þat he were  
Of harpe and pipe, þan he nere,  
Bet þušte þat he were i-shote  
Of harpe and pipe þan of þrote."

Ll. 21-24.

"And (zif) me schilde wiþ þe blete,  
Ne recche ich nozt of þine þrete;  
Çif ich me holde in mine hegge,  
Ne recche ich never what þu segge."\*

Ll. 57-60.

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\* In each case the last two lines seem to gather up and consummate what was tentatively put forward in the preceding lines.

## CHAPTER II.

## GREEK INFLUENCE : REPETITION IN THE ENGLISH ELEGY.

THE elegiac mood, in which the thought turns back so often upon itself, is best voiced by some form of repetition. It is seen in David's cry : " O my son Absalom ! my son, my son Absalom ! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son ! " Traces of the elegiac repetend are plainly discernible in the Old English lyric, informed, as it is, with gloom and regret ; but, like the Old English epic, the Old English elegy was checked in its growth, so that there is no organic connection between the old elegy and the new.

It is to the Alexandrian pastoral elegy, in which the repetend formed a characteristic feature of the movement and structure of the verse, that one must look for the real prototype of the great elegies of recent times. Tennyson's indebtedness to Bion, Moschus, and especially to Theocritus, has been touched upon by Mr. Stedman ;\* but the nature and frequent recurrence of the repetend, as employed by the " Sicilian tryad," may be seen in Mrs. Browning's translation of Bion's *Lament for Adonis* :

*" I mourn for Adonis—Adonis is dead !*

*Fair Adonis is dead, and the Loves are lamenting.*

Sleep, Cypris, no more on thy purple-strewed bed !

Arise, wretch, stoled in black,—beat thy breast unrelenting,  
And shriek to the worlds, ' Fair Adonis is dead.'

*I mourn for Adonis—the Loves are lamenting.*

He lies on the hills, in his beauty and death,—

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\* *Victorian Poets*, cap. vi.



The white tusk of a boar has transfixed his white thigh ;  
 Cytherea grows mad at his thin gasping breath,  
 While the black blood drips down on the pale ivory  
 And his eye-balls lie quenched with the weight of his brows. . . .

*I mourn for Adonis—the Loves are lamenting.*

Deep, deep in the thigh, is Adonis's wound ;  
 But a deeper, is Cypris's bosom presenting—  
 The youth lieth dead while his dogs howl around,  
 And the nymphs weep aloud from the mists of the hill,  
 And the poor Aphrodite, with tresses unbound,  
 All dishevelled, unsandalled, shrieks mournful and shrill  
 Through the dusk of the groves. . . .

*Ah, ah, Cytherea! the Loves are lamenting:*

She lost her fair spouse, and so lost her fair smile—  
 When he lived she was fair by the whole world's consenting,  
 Whose fairness is dead with him ! woe worth the while !  
 All the mountains above and the oaklands below  
 Murmur, ah, ah Adonis ! . . .

*Ah, ah, Cytherea! Adonis is dead!*

*Fair Adonis is dead—Echo answers, Adonis!*

Who weeps not for Cypris, when bowing her head,  
 She stares at the wound where it gapes and astonies ?  
 When, ah, ah !—she saw how the blood ran away  
 And empurpled the thigh ; and, with wild hands flung out,  
 Said with sobs, 'Stay Adonis ! unhappy one stay !' . . .

*Ah, ah, Cytherea! Adonis is dead.*

She wept tear after tear, with the blood which was shed ;  
 And both turned into flowers for the earth's garden-close ;  
 Her tears, to the wind-flower,—his blood, to the rose.

*I mourn for Adonis—Adonis is dead.*

Weep no more in the woods, Cytherea, thy lover !  
 So, well ; make a place for his corse in thy bed,  
 With the purples thou sleepest in, under and over. . . .

Love him still, poor Adonis ! cast on him together  
 The crowns and the flowers ! since he died from the place,  
 Why let all die with him—let the blossoms go wither ;  
 Rain myrtles and olive-buds down on his face :  
 Rain the myrrh down, let all that is best fall a-pining,  
 For the myrrh of his life from thy keeping is swept !—  
 Pale he lay, thine Adonis, in purples reclining,—  
 The Loves raised their voices around him and wept. . . .

*Cytherea herself, now, the Loves are lamenting.*

Each torch at the door Hymenæus blew out ;  
 And the marriage-wreath dropping its leaves as repenting,  
 No more ‘ Hymen, Hymen,’ is chanted about,  
 But the *ai ai* instead—‘ ai alas ’ is begun  
 For Adonis, and then follows ‘ ai Hymenæus ’ !  
 The Graces are weeping for Cinyris’ son,  
 Sobbing low, each to each, ‘ His fair eyes cannot see us ’ !—  
 Their wail strikes more shrill than the sadder Dione’s ;  
*The Fates mourn aloud for Adonis, Adonis.*” . . .

To Tennyson, says Mr. Stedman,\* “ may be adjudged the credit of being the first to catch the manner of the classical idyls and reproduce it in modern use and being. Before his time, Milton and Shelley were the only poets who measurably succeeded in this attempt, and neither of them repeated it after a single trial. Other reproductions of the Greek idyllic form have been by a kind of filtration through the Latin medium ; and often, by a third remove, after a redistillation of the French product.” Of Matthew Arnold’s great elegy, *Thyrsis*,<sup>v</sup> Mr. Stedman remarks : † “ It is another, and one of the best, of the successful English imitations of Bion and Moschus ; among which *Lycidas* is the most famous, though some ques-

\* *Victorian Poets*, p. 232.

† *Ib.*, pp. 98–99. William Watson, in his sonnet *To Lord Tennyson*, pays tribute to his “ Doric grace.”

tion whether Swinburne, in his *Ave atque Vale*, has not surpassed them all. Before the appearance of the last-named elegy, I wrote of *Thyrsis* that it was noticeable for exhibiting the precise amount of aid which classicism can render to the modern poet. As a threnode, nothing comparable to it had then appeared since the *Adonais* of Shelley."

The expressions, "Sicilian Muse" and "Doric lay," used by Milton in *Lycidas*, would of themselves prove Sicilian influence. The use of the repetend in the opening lines is, moreover, the same :

" Yet once more, O ye Laurels, and once more,  
 Ye Myrtles brown, with Ivy never sere,  
 I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude,  
 And with forc'd fingers rude  
 Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.\*  
 Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear  
 Compels me to disturb your season due ;  
*For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,*  
*Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer.*  
*Who would not sing for Lycidas ?"*

It is not unlikely that the reproduction of the Greek idyllic form even in *Lycidas* has been, partly at least, "by a kind of filtration," not through a Latin but through an English medium. On the "*Elegy* written by Brysket (though generally ascribed to Spenser †) on the death of Sir Philip Sidney," Guest ‡ comments as follows : "It has very little poetical merit, but deserves attention, as having undoubtedly been in Milton's eye when he wrote his *Lycidas*. From it Milton borrowed his irregular rimes, and that strange mixture of Christianity and heathenism, which shocked the feelings and roused

\* Mr. Swinburne considers these lines (the first five of *Lycidas*) the most musical ever written.

† And printed in the Globe edition of Spenser, p. 563.

‡ *History of English Rhythms* (edited by Skeat), London, 1882, pp. 265-266.

the indignation of Johnson. It may be questioned, if the peculiarity in the metre can fairly be considered a blemish. Like endings, recurring at uncertain distances, impart a wildness and an appearance of negligence to the verse, which suits well with the character of elegy."

The elegy in question is entitled *The Mourning Muse of Thestylis*, and is itself a plain imitation of Sicilian models :

"Come forth, ye Nymphs ! come forth, forsake your wat'ry bowers,  
 Forsake your mossy caves, and help me to lament ;  
 Help me to tune my doleful notes to gurgling sound  
 Of Liffie's tumbling streams, come let salt tears of ours,  
 Mix with his waters fresh, O come, let one consent  
 Joyn us to mourn with wailful plaints the deadly wound  
 Which fatal clap hath made, decreed by higher powers  
 The drery day, in which they have from us yrent  
 The noblest plant that might from east to west be found,  
 Mourn, mourn great Philip's fall ! mourn we his woeful end,  
 Whom spiteful death hath pluckt untimely from the tree,  
 Whiles yet his years in flowre did promise worthy fruit."\*

Spenser has clearly caught the Sicilian strain in the following dedicatory stanza prefixed to *Astrophel*, his elegy upon Sir Philip Sidney :

"To you [Shepheards] alone I sing this mournfull verse,  
 The mournfulst verse that ever man heard tell :  
 To you, whose softened hearts it may empierse  
 With dolours dart for death of Astrophel.  
 To you I sing and to none other wight,  
 For well I wot my rymes bene rudely dight."

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\* It is nearer the close of the poem that the resemblance in *conception* to *Lycidas* is most clearly shown, a resemblance too close to be accidental. Of course Milton has not plagiarized from, but rather honored, Brysket. Cf. also Ogle's interesting article on the *Origin of Milton's Lycidas* (Classical Journal, v. 29, p. 356 f., 1824).

Compare also the opening stanza of *Adonais* :

"*I weep for Adonais—he is dead !*  
*Oh, weep for Adonais !* though our tears  
 Thaw not the frost which binds so dear a head !  
 And thou, sad Hour, selected from all years  
 To mourn our loss, rouse thy obscure compeers,  
 And teach them thine own sorrow ; say : With me  
 Died Adonais ; till the Future dares  
 Forget the Past, his fate and fame shall be  
 An echo and a light unto eternity !" \*

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\* Professor Jebb, *Primer of Greek Literature* (p. 142), says : "Bion, a native of Ionia, was another pastoral poet, best known to us by his *Lament for Adonis*, which Shelley has used in his *Adonais*, and which Mrs. Browning has translated." The *Adonais* contains also many unmistakable allusions to the *Lament for Bion*, which forms the third of the nine Idyls written by Moschus. Dr. Furnivall suggests that "Adonais is Shelley's variant of Adonias, the women's yearly mourning for Adonis." Cf. the *Adoniazusa* of Theocritus.

## CHAPTER III.

FINNISH INFLUENCE : REPETITION IN "HIAWATHA" AND  
OTHER FINNISH IMITATIONS.

NO sketch of the influence of repetition in English verse would be complete without some allusion to another foreign source, the Finnish epic, *Kalevala*, as imitated chiefly in Longfellow's *Hiawatha*, the latter appearing in 1855. The *Kalevala* employs both repetition and alliteration. Longfellow dispensed with alliteration, but preserved the repetitions and unrimed trochaics of the original.

In the Finnish collection of ballads, called the *Kanteletar*, there is, in addition to repetition and alliteration, a prevailing note of tender melancholy, which also seems reflected at times in *Hiawatha* : \*

"Then his face with black he painted,  
With his robe his head he covered,  
In his wigwam sat lamenting,  
Seven long weeks he sat lamenting,  
Uttering still this moan of sorrow :—  
'He is dead, the sweet musician !  
He the sweetest of all singers !  
He has gone from us forever,  
He has moved a little nearer  
To the Master of all music,  
To the Master of all singing !  
O my brother, Chibiabos !'  
And the melancholy fir-trees  
Waved their dark green fans above him,

---

\* Repetition forms so constituent a part of the structure of these Finnish imitations that I have deemed the use of italics unnecessary.

Waved their purple cones above him,  
Sighing with him to console him,  
Mingling with his lamentation  
Their complaining, their lamenting."

Canto xv.

To what extent Longfellow was indebted to the Finns may be seen from the following lines taken from William Howitt's translation of the *Kalevala* (1852). He, too, makes no attempt to preserve alliteration, and, like Longfellow, makes almost no use of enjambement :

"And there lives not such a hero,  
Not a man so firm of purpose,  
Not a man, much less a woman,  
By his tears who is unmoved.  
Weep the young and weep the aged ;  
Weep the middle-aged not less so ;  
Weep the men who are unmarried,  
Weep the married men as fully ;  
Weep the bachelors and maidens ;  
Weeps the girl, half-child, half-woman,  
When is heard that moving sound.  
So his tears drop in the waters,  
Tears of ancient Wäinämöinen ;  
To the blue sea they flow onward,  
Onward from the wild strand flowing ;  
Deep beneath the crystal waters,  
Spreading o'er the sandy bottom,  
Here they wondrously are changèd—  
Changèd into precious jewels,  
To adorn fair queenly bosoms,  
And to gladden loftiest minds."

Oliver Wendell Holmes would explain the "fatal facility" of *Hiawatha* on physiological grounds : "The recital of each line uses up the air of one natural expiration, so that we read, as we naturally do, eighteen or twenty lines in a minute without disturbing the normal system of breathing, which is also

eighteen or twenty breaths to the minute." This explanation, however, would apply equally to all octosyllabic verse, whether employing repetition or not. A better explanation would be that it is easier to repeat words and constructions than to employ new ones. Compare the opening lines :

"Should you ask me, whence these stories ?

Whence these legends and traditions,

With the odors of the forest,

With the dew and damp of meadows,

With the curling smoke of wigwams,

With the rushing of great rivers,

With their frequent repetitions,

And their wild reverberations,

As of thunder in the mountains ?

I should answer, I should tell you," etc.

Professor Robertson well says\* that if the construction of *Evangeline* was a courageous effort, "the experiment of *Hiawatha* was actually daring." Yet its success was established from the very outset. The belligerent critics, however, felt sure that there must have been plagiarism from some source, they knew not where. Longfellow himself at no time made any secret as to the source of his verse. It remained, however, for his German friend and former companion, Ferdinand Freiligrath, to settle the matter among the critics. Writing to Longfellow from London, December 7, 1855, Freiligrath says: † "Of course William Howitt is right ; and your trochaic metre is taken from the Finns, not from the Spaniards. . . . The characteristic feature, which shows that you have fetched the metre from the Finns, is the *parallelism* adopted so skilfully and so gracefully in *Hiawatha*. I wonder that just this decisive circumstance is overlooked by all the combatants. It settles the question at once."

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\* *Life of Longfellow*. London, 1887. p. 140.

† See *Life of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*. Edited by Samuel Longfellow. (3 vols.) Boston, 1893. Vol. ii., p. 298.



And Longfellow quietly notes\* in his *Journal*, January 11, 1856: "A letter from Freiligrath, and a short article † by him on the metre of *Hiawatha*, which is making some discussion in the English papers. He puts the matter right at once. But he does not seem aware that the *parallelism*, or *repetition*, is as much the characteristic of Indian as of Finnish song."

Goethe had long before essayed a Finnish imitation. His *Finnisches Lied* (1810) preserves throughout its three stanzas the parallelism of clauses, but makes no attempt at repetition proper or alliteration:

" Käm' der liebe Wohlbekannte,  
 Völlig so wie er geschieden,  
 Kuss erkläng' an seinen Lippen,  
 Hätt' auch Wolfsblut sie gerötet ;  
 Ihm den Handschlag gäb' ich, wären  
 Seine Fingerspitzen Schlangen."

Goethe was followed by Platen, who in his mastery of the various styles of foreign verse and perhaps in his sense of harmony was hardly inferior to Goethe himself. The following lines taken from the close of his *Wäinämöinen's Harfe* (1833), though made from a Swedish translation of the Finnish, are full of melody:

" Und dem Wäinämöinen selbst  
 Flossen Thränen aus den Augen,  
 Dicker noch als Heidelbeeren,  
 Grösser noch als Schnepfeneier,  
 Nieder auf den breiten Busen,  
 Von dem Busen auf die Kniee,  
 Von den Knieen auf die Füße :  
 So durchnässten Wasserperlen  
 Fünf von seinen Wollenmänteln,  
 Acht von seinen Zwillichröcken."

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\* *Life*, edited by S. Longfellow, vol. ii., p. 303.

† The article alluded to is found in the *Athenæum* (London), No. 1470, December 29, 1855. It is but a column in length, and is well summed up in Freiligrath's letter to Longfellow.

As Longfellow continued and consummated the work of transmission begun by Goethe and Platen, so Charles Baudelaire continued the work of Longfellow. In his *Le Calumet de Paix, imité de Longfellow*\* (1857), Baudelaire has employed rime and division into stanzas, but he has preserved the tone of *Hiawatha* and infused into his verse a rich music surpassing that of his original. No stanza is superior to the fourth :

“Et lentement montait la divine fumée  
 Dans l'air doux du matin, onduleuse, embaumée.  
 Et d'abord ce ne fut qu'un sillon ténébreux ;  
 Puis la vapeur se fit plus bleue et plus épaisse,  
 Puis blanchit ; et montant, et grossissant sans cesse,  
 Elle alla se briser au dur plafond des cieux.”

Swinburne's Finnish venture, *The Bloody Son* (1866), is not a happy one. Like Tennyson, Swinburne has an ear too delicately attuned to the finer harmonies of English verse to give him mastery over the ruder keys of dialect :

“‘O where have ye been the morn sae late,  
 My merry son, come tell me hither ?  
 O where have ye been the morn sae late ?  
 And I wot I hae but anither.’  
 • By the water-gate, by the water-gate,  
 O dear mither.’

“‘And whatten kin' o' wark had ye there to make,  
 My merry son, come tell me hither ?  
 And whatten kin' o' wark had ye there to make ?  
 And I wot I hae but anither.’  
 ‘I watered my steeds with water frae the lake,  
 O dear mither.’”

It cannot be said that these Finnish imitations have had much influence on later poetry. The discussions evoked by *Hiawatha* called public attention for a while to the latent

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\* *Les Fleurs du Mal*, lxxxv., C. Lévy, editeur. Paris, 1892.

possibilities of parallelism and repetition, but these soon died down, leaving no appreciable effects in subsequent verse. As Swinburne's *Ave atque Vale* (1867) in memory of Charles Baudelaire marks the close of the great English elegies produced under the influence of the Sicilian pastoral poets, so Longfellow's *Hiawatha* (1855) may be said to mark both beginning and close of successful imitation in English verse of Finnish models.

The foregoing examples of repetition and parallelism have been given chiefly by way of survey and illustration ; but I shall now confine the study to the works of two modern poets, who in the art and consistency with which they have employed these devices, as well as in the brilliancy of the effects thus wrought, have no peers in the history of English literature. I refer to Edgar Allan Poe and Algernon Charles Swinburne.

## CHAPTER IV.

## REPETITION IN THE POEMS OF EDGAR ALLAN POE.

POE'S genius has never received the recognition in America that it has received abroad. His popularity in France, exceeding that of any other American poet, is due largely, of course, to the sympathetic criticism and loyalty of Charles Baudelaire ; but the eager reception accorded by the French to the weird romances of Hoffmann\* had already paved the way for Baudelaire's translations of Poe. Gautier, the friend and survivor of Baudelaire, declared Poe's genius too rare and ethereal to be understood by his Philistine countrymen. "He did not adore the almighty dollar exclusively ; he loved poetry for its own sake, and preferred beauty to utility : *hérésie énorme.*" †

It is not surprising that Swinburne is found among Poe's foreign admirers. Dividing American poets into two classes, "corn-crakes" and "mocking-birds"—the one characterized by harsh, the other by borrowed, notes—Swinburne affirms that the melody and originality of Poe's verse save him from being included in either division. ‡

Joseph Skipsey thinks that Poe was "the finest and most brilliant poetic genius that America has yet produced," that "in his very earliest literary efforts he had surpassed every other writer that America had produced," and that "in the specialty

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\* As to Hoffmann's popularity in France, see Scherer, *History of German Literature*, chap. xiii.

† *Notice to Baudelaire's Les Fleurs du Mal* (1868).

‡ *Under the Microscope* (1872).

of melody, he excels Collins, and indeed all others except some two or three of the very greatest poets in the English tongue."\*

Edmund Gosse, the last to voice English sentiment in regard to Poe, writes as follows to *The Critic* (New York), July 29, 1893 :

"The result of your ballot for 'The Best Ten American Books,' declared in your issue for June 3, 1893, contains one feature of great and grave public interest. It cannot, I think, be too strongly impressed on the notice of Americans of taste. It is a feature of omission. You give (on p. 357) a list of authors who received 'in all twenty votes or more.' These authors are thirty in number, and one of them received nearly seven hundred votes. But among these thirty does not occur the name of the most perfect, the most original, the most exquisite of the American poets. The name of Edgar Allan Poe does not occur.

"The omission is extraordinary and sinister. If I were an American, I should be inclined to call it disastrous. While every year sheds more lustre on the genius of Poe among the most weighty critical authorities of England, of France, of Germany, of Italy, in his own country prejudice is still so rampant that he fails to secure a paltry twenty votes, when Wallace (who on earth is, or was, Wallace?) secures two hundred and fifty-two, Mrs. Jackson fifty-seven, and Mitchell (who is, or was, Mitchell?) forty-two. You must look to your own house, but it makes one wonder what is the standard of American style."

The parenthetic queries do honor to Mr. Gosse's frankness, though they do not commend him as preëminently qualified to pass judgment on recent phases of American literature. It is to be regretted that foreign critics, while paying deserved tribute to Poe, should see fit, by way of intended antithesis, to

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\* *The Poetical Works of Edgar Allan Poe.* Edited by Joseph Skipsey. London, 1884. (*Prefatory notice.*)

See also *Introduction*, by Ernest Rhys, to *Tales and Essays of Edgar Poe.* London, 1889.

indulge in belittling comments upon American literature as a whole. Does not the real antithesis lie in the contrast between foreign appreciation of Poe and foreign ignorance of American literature in general? However this may be, it is certain that Poe's fame has suffered from the indiscriminate eulogy of friends almost as much as from the coarse slander of enemies.

The limited amount of verse left by Poe makes the study of repetition as employed by him comparatively easy. He could produce, however, without resort to his favorite devices, poetry of a type that proves his genius to have been independent of any one peculiarity of style. Mr. Woodberry \* speaks of *Israfel* as "the first pure song of the poet, the notes most liquid and clear and soaring of all he ever sang." "If I had any claim," says Mr. Stedman, † "to make up a 'Parnassus,' not perhaps of the most famous English lyrics, but of those which appeal strongly to my own poetic sense, and could select but one of Poe's, I confess that I should choose *Israfel*, for pure music, for exaltation, and for its original, satisfying quality of rhythmic art." But in *Israfel* there is hardly a suggestion of Poe's characteristic use of repetition. Nor can the use of repetition in *To One in Paradise*, *To Helen*, *The Conqueror Worm*, or *The Haunted Palace* be considered at all characteristic.

The poems in which repetition enters as a controlling element of the style and versification are *The Raven*, *Lenore*, *The Bells*, *Annabel Lee*, *Ulalume*, *To Helen*, ‡ *The City in the Sea*, *The Sleeper*, *Dream-Land*, *Eulalie*, and *For Annie*.

It should be premised that the repetition of a word or words constituting a refrain cannot justly be said to individualize Poe's style or the style of any other poet. Such repetitions have, indeed, been used by many poets far more extensively

\* *Edgar Allan Poe* (American Men of Letters Series). Boston, 1885. (p. 60.)

† *Poets of America*. Boston, 1890. (p. 248.)

‡ Poe unfortunately has two poems entitled *To Helen*. I allude here to the one written in blank verse, beginning, "I saw thee once."

than Poe has used them. It is not a simple but a compound repetend that Poe employs. He repeats not a mere word but a group of words, usually a whole clause. The repetition may be (1) complete, or (2) partial.

(1) The following selections exemplify the use of the unchanged repetend ; *i.e.*, complete repetition :

“ I saw thee once—once only—years ago :  
 I must not say how many—but not many.  
 It was a July midnight ; and from out  
 A full-orbed moon, that, like thine own soul, soaring,  
 Sought a precipitate pathway up through heaven,  
 There fell a silvery-silken veil of light,  
 With quietude, and sultriness, and slumber,  
 Upon the upturn'd faces of a thousand  
 Roses that grew in an enchanted garden,  
 Where no wind dared to stir, unless on tiptoe—  
*Fell on the upturn'd faces of these roses*  
 That gave out, in return for the love-light,  
 Their odorous souls in an ecstatic death—  
*Fell on the upturn'd faces of these roses*  
 That smiled and died in this parterre, enchanted  
 By thee, and by the poetry of thy presence.  
 Clad all in white, upon a violet bank  
 I saw thee half reclining ; while the moon  
*Fell on the upturn'd faces of the roses,*  
 And on thine own, upturn'd—alas, in sorrow !”

*To Helen.*

“ And I lie so composedly,  
*Now, in my bed*  
 (Knowing her love),  
*That you fancy me dead—*  
 And I rest so contentedly,  
*Now, in my bed*  
 (With her love at my breast),  
*That you fancy me dead.”*

*For Annie.*

The repetends here employed—"Fell on the upturn'd faces of these roses," "Now in my bed," "That you fancy me dead"—are not frequent with Poe. His usual manner is, while preserving the last word of each repeated line, to vary one or more of the preceding words.

(2) Partial repetition is, thus, the more frequent in Poe's verse. When the repetend is a complete line, the changes are internal, the last word being usually left intact. This produces what is called *perfect rime*, which, says Gummere,\* "is now entirely foreign to English verse." But it has not been observed that Poe skilfully disguises the effect of his perfect rimes by lessening the emphasis of the repeated rime-word. This he does by throwing a sudden and superior emphasis on the newly introduced word or words that serve to differentiate the two forms of the repetend. A single example will make this clear. The following lines, in which I italicize the words that by their superior emphasis call attention away from the perfect rimes, constitute the first stanza of *Ulalume*:

"The skies they were ashen and sober ;  
 The leaves they were crisped and sere—  
 The leaves they were *withering* and sere ; †  
 It was night in the lonesome October  
 Of my most immemorial year ;  
 It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,  
 In the misty mid-region of Weir,—  
 It was down by the *dank tarn* of Auber,  
 In the *ghoul-haunted woodland* of Weir."

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\* *Handbook of Poetics*. Boston, 1885. (p. 153.)

† Note how the distribution of emphasis in this and similar couplets containing perfect rime distinguishes them from other couplets containing perfect rime but unrelieved :

" 'Allas ! than am I overcome !  
 For that is doon is not to come !  
 I have more sorowe than Tantale.'  
 And whan I herde him telle this tale," etc.



Here the two forms of the first repetend are :

“ Thè leaves they were crisped and sere—  
The leaves they were *withering* and sere ;” \*

but the perfect rime (“ sere,” “ sere ”) is not felt to be a blemish, because the second “ sere ” receives much less emphasis than the first. Attention is centred more upon “ withering,” which, as a substitute for “ crisped,” not only assumes the most prominent place in the line, but serves to differentiate the two forms of the repetend.

The two forms of the second repetend are :

“ It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,  
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.  
It was down by the *dank tarn* of Auber ;”

of the third :

“ In the misty mid-region of Weir,—  
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.  
In the *ghoul-haunted woodland* of Weir,”

in which “ *woodland* ” receives the strongest emphasis as the poet’s chosen substitute for “ mid-region.”

Other examples of partial repetition are :

“ But our love it was stronger by far than the love  
Of those who were older than we,—  
Of many far wiser than we ;

And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side  
Of my darling—my darling—my life and my bride,  
In the sepulchre there by the sea,  
In her tomb by the sounding sea.”

*Annabel Lee.*

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\* Cf. the examples of “synonymous parallelism” given by Lowth in his *Lectures on Hebrew Poetry*.

“ So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating  
 ‘ ’Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door,—  
 Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door.  
 This it is, and nothing more.’ ”

*The Raven.*

“ Come, let the burial rite be read,—the funeral song be sung !—  
 An anthem for the queenliest dead that ever died so young,—  
 A dirge for her the doubly dead in that she died so young.”

*Lenore.*

“ In a clamorous appealing to the mercy of the fire,  
 In a mad expostulation with the deaf and frantic fire.”

*The Bells.*

“ I dwelt alone  
 In a world of moan,  
 And my soul was a stagnant tide,  
 Till the fair and gentle Eulalie became my blushing bride,—  
 Till the yellow-haired young Eulalie became my smiling bride.”

*Eulalie.*

“ She tenderly kissed me,  
 She fondly caressed,  
 And then I fell gently  
 To sleep on her breast,—  
 Deeply to sleep  
 From the heaven of her breast.

“ When the light was extinguished  
 She covered me warm,  
 And she prayed to the angels  
 To keep me from harm,—  
 To the queen of the angels  
 To shield me from harm.”

*For Annie.*

“ Far in the forest, dim and old,  
 For her may some tall vault unfold,—

Some vault that oft hath flung its black  
 And winged panels fluttering back,  
 Triumphant, o'er the crested palls  
 Of her grand family funerals,—  
 Some sepulchre, remote, alone,  
 Against whose portal she hath thrown,  
 In childhood, many an idle stone,—  
 Some tomb from out whose sounding door  
 She ne'er shall force an echo more."

*The Sleeper.*

"For no ripples curl, alas!  
 Along that wilderness of glass;  
 No swellings tell that winds may be  
 Upon some far-off happier sea;  
 No heavings hint that winds have been  
 On scenes less hideously serene."

*The City in the Sea.*

*For Annie* and *The City in the Sea* exemplify alternate repetition, while in *Ulalume* the repetends alternate at the close of the stanza, but elsewhere follow one another immediately.

A more interesting question relates to the source or sources of the repetend as used by Poe. The attempt to correlate his verse with preceding or contemporary verse is not to be construed as an attempt to understate his genius or his originality. Time has set its seal on these, and Poe has gone down to posterity with Hoffmann, Baudelaire, Coleridge, and Hawthorne. It is rather an attempt to estimate Poe's work at its true value by viewing it in the light of historical connection and literary precedent. To compare Poe with Longfellow, as is so often done, is to compare two men who had almost nothing in common, whose views of the poetic art were almost antipodal, and whose works, valuable and enduring as both are, will not bear comparison, being wholly unamenable to the same law or laws.

As a poet, Poe must be regarded as a writer of ballads, and of that class of ballads of which *the mysterious* forms the con-

trolling and essential element. Goethe\* has emphasized the importance of the note of mystery in the ballad, and Professor Child,† our highest American authority, speaks of the dropping or obscuring of marvellous incidents in the ballad as a mark of degeneracy. *The Raven* belongs with Goethe's *Erlkönig*, Bürger's *Lenore*,‡ and Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner* and *Christabel*. Viewed in this light, viewed as a continuation of the ballad revival signalized by the appearance of the *Ancient Mariner*, the spirit and structural peculiarities of Poe's most famous poems are at once understood. "In reading that man's poetry," says Poe § of Coleridge, "I tremble like one who stands upon a volcano, conscious, from the very darkness bursting from the crater, of the fire and the light that are weltering below." And again, || "Of Coleridge I cannot speak but with reverence. His towering intellect! his gigantic power!"

A study of the English, French, or German ballad shows that Poe has used materials already at hand. He has subjected the structural peculiarities of the ballad to the demands of rigid art, has added novel combinations here and there, but the effect is and was meant to be that of the ballad. Does not Poe's use of the term "quaintness" (pp. 29-30) show that in the repetend he saw a means of reproducing the effects of the older verse? Other poets have recognized this function of repetition.

Among Tennyson's *Juvenilia* is found the *Ballad of Oriana*. The following stanza shows that Tennyson well knew the

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\* See the brief but admirable discussion of the spirit and structure of the German ballad, as exemplified chiefly in the ballads of Goethe and Bürger, that Echtermeyer has prefixed to his *Auswahl deutscher Gedichte*, Halle, 1885. It forms a suggestive introduction to the subject of repetition in ballad verse.

† *Ballads*, 2d ed., vol. i., p. 48.

‡ It is well known that Bürger himself derived his inspiration from the older English ballads. See Scherer, *l. c.*, chap. xi.

§ Stoddard, *l. c.*, I. 50-51.

|| *Ib.*, VI. 570.

value of repetition as a means of imitating the "stretched metre of an antique song :"

"The bitter arrow went aside,  
   Oriana :  
 The false, false arrow went aside,  
   Oriana :  
 The damned arrow glanced aside,  
 And pierced thy heart, my love, my bride,  
   Oriana !  
 Thy heart, my life, my love, my bride,  
   Oriana !"

In his ballad entitled *The Revenge, a Ballad of the Fleet*, written in 1880, occur these lines :

"Ship after ship, the whole night long, their high-built galleons  
 came,  
 Ship after ship, the whole night long, with her battle-thunder and  
 flame ;  
 Ship after ship, the whole night long, drew back with her dead and  
 her shame."

Tennyson has in these two selections borrowed from the structure of the older ballad the two forms of repetition employed by Poe, partial and complete.

The following selections from Coleridge exhibit the same devices :

"And I had done an hellish thing,  
 And it would work 'em woe :  
 For all averred, I had killed the bird  
 That made the breeze to blow.  
 Ah, wretch ! said they, the bird to slay,  
 That made the breeze to blow.

"Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,  
 The glorious Sun uprist :  
 Then all averred, I had killed the bird

## REPETITION AND PARALLELISM

That brought the fog and mist.  
 'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,  
 That bring the fog and mist."

*Ancient Mariner*, Part the Second.

"A spring of love gushed from my heart,  
 And I blessed them unaware!  
 Sure my kind saint took pity on me,  
 And I blessed them unaware."

*Ib.*, Part the Fourth.

The following familiar stanzas composing Kingsley's *The Sands of Dee*, exemplify the same peculiarities of structure, peculiarities that may be found in almost all English ballads dealing with similar or related themes :

"O Mary, go and call the cattle home,  
 And call the cattle home,  
 And call the cattle home,  
 Across the sands o' Dee ;'  
 The western wind was wild and dank wi' foam,  
 And all alone went she.

"The creeping tide came up along the sand,  
 And o'er and o'er the sand,  
 And round and round the sand,  
 As far as eye could see ;  
 The blinding mist came down and hid the land—  
 And never home came she.

"Oh, is it weed, or fish, or floating hair—  
 A tress o' golden hair,  
 O' drownèd maiden's hair,  
 Above the nets at sea ?  
 Was never salmon yet that shone so fair,  
 Among the stokes on Dee.'

"They rowed her in across the rolling foam,  
 The cruel, crawling foam,  
 The cruel, hungry foam,

To her grave beside the sea ;  
 But still the boatmen hear her call the cattle home,  
 Across the sands o' Dee."

Without making further quotations, it seems evident that all attempts to explain Poe's use of the repetend as due to the influence of any one poet are entirely futile. I cannot think, therefore, that Mr. Stedman has spoken with his usual insight and accuracy when he says that Poe derived his use of the repetend from Mrs. Browning.\* There are suggestions of Poe's style here and there in Mrs. Browning's *Romaunt of the Page* (1839), but being a volume of ballads, the most important giving its name to the collection, a resemblance to Poe was to be expected.

Mr. Skipsey's remarks, properly interpreted, point the same way. "It has been supposed," he says, "that Poe caught the idea of utilizing for musical effects—as he has done in *Lenore*, *Eulalie*, and other pieces—the refrain derived from the repetition of some emphatically significant word or line of the poem, from the practice of Mangan, in whose *Times of the Barmecides* and *Dark Rosaleen*, such refrains are made to play a similar effective part. . . . I speak of Mangan on the merit of some lyrics solely, which are to be found in two or three Irish ballad books published by Duffy of Dublin."

Poe and Mangan died the same year, 1849. There was no American edition of Mangan's poems until 1859, and not even a London edition until after 1849. Poe may have heard of Mangan, though I do not think it likely, but that he ever read a line of Mangan's poems seems highly improbable. Mr. Skipsey's allusion, however, to a ballad book is significant.

The charge made by a recent anonymous editor of Poe's poems, that their author "boldly plagiarized not only the general idea of *The Raven*, but even many of the peculiarities of rhythm and rhyme, from Albert Pike's poem *Isidore*," hardly

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\* *Poets of America*, p. 245.

merits attention. The repetend is used in *The Raven* precisely as it is used in the poems that Poe wrote many years before the appearance of Pike's *Isidore*.

The conflicting opinions held especially in this country in regard to Poe's genius and to the originality and permanence of his work are due, I am convinced, almost entirely to the failure to judge his work by the canons of criticism that alone are applicable. If put upon the same plane with Longfellow and Tennyson, Poe is insignificant beside them. His range is narrower than theirs, his voice thinner. But in the realm of the older ballad, in complete mastery of the sensuous effects that lurk in color, form, and sound, heightened by brooding and indefinable gloom, Poe takes easy and secure precedence. Room for him here must be made beside Bürger, Goethe, and Coleridge. It is only in such a comparative estimate that Poe's genius will stand adequately outlinmed. "The feelings to which he appeals," says Minto,\* "are simple but universal, and he appeals to them with a force that has never been surpassed."

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\* *Encyclopædia Britannica*, xix.



## CHAPTER V.

REPETITION IN THE POEMS OF ALGERNON CHARLES  
SWINBURNE.

THE link between Poe and Swinburne is found in the lyric genius of Charles Baudelaire, with whose name the name of Poe is in France inseparably associated. No closer or more interesting literary affinity has ever existed than that between these two gifted but erratic men, neither of whom ever saw the other. Baudelaire adopted all of Poe's critical *dicta* and defended them to the last with a loyalty that would brook not the slightest disagreement; he translated Poe's works into French "with an identification of style and thought so exact," says Gautier, "that they seem original works rather than translations;" he lived to see Poe's fame placed upon a far higher pedestal in France than in America; and, when nearing his own end, he made a solemn resolve "to pray every morning to God, the Fountain of all strength and of all justice, to my father, to Mariette, and to Poe." \*

Thus a lineal descent of literary influence may be traced from Poe through Baudelaire to Swinburne, for it is to Baudelaire that Swinburne owes his earliest and strongest literary inspiration. †

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\* See Esmé Stuart, *Charles Baudelaire and Edgar Poe: a Literary Affinity*. (Nineteenth Century, July, 1893.)

† Poe's *Raven and Other Poems*, established edition, appeared in 1845; Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du Mal*, in 1857; Swinburne's *Poems and Ballads*, in 1866. Baudelaire never saw Poe, and Swinburne never saw Baudelaire. There is no reason to believe that Poe had even heard of Baudelaire.

Of Swinburne's command of rhythm Mr. R. H. Stoddard thus speaks: \* "Another quality to be noted in Swinburne, and one which allies him to the masters, is his sense of rhythm,—the music which is the inspiration and creation of metrical thought, and in which it lives, moves, and has its being. We find it in the great works of Shakespeare, and in his songs; in the early poems of Milton,—the songs in *Comus*, and passages in *Paradise Lost*; and occasionally in Beaumont and Fletcher. We do not find it in Dryden and Pope, or, to come to our own time, in Scott or Byron. They knew nothing of the unheard melodies of which Keats tells us, but played, with their pipes or their trumpets, the old tunes which had been handed down to them, and from which such life as they may once have had had long since departed.

"It was otherwise with Swinburne, whose sense of music was profound, and who had, besides, an ear of his own which taught him, that, much as the masters had accomplished, they had not discovered all the secrets of English verse, particularly the great secret which underlies all great poetry,—the compulsion of discords into harmonies. The combinations of sound which run so strangely through Swinburne's poetry, and which cannot but end, one would think, in the harshest discords, become, in his hands, rivers of sonorous music, which rush and roar along their several ways until they reach the sea, and are swallowed up in its long, tumultuous, endless harmony.

"When the history of English verse in the nineteenth century comes to be written, Swinburne will certainly figure in one chapter, and as prominently as any of his contemporaries or predecessors."

Mr. Stedman † is not less outspoken: "Before the advent of Swinburne we did not realize the full scope of English verse. In his hands it is like the violin of Paganini. The range of

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\* Introduction to *Selections from the Poetical Works of A. C. Swinburne*. New York, 1884.

† *Victorian Poets*. Boston, 1885. (pp. 380-381.)

his fantasias, roulades, arias, new effects of measure and sound, is incomparable with anything hitherto known. The first emotion of one who studies even his immature work is that of wonder at the freedom and richness of his diction, the susurrus of his rhythm, his unconscious alliterations, the endless change of his syllabic harmonies,—resulting in the alternate softness and strength, height and fall, riotous or chastened music, of his affluent verse. How does he produce it? Who taught him all the hidden springs of melody? He was a born tamer of words.”

That Swinburne owes his most characteristic and brilliant formal effects to the play and interplay of repetition, can, I think, be easily shown. After memorizing large portions of his lyric poetry, I have been surprised to see how the same devices of repetition, the same varieties of homophony, the same tricks of style, keep again and again recurring. It is due partly to this that his lines remain so easily and so ineffaceably in the memory.

(1) Swinburne is not fond of initial repetition or of alternate parallelism, but the following stanza from *Laus Veneris* illustrates one of his characteristic devices of repetition : \*

“ Ah, with blind lips I felt for you, and found  
 About my neck your *hands* and *hair* enwound,  
*The hands that stifle and the hair that stings,*  
 I felt them fasten sharply without sound.”

Swinburne has here taken two accented † words, “hands” and “hair,” and repeated them further on in the stanza, adding to each a relative clause. The third line has thus been already prepared for before it is reached. It consists, moreover, of two clauses, not only parallel in construction, both

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\* The citations made are in no case even approximately exhaustive.

† I have in many cases cited repeated words that are not accented. The difference in effect is one of degree, not of kind. So, for assonance instead of complete repetition.

being relative clauses of three words, but uniform in succession of consonants,—“hands,” “stifle:” “hair,” “stings.” The devices of parallelism will, however, be treated in their proper place. Attention is here called to the frequency with which Swinburne repeats two preceding and accented words with the addition to each of a relative clause. Other examples are :

“ I have put my *days* and *dreams* out of mind,  
*Days* that are over, *dreams* that are done.”  
*Triumph of Time.*

“ There are sounds where the soul’s *delight* takes fire,  
 Face to face with its own *desire*;  
 A *delight* that rebels, a *desire* that reposes.”  
*Ib.*

“ *Delight*, the rootless flower,  
 And *love*, the bloomless bower ;  
*Delight* that lives an hour,  
 And *love* that lives a day.”  
*Before Dawn.*

“ Such word alone were fit for only thee,  
 If *his* and *thine* have met  
 Where spirits rise and set,  
*His* whom we see not, *thine* whom scarce we see.”  
*A Birth-Song.*

“ Sweet is each in season, good the gift it brings,  
 Sweet as change of *night* and *day* with altering wings,  
*Night* that lulls world-weary day, *day* that comforts night,  
*Night* that fills our eyes with sleep, *day* that fills with light.”\*  
 Chorus in *Erechtheus.*

---

\* “ ‘The *day* to *night*,’ she made her moan,  
 ‘The *day* to *night*, the *night* to morn,  
 And *day* and *night* I am left alone  
 To live forgotten, and love forlorn.’ ”

TENNYSON, *Mariana in the South.*

In the two following examples Swinburne repeats the two words in the inverse order :

“ Soft *hands* and *lips* that smite ;  
*Lips* that no love can tire,  
 With *hands* that sting like fire.”

*Before Dawn.*

“ The *loves* and *hours* of the life of a man,  
 They are swift and sad, being born of the sea ;  
*Hours* that rejoice and regret for a span,  
 Born with a man’s breath, mortal as he ;  
*Loves* that are lost ere they come to birth.”

*Triumph of Time.*

When the two words are repeated without the addition of a relative clause, the inverse order is far the more common : \*

“ Till life *forget* and death *remember*,  
 Till thou *remember* and I *forget*.”

*Itylus.*

“ Could I *forget* or thou *remember*,  
 Couldst thou *remember* and I *forget*.”

*Ib.*

“ *Laurel* is green for a season, and *love* is sweet for a day ;  
 But *love* grows bitter with treason, and *laurel* outlives not May.”  
*Hymn to Proserpine.*

---

\* This is not unlike Shakespeare’s inverse method :

“ They are apt enough to dislocate and tear  
 Thy flesh and bones ” (*King Lear*, iv. 2, 65-66),

where “ Thy bones and flesh ” would preserve the order implied in “ dislocate and tear. ” See Corson, *Introduction to Shakespeare*. Boston, 1889. (pp. 374-377.)

Genung, *Practical Rhetoric* (p. 163), considers the following an example of the inverse order used “ to disguise the iteration : ” “ Make the *heart* of this people fat, and make their *ears* heavy, and shut their *eyes* ; lest they see with their *eyes*, and hear with their *ears*, and understand with their *heart*.”

" A strong *desire* begot on great *despair*,  
 A great *despair* cast out by strong *desire*."  
*Hermaphroditus.*

" Shall make thee *man* and ease a *woman's* sighs,  
 Or make thee *woman* for a *man's* delight."  
*Ib.*

" Till *day* like *night* were shady,  
 And *night* were bright like *day*."  
*Faustine.*

" O sole *desire* of my *delight*!  
 O sole *delight* of my *desire* !"  
*Fragoletta.*

" The *delight* that consumes the *desire*,  
 The *desire* that outruns the *delight*."  
*Dolores.*

" As the *rod* to a *serpent* that hisses,  
 As the *serpent* again to a *rod*."  
*Ib.*

" As a new *moon* above spent *stars* thou wast ;  
 But *stars* endure after the *moon* is past."  
*A Wasted Vigil.*

" And *all* these only like your *name*,  
 And your *name* full of *all* of these."  
*Félise.*

" Ah that such *sweet* things should be *fleet*,  
 Such *fleet* things *sweet*."  
*Ib.*

" If you were I and I were you,  
 How could I love you, say ?  
 How could the roseleaf love the rue,  
 The *day* love *night* fall and her dew,  
 Though *night* may love the *day* ?"  
*Ib.*

“He that strews *red* shall gather *white*,  
He that sows *white* reap *red*.”

*May Janet.*

“Not a breath shall there sweeten the seasons hereafter  
Of the flowers or the lovers that *laugh* now or *weep*,  
When as they that are free now of *weeping* and *laughter*  
We shall sleep.”

*A Forsaken Garden.*

“For *shame's* sake and *fame's* sake,  
Enough of *fame* and *shame*.”

*A Word for the Country.*

“Not a kindlier life or sweeter,  
Time, that *lights* and *quenches* men,  
Now may *quench* or *light* again.”

*Epicede.*

“*Man* on us as *God*,  
*God* as *man* hath trod.”

*Christmas Antiphones, II.*

“Mingling *me* and *thee*,  
When like light of eyes  
Flashed through *thee* and *me*,  
Truth shall make us free.”

*Ib., III.*

“No shadow, but rather  
*God*, father of song,  
Shew grace to me, *Father*  
*God*, loved of me long.”

*Off Shore.*

“The *sea* has the *sun* for a harper,  
The *sun* has the *sea* for a lyre.”

*By the North Sea, VII.*

“The faint fresh flame of the young year flushes  
From *leaf* to flower and flower to *fruit*;  
And *fruit* and *leaf* are as gold and fire,  
And the oat is heard above the lyre.”

Chorus in *Atalanta in Calydon*.

“And circled *pain* about with *pleasure*,  
And girdled *pleasure* about with *pain*.”

*Ib.*

“Surely most *bitter* of all *sweet* things thou art,  
And *sweetest* thou of all things *bitter*, love.”

Song in *Bothwell*.

“Sail on sail along the sea-line *fades* and *flashes*; here on land  
*Flash* and *fade* the wheeling wings on wings of mews that  
plunge and scream.”

*Midsummer Holiday*, IX.

No English poet approaches Swinburne in the frequency with which this device is employed ;\* but that its harmonious effect, when not used to excess, was well known, is evident from the use made of it by Shakespeare in *Venus and Adonis*, *Lucrece*, and the *Sonnets*. It diffuses also a subtle melody throughout the following stanza of Hood's *The Death-Bed*, the first two lines being an example of triple repetition :

“Our very *hopes* *belied* our *fears*,  
Our *fears* our *hopes* *belied*—  
We thought her *dying* when she *slept*,  
And *sleeping* when she *died*.”

---

\* Rabelais in his *Pantagruel* puts the following lines in the mouth of Guillaume Cretin (Besant, *Early French Poetry*, p. 185) :

“*Deffaictes* ce qu' estait *refaict*.  
*Refaictes* ce qu' estoit *deffaict*.”

But Swinburne rarely inverts and repeats two words that have occupied respectively the first and last places in a preceding line.



As frequently as this device of double repetition recurs in Swinburne's verse, it is not his most characteristic method of making one line glide smoothly into another. This is oftener accomplished by the following varieties of repetition and parallelism :

(2) A line in which one word occurs twice is followed by a line in which another word occurs twice : \*

“ And heard the chiming bridle *smite* and *smite*,  
 And gave each *rhyme* thereof some *rhyme* again.”  
*Laus Veneris.*

Here the unifying effect of the repetition employed in the first line is continued and intensified by a similar repetition in the next line. Other examples are :

“ I shall sleep, and *move* with the *moving* ships,  
 Change as the winds *change*, veer in the tide ;  
 My *lips* will feast on the foam of thy *lips*,  
 I shall *rise* with thy *rising*, with thee subside.”  
*Triumph of Time.*

(The movement of the four lines just cited has always seemed to me unsurpassed in English verse. The rise and fall of the wave could hardly be better shown than in the rapidity of “ I shall rise with thy rising,” and the slower, settling movement of “ with thee subside.”)

“ *Glad*, but not flushed with *gladness*,  
 Since joys go by ;  
*Sad*, but not bent with *sadness*,  
 Since sorrows die ;

---

\* Browning's famous lines in the *Song*, from *A Blot in the 'Scutcheon*, owe much of their structural effect to this device :

“ There's a woman like a dewdrop, she's so *purser* than the *purest* ;  
 And her *noble* heart's the *noblest*, yes, and her *sure* faith's the *surest* ;  
 And her eyes are dark and humid, like the *depth* on *depth* of lustre  
 Hid i' the harebell.”

Deep in the gleaming glass  
 She sees all *past* things *pass*,  
 And all sweet life that was *lie* down and *lie*."  
*Before the Mirror, III.*

"With *limbs* from *limbs* dividing  
 And *breath* by *breath* subsiding."  
*Before Dawn.*

"You *loved* me and you *loved* me not ;  
 A little, *much*, and *overmuch*.  
 Will you *forget* as I *forget* ?  
 Let all *dead* things lie *dead*, none such  
 Are soft to touch."

*Félise.*

"I *remember*, forget, and *remember*  
 What love saw *done* and *undone*."

*Ib.*

"Of days more *sweet* than thou wast *sweet* to smell,  
 Of *flower*-soft thoughts that came to *flower* and fell,  
 Of loves that lived a lily's life and died,  
 Of dreams now *dwelling* where dead roses  *dwell*."

*Relics.*

"What, not one hour ? For *star* by *star* the night  
 Falls, and her thousands *world* by *world* take flight."  
*A Wasted Vigil.*

"There is no woman living that draws breath  
 So *sad* as I, though all things *sadden* her.  
 There is not one upon life's weariest way  
 Who is *wear*y as I am *wear*y of all but death.  
 Toward whom I *look* as *looks* the sunflower  
 All day with *all* his whole soul toward the sun."

*The Complaint of Lisa.*

“ ‘ One hour for sleep,’ we said, ‘ and yet *one* other ;  
 All day we *served* her, and who shall *serve* by night ?’  
 Not *knowing* of thee, thy face not *knowing*, O mother,  
 O *light* wherethrough the darkness is as *light*.”

*Mater Triumphalis.*

“ Bright *bank* over *bank*  
 Making glorious the gloom,  
 Soft *rank* upon *rank*,  
 Strange *bloom* after *bloom*.”

*Off Shore.*

“ I, last least *voice* of her *voices*,  
 Give thanks that were mute in me long  
 To the *soul* in my *soul* that rejoices  
 For the *song* that is over my *song*.”

*By the North Sea, VII.*

“ Between the *sea*-mark and the *sea*  
 Joy *grew* to grief, grief *grew* to me ;  
 Love turned to *tears*, and *tears* to fire,  
 And dead delight to new desire ;  
*Love's* talk, *love's* touch there seemed to be  
 Between the *sea*-sand and the *sea*.”

Song in *Chastelard*.

“ I *saw* them come and *saw* them flee  
 Between the *sea*-foam and the *sea*.”

*Ib.*

“ Be night's dark *word* as the *word* of a wizard,  
 Be the *word* of dawn as a god's glad *word*,  
 Like heads of the spirits of darkness visored  
 That see not for *ever*, nor *ever* have heard,  
 These basnets, *plumed* as for fight or *plumeless*,  
 Crowned of the *storm* and by *storm* discrowned.”

*Les Casquets.*

“ We mourn for love of a *song* that *outsang* the lark,  
 That nought so *lovely* beholden of Sirmio's *lover*  
 Made glad in *Propontis* the flight of his *Pontic* bark.”  
 ‘ *Insularum Ocelle.*’

Instead of the correspondence of verbal repetition, there is frequently the correspondence of alliteration : the initial sound is repeated instead of the whole word :

“ Loves that are *lost* ere they come to birth,  
*Weeds* of the *wave*, without fruit upon earth.  
 I *lose* what I *long* for, save what I can,  
 My *love*, my *love*, and no *love* for me.”

*Triumph of Time.*

Indeed, Swinburne's combinations of alliteration would require separate mathematical treatment. No defence can be made of such puerilities as,

“ Men touch them and change in a trice  
 The *lilies* and *languors* of *virtue*  
 For the *raptures* and *roses* of *vice*. ”

*Dolores.*

or,

“ Where *faint* sounds *falter* and *wan* beams *wade*,  
*Break*, and are *broken*, and *shed* into *showers*.”

*Triumph of Time.*

Swinburne has here joined corresponding half-lines by a species of alliterative parallelism :\*

*f : f :: w : w.*  
*br : br :: sh : sh.*

(3) The repetition of one word throughout several lines may serve to give unity by binding the lines closer together.

“ Could love make *worthy* things of *worthless*,  
 My song were *worth* an ear ;

---

\* Chaucer ventures upon this device only once, but with complete success. Cf. the *Knights Tale*, ll. 1752-1753 :

“ Out *brete* the *blood*, with *sterne* *stremes* *rede*.  
 With *mighty* *maces* the *bones* they to-*brete*.”

Ten Brink, who cites these lines in his *Chaucers Sprache und Verskunst*, Leipzig, 1884 (p. 201), omits “the” before “bones” (the Morris-Skeat edition retains it), and prefaces his citation with the remark, “Gelegentlich enthält der Vers zwei verschiedene Stabreime, zwei Stäbe in jedem Glied nach der Ordnung *aa—bb*.”

Its note should make the day most mirthless  
 The merriest of the year,  
 And wake to *birth* all buds yet *birthless*,  
 To keep your *birthday* dear."

*Six Years Old.*

"Yea, with red *sin* the faces of them shine ;  
 But in all these there was no *sin* like mine ;  
 No, not in all the strange great *sins* of them  
 That made the wine-press froth and foam with wine."

*Laus Veneris.*

"She walked between the blossom and the grass ;  
 I knew the *beauty* of her, what she was,  
 The *beauty* of her body and her *sin*,  
 And in my flesh the *sin* of hers, alas !"

*Ib.*

"*Mother* of loves that are swift to fade,  
*Mother* of mutable winds and hours,  
 A barren *mother*, a *mother*-maid,  
 Cold and clean as her faint salt flowers."

*Triumph of Time.*

"As afternoon *forgets* the dew,  
 As time in time *forgets* all men,  
 As our old place *forgets* us two,  
 Who might have turned to one thing then,  
 But not again."

*Félice.*

"Couldst thou not *watch* one hour, though I *watch* three ?  
 Couldst thou not *watch* with me ?"

*A Wasted Vigil.*

"Son of the *lightning* and the *light* that glows,  
 Beyond the *lightning's* or the morning's *light*."

*For the Feast of Giordano Bruno, I.*

“Thou whose *birth* on earth  
 Angels sang to men,  
 While thy stars made mirth,  
 Saviour, at thy *birth*,  
 This day born again ;

“As this *night* was bright  
 With thy cradle-way,  
 Very light of light,  
 Turn the wild world's *night*  
 To thy perfect day.

“God whose *feet* made sweet  
 Those wild ways they trod,  
 From thy fragrant *feet*  
 Staining field and street  
 With the blood of God ;

“God whose *breast* is rest  
 In the time of strife,  
 In thy secret *breast*  
 Sheltering souls opprest  
 From the heat of life.”

*Christmas Antiphones, I.*

“The delight that he takes but in *living*  
 Is more than of all things that *live* ;  
 For the world that has all things for *giving*  
 Has nothing so goodly to *give*.”

*By the North Sea, IV.*

“Though the many lights dwindle to *one* light,  
 There is help if the heaven has *one* ;  
 Though the skies be discrowned of the *sunlight*,  
 And the earth dispossessed of the *sun*.”  
*Dedication (to Edward Burne-Jones).*

“Not *earth's* for spring and fall,  
 Not *earth's* at heart, not all  
*Earth's* making, though men call  
*Earth* only mother.”

*Ex-Voto.*

“What old-world son of thine,  
 Made *drunk* with death as wine,  
 Hath *drunk* the bright sea's brine  
 With lips of laughter?  
 Thy blood they *drink*; but he  
 Who hath *drunken* of the sea  
 Once deeplier than of thee  
 Shall *drink* not after.”

*Ib.*

The repeated word may bind the end of one line with the beginning of the next. It is the employment of this device throughout a stanza that constitutes the structure already alluded to on pages 23-25. ✓

“Let us go hence, my songs: she will not hear;  
 Let us go hence together without fear.  
 Keep silence now, for singing time is *over*,  
 And *over* all old things and all things dear.”

*A Leave-Taking.*

“Yea, now, do I bid you *love* me, *love*?  
*Love* me or *loathe*, we are one not twain.”

*Les Noyades.*

“I will go back to the great sweet *mother*,  
*Mother* and lover of men, the sea.”

*Triumph of Time.*

“Yea, I know this well: were you once sealed *mine*,  
*Mine* in the blood's beat, *mine* in the breath.”

*Ib.*

“With sighing and with laughter and *with tears*,  
*With tears* whereby strong souls of men are bound.”

*Laus Veneris.*

“And our hearts were fulfilled of the music he *made* with us,  
*Made* with our hearts and our lips while he *stayed* with us,  
*Stayed* in mid passage his pinions from flight  
 For a day and a night.”

*At Parting.*

(4) Parallelism, or the repetition of constructions, is as frequent in Swinburne's verse as is the repetition of words. Many examples may be found in the selections already given. Others are :

(a) “And wrought with weeping and laughter,

(a)     And fashioned with loathing and love,

(b)    With life before and after

(b)     And death beneath and above.”

Chorus in *Atalanta in Calydon*.

There is perfect parallelism of structure here between the first and second lines, and the third and fourth. The lines that are not banded by rime are banded by successive parallelism. As stated before (page 10), parallelism is usually found joined with repetition.

“Her eyelids on her eyes like flower on flower,  
 Mine eyelids on mine eyes like fire on fire.”

*Laus Veneris.*

“Had you loved me once, as you have not loved ;  
 Had the chance been with us that has not been.”

*Triumph of Time.*

“Yea, hope at highest and all her fruit,  
 And time at fullest and all his dower.”

*Ib.*



“Clear of the whole world, hidden at home,  
Clothed with the green and crowned with the foam.”

*Ib.*

“The heavens that murmur, the sounds that shine,  
The stars that sing and the loves that thunder.”

*Ib.*

“There are sins it may be to discover,  
There are deeds it may be to delight.  
What new work wilt thou find for thy lover,  
What new passions for daytime or night?”

*Dolores.*

“Blind buds that snows have shaken,  
Wild leaves that winds have taken.”

*Garden of Proserpine.*

“Land me, she says, where love  
Shows but one shaft, one dove,  
One heart, one hand.  
—A shore like that, my dear,  
Lies where no man will steer,  
No maiden land.”

*Love at Sea.*

“Lord of light, whose shrine no hands destroy,  
God of song, whose hymn no tongue refuses.”

*Nine Years Old.*

“Some with crying and wailing, some with notes like sound of bells  
that toll,  
Some with sighing and laughing, some with words that blessed  
and made us whole.”

*Midsummer Holiday, IX.*

“But your fathers bowed down to their masters  
And obeyed them and served and adored.  
Shall the sheep not give thanks to their pastors?  
Shall the serf not give praise to his lord?”

*A Word for the Country.*

“ Light hearts with sad ;  
 Crowned king with peasant,  
 Pale past with present,  
 Harsh hours with pleasant,  
 Good hopes with bad.”

Song in *Bothwell*.

“ The sweetness of spring in thine hair, and the light in thine eyes.  
 The light of the spring in thine eyes, and the sounds in thine ears.”

Chorus in *Atalanta in Calydon*.

“ Take hands, and part with laughter ;  
 Touch lips, and part with tears.”

*Rococo*.

“ Miles and miles and miles of desolation !  
 Leagues on leagues on leagues without a change !”

*By the North Sea*, III.

These four varieties of repetition, though not exhaustive, furnish far better than any traditional metrical analysis could do, what seems to me the true key to Swinburne's elaborate and complicated system of versification. Almost all of the examples given illustrate repetition in its twofold character, (1) as a means of producing harmony, and (2) as a means of banding separate lines by sameness or unity of sound and effect.

It hardly needs to be pointed out that when confined to one line repetition still performs its double function, but in this case bands not lines but parts of lines. Thus each of the four varieties of repetition that have been mentioned is as frequently employed by Swinburne to band the parts of a single line as to band separate lines. The following are single line illustrations of each variety mentioned :

(1) “ *Laboring he dreams, and labors in the dream.*”

*Laus Veneris*.

“ *Nets caught the pike, pikes tore the net.*”

*Faustine*.

By writing each as two lines, we get the two types of repetition mentioned on pages 59-64 :

“ *Laboring* he *dreams*,  
And *labors* in the *dream*.”

“ *Nets* caught the *pike*,  
*Pikes* tore the *net*.”

(2) “ *Flesh* of his *flesh*, but *heart* of my *heart*.”  
*Triumph of Time*.

“ With *lisp* of *leaves* and *ripple* of *rain*.”  
Chorus in *Atalanta in Calydon*.

(3) “ *Wind*, and *light*, and *wind*, and *cloud*, and *wind*.”\*  
*By the North Sea*, III.

(4) “ *Spray* of *song* that *springs* in *April*, *light* of *love* that *laughs*  
through *May*.”  
*Midsummer Holiday*, VIII.

“ *Fruits* fail and *love* dies and *time* ranges.”  
*Dolores*.

The epithet applied by Mr. Stedman to Swinburne, “ a born tamer of words,” does not seem to me an appropriate one, for Swinburne’s range of vocabulary is not large, but surprisingly small. Shakespeare, Sir Thomas Browne, De Quincey, Browning, and Tennyson are preëminent tamers of words ; but Swinburne is a tamer not of words but of sounds. Words occur and recur in his verses not so much for the sake of the words as for the sake of the sounds. Before a chord has ceased to vibrate, it is struck again and again and again. The thought when it moves at all moves at a snail’s pace. The reader is reminded of the advance of the Crusaders, who, when in sight of Jerusalem, are described as

“ Taking two steps in advance, and one reluctantly backward.”

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\* Each example under (2), page 65, taken line by line, is an illustration of this principle.

In reading his *Century of Roundels* one cannot help feeling that the roundel with its difficult reticulations is but the natural utterance of Swinburne. His most characteristic poems are but roundels "writ large."

Yet, in spite of the thinness and pallor of the thought, this mastery of sounds has had its effect upon the poetry of the day. Hardly a volume of verse has recently appeared in which traces of Swinburne may not be discovered. It is, of course, impossible to say whether these more recent imitators may not have taken their model at once from Baudelaire, Gautier, Verlaine, and other leaders of French mysticism; but it is more probable that Swinburne is himself the model.

His own attitude toward the French mystics has changed since the appearance of his *Poems and Ballads* in 1866. While at first he imitated the diseased fantasies of the *décadents* as well as their technique, there is noticeable in the spirit of his later verse a partial return to what he himself has called the "high and wide things of nature, the color that grows in no greenhouse, but such as comes with morning upon the mountains."

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